



Islamabad POST

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COAS: Global peace confronted with ever evolving threats

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Punjab govt to present surplus budget

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Iga Swiatek battles past Krejckikova

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SC to have 34 judges

Services chiefs tenure extended to five years

The opposition PTI took a strong exception to the passage of the bills in the NA and continued chanting slogans throughout the session; hints at countrywide protests

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Shortly after receiving the National Assembly's nod, the Senate on Monday passed the bill seeking amendments to the laws that deal with all three branches of the armed forces, extending the fixed tenure of services chiefs up to five years. The bill to amend the Pakistan (Army/Air Force/Navy) Act Amendment, 2024, was presented in both houses by Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar. "The purpose of these amendments are to make consistent the Pakistan Army Act, 1952, The Pakistan Navy Ordinance, 1961 and The Pakistan Air Force Act, 1953 with the maximum tenure of the Chief of the Army Staff, the Chief of the Naval Staff and the Chief of the Air Staff and to make consequential amendments for uniformity in the aforementioned laws," stated the bill — a copy of which is available with Geo News. "In the said Act, in section 8A, in sub-section (1), for the expression "three (03)" the word "five (05)" shall be substituted," says the bill seeking amendment to Pakistan Army Act, 1952. Regarding the retirement age and service limits of services chiefs, including COAS, CNS, and CAS, the document read that the criteria prescribed for the senior military officers "shall not be applicable" to the army, navy and air force heads during their "tenure of appointment, reappointment and/or extension". Apart from this, the lower house also adopted the Pakistan Air Force Act, 1953 and the Pakistan Navy Amendment Bill, 1961.

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Maulana Fazl slams amendments as threat to democracy

Fazlur Rehman also condemned government's plan to extend period of detention up to 90 days

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman strongly criticised the government's proposed amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act, calling them an affront to democratic principles and an insult to the spirit of the 26th constitutional amendment. Talking to the media, Maulana Fazlur Rehman condemned the government's plan to extend the period of detention and enable authorities to detain individuals for up to 90 days based solely on suspicion. He argued that granting such sweeping powers to the government would effectively amount to a "civil martial law," marking a dangerous erosion of

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DIWALI CELEBRATIONS



ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador Donald Blome, Ambassador of the Netherlands Ms. Henny de Vries, Ambassador of Italy Ms. Marilina Armellini and Charge d Affaires of the Indian High Commission Geetika Srivastava lighting candles to celebrate Diwali festivities. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the celebrations. — DNA

Indian HC celebrates Diwali

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Diwali celebrations at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad were marked by a gathering that featured a blend of cultural diplomacy and festive spirit. US Ambassador Donald Blome, Dutch Ambassador Henny de Vries, Italian Ambassador Marilina Armellini, and Charge d'Affaires Geetika Srivastava of the Indian High Commission led the festivities by lighting candles, symbolizing the traditional Diwali ritual of dispelling darkness with light. The event attracted a diverse array of guests from diplomatic circles, Pakistani officials, expatriates, and local community members, reflecting Diwali's universal appeal as a festival that celebrates unity, peace, and joy. The attendees were treated to Indian cultural elements, including traditional music and festive decorations, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage. Diwali celebrations like these are a recurring part of the Indian High Commission's outreach, promoting cross-cultural understanding and fostering positive relations between India, Pakistan, and the international community. The annual Diwali event is one among various cultural programs organized by the High Commission, underlining the role of cultural diplomacy in bringing communities together and creating a shared space for celebration across borders.

Terms his visits 'successful'

MBS seeks millions of Pakistani IT workers: Shehbaz

Speaking to his cabinet, PM Shehbaz shared outcomes from his recent diplomatic trips to Saudi Arabia and Qatar

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif revealed on Monday that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has requested millions of skilled workers from Pakistan's Information Technology sector to support the kingdom's expanding technological infrastructure. Speaking to his cabinet, PM Shehbaz shared outcomes from his recent diplomatic trips to Saudi Arabia and Qatar, where both nations expressed interest in collaborating with Pakistan on workforce and IT development. During talks with the Saudi crown prince,

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Reduction in policy rate to boost business activities

Says, nefarious designs of those, who want to spread chaos witnessed failure

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says reduction in policy rate will enhance business activities,

Continued on Page 06

Harris vows Gaza peace, Trump tone darkens in final hours

Final US campaign blitz for Harris and Trump

AGENCIES

EAST LANSING: Kamala Harris courted voters angered by the Gaza war while Donald Trump doubled down on violent rhetoric with a comment about journalists being shot as the tense US election campaign entered its final hours. The Democratic vice president and the Republican former president frantically blitzed several swing states as they tried to win over the last holdouts with less than 36 hours left until polls open on Election Day on

Tuesday. Trump predicted a "landslide", while Harris told a raucous rally in must-win Michigan that "we have momentum — it's on our side." The 2024 race is going down to the wire, with more key states effectively tied at this point than in any comparable election. Over 77.6 million people have cast early votes, around half of the total ballots cast in 2020. With the clock ticking, Harris, 60, spent the day in Michigan where she risks losing the critical support of a 200,000-strong Arab-American

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Briefs

Iranian FM arrives in Pakistan

Bilateral relations and the Middle East situation are on the cards during his visit

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi has arrived in Pakistan today on a two-day official visit. During his visit, he will hold meetings with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar. Iranian foreign minister will hold consultations on the situation in the Middle East and Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations. The visit will provide an important opportunity to advance cooperation and dialogue between Pakistan and Iran on a wide range of areas including trade, energy and security.

Jl challenges Amendment

Amendment contradicts several constitutional provisions, JI Chief

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Jamat-e-Islami (JI) challenged the 26th constitutional amendment in the Supreme Court on Monday. JI Chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman challenged the amended law. The respondents in the petition are the federation and the provinces. The petition contends that the amendment contradicts several constitutional provisions. The petitioner maintains that the amendment disrupts the established constitutional framework and calls for it to be nullified. The petition urged that the Chief Justice of Pakistan's appointment should be strictly based on seniority. It questions the role of the parliamentary committee in this process, supposing it unconstitutional. The petition also calls for suspending any new judicial commission formed under this amendment.

Justice Mansoor opposes

'Not all cases need constitutional benches'

'Leave some cases with us too', the senior most judge remarked while hearing case in Supreme Court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah on Monday opposed transferring every case to constitutional benches, suggesting that more cases should remain with regular top court benches for efficiency. Justice Mansoor made the remarks during a hearing on an overbilling case, where the SC judge, speaking to the petitioner's counsel, advised against forwarding every case to a constitutional bench, noting, "Leave some cases with us too." During the proceedings, the petitioner's counsel argued that the 26th Amendment had introduced new grounds, potentially justifying the case's referral to a constitutional bench. However, Justice Shah responded that this particular case did not involve significant constitutional or legal questions, making a constitutional bench unnecessary. The court subsequently closed the case, noting that appeals regarding previous judgments on

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Bushra Bibi bursts into tears inside courtroom

Bushra Bibi also criticised her legal team, accusing them of wasting time

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, the wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, broke down in tears during a hearing at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail on Monday, asserting that justice in the country "doesn't exist." During a court appearance for her husband Imran Khan's bail hearing, Bushra Bibi expressed deep frustration with what she described as

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Will there be an end to political uncertainty?

ANALYSIS

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

THE failed attempts to privatize Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) highlight the dismal state of the nation's political and economic landscape, which continues to weigh heavily on the population. People who voted in the 2024 elections had hoped the new government would bring prosperity and relief, yet they now face mounting hardships. Disillusionment is growing as the government has taken a path that increasingly pits it against the judiciary. Through the 26th amendment, the judiciary's powers have been significantly weakened, with further efforts underway to deepen divisions within its ranks, effectively transforming it into a subdued institution. The failed attempt to privatize PIA highlights a significant lapse in government planning, revealing a lack of adequate preparation before offering the national airline for sale. The bid of Rs 10 billion, compared to the government's expected Rs 85 billion, was a substantial embarrassment for decision-makers. Furthermore, the bidder clarified that their effective offer was Rs 210 billion, as they anticipated covering the airline's substantial liabilities of approximately Rs 200 billion. This disparity underscores the need for more thorough financial analysis and transparent communication in handling such high-stakes privatization efforts. The current political turmoil in Pakistan, particularly the government's preoccupation with controlling

the judiciary, has led to a series of administrative oversights that seem likely to persist. Recently, Pakistan had the opportunity to bolster its international reputation by hosting the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government Conference—a notable diplomatic event that could have significantly enhanced its global image. Unfortunately, the event's potential impact was undercut by the government's divided attention and domestic priorities. While hosting this important conference, which brought together high-ranking officials and dignitaries from various member states, the government's attention was still largely focused on the

“The proposition of mid-term elections might appeal to PTI supporters by giving them a pathway back to power through democratic means, while allowing the government to defuse ongoing tensions. If the PTI leadership settles for anything less than mid-term elections, it risks alienating its core supporters, who may view such a concession as a sign of weakness or a betrayal of their cause”

contentious 26th Amendment. The amendment, intended to reshape judicial power, has sparked considerable debate and political maneuvering, with government officials prioritizing its passage over the smooth conduct of the conference. In a stark display of this prioritization, Prime Minister left Islamabad shortly after the conference's conclusion to attend a political meeting in Lahore aimed at securing support for the amendment. This abrupt departure surprised foreign delegates, who found themselves largely overlooked in Islamabad without the presence of top government officials. This inattentive handling of the conference left an unfavorable impression on the foreign representatives, who had expected a display of Pakistan's

commitment to fostering stronger international ties. Instead, the experience underscored the government's internal preoccupations and raised questions about its diplomatic priorities. The missed opportunity cost Pakistan potential goodwill as the nation's leadership appeared more focused on domestic power struggles than on nurturing critical regional partnerships. The government seems determined to keep PTI founder Imran Khan behind bars and his party on the defensive. It has taken extensive measures to limit PTI's political influence, deploying significant resources to weaken its organizational structure and prevent it from fully engaging in the

political landscape. From legal battles and administrative actions to stringent crackdowns on party supporters, the government has left no avenue unexplored in its effort to stifle PTI's momentum. Ironically, if the government had devoted even half of these efforts to addressing public issues and enhancing social welfare, it could have substantially improved the lives of ordinary citizens during its time in power. Instead of focusing primarily on sidelining a political rival, the same energy could have been channeled into policies that tackle pressing issues such as economic hardship, healthcare, and education. By concentrating so heavily on limiting PTI, the government has missed an opportunity to make meaningful changes that could have won

more public support through positive, impactful governance. At present, it appears the government has successfully managed to exert control over the judiciary and contain the PTI. However, this control may prove short-lived, as the government's actions lack the support and confidence of the public. In contrast, both the judiciary and the PTI seem to enjoy stronger public backing, which could influence outcomes in the coming days. One likes it or not, PTI is a reality and it has to deal with in that perspective. Without taking it on board country's road to political and economic stability would remain elusive. Efforts are already on to woo Imran Khan. He has been offered to release provided he allows the incumbent set up to complete its term — a proposal the founder PTI seems to have outright rejected. The current political climate in the country is tense, with an evident divide between the ruling establishment and the opposition, particularly the PTI. If those in power are genuinely committed to steering the country out of its present state of chaos, they must seek a solution that is practical and appealing to all major stakeholders. Mid-term elections could serve as a viable compromise, potentially enticing the PTI and its leadership to abandon their confrontational approach in favor of a structured democratic process. The proposition of mid-term elections might appeal to PTI supporters by giving them a pathway back to power through democratic means, while allowing the government to defuse ongoing tensions. If the PTI leadership settles for anything less than mid-term elections, it risks alienating its core supporters, who may view such a concession as a sign of weakness or a betrayal of their cause. Consequently, this could lead to a loss of public support, as the PTI's base is largely driven by demands for political accountability and systemic change.

ECC meeting took several key agenda items

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MoIB) presented a summary requesting a technical supplementary grant (TSG) of Rs. 95.822 million to settle the outstanding dues related to the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet at Finance Division. The meeting was attended by Mr. Musadik Masood Malik, Minister for Petroleum; Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, Minister for Power; Mr. Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister for Economic Affairs; the Governor, State Bank of Pakistan; the Chairman, SECP; the Chairman, Board of Investment; Federal Secretaries; and senior officers from concerned ministries and departments. During the meeting, several key agenda items were discussed and decisions were made. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MoIB) presented a summary requesting a technical supplementary grant (TSG) of Rs. 95.822 million to settle the outstanding dues related to the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting. After deliberation, the ECC directed the ministry to reappropriate the funds from its allocated budget for the fiscal year 2024-25. In case of a shortfall of

funds at the end of the fiscal year, the Finance Division will allocate a technical supplementary grant as needed. Another request from MoIB for an additional TSG of Rs. 536.1 million for crucial digital initiatives was discussed. The ECC similarly directed the Ministry to reappropriate the required amount from its FY 2024-25 budget, with the possibility of supplementary funds being allocated later, if required. The Ministry of Industries and Production brought forward a summary regarding the Peshawar High Court's decision on the export of sugar from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Ministry emphasized that based on national data, the sugar production in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is less than the province's annual consumption of 0.979 million MT. The local deficit is usually met by sugar supplied from surplus-producing provinces such as Punjab and Sindh. Therefore, no sugar shortage is expected in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, even with the current and any future exports allowed by the ECC. As a result, the ECC reiterated its earlier decision based on the provided national figures. However, the request and suggestions from the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were duly

noted. The Ministry of Law and Justice presented a summary for the surrender of Rs. 151.787 million from the Ministry of Housing and Works, to be transferred to the Supreme Court of Pakistan for the repair and maintenance of its buildings. The ECC approved the transfer of these funds through a technical supplementary grant for FY 2024-25. A summary from the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) was also presented, seeking approval for the Sale Purchase Agreement (SPA) for the supply of POL products between Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and SOCAR Azerbaijan. The ECC approved the signing of the SPA. The Ministry of Energy (Power Division) submitted the Circular Debt Management Plan for FY 2024-25. The ECC approved the plan, which aims to reduce liabilities in the power sector and enhance financial sustainability. The Ministry of Interior requested a TSG amounting to Rs. 650.35 million to cover costs related to the SCO Summit 2024, repairs of Safe City cameras damaged during violent protests, and maintaining law and order in Islamabad. The ECC directed the ministry to reappropriate the funds from its allocated budget for FY 2024-25.



