

Islamabad POST

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Mike Tyson to get back in ring after 19 years

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British HC highlights UK-Pakistan ties

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Pak-Lebanon shares cordial ties Mashhood

Detailed News On Page-08



‘Motivated by agenda’

Pakistan dismisses report on Chinese security demand

FO says Islamabad, Beijing hold dialogue based on mutual cooperation and respect each other's sovereignty

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Thursday dismissed reports of Beijing pushing Islamabad to join security efforts in Pakistan, terming them as “speculations [...] motivated by an agenda to create confusion”. The statement by Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch comes amid heightened security concerns, with China's envoy recently expressing frustration over the attacks, which Baloch said were “perplexing” remarks. However, on Monday, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson reaffirmed Beijing's support for Pakistan in countering terrorism. Lin Jian also asserted that China and Pakistan had “the resolve and capability to foil any attempt to harm China-Pakistan relations and ensure that terrorists will pay the price”.

Responding to queries during a weekly press briefing in Islamabad today, Baloch said: “We do not respond to media speculations that are based on unreliable sources and motivated by an agenda to create confusion about the nature of this relationship. “We advise media to ascertain the motivation of individuals who feed them such stories,” she stressed. The spokesperson further asserted: “We would not allow any effort to derail the Pakistan-China strategic partnership.” Two major deadly attacks have occurred this year – a March blast in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bisham killed five Chinese nationals while another blast near Karachi airport last month killed two citizens of the neighbouring country. A media report this week, citing “five Pakistani security and government sources”, stated Beijing was pushing Islamabad to allow its own security staff to protect thousands of Chinese citizens working in Pakistan. Echoing her Chinese counterpart's remarks, Baloch asserted today: “Pakistan and China have the resolve and capability to foil any attempt to harm China-Pakistan relations, including by spreading

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Qatar lauds Pak role in regional peace

CJCS General Sahir Shamshad calls on Qatar's Defence Minister and Chief of Staff to discuss defence cooperation

DNA

DOHA: General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) on an official visit to State of Qatar, called on Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan bin Ali Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Qatar and held a separate meeting with Chief of Staff, Qatar Armed Forces. During the interaction, both sides discussed evolving regional dynamics and expressed mutual commitment for enhancing bilateral cooperation between both countries. Chairman JCSC highlighted strong brotherly relations between Pakistan and Qatar and reaffirmed commitment to further strengthening military-to-military cooperation in defence and security domains. ON the occasion, Qatari leadership acknowledged the positive role of Pakistan in ensuring regional stability and appreciated the professionalism and sacrifices of Pakistan Armed Forces in fight against terrorism. Earlier upon arrival at Qatar Armed Forces Headquarters, smartly turned out military contingent presented “Guard of Honour” to Chairman JCSC.



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Irfan Neziroglu called on the Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain. – DNA

PM felicitates Mauritian counterpart

Says, looking forward to further strengthen ties



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has felicitated Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam on his resounding victory in the general elections and subsequent oath taking as Prime Minister of Mauritius. In a post on social media platform X, Shehbaz Sharif wished Dr Ramgoolam every success in leading Mauritius towards a brighter future. The Prime Minister said he looks forward to working with Dr Ramgoolam to further strengthen the friendly and cordial Pakistan-Mauritius ties.

DPM Dar to reach UAE today

He will participate in Sir Bani Yas Forum, commencing in the United Arab Emirates

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will participate in Sir Bani Yas Forum, commencing in the United Arab Emirates today (Friday). At the forum, the deputy prime minister would engage in high-level dialogue with global leaders and experts, addressing critical issues of regional security, economic cooperation and sustainable development. He would also underscore Pakistan's strategic perspective on fostering diplomatic solutions to complex regional challenges and advancing collective prosperity. Earlier, Ishaq Dar urged the developed nations to

Continued on Page 06

Politics is not about resentment PML-N not upholding political agreements, accuses PPP's Bilawal

PPP chairman upset over government's failure to adhere to agreements, particularly during constitutional reforms

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed frustration with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), accusing the party of violating agreements and failing to provide PPP with respect in the federal government. Addressing the media at Bilawal House in Karachi on Thursday, Bilawal stated that the issue was not about personal grievances but about honour and political integrity. “Politics is about respect, not resentment. If the judiciary had representation from rural Sindh, we would have demanded equality,” he remarked, referring to Pakistan's Supreme Court. Bilawal highlighted the government's failure to adhere to agreements, particularly during constitutional reforms, citing discrepancies in policy implementation. “During the constitutional reform process, the government made promises but then backtracked, adopting different approaches for

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CJP-led parley sees use of tech for judicial reforms