ISLAMABAD: An electric bus on the way in front of Faisal Mosque after open new route PIMS hospital to Damm-e-Koh, in the Federal Capital.

Forest fire in Bara Hotar contained by Rescue 1122

DNA

ABBOTTABAD: A fire erupted yesterday in the dense forests of Bara Hotar in Lower Galiyat, prompting an immediate response from Rescue 1122 Abbottabad and local authorities and contained it. Deputy Commissioner Captain (R) Sanaullah Khan directed Additional Assistant Commissioner III, Shamim Ullah, along with DSP Galiyat, officials from the forest department, local police, Rescue 1122, and local government personnel to reach the scene and address the emergency. With collaborative efforts from local residents, the fire was brought under control within two hours.

Additional Assistant Commissioner Shamim Ullah stated that strict action would be taken against those responsible for starting the fire, underscoring the severity of forest protection in the region. Rescue 1122 deployed three fire vehicles and 12 fire fighters upon receiving the alert. However, the challenging terrain and lack of accessible roads posed significant obstacles, forcing rescue teams to traverse on foot. After three hours of relentless effort, fire fighters managed to contain the blaze using traditional methods, aided by local villagers.

Lahore second most polluted city in the world

LAHORE: The provincial capital was still the second most polluted city in the world on Monday despite the Punjab government efforts. The average smog rate in the City of Gardens was 414; Air Quality Index at DHA Phase-VIII was 714 and Syed Maratab Ali Road 613. The average rate of smog in the city was less

than the previous day, but the situation is still alarming. In order to protect children from the polluted atmosphere, holidays have been announced in the primary schools of Lahore from November 4 to November 9. Due to the bad environment the administration has banned the entry of heavy vehicles

in the city on Friday and Sunday. On the other hand, according to the Department of Meteorology, the minimum temperature in Lahore was 19 degrees Celsius while maximum temperature was 31 degrees Celsius. The humidity in the air reached 77 percent. —APP

Punjab to present Rs 630b surplus budget: Azma

She said that KP needs jail reforms more urgently, as prisoners can break out of jails there

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has that the KP government doesn't even have funds to pay employee salaries but still dreams of buying PIA. At a press conference at DGPR, she said the Punjab government was set to present a surplus budget of Rs630 billion in 2025. "It's a joke that Maryam Nawaz is following Gandapur. Mian Nawaz Sharif never said that the Punjab government was planning to purchase PIA. All Pakistanis want the national airline to improve, and if investors from Karachi are interested in investing in PIA, it's a positive development," she added. She said that KP needs jail reforms more urgently, as prisoners can break out of jails there. "When there was a forest fire in KP, their so-called revolutionary fire brigade didn't even have money to refuel their vehicles. Tackling smog is not easy; China has been fighting it for 26 years," she added. She noted that smog has become one of the biggest issues cur-

rently. "When the wind from India blows towards Pakistan, Lahore's air becomes more polluted. We are aware that efforts are also being made on the Indian Punjab side. According to today's data, Delhi ranks first for smog, while Lahore is second. Delhi's air quality index is around 393, and Lahore's is close to 280. Primary schools in Punjab have been given holidays due to the smog. The Chief Minister of Punjab will soon write a letter to the CM of Indian Punjab," she added. She mentioned that a news was published yesterday, claiming that all provinces except Punjab were financially stable, which was far from reality. "In 2025, Punjab is set to present a surplus budget of Rs630 billion. Punjab has cleared all its wheat loans since 1952 and is now free from the burden of a 56% markup," she maintained. "The Punjab government has invested Rs200 billion in treasury bills. If the amount is included in the budget, the news story would have ended

right there. The PTI is using this news for political point scoring." She said that Maryam Nawaz was introducing excellent projects in Punjab. "High-quality hospitals are being built in Punjab, and the Punjab government is establishing the country's first public cancer hospital. The 'Fitna Party' should tell us what new hospitals Gandapur has established in KP. Gandapur's actions are something no woman, or even a reasonable person, would do," she added. She said that she was saddened to hear that Bushra Bibi cried in court. "When Maryam Nawaz Sharif was in custody, we never saw her cry. It would have been better if Bushra Bibi had apologized for the false cases filed against Mian Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz and Rana Sanaullah. No matter what drama they play now, they will have to provide receipts. Bushra Bibi coming forward on the rostrum and speaking out was a good media stunt," she added.—APP

Police bust street criminal gang; arrest three

RAWALPINDI: Police have busted a street criminal and bike-lifting gang by arresting three active members of the gang allegedly involved in street and other crimes and recovered cash Rs 58,000, two snatched motorcycles, weapons, and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Civil Lines police held three street criminals namely Abdul Qadir, Farhad, and Amir, and recovered Rs 58,000, two stolen motorcycles, weapons, and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent Police, Potohar Nasir Nawaz said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang. —APP

KP govt enrolls 1.3m out of schools children during recent drive

PESHAWAR: KP Minister for Elementary & Secondary Education, Faisal Khan Tarakai has said that out of 4.7 million out of schools children in the province 1.3 million have been enrolled in schools during the recent enrolment drive. Addressing a graduation ceremony for the outgoing boys and girls students under Alternative Literacy Pathways (ALP) Centres here at Nishtar Hall on Monday that children deprived of education are being provided best educational facilities under the non-formal education systems in their respective areas. The ceremony was also addressed by the Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur and Special Secretary Elementary & Secondary Education,

Asfanyar Khattak. Besides, the higher authorities of the Elementary & Secondary Education and ALP Programme, officers of the district education, boys & girls students and their parents attended the ceremony at large. He said that under a condense course education up to middle standard level is imparted in a short period of time and them merged into the formal school system. He said that in the recent examinations held under the auspices of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, the boys and girls students of the non-formal education system have passed with distinction. The provincial minister for the elementary and secondary education said

that the alternative literacy pathways programme was introduced for out of schools children in 2019 and initially it was limited to only 10 districts of the province, but now it has been extended to 27 more districts. He said that about 63000 students have been enrolled in cooperation with partner organizations like UNICEF, Human Capital Investment Project and Aspire Programmes out of which 38000 were girls. 34000 boys and girls had completed course and merged into formal education system while the education of 28000 boys and girls is still in progress in 840 ALP Centres. The provincial minister further said that beside the conventional education.—APP

KP CM to inaugurate third phase of drug free Peshawar drive

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur would inaugurate the third phase of the drug-free Peshawar campaign at University of Peshawar on November 7. The largest rehabilitation program of the provincial government would be attended by provincial ministers, members of national and provincial assemblies, businessmen and industrialists, journalists, bureaucrats, artists, social workers, students, lawyers and civil society members. According to a statement issued by the office of Commissioner Peshawar Division, a marathon race, an awareness walk would be held while improvisational drama.—APP



LAHORE: Students participating in Art Work Competition on Monday.

Experts for effective laws to regulate social media

The discussion was focused on the various aspect of regulating social media and addressed gaps identified in social media regulations

LAHORE: Social media should be regulated in the light of effective laws of the land without harming the civil rights and the national security. It was narrative by participants of a round table discussion here at the National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP) on Monday. Lahore NIPP Reactor Dr Ijaz Munir chaired the session while Dean Dr Naveed Ehali moderate the session. Key note speakers include Director General of National Institute of Management (NIM) Farooq Mazhar, LUMS Associate

Professor Dr Taimur Rehman, PU Department of Digital Media School of Communication Studies Chairperson Dr Savera Shami, Executive Director Digital Rights Foundation Nighat Daad, Journalist from Daily Pakistan Usman Shami and Dr Fareed Zafar Associate Professor from LUMS. The discussion was focused on the various aspect of regulating social media and addressed gaps identified in social media regulations. In his discussion, Dr Fareed Zafar stressed the need for providing education and awareness on

the usage of social media as fake news and sensation had impact on society. He emphasized the urgent need for improving cyber security laws and its implementation. Dr Taimur Rehman from LUMS expressed that users of social media should use these social app with care as education and awareness was necessary. He was of the view that laws regulating the social media should be more effective. Professor Dr Savera Shami suggested to creating awareness about the negative impact of unbounded use of social me-

dia. She said that social media platforms should be invited to establish their offices in Pakistan for sake of enabling and regulating environment under the laws. She stressed the need for timely enforcement of laws to eliminate extremism and hate content from the social media. During a question answer session, the participants discussed various proposals to regulate the social media. Later on, Reactor Dr Ijaz Munir distributed shields among discussion panellists and participants.—APP

Court Notice

In The Court of Mr. Sulman Asif Civil Judge 1st Class Gujrat, Suit for Declaration with Consequential Relief, Title: Zeshan Etc Versus Province of Punjab Etc, Notice To: Ruhkana Bibi W/O Muhammad Anwar R/O Thatha Faqirullah Tehsil District Wazirabad, Tunzeela D/O Muhammad Akbar R/O Chakori Tehsil & District Gujrat. Whereas service of defendants is not going to be effected through ordinary means. So, service of defendants be effected through proclamation in the newspaper. You defendants are directed to appear in court in person or through counsel on 24.11.2024 at 9:00 AM, failing which ex parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Civil Judge Gujrat.

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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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



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Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
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
MD Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the PMLN's Parliamentary Party at Parliament House.

Need stressed to promote teachings of Sufi saints

The acting chairman underscored the importance of fostering peace and a balanced mindset in young people, describing them as the "valuable asset" of any nation. He stressed that, with proper education and training, the youth could contribute significantly to the country's progress and prosperity, benefiting both their families and society

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting Senate Chairman Syedaal Khan on Sunday highlighted Pakistan's rich heritage in culture, literature, and civilization, and said that the subcontinent of Pakistan has long been a birthplace of celebrated Sufi saints, scholars and intellectuals. Speaking at the Shah Latif Festival, organized with the support of the Sindhi Language

Authority and Sindh's Department of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities, he highlighted the importance of actively promoting literature, culture, and civilization. The festival, which aimed to introduce young people to the poetry of the legendary Sufi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, provided a platform for children from diverse linguistic backgrounds to explore Bhittai's poetry and message. While inaugurating the event, he explained that beyond

acquainting the younger generation with the philosophy and Sufi thought of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, the festival aimed to instill a sense of peace, security, and true Islamic teachings among the youth. He praised the festival's variety of activities, where students engaged in speeches, theatre, art exhibitions, and other creative expressions to delve into Bhittai's message and cultural heritage. The acting chairman underscored the importance of fostering peace

and a balanced mindset in young people, describing them as the "valuable asset" of any nation. He stressed that, with proper education and training, the youth could contribute significantly to the country's progress and prosperity, benefiting both their families and society. He said that the current government is making substantial efforts to expand educational access nationwide while emphasizing Pakistan's cultural heritage and traditions.

He highlighted the value of such cultural programs, which not only celebrate the teachings of Sufi saints but also guide young people toward positive and constructive paths. "Pakistan is fortunate to have produced notable poets and Sufi saints from all four provinces. We must continue to advance their teachings," the acting chairman said calling for increased efforts to promote these values across generations", he added.



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador Irfan Neziroglu paid a courtesy visit to Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan.

9,568 emergencies responded, 9,215 recued in Oct

MULTAN: Rescue 1122 Multan responded to an impressive 9,568 emergency calls, and successfully rescuing 9,215 individuals in month of October. Under the leadership of District Emergency Officer Dr Hussain Mian, the service maintained an average response time of under seven minutes, ensuring rapid assistance to those in need. According to a release issued here, the breakdown of the emergencies shows that Rescue 1122 Multan managed 2,682 traffic accidents, 83 fire incidents, 249 crime-related emergencies, one drowning incident, six building collapse incidents, and 5,512 medical emergencies. These medical emergencies included cases such as heart attacks.—APP

Police bust street criminal gang, arrest three

RAWALPINDI: Police have busted a street criminal and bike-lifting gang by arresting three active members of the gang allegedly involved in street and other crimes and recovered cash Rs 58,000, two snatched motorcycles, weapons, and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Civil Lines police held three street criminals namely Abdul Qadir, Farhad, and Amir, and recovered Rs 58,000, two stolen motorcycles, weapons, and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent Police, Potohar Nasir Nawaz said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang.—APP

Nanga Pir Bagh breathtaking beauty for tourists

Minister of Sports, Culture & Youth Affairs of Azad Government State of Jammu & Kashmir, Asim Shareef Butt, announced that the government was organizing cultural festivals, drawing large crowds and hosting district-level sports tournaments to promote community engagement and celebrate the region's rich heritage

ISLAMABAD: Nanga Pir Bagh's breathtaking beauty, coupled with its tranquil atmosphere makes it an ideal destination for travelers seeking relaxation where its picturesque spot inviting visitors to unwind amidst nature's splendor, providing a refreshing escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. "Nestled in the heart of Azad Kashmir, Nanga Pir Bagh is rapidly gaining popularity among tourists seeking serenity," said a report aired by PTV news channel. Minister of Sports, Culture & Youth Affairs of Azad Government State of Jammu & Kashmir, Asim Shareef Butt, announced that the government was organizing cultural festivals, drawing large crowds and hosting district-level sports tournaments to promote community engagement and celebrate the region's rich heritage. Minister Asim Shareef Butt expressed his delight over Nanga Pir's increasing popularity and invited tourists to explore its breathtaking beauty.

"This enchanting spot is known for its picturesque landscapes, magical bushes, and scented breeze, making it an unforgettable experience for visitors," he added. Locals in Azad Kashmir enthusiastically urged citizens and abroad tourists to discover the allure of Nanga Pir Bagh, the region's emerging destination. "Nanga Pir Bagh is a hidden gem waiting to be explored," said Muhammad Akram, a local resident. "Its breathtaking landscapes, serene atmosphere and warm hospitality make it an ideal getaway for nature lovers and adventure seekers," he added. Another local, Shamim Akhtar, said, "We are thrilled to see tourists taking interest in our beautiful valley." "We invite everyone to experience the magic of Nanga Pir Bagh and explore its uncharted trails, scenic vistas and cultural heritage," said an official of forest department. "We loved our visit to Nanga Pir Bagh, but faced difficul-

ties due to poor road conditions. Hope to see improvements soon," a foreign tourist while enjoying 3rd Nanga Pir festival. To sustain tourism growth, the forest department should focus on reforestation and conservation efforts, an environmental expert Dr Hassan said. "Upgrading road infrastructure and developing eco-friendly facilities will further enhance Nanga Pir Bagh's tourist potential," a tourist guide Ahmed said. "Implementing sustainable tourism practices will ensure Nanga Pir Bagh's natural beauty is preserved for future generations" said Dr. Khan, Conservationist. "Vloggers are also being encouraged to visit Nanga Pir, a breathtaking destination in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. This enchanting spot is known for its picturesque landscapes, magical bushes, and scented breeze, making it an unforgettable experience for visitors," he added.—APP

Polio eradication program Rejuvenated with new strategy

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication, Ayesha Raza Farooq, said on Sunday that Pakistan's polio eradication program has been completely revamped aimed at making Pakistan polio-free by mid-next year. Speaking to a private news channel, she said that whole program have been redesigned as part of a National Emergency Action Plan, developed under the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. She said that all elements of the program, including surveillance, communication, and operations were revamped with the new strategy. The new approach brings together federal, provincial, and district authorities in a coordinated effort to eliminate polio, she added. "Eradicating polio is a shared responsibility, and we are committed to fully backing our healthcare workers and security personnel," she stated, adding that strict measures are in place to ensure accurate data entry by field staff.—APP

PSX stays bullish, gains 1,078 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,078.15 points, a positive change of 1.19 percent, closing at 91,938.01 points as compared to 90,859.85 points on the last trading day.

A total of 589,546,678 shares were traded during the day as compared to 465,865,841 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 29,959 billion against Rs. 23,089 billion on the last trading day. As many as 445 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 258 of them recorded gains and 140 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 47 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Power Cement with 56,698,604 shares at Rs 7.12 per share, K-Electric Limited with 38,931,623 shares at Rs 4.85 per share and Maple Leaf with 36,957,197 shares at Rs41.53 per share. Indus Motor Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.70.50 per share price, closing at Rs 1,989.28, whereas the runner-up was Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs 63.75 rise in its per share price to Rs 7,505.35.—APP

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Briefs

IRSA releases 114,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 114,400 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 58,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1525.49 feet and was 127.49 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 30,700 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1183.15 feet, which was 133.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 5,900 cusecs and 38,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Tansa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 36,800, 45,700, 37,200, and 5,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Iqbal echoes highlighted in New Zealand Literary moot

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at Literary Conference 2024 organized by Charity NZ, took place at Victoria University's Kelburn Campus in Wellington, New Zealand emphasized Allama Muhammad Iqbal's vision and thinking. This year's event featured distinguished speakers from Pakistan, celebrating Eastern philosophy and thought in the Western academic landscape. Pakistan's High Commissioner to New Zealand, Dr. Faisal Aziz Ahmed, attended the conference, highlighting the importance of fostering cross-cultural exchange. In his opening remarks, Mr. Athar Awan emphasized the need to responsibly introduce Eastern thinkers like Allama Iqbal and Moulana Jalal ud din Rumi. "It is essential," he said, "that we present the ideas of Iqbal and Rumi in a way that truly resonates here." Dr. Fatima Fayyaz from the Lahore University of Management Sciences delivered an insightful talk on Moulana Rumi's timeless message of humanity and human development. Highlighting the profound influence of Rumi's philosophy, she emphasized its relevance in today's interconnected world. Dr. Khuram Ellahi from the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics explored the depth of Allama Iqbal's concept of the "Adam" as envisioned by Allama Iqbal. "Iqbal's Adam," Dr. Ellahi noted, "holds a vast universe within himself, symbolizing the depth and potential of human existence." The Pakistani community participated enthusiastically in the festival, with the event also drawing interest from the broader New Zealand public. In his closing remarks, Mr. Athar Awan expressed gratitude to the attendees, while Dr. Faisal Aziz Ahmed expressed his hope for more such events to foster cross-cultural understanding.—DNA

Pakistan relationship with SA countries is historic, indispensable

Ambassador Hashmi regretted that India's hegemonic and interventionist approach to its neighbors has hindered Pakistan's relations with South Asian states. He said that Hindu pandits view their neighboring countries with a sense of ownership, noting that India's worldview, including its life, religion, and ideology, is rooted in Hindu secularism, shaped by Hindu values and systems

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: 'Pakistan is a holy land for Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists alike. The holy book of Hindus, Rigveda was revealed and composed in Pakistani Punjab. The epic Mahabharata was recited for the first time in Taxila, Pakistan. For Sikhs, Pakistan is a holy land as it is the birth and death place of their Guru. For Buddhists, their Guru, Padma Sambhava, a god in Buddhism was born in Swat. Therefore, Pakistan is equally sacred for all the major religions of South Asia and beyond.' These were the views expressed

by Ambassador Afrasiab Mehdi Hashmi, former High Commissioner to Bangladesh and Deputy High Commissioner to India, during his talk at the Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad. Ambassador Hashmi regretted that India's hegemonic and interventionist approach to its neighbors has hindered Pakistan's relations with South Asian states. He said that Hindu pandits view their neighboring countries with a sense of ownership, noting that India's worldview, including its life, religion, and ideology, is rooted in Hindu secularism, shaped by Hindu values and systems.

Ambassador Hashmi noted that while Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives are perceived as independent sovereign states, India has consistently exerted influence and pressure on them. For instance, in Bhutan, India stationed a full corps of its army, commanded by a lieutenant general, despite Bhutan's UN membership. Similarly, Nepal, a predominantly Hindu nation, is influenced by India's stance that Buddha was born there. Ambassador Afrasiab added that in the late 1980s, India faced accusations of trying to overthrow the Maldives gov-

ernment. He also highlighted the Tamil ethnic connections between South India and Sri Lanka. Ambassador Afrasiab highlighted that while India culturally influences Bangladesh, religion connects it more closely to Pakistan. He noted India's support during the 1971 conflict and the subsequent narrative of 90,000 Pakistani soldiers surrendering, though the actual number was only 34,000, as stated by General Niazi and referenced by Sharmila Bose, he asserted. 'Unfortunately, Indian intelligence undermined Bangladesh's intellectual foundations by de-

stroying literature related to the independence movement and key figures like Mr. Jinnah, severing the new generations ties to Pakistan', he stressed. While remarking on India's belief that 'Pakistan is inconsequential to India,' he stated that this perspective contradicts the reality that 80 percent of India's armed troops are stationed near the western border rather than focussing on China. Ambassador Hashmi stated that the RSS under Modi believes in Akhand Bharat, which was a lost glory as the partition of India took away the spirit of Hindu pride when the Indus Valley was transferred to Pakistan, he added.

Education Ministry formally recognises donors, attached depts

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training On Monday organized an Appreciation Meeting to recognize the invaluable contributions of its sponsors and attached departments. The event was chaired by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani and Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed. Prominent personalities included Additional Secretary Hassan Saqlain, Senior Joint Secretary Junaid Akhlaq, and PSO to Parliamentary Secretary Madam Faiza Fatima. Addressing the gathering, Secretary Wani expressed gratitude to the sponsors and attached departments for their unwavering support. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed emphasized the significance of collaborative efforts in advancing country's education sector. The Appreciation Meeting acknowledged the dedication of our amazing sponsors including, Savour Foods, OGDCL, Adam and E-Travels, ARG Personal Care, Cancer Foundation, PTCL/UFONE, Cheezious, Crunches, TDP, Riphah International University, J7 Emporium, Fauji Ghee. The attached departments, were also lauded including FBISE, FDE and NBF. Representatives from these organizations received certificates & shields of appreciation, recognising their tireless efforts. This event reinforced education ministry's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships, ensuring quality education and professional training for all Pakistanis.—APP

Police bust street criminal gang; arrest three

RAWALPINDI: Police have busted a street criminal and bike-lifting gang by arresting three active members of the gang allegedly involved in street and other crimes and recovered cash Rs 58,000, two snatched motorcycles, weapons, and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Civil Lines police held three street criminals namely Abdul Qadir, Farhad, and Amir, and recovered Rs 58,000, two stolen motorcycles, weapons, and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent Police, Potohar Nasir Nawaz said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Renowned businessman Ijaz Khokhar posing for a picture with the Charge d Affaires of the Indian High Commissioner Geetika Srivastava on the occasion of the Diwali celebrations.—DNA

APHC says 1947 Jammu massacre worst tragedy in history

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir has stated that the Jammu carnage of 1947 is one of the largest massacres and the worst tragedy in human history. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC spokesman Abdul Rashid Minhas, in a statement in Srinagar while paying rich tributes to the Jammu martyrs of 1947, said that the Jammu carnage was one of the biggest massacres and the worst tragedy in human history. Hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Muslims were massacred by the forces of Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh, the Indian Army, and Hindutva communal forces, including the RSS and Jansang, in various parts of the Jammu region while they were migrating to Pakistan during the first week of November 1947. He urged the people to observe November 6 as Martyrs' Day and renew the pledge that the mission of the Kashmiri martyrs would be accomplished at all costs. The APHC stated that the RSS-backed Hindutva BJP government of India took the decision to abrogate the special status of IIOJK in August 2019 on communal lines, and since then, the Kashmiris have faced gradual disempowerment. The statement noted that Modi, Shah, and the RSS chief are following the British policy of divide-and-rule politics to create a wedge between Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and others. He maintained that the people of the occupied territory have rejected New Delhi's illegal decision and stand in solidarity with the people of IIOJK. The APHC leader appealed to the Kashmiris to commemorate the historic Jammu Martyrs' Day on both sides of the Line of Control and in the rest of the world to pay tributes to the martyrs of the freedom movement. He also urged the public to organize anti-India demonstrations, seminars, and symposiums on that day. He stated that the non-Kashmiri RSS-BJP Hindutva authorities in the territory are intent on turning Kashmir into a graveyard, for which over one million trigger-happy troops have been deployed. Killing, torture, arson, arrests, and atrocities have become the order of the day, he added. He noted that lakhs of non-state Hindu fanatics have been granted domicile and are being settled in the occupied territory. These zealots are being trained, funded, and armed by the Indian Army to carry out genocide against Muslims in IIOJK, he lamented. The APHC spokesman expressed solidarity with those injured in a grenade blast in Srinagar on Sunday. He questioned how such grenade blasts could occur in public and busy markets when there is a heavy deployment of Indian forces everywhere. He added that such incidents are the handiwork of Indian forces and their agencies to instill fear, defame the Kashmiri freedom struggle, and target peace-loving Kashmiri youth.—DNA

Services' trade up by 5.77% in 1st Quarter

FASIAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD, Nov 4 (): The export of various services witnessed a 5.77 percent increase during the first quarter of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding months of last year. According to the latest PBS data, Pakistan earned \$1.906 billion from the export of services during July-September FY2024-25 as compared to services' export of \$1.802 billion in

July-September FY2023-24, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. On the other hand, the services' imports witnessed a decline of 3.35 percent during the months under review and were recorded at \$2.605 billion as compared to the import of \$2.695 billion in July-September FY2023-24. Based on the figures, the services trade deficit shrank by 21.77 percent during the first quarter as compared to the corresponding months of the previous year. The services

trade deficit was recorded at \$698.85 million during the period under review as against a deficit of \$893 million last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the exports of services in September 2024 increased by 17.04 percent to \$656.99 million from \$561.36 million in September 2023. On the other hand, the imports decreased by 3.99 percent going down from \$918.91 million to \$882.23 million, according to PBS data. On a month-on-month basis, the export of services increased

by 6.55 percent in September 2024 when compared to the exports of \$616.59 million in August 2024. The imports of services witnessed a decrease of 1.95 percent in September 2024 compared to imports of \$899.76 million in August 2024, PBS reported. It is pertinent to mention here that the merchandise exports from the country increased by 13.45 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year.

ANF arrests 11 drug dealers with 63 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 13 operations across the country managed to arrest 11 drug dealers and recovered over 63 kg drugs worth more than Rs 15 million, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that 500 grams ice was recovered from an accused arrested near a university in Multan. 500 grams hashish was recovered from the possession

of an accused rounded up near Jhang Road, Faisalabad. 300 grams hashish and 100 grams ice were recovered from a drug dealer netted near a university in Sialkot. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. He said, in another operation, 360 grams heroin was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain at Islamabad Airport. 1530 grams hashish was recovered from a parcel sent to Australia at a courier office in Lahore. 240 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel sent to Bahrain from a courier office in Karachi. 47 kg opium was recovered from Chagai area and 5 kg ice was recovered from two suspects arrested near Super Highway, Jamshoro. 2.4 kg opium and 3.6 kg hashish were recovered from an accused held near Sheikhpura Road. 850

grams weed was recovered from an accused arrested in Shah Faisal Road, Korangi, Karachi. In two operations conducted near Babu Sabu Toll Plaza Lahore, 2.9 kg heroin was recovered and an accused and a woman were arrested. 530 grams heroin and 410 grams ice were recovered from a drug dealer rounded up near Tall Plaza, Jhelum. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.—DNA

Gilani for innovative approach to achieve sustainable development goals

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday highlighting the country's multiple initiatives to achieve resilience and a sustainable future, called for relentless efforts, massive awareness, and an innovative approach to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The acting president, addressing the inaugural plenary of the 27th Sustainable Development Conference organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), highlighted the transformative role of technology and said that by harnessing advancement in artificial intelligence and blockchain, the social protection and inclusive growth could be achieved through innovative methods. He told the gathering of cabinet members, academicians, environmental experts, think tanks and researchers that the promotion of sustainable prac-

tices necessitated fostering a culture of responsible citizenship and environmental awareness. He commended the second edition of the Sustainability Investment Expo 2024 held alongside the moot to showcase cutting-edge technology, fostering collaboration and attracting investment. He

at the conference would be a clarion call for survival and prosperity as Pakistan being the fifth most vulnerable country, had been faced with the impacts of climate change. However, he said the country had made commendable strides towards climate governance and sustainable de-

velopment as the national climate and sustainable development policy outlined a comprehensive strategy to address resilience, mitigation, poverty alleviation, social equity, women empowerment, agriculture, water resources and energy efficiency, women empow-

erment, water resources, and energy efficiencies. Besides, he said that Pakistan had linked its Vision 2025 to the SDGs to demonstrate commitment to reaching sustainable development outcomes for a wider human well-being. The 5Es Framework by the Planning Ministry also gram had provided financial assistance to the millions of vulnerable families while additional economic reforms were being made to reduce poverty and promote inclusive growth. He said Pakistan's parliament was the first to go green by switching to solar energy, besides making legislation to establish the standing committees on climate changes of both houses of parliament and integrating SDGs into the national development agenda. Acting President Gilani called for efforts to reduce poverty, address gender disparity, ensure education, health, clean drinking water and development of infrastructure and environmental conservation. He said that the country's progress was linked to the prerequisite of women's empowerment by providing them with education, employment and leadership as gender equality was not merely a moral imperative but also a key driver of sustainable development.



said the theme of the conference "From Fragility to Resilience: Enhancing Sustainable Development" was a reminder of the critical importance of transforming and turning vulnerabilities into strengths, besides innovation and adaptability. He said the deliberations

development as the national climate and sustainable development policy outlined a comprehensive strategy to address resilience, mitigation, poverty alleviation, social equity, women empowerment, agriculture, water resources and energy efficiency, women empow-

erment, water resources, and energy efficiencies. Besides, he said that Pakistan had linked its Vision 2025 to the SDGs to demonstrate commitment to reaching sustainable development outcomes for a wider human well-being. The 5Es Framework by the Planning Ministry also



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Washington must face reality

BEIJING'S recent sanctions against Skydio, America's largest drone manufacturer, underscore the need for a comprehensive understanding of the interdependence between the Chinese and American economies, as well as the fundamental flaws in Washington's strategy toward China. Beijing's swift response to US arms sales to Taiwan has profoundly impacted Skydio's supply chain. The company has been forced to restrict battery supplies and urgently seek alternatives until spring 2025. It's reported that it also sought help from senior officials at the White House, hoping that the US and its allies could assist in resolving the "battery supply disruption." This predicament facing the company highlights the pressing need for a strategic shift in US-China relations. "This is an attempt to eliminate the leading American drone company and deepen the world's dependence on Chinese drone suppliers," Skydio CEO Adam Bry said in a letter to customers, first reported by the Financial Times. The company, which provides drones to Ukraine's military and Taiwan's fire agency, manufactures its products in the US but still relies on a global supply chain for many of its components; one of the most critical components, batteries, are still sourced in China. This incident serves as a wake-up call: Beijing's countermeasures against US companies are reasonable and legitimate decisions made to safeguard China's core interests and uphold the basic principle that drones should not be used for warfare. More importantly, this shows that China will no longer merely defend against and absorb US crackdown and containment; instead, it will increasingly adopt countermeasures. China has long possessed such capabilities. Since the Trump administration initiated the trade war in 2018, Washington has pursued a strategy of "decoupling" from China under the pretext of national security. The Biden administration has institutionalized, systematized and fully advanced sanctions and containment, particularly by continuously tightening restrictions on high-tech exports and investments to China. However, as the Skydio case demonstrates, this approach is backfiring. The company's inability to secure a supply of essential components, such as batteries, exposes the painful reality that the US tech industry remains deeply dependent on Chinese supply chains. This situation is merely a microcosm of America's broader dependence on Chinese manufacturing. As containment intensifies, more US industries, businesses and the entire economy will pay an increasingly heavy price. The RAND Corporation's recent report "The Effectiveness of U.S. Economic Policies Regarding China Pursued from 2017 to 2024," states that an assessment of US economic policies toward China since 2017 shows these policies have made "limited progress" in promoting fair trade... Some policy measures, particularly tariff increases, have negatively affected US economic growth, manufacturing employment and exports. This judgment is based on China's restraint from taking stronger countermeasures, reflecting self-inflicted damage from US containment. Once China begins to counter, the situation will not be so simple.



Malaysia's refusal to take sides

MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's third visit to China in two years reflects Malaysia's high regard and expectations for cooperation with China. Seeking development is the mainstream voice of the Global South, and the West's attempts to control the diplomatic choices of countries in the Global South are facing increasing resistance. At the invitation of the Chinese side, Anwar will pay a working visit to China from Monday to Thursday, marking his third trip to the country in two years. This visit underscores the Malaysian government's strategy of diversifying relations and highlights the increasingly close and constructive relationship between Malaysia and China. "Malaysia is an important member of ASEAN. With its high-level leaders visiting China multiple times, the country has played a positive role in cooperating with China to maintain regional stability, peace and development," Shen Shishun, director of the Department for Asia-Pacific Security and Cooperation at the China Institute of International Studies, told the Global Times. Malaysia has been engaging with various countries to foster friendships, seek development and promote cooperation. However, the West continuously attempts to interfere in its decision-making. According to foreign media reports, Anwar has recently reiterated his refusal to take sides. At a university event on November 1, Anwar said that he had directly rejected US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's call to stop building friendly relations with Russia on the sidelines of the 19th East Asia Summit in October. Anwar responded to the US by saying, "That's your issue; don't instruct us. We are an independent, sovereign country; we make decisions for our people and our nation." Anwar has repeatedly criticized the West for forcing countries to take sides, resisting Western pressure while maintaining friendly relations with countries like China and Russia. In a February interview with the Financial Times, when asked about US' criticisms of Malaysia's ties with China, Anwar condemned a rising tide of "China-phobia" in the West, stating, "Why must I be tied to one interest? I don't buy into this strong prejudice against China." Anwar's refusal to take sides is a rational and pragmatic choice rooted in Malaysia's own development. China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years, and the pragmatic collaboration between the two countries has brought significant benefits and development to their peoples. Additionally, for Malaysia, engaging with major powers such as China, the US and Russia aligns with its goal of strengthening its voice on the international stage and diversifying its strategic relations. The West, in order to maintain its hegemony, clings to Cold War thinking, continually creating imaginary enemies and inciting group confrontations while dictating the internal and external affairs of other countries. This arrogant and domineering posture has increasingly provoked resentment among countries in the Global South. "Countries in the Global South have the ability to make independent judgments and the right to exercise their own foreign policy, choosing positions that are just and in line with the interests of their peoples," Shen Shishun told the Global Times.

Israel's campaign against UNRWA precedes Oct. 7

Dr. Ramzy Baroud

One key player in the war on UNRWA has been Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of former US President Donald Trump. Kushner, who invested much time in helping Israel, made UNRWA a key point in his plan. He vowed to carry out a "sincere effort to disrupt" the work of the organization, a leaked 2018 email revealed.

Due to international rejection and solidarity, Kushner ultimately failed. Even the withholding of funds by the US administration did not force the organization to shut down, although it did negatively impact the lives of millions of Palestinians. The ongoing war on Gaza and the push to annex large parts of the West Bank represented...

THE Israeli Knesset last week adopted two bills that will effectively ban the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, from carrying out any activity in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Simply put, the decision is catastrophic, because UNRWA is the main international body responsible for the welfare of millions of Palestinians throughout the Occupied Territories and much of the region.

Israel followed up its decision by attacking and damaging an UNRWA office in the Nur Shams refugee camp in the West Bank. This was the Israeli government's way of demonstrating its seriousness regarding the matter. This is not the first time that Israel has pursued an anti-UNRWA agenda and, contrary to claims by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials, the decision is not linked to the current genocidal war on Gaza or the unfounded claims that UNRWA supports "terrorism." An independent review commissioned by the UN in April revealed that Israel "made public claims that a significant number of UNRWA employees are members of terrorist organizations," but that it "has yet to provide supporting evidence of this."

However, Israel's claims did a great deal of damage to the organization, as 13 countries, including the US, Canada, Australia, the UK, Germany and Italy, withheld badly needed funds that were helping Gaza stave off a horrific famine. Eventually, most of these countries reinstated their financial support, though without apologizing to the Palestinians who were adversely impacted by their unfair initial decisions. Unrepentant, Israel continued to unleash its relentless war on the organization. "UNRWA workers involved in terrorist activities against Israel must be held accountable," Netanyahu said in a statement last week. The anti-UNRWA rhetoric remains functional

for Israel. Amplified by the ever-willing US mainstream media, Israel has managed to keep UNRWA's name in the news, always associating it with "supporting terrorism." So, when the Knesset voted for the anti-UNRWA bills, many media outlets conveyed the news as if it was the only rational conclusion to an essentially fabricated story.

Israel's problem with UNRWA has little to do with the organization itself, but with its underlying political representation as a UN entity whose mission is predicated on providing "assistance and protection to Palestine refugees."

UNRWA was established in 1949 by UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV). It began its operations on May 1, 1950, and, with time, it became central to the survival of a large number of Palestinian refugee communities in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

Many have rightly criticized the UN for failing to supplement UNRWA's humanitarian mandate with a political equivalent that would ultimately help Palestinians achieve their right of return in accordance with UN Resolution 194. For Israel, however, UNRWA remained problematic. According to Tel Aviv's thinking, UNRWA's existence is a constant reminder that there is a distinct group of people called Palestinian refugees. And though UNRWA is not a political organization, the Palestinian refugee crisis and all related UN resolutions that emphasize the "inalienable" rights of these refugees are very political.

Taking advantage of the initial, albeit brief, sympathy with Israel worldwide and the massive campaign of misinformation emanating from Israel and its allies, Netanyahu used the Oct. 7 attacks as an opportunity to further demonize UNRWA. However, his campaign started much earlier.

One key player in the war on UNRWA has been Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of former US President Donald Trump. Kushner, who invested much time in helping Israel, made UNRWA a key

point in his plan. He vowed to carry out a "sincere effort to disrupt" the work of the organization, a leaked 2018 email revealed.

Due to international rejection and solidarity, Kushner ultimately failed. Even the withholding of funds by the US administration did not force the organization to shut down, although it did negatively impact the lives of millions of Palestinians.

The ongoing war on Gaza and the push to annex large parts of the West Bank represented a golden opportunity for Netanyahu and his extremist government to increase the pressure on UNRWA. They have been enabled by unconditional US support and the willingness of various Western governments to recklessly act upon Israel's false claims regarding the UN organization.

By allowing Israel to delegitimize the very organization responsible for enforcing international law, the UN's crisis becomes much deeper.

An impassioned plea made by UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese last week reflected the frustration felt by many UN-affiliated officials regarding the growing irrelevance of the organization. In a speech, Albanese pointed out that, if the UN's failures continue, it will become "more and more irrelevant to the rest of the world," especially during these times of turmoil.

This irrelevance is already being felt by millions of Palestinians, mainly in Gaza but also in the West Bank. Though Palestinians continue to withstand and reject and resist Israeli aggression, they are fed up with an international system that seems to offer them only words and little action.

Israel's banning of UNRWA should represent an opportunity for those concerned about the standing of the UN to remind Israel that member states that have no respect for international law deserve to be delegitimized. This time, words must be accompanied by action. Nothing else will suffice.

PAF: Indus shield 2024 'Stronger when together'

Asma Ishaq

Col Khaled Ezzat speaks, "It is my first time here in Pakistan and I enjoy this exercise and being the part of it is quite a big opportunity in such good environment. Of course, to share this exercise with multinational forces with different platforms, air crafts using the modern and new weaponry system." From Bahrain Col Rashid Khamees Al Ziyani shares, "To speak about my visit to airspace center, it is an amazing set up amended by amazing people." Galvanizing Interoperability Among 24 Air Forces. Pakistan Air Force has always been able to keeping a sophisticated position in serving the country

BEFITTINGLY acknowledged and hailed for an impeccable professionalism, Pakistan Air Force stays 'active in action' throughout the year. It never sleeps in the real! From defending the country's aerial frontiers, signing agreements in improving 'the further excellence' for cutting-edge aircraft technology likewise setting up the first 'state-of-the-art' Cyber/Information Technology and Aerospace cluster projects like NASTP, Artificial Intelligence next in building the industry and academia or lest not forget for helping in any kind of humanitarian cause: inland or abroad, this is our Pakistan Air Force indeed the Nation's Pride.

Recently, couple of attention grabbing videos have been released by the Directorate General Public Relations to fascinate the interest for an ongoing PAF's Indus Shield 2024. A mega kind of multinational exercise with a well-intentioned participation of 24 Air Forces led by Pakistan Air Force, a hugely admirable effort from Aerospace Power Center of Excellence. This top-notch and well-planned exercise commenced in the first week of October 2024 at two PAF operational Air Bases, at PAF Base Mushaf and PAF Base Rafiqi simultaneously. This Indus Shield 2024 has proven to be the next-success-story of PAF after the much commendable execution of Indus Shield 2023. The ongoing Indus Shield 2024 has involved the participants in exercise from all parts of the globe ranging from Asia, Gulf, Europe and Africa.

The CAS' Vision: The Zenith of Indus Shield 2024.

The Indus Shield 2024 has now become an acute physical demonstration of the CAS's vision. It testifies the able-guidance of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu NI (M) conveyed via his directives at various occasions to meet the unparalleled standards of professionalism that he maintains for PAF. In his inaugural address, the CAS underscored, "The ongoing exercise Indus Shield-2024 will go a long way in bolstering interoperability amongst the participating nations and will train their air and ground crews to face contemporary warfare challenges. I fully entrust PAF for leading the camaraderie in this regard."

The CAS has also shared about the par-excellence of Aerospace Power Center of Excellence, "Aerospace Power Center of Excellence has been revamped incorporating niche technologies and Hi-Tech training facilities to undertake multi domain operations keeping abreast with contemporary warfare parameters. The initiative ensures that the center remains attuned to contemporary warfare dynamics while also offering training through state-of-the-art facilities to the friendly nations, embodying

the principles that we are, 'Stronger When Together.'

The Worthy Participating 24 Air Forces.

Indus Shield-2024 has brought together all the elite Air Forces from 24 countries. It serves as a single platform in the region to showcase their professional prowess. It is a versatile participation where it engages air forces from Asia, Gulf, Europe and Africa. This diverse participation embodying the collaborative spirit that is the exercise motto- 'Stronger When Together.'

The 24 Air Forces Pakistan, Egypt, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Tanzania, Malawi, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, UAE, Zimbabwe and Qatar.

Group Captain Muhammad Asif Bhatti from PAF speaks, "This exercise is unique in nature where we have 24 nations that are participating in this exercise and how it makes it different than other exercises that we undertake in the region and what makes it the biggest exercise is that it is not only that we are participating in the kinetic form that is the fighter and force multipliers but there are other domains which we think are essential for the conduct of operations in the future warfare."

Adhering to the brilliance of Aerospace Power Center of Excellence, Maj Gen Lancelot Mathebula from South Africa speaks, "My experience within this training center I do believe is the next level. It reaches to not every fighter pilot but every air force's dream to make it sure that we can have multi-domain warfare training which is what any other country would like and I would like to commend the country itself as well as the defence force of Pakistan as well as the Pakistani Air Force for such a vision and the fact that it is an indigenous system that they have means that they have a continuous vision to make sure that they can protect and defend the country."

Col Khaled Ezzat speaks, "It is my first time here in Pakistan and I enjoy this exercise and being the part of it is quite a big opportunity in such good environment. Of course, to share this exercise with multinational forces with different platforms, air crafts using the modern and new weaponry system."

From Bahrain Col Rashid Khamees Al Ziyani shares, "To speak about my visit to airspace center, it is an amazing set up amended by amazing people."

Galvanizing Interoperability Among 24 Air Forces.

Pakistan Air Force has always been able to keeping a sophisticated position in serving the country. This position itself evidences the PAF's aerial prowess in the region.

Nonetheless, PAF's remarkable position has also been a pivotal factor in upholding deterrence in the region. Now, PAF's coming up with a mega exercise endorses an invaluable learning experience for all the 24 Air Forces involved in it. The exercise offers a unique opportunity for participating air forces to bring their skills and operational capabilities to the spotlight. All this to accentuate the interoperability among 24 air forces to achieve shared objectives and addresses the evolving dynamics of aerial warfare in the face of common security threats. It is exactly like, all under one sky as it is said all under one roof.

The Aspects Of Exercise Indus Shield 2024:

With the core objectives of military cooperation, fostering strategic partnership, and strengthening brotherly bonds, Indus Shield 2024 focusses on simulating various military tactics to maximize the war fighting potential of participating air forces through integrated training environment. The exercise involves complex air warfare scenarios and simulations designed to improve the aerial combat. The participants have got themselves in a near-realistic scenario of aerial warfare that replicates the real combat conditions including Air-to-Air and Air-to-Ground combat tactics. Moreover, deploying lethal and long range surface air vectors through unmanned force to manned and unmanned teaming kinetic and non-kinetic roles. It is a step forward to AI enabled warfare. Moreover, it is to augment the PAF's Cyber Force Application and PAF's Space Force Application in unison with counter operations. Last, this exercise includes the counter terrorism training modules. All in all, Indus Shield provides a vital learning experience to the air and ground crews both.

Folding The Wings But For Another Flight:

While the Indus Shield 2024 has folded its wing for another time to take the flight, this definitely has gone adding another impressive episode for PAF. Undeniably, PAF has proven to be successful in attaining the attention of international community. Consequently, PAF continues to become the center of global focus for honing the modern air-combating tactics. Soon again, the PAF intends to stretch its powerful wings to strengthening the interoperability for fostering the greater understanding and collaboration in the realm of aerial defence. The Indus Shield 2024 has consolidated Pakistan Air Force's dedication to its mission of safeguarding Pakistan's airspace along with promoting interoperability amongst the participating air forces in the face of mutually shared challenges.

—Asma Ishaq teaches English Language and English Literature to senior classes. She is also Subject Coordinator, English.

Briefs

Services chiefs tenure extended...

FROM PAGE 01

The proposed bill to amend the Army Act, the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2024, aims to extend the tenure of the Chief of Army Staff from three to five years. "In the said Act, in section 8A, in sub-section (1), for the expression 'three (03)' the word 'five (05)' shall be substituted," the bill said. Sub-section 1 of Section 8A states that "the President shall, on the advice of the Prime Minister, appoint a General as the Chief of the Army Staff, for a tenure of three (03) years." Similarly, the bill aims to increase the length of time the service chief can be reappointed or have their tenure extended to five years, instead of three as outlined in Section 8B. Section 8B of the Army Act reads as follows: "The President, on the advice of the Prime Minister, may reappoint the Chief of the Army Staff for additional tenure of three (03) years, or extend the tenure(s) of the Chief of the Army Staff up to three (03) years, on such terms and conditions, as may be determined by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister, in the national security interest or exigencies, from time to time."

Maulana Fazl slams..

FROM PAGE 01

civil liberties and democratic standards. "It is unbelievable that parties like the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), who have long advocated democratic values and the sanctity of the vote, are now supporting legislation that undermines the very essence of democracy," he held. Questioning the government's intentions, the JUI leader urged lawmakers to reconsider which parts of the 26th amendment they are willing to retract, suggesting that the current legislation contradicts the foundational principles of the constitution. Fazlur Rehman also rebuked the recently enacted Evacuee Properties Act, which extends to Islamabad's limits, calling it "illegal" and claiming that opposition to the law reflects the collective stance of the Muslim Ummah, rather than just his own party's viewpoint. On a humanitarian note, Maulana Fazlur Rehman drew attention to the crisis in Gaza, where he highlighted severe food shortages. He also urged everyone to extend support to the oppressed residents in the besieged region.

'Not all cases need..

FROM PAGE 01

overbidding remained pending. Meanwhile, the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) is scheduled to convene its first meeting on Tuesday, November 5 to discuss constitutional benches to be formed with in the Supreme Court in view of the newly passed 26th Constitutional Amendment and establishment of a JCP secretariat. The JCP, a body whose one of key tasks is to nominate judges to superior courts—has also been reconstituted in the wake of last month's constitutional amendments. According to the notification of the meeting issued by the JCP secretary on Saturday, the commission chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJ) Yahya Afridi now comprises 12 members including three senior SC judges—Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Munib Akhtar and Aminuddin Khan. Other members include Attorney-General for Pakistan Mansoor Awan, Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarar and a representative of the bar, Akhtar Hussain Advocate. The commission now includes four MPs—a senator and an MNA from the treasury benches, a senator and an MNA from the opposition benches. A member has also been nominated for the women's seat. Prior to issuance of the notification, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq nominated these members to the JCP and later intimated the commission about the decision through a letter. The speaker nominated NA Leader of Opposition Omar Ayub of the PTI and MNA Sheikh Aftab Ahmed of the PML-N to the commission.

Australia edge spirited Pak in ODI series opener

Josh Inglis top-scored for Australia in the tense run chase

SPORTS DESK

MELBOURNE: Skipper Pat Cummins played a gutsy knock under pressure and steered Australia to a hard-fought two-wicket victory over Pakistan in the first ODI here at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on Monday. Chasing 204, the home side had to put in hard yards to chase down the total in 33.3 overs. Australia had a shaky start to the pursuit as their openers Jake Fraser-McGurk (16) and Matthew Short (1) perished inside four overs with just 28 runs on the board.

Following the early blow, experienced batter Steve Smith put together an anchoring partnership for the third wicket with Josh Inglis. The pair looked in great touch amid their 85-run stand until Smith handed Saim Ayub a straightforward catch off Haris Rauf. Smith scored 44 off 46 deliveries with the help of six boundaries.

Inglis was then involved in a brief partnership with Marnus Labuschagne before falling victim to Shaheen Shah Afridi in the 20th over. He fell just one short of his well-deserved half-century, scoring 49 off 42 balls, laced with four fours and three sixes. His dismissal was part of a middle-order collapse, majorly inflicted by Haris, who removed Labuschagne (16) and Glenn Maxwell (0) on successive deliveries in the next over, reducing Australia to 139/6.

All-rounder Aaron Hardie then registered an important 16-run partnership with Sean



Abbott before being cleaned up by returning Mohammad Haseeb in the 26th over. Coming out to bat at No.9 when Australia were reeling at 155/7, Cummins showcase astounding grit to steer his side over the line. He scored an unbeaten 32 off 31 balls with the help of four boundaries. He was supported by Abbott and Mitchell Starc, who scored 13 and two not out respectively. Haris was the standout bowler for Pakistan, taking three wickets, followed by Shaheen with two, while Naseem Shah and Hasanain shared two between them. Put into bat

first, Pakistan's batting unit struggled against a ruthless Australian bowling attack and could accumulate 203 before getting bundled out in the 47th over. The visitors got off to a shaky start to their innings as they lost debutant opener Saim Ayub (1) in the third over with just three runs on the board. His opening partner Abdullah Shafique tasted similar fate as he too, was dismissed by Mitchell Starc, resulting in Pakistan slipping to 24/2 in 6.4 overs. Following the early hiccup, skipper Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam forged

a fighting partnership. The duo appeared to have settled down, having added 39 runs for the third wicket. But until Pat Cummins' decision to introduce spin turned the tide in Australia's favour as Adam Zampa got rid of star batter Babar Azam in the 18th over. Babar scored a cautious 37 off 44 deliveries with the help of four boundaries.

His dismissal prompted a middle-order collapse as Pakistan lost three more wickets in quick succession, including that of their captain Rizwan, and thus slipped to 117/6 in 31.4 overs. Rizwan remained the top-scorer for Pakistan with a 71-ball 44, which featured two fours and a six.

Debutant middle-order batter Muhammad Irfan Khan then put together a crucial partnership with Shaheen Shah Afridi. The pair added 31 runs at a brisk pace amid their stand, which lasted with Shaheen's dismissal off Starc in the 37th over.

Irfan was then involved in another crucial partnership when he, alongside Naseem Shah, added 27 runs for the eighth wicket. The debutant, however, had an agonizing end to his brilliant innings as he got run out after scoring 22 off 35 deliveries.

Naseem Shah then launched an onslaught on the Australian bowlers and gave a late push to Pakistan's total, courtesy of his quickfire cameo. He smashed one four and four sixes on his way to a 39-ball 40. Starc led the way for Australia with three wickets, followed by Adam Zampa and Pat Cummins with two each. Sean Abbott and Marnus Labuschagne made one scalp apiece.

Coco Gauff, Iga Swiatek win openers in Riyadh

Swiatek, in turn, struggled in her first match in two months, falling in the first set and trailing 3-0 in the second before she flipped the switch

WEB DESK

RIYADH: World No. 3 Coco Gauff and No. 2 Iga Swiatek of Poland won their respective opening matches of the Orange Group at the WTA Finals Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. Gauff posted a 6-3, 6-2 victory over No. 6 Jessica Pegula, while Swiatek rallied from a first-set misstep to notch a 4-6, 7-5, 6-2 victory over Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejickova of the Czech Republic.

Gauff and Swiatek will square off on Tuesday, with the winner taking control of the Orange Group. Swiatek holds a commanding 11-1 head-to-head record against Gauff. Gauff held a 16-8 edge in winners and converted five of her eight break points to end the match in 75 minutes.

"I thought we both were playing high level," Gauff said. "I just think I was able to break through on the more important points." Swiatek, in turn, struggled in her first match in two



months, falling in the first set and trailing 3-0 in the second before she flipped the switch. "Even though I played a lot of those (practice) matches," Swiatek said. "I kind of forgot for a while how it is to feel all those things, a bit different stress and emotions. For sure, I needed some time to adapt. The most important thing was that even though it happened, I managed to fight through that. And was patient enough to wait to get better." Swiatek broke

Krejickova early in the third set and seized a 5-0 lead en route to winning the match. "Honestly, I just focused on getting the balls in," Swiatek said of the early going. "I needed to focus on the easy stuff. My main goal was just to be solid. 'I'm happy that I won because at the beginning I felt a little bit rusty.'" Krejickova lamented letting the match get away from here. "It definitely wasn't the best tennis I can play, but I was really quite solid," Krejickova

said. "I just feel I lost a little bit the momentum of the match and obviously, I'm not really sure if it was me or Iga. She just came up and started to play more aggressive, started to hit her targets better. The victory comes after the Japanese star made history by becoming the first player ever to hit at least 50 home runs and steal 50 bases in a single season. 'Yeah, unfortunately, it's Iga - and you have to play two sets better than her.'" The long wait is over for Viktorija Golubic.

Pakistani runners shine at New York City Marathon

Danish was the fastest Pakistani to complete the marathon

NEW YORK: Pakistani runners made an impressive showing at the 2024 New York City Marathon, one of the world's largest and most challenging courses, with twelve runners finishing in under four hours. Danish Elahi emerged as the fastest Pakistani, completing the marathon in an impressive 3 hours, 26 minutes, and 50 seconds. Following closely was Ruffi Shehzada, who finished with a time of 3:32:22, while Pakistani-American Babar Ghias clocked in at 3:38:53.

Other standout performances under four hours included Ammar Mumtaz, Prem Kumar, and Rehman Azhar. Khoula Ahmed, a Norwegian-Pakistani runner, was the fastest female from Pakistan, finishing with a commendable time of 3:43:02. She was followed by Maheen Sheikh and Kaub Sarwar, rounding out the top three Pakistani women in the marathon. This year's NYC Marathon saw 36 Pakistani runners, both local and overseas nationals, competing alongside thousands from across the globe. The contingent included Pakistani-Americans, as well as Pakistani expats from Norway, the UAE, UK and Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, in the men's elite category, Dutch runner Abdi Nageeye claimed first place, completing the course in 2 hours, 7 minutes, and 39 seconds. Kenya's Evans Chebet and Albert Korir finished second and third, respectively. Kenya's Sheila Chepkirui led the women's elite field with a time of 2:24:35, followed by compatriots Hellen Obiri and Vivian Cheruiyot. Results of Pakistani (including diaspora) runners from NYC Marathon:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Danish Elahi - 3:26:50 | 9. Shariq Samad - 3:43:31 |
| 2. Ruffi Shehzada - 3:32:22 | 10. M Fasihul Saleh - 3:44:44 |
| 3. Babar Ghias - 3:38:53 | 11. Salman Khan - 3:44:44 |
| 4. Ammar Mumtaz - 3:39:42 | 12. Salman Cahudhary - 3:57:37 |
| 5. Prem Kumar - 3:42:44 | 13. Maheen Sheikh - 4:08:03 |
| 6. Rehman Azhar - 3:42:53 | 14. Jamal Khan - 4:09:16 |
| 7. Yawar Siddiqui - 3:42:58 | 15. Raja Arif - 4:14:31 |
| 8. Khoula Ahmed - 3:43:02 | 16. Noshervan Ali - 4:14:52 |

Champions Trophy added to Women's tournaments

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday, announced the introduction of the Women's Champions Trophy, scheduled to be held in 2027. The upcoming FTP cycle will feature an ICC tournament each year, commencing with the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in 2025, followed by ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026, the inaugural Women's Champions Trophy in 2027 and the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2028. The apex cricketing body also unveiled the 2025-29 Future Tour Programme (FTP), outlining the fixtures of the fourth edition of the ICC Women's Championship. The recently-unveiled cycle is set to shape the lineup of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2029, which will be expanded to 11 teams, one more than the current number of teams (10). As a result, Zimbabwe will make their debut in the tournament. - Agencies

Barcelona beat rivals Espanyol to go 9 points

MADRID: La Liga leaders Barcelona continued their excellent early season form under Hansi Flick as they swept aside city rivals Espanyol to move nine points clear of Real Madrid. Fresh from thrashing Real in their El Clasico encounter last week, Barca's attacking play was again sensational at times, with teenage winger Lamine Yamal once more looking a class above his contemporaries. He bent in a wonderful cross with the outside of his foot which Dani Olmo turned in off the crossbar for the 12th-minute opener. Another talented youngster, Marc Casado, then

played an equally good ball in behind the Espanyol defence 11 minutes later, with captain Raphinha timing his run perfectly to clip the ball home. Defensively, Barca's incredibly high line once again made life interesting, with Espanyol having two goals ruled out for narrow offside calls. Full-back Omar el Hilali squared for Jofre Carreras to sweep in, but the strike was ruled out by the video assistant referee (VAR). Moments later, Olmo got his second with a thumping shot from the edge of the area to put Barca 3-0 up. Early in the second half Alvaro Tejero's effort for the visitors was also

ruled out after another close offside call. Captain Javi Puado, though, swept in at the far post 18 minutes after the break to reduce the deficit. Espanyol improved as Barcelona shut down, but the fourth-bottom side were second best throughout as their dismal derby record continued. They have now gone 27 straight derbies without a win over Barcelona and have lost six of their past seven games in La Liga. Flick's side have won 11 of their 12 league games under the German and, since their sole loss at Osasuna at the end of September, have won six in a row in all competitions, scoring 24 goals in the process. They visit Red Star Belgrade in the Champions League on Wednesday and will look to maintain this wonderful run of form. Earlier on Sunday, third-placed Atletico Madrid beat Las Palmas 2-0 to move to within a point of Real in the table. - Agencies

Zverev outclasses Humbert to clinch Paris title

Zverev will leapfrog Carlos Alcaraz in Monday's official rankings update

PARIS: Alexander Zverev of Germany needed just 76 minutes to crush Ugo Humbert 6-2, 6-2 in the final of the Rolex Paris Masters, disappointing the Frenchman on his home turf. The third seed, Zverev produced 15 winners and nine unforced errors, compared to 12 and 25, respectively, for Humbert. Zverev also won 91 percent of points on his first serve, 79 percent on his second as he achieved his seventh ATP Masters 1000 title. He lost only five points on his serve and never faced a break.

"I knew I had to play like this to win today," said Zverev, who got his 23rd career win in an ATP Tour final. "Ugo is an incredible player, but here in Paris, he plays even better than he usually does and I knew that. Once the crowd gets involved, it's going to be difficult. So, I had to take that away early, and I did, so I'm happy about that."

"It was not 100 percent guaranteed that I would be back at this level after Roland Garros two years ago, when I basically broke everything possible in my ankle. So, to win this title here in Paris means the world to me, and I'm sure it means everything to those in my box, because they have done so much for me." He also has won ATP Masters titles in Rome (twice), Madrid (twice), Cincinnati and

Montreal. Humbert was the first Frenchman since Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in 2011 to reach the Paris final at the Accor Arena in Paris. He did so by defeating Russian Karen Khachanov in a tough three-set semifinal on Saturday. "It was a beautiful week, despite my defeat to

day," Humbert said. "My feeling is that I gave it my all. I have no regrets. "He was stronger than me in every aspect of tennis. I couldn't recover from yesterday's match enough, but congrats to him." Humbert will rise to No. 14 in the ATP rankings. "To have my family

and team with me the whole week has been incredible. It's for moments like this why I do this every day, why I train." With the win, Zverev will be the second seed at the Nitto ATP Finals, which begin Nov. 10. Eighth-seeded Alex Michelsen captured a 6-3, 6-1 first-round win over Frenchman Harold Mayot in Metz, France. Michelsen, a 20-year-old native Southern California, recorded seven aces and saved all nine break points against him.

Corentin Motet sent the home fans happy, however. He advanced to the second round when Sumit Nagal of India retired in the second set. Motet was up 7-5, 4-0 at the time. Hamad Medjedovic scored a stellar comeback win in his home country when he upset No. 6 seed Brandon Nakashima 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 in first-round action in the Serbian capital. Medjedovic fired 16 aces in all and saved 2 of 2 break points in the third set. Nakashima, who hit 14 aces without a double fault, saved match point on his way to winning the eighth game of the third set and cutting his deficit to 5-3, but Medjedovic prevailed in the following game. In the only other opener on Sunday, Hungary's Fabian Marozsan also made a big rally in defeating China's Juncheng Shang 2-6, 7-6 (5), 7-5. - Agencies



MBS seeks millions of Pakistani..

FROM PAGE 01

PM Shehbaz reported that Saudi Arabia anticipates an increased need for IT professionals in the near future, Express News reported. Saudi delegations also explored opportunities in solar energy, mining, agriculture, and IT, with a Pakistani team scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia soon for further discussions. In Qatar, PM Shehbaz said productive talks were held with Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who reiterated Qatar's commitment to economic cooperation. Qatar plans to fast-track a previously pledged \$3 billion investment, with the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) preparing to send a team to Pakistan this month to explore projects in IT and mineral sectors. The Qatari emir also announced plans for an IT park in Pakistan, further cementing bilateral tech ties. Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that Qatar would make an investment of \$3 billion in diverse sectors, which would have a significant impact on the national economy and ultimately benefit the masses.

Reduction in policy rate to...

FROM PAGE 01

exports and employment opportunities in the country. Presiding over a meeting of the Parliamentary Party of PML-N in Islamabad today (Monday), he said the economy of Pakistan is becoming stable. He said the State Bank of Pakistan has reduced the policy rate by 250 points. He said following the decrease of 250 points, the reduction of policy rate from 17.5% to 15% is welcoming. The Prime Minister said inflation has scaled down from thirty-eight percent to seven percent, while the national and international institutions are testament to the stability of the country's economy. Shehbaz Sharif said the nefarious designs of those, who want to spread chaos and bring the country to the brink of bankruptcy, witnessed failure. He said history will always remember those in golden words who sacrificed their politics for the survival of the country.

Harris vows Gaza peace, Trump...

FROM PAGE 01

community that has denounced US handling of the Israel-Hamas war. "As president, I will do everything in my power to end the war in Gaza," Harris said at the start of her speech at Michigan State University, noting that there were leaders of the community present. But the rest of the speech was upbeat, with Harris spending more time on urging people to get out and vote than on attacks on Trump. "We got two days to get this done," she said. Earlier, Harris quoted scripture in a majority-Black church in Detroit, Michigan and urging Americans to look beyond Trump. "Let us turn the page and write the next chapter of our history," she said. Trump on Sunday zigzagged through Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Georgia - the three biggest swing-state prizes in the Electoral College system that awards US states influence according to their population.

Bushra Bibi burst into tears inside..

FROM PAGE 01

"systematic unfairness" for the past nine months. "There is no justice. I didn't come here seeking justice," she said emotionally. Questioning the integrity of the judicial process, she added, "Is the person inside [Imran Khan] not a human? Do the judges not see this?" She further stated that this would be her last appearance, voicing her disillusionment with the legal system. Bushra Bibi also criticised her legal team, accusing them of wasting time and expressing her readiness to face imprisonment. She lamented that her husband and she had been subjected to widespread injustice across Pakistan, claiming they were punished unfairly.

Briefs

Rupee sheds 08 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 08 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.78 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.70. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.35 and Rs 278.85 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 66 paise to close at Rs 302.63 against the last day's closing of Rs 301.97, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.82, whereas an increase of Rs 2.25 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs360.30 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 358.05. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 02 paise each to close at Rs 75.62 and Rs 73.96 respectively.—APP

Egypt, Iran foreign ministers discuss rising ME tensions

CAIRO: Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty has reiterated to his Iranian counterpart the urgency of de-escalating Middle East tensions in order to avert a regional war. During a phone call with Abbas Araghchi, Iran's foreign minister, Abdelatty discussed his country's concerns about the possibility of a full-scale regional war amid rising tensions. Araghchi was in Cairo last month for the first visit to Egypt by a key Iranian official in around a decade. His trip was focused on efforts to de-escalate Israel's conflicts with Gaza and Lebanon.—APP

Cocoa farmers hoard beans in anticipation of price hike

GHANA: Cocoa farmers in the world's No.2 producer Ghana are hoarding beans in anticipation of higher prices, industry sources told Newsagency, potentially squeezing supplies to a global cocoa market looking to recover from last season's disastrous harvests. While the scale of the up-country bean stocking was not clear, a dozen farmers, buyers and officials from state regulator Cocobod confirmed the practice, with some blaming it for a slowing of bean purchases. "I have more than 300 bags, but I won't sell," said a cocoa farmer in south-central Ghana, who asked not to be named. "I will only sell after Christmas. We want to see if they will increase the price as they said." The sources all said that farmers were reacting to comments by Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia, who told supporters of the ruling New Patriotic Party four weeks ago that the government would raise prices for farmers. Bawumia, who is running for the presidency in Dec. 7 elections, was speaking in Sefwi Wiaso in southwestern Ghana, one of the country's biggest cocoa growing towns. He has since said his comments had been misunderstood. Ghana lost more than a third of its 2023/24 cocoa output to smuggling, according to Cocobod officials, adding to woes that brought production to a more than two-decade low and helped send global cocoa prices to record highs. In a bid to boost farmer incomes and deter smuggling, Ghana raised the fixed farmgate price by nearly 45% to 48,000 cedis, or just under \$3,000, per metric ton for the 2024/25 season, which opened in September. However, Ivory Coast — Ghana's neighbour and the world's biggest cocoa grower — raised its price to 1,800 CFA francs (\$3.00) per kilogramme, just slightly above Ghana's. Local media quoted Bawumia as saying the government would bring the farmers' price on par with Ivory Coast's.—DNA

Iran slams US deployment of B-52 bombers as destabilizing

On Monday, President Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran had missiles so Israel "wouldn't dare attack us." During the news conference, Baghaei said Iran's official position against changing the nuclear doctrine and pursuing atomic weapons remained the same

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei on Monday criticized what he called the United States' "destabilizing presence" after the deployment of B-52 bombers to the region. "We have always believed that the presence of America in the region is a destabilising presence," said

Baghaei told a news conference in response to a question about the deployment, adding that it "will not deter (Iran's) resolve to defend itself." The US military announced on the deployment of B-52 bombers to the Middle East as a warning to Iran which has vowed to respond to Israeli strikes on its military sites

on October 26. Israel's attack was in retaliation for an October 1 Iranian missile barrage, itself retaliation for the killing of Iran-backed militant leaders and a Revolutionary Guards commander. At least four soldiers were killed in the strikes which also caused "limited damage" to a few radar systems, officials said

at the time. Iranian media also reported that a civilian was killed. Baghaei said Iran's response would be "definite and decisive." He added that Iran supported "all initiatives and efforts" to push for a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon, where Israel is at war with the Iran-backed Hamas and Hezbollah armed groups,

respectively. Israel said its October 26 attack targeted Iran's defense capabilities and missile production, but Tehran said its missile production remained intact. On Monday, President Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran had missiles so Israel "wouldn't dare attack us." During the news conference, Baghaei

said Iran's official position against changing the nuclear doctrine and pursuing atomic weapons remained the same. Citing a recent speech by Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Baghaei said the Islamic republic would be "equipped with everything necessary to defend" itself.—APP



TASHKENT: Pakistan's Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, engages in discussions with Uzbekistan's Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, Laziz Kudratov. —APP

Nations gather for crunch climate talks in shadow of US vote

PARIS: World leaders kick off UN climate talks next week, days after a knife edge US election that could send shockwaves through global efforts to limit dangerous warming. The stakes are high for the COP29 conference in Azerbaijan where nations must agree a new target to fund climate action across huge swathes of the world. It comes in a year likely to be the hottest in human history that has already witnessed a barrage of devastating floods, heatwaves and storms in all corners of the globe. Nations are falling far short of what is needed to keep warming from hitting even more dangerous highs in the future. But leaders arriving in Baku are wrestling with a host of challenges, including trade spats, economic uncertainty and conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. Adding to the uncertainty, the US vote and potential return of Donald Trump, who pulled out of the Paris Agreement and has called climate change a "hoax", could ripple through the negotiations and beyond. "You can imagine that if Trump is elected, and if the election outcome is clear by the time that we get to Baku, then there will be sort of a crisis moment," said Li Shuo, a Washington-based expert on climate diplomacy at the Asia Society Policy Institute. He said that countries, likely including China, are preparing to send a "clear message" in support of global climate cooperation if Trump beats his rival Kamala Harris to the White House. The UN talks are seen as critical to laying the groundwork for a major new round of climate commitments due early next year. Current pledges would see the world blast past the internationally agreed limit of a 1.5 degrees Celsius rise in temperatures since the pre-industrial era. "Decisions in Baku could profoundly shape the climate trajectory and whether 1.5 degrees remains within reach," said Cosima Cassel, of think tank E3G. Azerbaijan hosting the 11-22 November talks has drawn concerns over its heavy reliance on fossil fuels and its human rights record. Countries last year committed to transition away from fossil fuels and triple renewables usage by 2030. This year, negotiators must increase a \$100 billion-a-year target to help poorer nations prepare for worsening climate impacts and wean off coal, oil and gas. The overall amount of this new goal, where it comes from, and who has access are major points of contention. Experts commissioned by the UN estimate that developing countries, excluding China, will need to spend \$2.4 trillion per year by 2030 on climate priorities. From that, \$1 trillion must come from international public and private finance. Wealthy existing donors, including the EU and US, have said new sources of money will have to be found, including from China and oil-rich Gulf states. China — today the world's largest polluter and second-largest economy — does pay climate finance but on its own terms. Between 2013 and 2022, China paid on average \$4.5 billion a year to other developing countries, the World Resources Institute said in a September paper.—APP

Indonesia, Russia kick off first joint naval drills

The southeast Asian ASEAN bloc, which Indonesia is a member of, held joint exercises with Russia in 2021, but Jakarta had never held drills alone with Moscow before this week

SURABAYA: Indonesia and Russia kicked off their first joint naval drills on Monday, as the Southeast Asian archipelago's new leader seeks to boost ties with Moscow. The region's biggest economy maintains a neutral foreign policy, refusing to take sides in the Ukraine conflict or in great power competition between Washington and Beijing. But newly inaugurated Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has pledged to be bolder on the world stage and in July visited Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. The five-day drills will take place in two phases at a naval base in Surabaya and in the Java Sea. Russia has sent three corvette class warships, a medium tanker ship, a military helicopter, and a tug boat, the Indonesian navy said in a statement last week. Local broadcasters showed Russian ships calling into port and being welcomed by an Indonesian marching band on Sunday ahead of the drills. Analysts say the joint exercises signal Prabowo is beginning a significant foreign policy shift, pledging to boost Jakarta's alliances with major powers. During a visit to the Kremlin in July, Prabowo — a 73-year-old ex-general — said he wanted to deepen the relationship with Russia. "We consider Russia as a great friend and I would like to continue to maintain and enhance this relationship," Prabowo told Putin. The southeast Asian ASEAN bloc, which Indonesia is a member of, held joint exercises with Russia in 2021, but Jakarta had never held drills alone with Moscow before this week. Jakarta has billion-dollar trade ties with Moscow, yet major arms imports have stalled in recent years after Russia seized Crimea in 2014 and launched its full-scale military offensive on Ukraine in 2022. Still, since becoming defence minister in 2019 Prabowo has kept alive a \$1.1 billion Russian fighter jet deal agreed a year earlier, despite the reported threat of US sanctions.—APP

Alert level raised after six killed by Indonesia volcano eruption

EAST FLORES, Indonesia: At least six people died after a volcano in eastern Indonesia erupted several times overnight, officials said Monday, raising the alert level to the highest of a four-tiered system. Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki, located on the popular tourist island of Flores, spewed ash and lava that peppered the surrounding area with fireballs, forcing authorities to evacuate several villages. "Six fatalities have been confirmed," Abdul Muhari, spokesman of the country's disaster management agency, told Kompas TV. Footage received by AFP showed villages near the volcano covered by thick ash, with some areas on fire. An AFP journalist near the volcano said five villages evacuated. The crater erupted just before midnight and then again at 1:27 am (17:27 GMT Sunday) and 2:48 am, the agency said. The country's volcanology agency raised the alert level to the highest and told locals and tourists not to carry out activities within a seven-kilometre (4.3-mile) radius of the crater. "There has been a significant increase in volcanic activity on Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki," it said in a press release Monday. It warned there was a potential for rain-induced lava floods and told locals to wear masks to avoid the effects of volcanic ash. The mountain had several major eruptions in January, prompting authorities at the time to raise the alert status to the highest level and evacuate at least 2,000 residents. Indonesia, a vast archipelago nation, experiences frequent eruptions due to its position on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an area of intense volcanic and seismic activity. In December last year, an eruption at one of the country's most active volcanoes, Mount Marapi in West Sumatra, killed at least 24 climbers, most of them university students.—Agencies

Jordanian field hospital delivers services in northern Gaza

IYADH: Medical teams at Jordan field hospital Gaza 80 began receiving patients on Sunday, reported state news agency Petra. Staff started work in the morning, treating people with various medical conditions, according to a statement by the military hospital's commander. The statement added that the facility highlighted how King Abdullah II, the supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, was keen to stand alongside those in the Gaza Strip. Residents and patients expressed their thanks for his support and pride in the relentless efforts of Jordan's armed forces to provide medical and humanitarian aid.—APP

India's Rajasthan state seeks Saudi investment with roadshow in Riyadh, Jeddah

NEW DELHI: The government of India's Rajasthan state is seeking Saudi investment in its growing industries, its minister told Arab News on Monday as he leads an official delegation to meet investors and business leaders in the Kingdom. Rajasthan, India's largest state by area, is gearing up to host a global investment summit in its capital Jaipur next month as part of the goal to double the state's gross domestic product to \$350 billion in the next five years. The summit is aimed at attracting international investors and fostering new partnerships in various sectors, including renewable energy, electric vehicles, infrastructure, startups and tourism. Ahead of the event, the state government has organized a roadshow in Riyadh and Jeddah this week to invite Saudi officials and business players to invest in Rajasthan. "Saudi Arabia is one of the largest and key economies in the West Asian region that is of immense significance to Rajasthan from the perspective of furthering trade and other partnerships," Rajasthan's Minister of State for Industry and Commerce K. K. Vishnoi, told Arab News. "The sectors that remain our key focus from the perspective of seeking Saudi investment include engineering, machinery and equipment, investment advisory, agro solutions, food processing and FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) distribution, among others." Rajasthan officials are scheduled to meet leading Saudi companies operating in these sectors, and will present the state's strategic advantages while also offering key incentives to potential investors, he added. As part of his visit to the Kingdom, Vishnoi held talks on Monday with the Saudi Assistant Minister of Investment Ibrahim Yousef Al-Mubarak, according to a release issued by the state government. "The delegation will also extend an invitation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to participate in the investment summit as a partner country," it said. Saudi Arabia is India's fifth-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade valued at about \$43 billion in the 2023-2024 financial year, accounting for more than 4.5 percent of India's total trade.—APP

Pakistan week fosters Saudi-Pakistani cultural bonds

An official said the Saudi Ministry of Media plays a crucial role in organizing and promoting cultural exchange events such as Pakistan Week. He said the ministry collaborates with foreign embassies and community organizations to facilitate and support these events, ensuring they align with the Kingdom's broader goals of fostering diversity and inclusivity

RIYADH: A delegation of journalists from Pakistan, currently on an official visit to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, expressed that Pakistan Week in Suwaidi Park has featured a vibrant celebration of Pakistani heritage. The event included a variety of cultural elements, such as traditional music and dance performances, regional culinary experiences showcasing iconic dishes, art exhibits featuring Pakistani crafts and artwork, and fashion shows highlighting traditional attire like shalwar kameez. They, expressing their views in an exclusive talk with APP, said the week also incorporated film screenings, poetry recitals, and stalls featuring handmade crafts, presenting a holistic view of Pakistan's rich cultural landscape

to both Pakistani expatriates and Saudi nationals. A senior journalist, anchor and news analyst, Shaukat Paracha said Pakistan Week served as a platform for fostering deeper cultural connections between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and by highlighting shared values, traditions and customs, the event promoted mutual respect and understanding between the two communities. He said this cultural exchange not only helped Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia connect with their roots but also offers Saudi citizens an opportunity to experience and appreciate Pakistan's heritage. He said these initiatives contribute to building a strong foundation of people-to-people relationships, which aligns with the broader

goals of Vision 2030 to embrace diversity and foster harmony among the Kingdom's multicultural residents. At Suwaidi Park, a senior journalist, Tariq Chaudhry said a variety of activities were organized to entertain both the Pakistani community and Saudi visitors. He said these included live music concerts featuring Pakistani artists, traditional folk dances such as bhangra, and a showcase of Pakistani street food stalls. He said the park also hosted interactive art installations, cultural parades, and storytelling sessions on Pakistani folklore. He said family-friendly activities like face painting, henna application, and children's games inspired by Pakistani culture were available, making it a vibrant, inclusive

celebration for all ages and backgrounds. A senior journalist and anchorperson, Sohail Bhatti said the response from the Pakistani community was overwhelmingly positive. He said many Pakistanis felt a renewed sense of pride and connection to their culture and they were grateful for the opportunity to celebrate their heritage publicly in Saudi Arabia. He said the attendance at events had been high, with enthusiastic participation in activities ranging from culinary showcases to musical performances. He said the community's engagement reflected their appreciation for the Saudi government's recognition and support of their cultural heritage, which strengthens their sense of belonging within the Kingdom. An

official said the Saudi Ministry of Media plays a crucial role in organizing and promoting cultural exchange events such as Pakistan Week. He said the ministry collaborates with foreign embassies and community organizations to facilitate and support these events, ensuring they align with the Kingdom's broader goals of fostering diversity and inclusivity. He said the ministry provides resources and media coverage to increase visibility and engagement, inviting international media to capture these cultural celebrations. By supporting such initiatives, the official said the ministry emphasized Saudi Arabia's commitment to cultural openness and its recognition of the valuable contributions of expatriate communities in enriching the social fabric of the Kingdom.—APP

Crowd hurls mud, insults at Spanish royals, PM

VALENCIA: Furious locals pelted Spain's king, queen and prime minister on Sunday with mud and cries of "murderers!", forcing them to cut short a visit to the town worst hit by floods which have killed more than 200. As a new storm headed for the region, an angry crowd in the town of Paiporta focused its wrath on Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and the head of the Valencia region, both of whom were whisked away by security. Mud hit King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia in the face and clothes as they tried to calm the angry crowd five days after the floods hit. The extraordinary scenes underscored the depth of anger over the response to Spain's worst disaster in decades, with the toll now at 217 dead and hopes fading for finding survivors. The king and queen arrived went to a crisis centre in Paiporta, ground zero for a disaster Sanchez called the second deadliest flood in Europe this century. But extra security guards were soon called to stand between the royals and the angry crowd, whose ire seemed most directed at Sanchez and Valencia regional government head Carlos Mazon. "I understand the social anger and of course, I'm here to receive it. This is my political and moral obligation," Mazon said in a post on X, while calling the king's conduct "exemplary." The king and queen spent an hour trying to calm tempers before leaving. Sanchez and the local politicians quickly left, but not before the rear window of the premier's vehicle was broken. Sanchez later said while he empathised with the "anguish and suffering" of the victims, he condemned "all forms of violence".—APP

Jewish Iranian man executed in murder case

PARIS: Iran on Monday executed a member of the country's Jewish minority who had been convicted of murder, an NGO said, at a time of rising tensions with Israel. Arvin Ghahremani was hanged in prison in the western city of Kermanshah after being convicted of a murder during a street fight, said the Norway-based Iran Human Rights group. "In the midst of the threats of war with Israel, the Islamic republic executed Arvin Ghahremani, an Iranian Jewish citizen," said IHR director Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, adding the legal case had "significant flaws." "However, in addition to this, Arvin was a Jew, and the institutionalized anti-Semitism in the Islamic republic undoubtedly played a crucial role in the execution of his sentence," Amiry-Moghaddam added.—APP

Urgent needs in Palestinian refugee camps discussed

AMMAN: Jordan's Department of Palestinian Affairs and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East held talks on Sunday to address the growing needs and challenges of the displaced and vulnerable in camps across the country. During the meeting, Department of Palestinian Affairs Director-General Rafiq Khirfan condemned what he described as a "systematic campaign and political assassination" aimed at weakening UNRWA's role, according to reports. He pointed to Tel Aviv's recent actions, including a decision by the Israeli Knesset to restrict UNRWA activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, such as East Jerusalem, and to withdraw diplomatic privileges from its staff. Khirfan said the measures were a violation of international law and an attempt to undermine UNRWA's mission of supporting Palestinian refugees, advocating for their right to return, and compensation. Despite these challenges, Khirfan underscored Jordan's continued commitment to backing UNRWA at regional and international levels, recognizing the agency's critical role in providing services and stability.—APP

Briefs

PSX rallies to record high

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Stocks on Monday rallied to a fresh record ahead of a pivotal central bank meeting, fueled by investor optimism over a potential rate cut and a favourable economic outlook showing strength across key indicators. The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Shares Index gained 1,078.15 or 1.19% to close at 91,938 points after hitting an intraday high of 92,159 points. Key contributors to the surge included Systems Limited, Lucky Cement Limited, Cherat Cement Company Limited, Hub Power Company Limited, and Engro Corporation Limited, collectively adding 611 points to the index. Trading activity remained robust, with 587 million shares traded, totaling Rs 29 billion. The Power Cement Limited led the trading volume, with an impressive 56 million shares changing hands. Speaking to Geo.tv, Ahsan Mehani, senior analyst at Arif Habib Corp, said stocks hit an all-time high as investors were anticipating a major SBP rate cut following a 3.4% drop in NSS (national saving schemes) rates due to October's 7.2% CPI (consumer price index) inflation. "Investment pledges of \$3 billion from Qatar, \$2.8 billion from Saudi Arabia, and rupee stability also fueled record bullish activity at the PSX," Mehani added. Last week, Information Minister Attullah Tarar said that Qatar would invest \$3 billion in diverse sectors of Pakistan, including trade, investment, culture and others following the successful visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Imran's life in danger: Aleema

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: PTI founder Imran Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, has voiced serious concerns over her brother's safety, calling ongoing rumours of a deal baseless. Speaking to the media in Islamabad, she stated that Imran Khan remains resolute in his pursuit of justice, stressing that the situation now demands resolution. Aleema pointed to the frequent threats faced by Imran Khan's family, with multiple FIRs filed against him, and highlighted recent incidents where young children in their family were allegedly detained. Appealing to the new chief justice, she urged intervention to curb rising lawlessness, warning of potential public backlash. Meanwhile, PTI Secretary Salman Akram Raja announced a rally scheduled for Nov 9 in Swabi, calling it a critical step towards freedom. "This is not political gamesmanship but a fight for survival," he declared, rallying supporters to push for Imran Khan's release and vowing that their movement will persist until his freedom is achieved.

IHC issues notice to FIA

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notice to the Federal Investigation Authority (FIA) in PTI founder Imran Khan's bail plea in Toshakhana-II case. IHC Justice Miangul Hasan Aurangzeb heard Imran Khan's bail plea in Toshakhana-II case. The court adjourned the case hearing for an indefinite period, serving notice to the Federal Investigation Authority. The registrar office will fix the next date for case hearing. It is pertinent to note that the special judge central rejected Imran Khan's bail plea whereas his wife Bushra Bibi was granted bail in the Toshakhana-II case. Yesterday, the Federal Investigation Authority challenged Bushra Bibi, wife of Imran Khan, bail in the Toshakhana-II case in the Supreme Court.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs the Federal Cabinet meeting. – DNA

'Israel' tells UN it is severing ties with UNRWA after ban

FOREIGN DESK

Over 1,800 Palestinians killed in north Gaza siege

NEW YORK: The Israeli occupation regime formally announced on Monday that it had cut ties with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which provides aid to Palestinian refugees, following a parliamentary decision to ban the agency. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the notification to the UN, stating it was acting on instructions from Foreign Minister Israel Katz. "UNRWA, the organization whose employees participated in the October 7 massacre and many of whose employees are Hamas operatives, is part of the problem in the Gaza Strip and not part of the solution," Katz claimed, reiterating baseless claims about the UN agency. "Israel" has frequently demanded that UNRWA be dismantled and its responsibilities moved to other UN organizations. The bill has upset the United Nations and some of "Israel's" Western allies who believe it would exacerbate the already grave humanitarian situation in Gaza, where "Israel" has ruthlessly and repeatedly bombed civilians for the last year. The decision to sever ties comes after the Israeli parliament voted last month to end UNRWA's operations in the

GAZA CITY: More than 1,800 Palestinians have been killed and hundreds more are gone missing since Israel launched a new wave of genocidal campaign in northern Gaza last month, local authorities say. In a statement released on Monday, Gaza's government media office said that 1,800 people were killed and 4,000 wounded in northern Gaza in the past month. "Over 1,800 people were killed and 4,000 injured while hundreds are still missing in this ongoing aggression," the statement read. In northern Gaza, since October 6, the Israeli Forces have been carrying out a ground offensive and imposed a tightened siege, particularly around the area of Jabalia. The occupation army has also prevented any ambulances or humanitarian aid convoys from entering northern Gaza. The Israeli regime is using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in the occupied Gaza Strip, the media office said. "The occupation army used starvation as a weapon against civilians, prevented 3,800 aid trucks from going into northern Gaza, and deliberately starved nearly 400,000 people there, including more than 100,000 children." Local Gaza authorities have also accused Israel of seeking to occupy the area and forcibly displace its residents. "It also destroyed dozens of displacement and shelter centers that house tens of thousands of displaced people who fled their homes in search of safety and security." – Agencies

particular in Gaza, where UNRWA has provided aid for more than 70 years. Despite the warnings, Katz downplayed UNRWA's role, stating that the agency is responsible for only a fraction of the aid reaching Gaza. "Even now, the vast majority of humanitarian aid to Gaza is delivered through other organizations, and only 13% of it is delivered through UNRWA," he noted. However, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned last week that the Israeli occupation newly approved law banning UNRWA from operating could lead to "devastating consequences for Palestine refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is unacceptable." "There is no alternative to UNRWA," he said. "The implementation of these laws would be detrimental for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for peace and security in the region as a whole." In January, the Israeli occupation accused several UNRWA employees in Gaza of involvement in October 7's Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Subsequent investigations found some instances of "neutrality-related issues" and suggested that nine employees "may have been involved" in the incident, though no conclusive evidence supported the main Israeli allegations. The UNRWA ban may have additional implications for agency staff, particularly in the West Bank, who could face challenges in moving through checkpoints and accessing eastern al-Quds or the occupied Palestinian territories, as they would lose the coordination privileges with Israeli authorities.

Navy tests ship-launched ballistic missile

The weapon system with 350 KM range is capable of engaging land and sea targets with high precision

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Navy conducted successful flight test of an indigenously developed ship-launched ballistic missile. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the weapon system with 350 KM range is capable of engaging land and sea targets with high precision. It is equipped with state of the art navigation system and maneuverability features. Flight test was witnessed by Chief of the Naval Staff and senior officers from Pakistan Navy and dedicated scientists and engineers. President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC) Gen Sahir Shamsahad Mirza congratulated the scientists, engineers and experts on achieving the milestone. In August, Pakistan also conducted a successful training launch of the Shaheen-II surface-to-surface ballistic missile.

KP passes bill raising perks of ministers

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday passed a bill presented by Law Minister Aftab Alam Afridi to increase the privileges of provincial ministers. According to the newly passed bill, KP ministers will get Rs1 million for renovating the house provided to them by the government. The bill also allows provincial ministers to buy carpets, curtains, air conditioners and refrigerators for their houses.

At least six terrorists killed in 2 KP operations

Interim Afghan government will fulfil its obligations and deny use of Afghan soil by militants, says ISPR

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: At least six terrorists were killed by the security forces in two separation operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) last night, the military's media wing said on Monday. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the movement of a group of terrorists, who were trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, was picked up by the security forces in the general area Khamrang, South Waziristan District. The army troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate, the military's media wing said, adding that five terrorists were killed and three others sustained injuries. In another incident, an intelligence-based operation was conducted by the law enforcers in the general area Dosali, North Waziristan District. "During the conduct of the operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij's location, resultantly one khwarij Ahmed Shah Intizar was sent to hell." "Pakistan has consistently been asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border." The spokesperson of the military's media wing hoped that the interim Afghan government would fulfil its obligations

and deny the use of Afghan soil by militants for perpetrating acts of terrorism against Pakistan. "The Security Forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to secure its borders and eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country," it added. The third quarter (July-September) of 2024 saw a sharp increase in fatalities of terrorist violence and counter-terrorism campaigns, with a 90% surge in violence, according to a report issued by the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS). A total of 722 people were killed, including civilians, security personnel, and outlaws, while 615 others were wounded in as many as 328 incidents recorded during the period under review. Nearly 97% of these fatalities occurred in KP and Balochistan – marking the highest percentage in a decade, and over 92% of these incidents of terror attacks and security forces' operations were recorded in the same provinces. The total fatalities from three quarters of this year have now surpassed the total fatalities recorded for the entire 2023; the number of fatalities rose to at least 1534 in the first three quarters compared to 1523 in 2023. Meanwhile, terrorist groups continue to reorganise and beef up their ranks. Most of the terror attacks remained unclaimed by terrorist or insurgent groups, likely for tactical reasons, as per the report.

Global peace confronted with ever evolving threats: COAS

The 28th Annual Conference of IAPTC is being hosted for the first time in Pakistan

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir emphasised that global peace was facing "emerging threats and challenges." He pointed out that despite various efforts by the United Nations and other organisations to establish peace, the plight of Kashmiris and Palestinians serves as a "stark reminder that much remains to be done." The COAS expressed these views at the opening ceremony of the 28th

Annual Conference of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centre (IAPTC) being hosted for the first time in Pakistan at the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), NUST, Islamabad from Nov 4 to 8, 2024. In his keynote address to the august gathering, the Pakistan Army chief said despite the numerous peacekeeping endeavours by the UN and other organisations, the plight of innocent Kashmiris and Palestinians serve as a stark reminder that still a lot needs to be done. The event officially commenced with the inauguration of new CIPS building by Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir. Under Secretary General, Department of Peace Operations, Jean Pierre Lacroix, United Nation's police advisor, acting deputy military advisor, foreign secretary of Pakistan and NUST Rector accompanied the chief guest during inauguration and opening ceremony of the conference.



SBP cuts policy rate by 250bps, exceeding forecasts

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday slashed the key policy rate by 250 basis points (bps) to 15%, at least 0.5% more than the market expectations, marking its fourth consecutive cut as inflation remains in single digits through October. Analysts as well independent economists widely believed the central bank would cut its key interest rate further at its policy

meeting, with policymakers continuing their efforts to revive a fragile economy as inflation eases off recent record highs. "The inflation has declined faster than expected and has reached close to its medium-term target range in October," the SBP's MPC noted, adding that "the tight monetary stance continues to play an important role in sustaining the downward trend in inflation." – DNA

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