The meeting was attended by VCs of several universities and SCBA president

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi on Thursday chaired an important meeting to discuss judicial reforms. According to a statement issued by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the meeting chaired by CJP was also attended by vice chancellors (VCs) of several universities and the SCBA president. The participants discussed multiple suggestions to bring about judicial reforms. The registrar of Supreme Court gave a detailed

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Apex committee meeting summoned under NAP

The meeting will also discuss the broader national security landscape is likely to take important decisions

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif convened a meeting of the Apex Committee formed under the National Action Plan on Monday. The meeting will be attended by civil and military leadership including Defence Minister, Interior Minister and other cabinet members. Additionally, the chief ministers of all provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan and services chiefs will also attend the meeting, the sources said. They added that the meeting aims to review the overall law and order situation, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, where terrorism remains a significant concern. The Apex Committee will receive updates on the effectiveness of

intelligence-driven operations against terrorist groups. The meeting will also discuss the broader national security landscape is likely to take important decisions to eliminate the menace of terrorism. In its earlier meeting, the of the Apex Committee formed under the National Action Plan approved a reinvigorated and re-energized national counter-terrorism campaign through launching of Operation ‘Azme-Istehkam’ with consensus of all stakeholders, symbolising the national resolve to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country. The ‘Operation Azme-Istehkam’ was launched with the consensus of all stakeholders, including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir,

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Briefs

Pak, Russia to enhance coordination

The two sides exchanged views on relations with Afghanistan

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Russia on Thursday called for enhanced coordination among the regional countries for a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. Th Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation on Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Kabulov paid a day long visit to Pakistan. He called on Foreign Secretary Anna Baloch and later had detailed discussions with Additional Secretary (Afghanistan and West Asia), Ambassador Ahmad Naseem Warraich. The two sides exchanged views on relations with Afghanistan and called for enhanced coordination among the regional countries for a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

National polio tally reaches 49

Balochistan remains the most affected province in 2024, with 24 reported cases

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has confirmed its 49th case of wild poliovirus (WPV1) for 2024, with the latest case reported from Jaffarabad district in Balochistan. The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health in Islamabad confirmed the detection on Thursday, November 14. Genetic sequencing of the virus samples collected indicates a connection to the WPV1 strain detected in Pishin earlier this year. This is the first reported polio case from Jaffarabad, which shares borders with Nasirabad, JhalMagsi, Jacobabad.

Toshakhana reference

NAB urges IHC to overturn Imran, Bushra's sentences

NAB prosecutor stated that he disagreed with the manner in which the trial and sentencing were conducted

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: In the Toshakhana case, Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has requested the Islamabad High Court to nullify sentences handed down to former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife, Bushra Bibi, and to remand the case for further proceedings. NAB prosecutor, Amjad Pervez stated that he disagreed with the manner in which the trial and sentencing were conducted, admitting that he had already called for suspending the sentences. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb presided over the hearing on Thursday, reviewing appeals against the sentences. Barrister Ali Zafar requested exemption for his clients from appearing in person, to which Justice Farooq responded, “Don't worry, we'll order it.” Pervez expressed no objection to the exemption request. Barrister Zafar argued that the trial process was flawed, describing it as a

Continued on Page 06

Fazl denies involvement in efforts for Imran's release

JUI-F also condemned the incident with Khawaja Asif in London, calls for lawful action

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman has clarified that he has no role in the efforts to secure the release of former Prime Minister Imran Khan. Speaking to the media, Fazlur Rehman said that while he has always advocated for constitutional and democratic

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Major among 2 martyred during Harnai operation

Troops effectively engaged terrorists' location and resultantly killed three of them, says ISPR



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers including an army officer were martyred after an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded on the leading vehicle during an operation in Balochistan's Harnai district, said the military's media wing on Thursday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces were immediately mobilised to sanitise the area on reported presence of terrorists who were planning to target innocent civilians in Harnai. The Pakistan Army troops effectively engaged

the terrorists' location and resultantly killed three of them, the statement said. “However, during the operation, an improvised explosive device exploded on the leading vehicle of security forces, resultantly, Major Muhammad Haseeb (age: 28 years, resident of district Multan), a brave officer, who was leading his troops from the front, along with Havildar Noor Ahmed (age: 38 years, resident of District Barkhan), having fought gallantly, made the ultimate sacrifice and embraced Shahadat,” said the ISPR.

It further said that the security forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan, and such sacrifices of the brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve. Pakistan continues to battle militancy as terrorist activities spiked across the country, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the Taliban takeover of bordering Afghanistan. The latest incident of terrorism came last week,

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Call for declaring smog 'national health emergency'

Commenting on the smog issue, Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General, WWF-Pakistan said that the government must take immediate, bold and decisive actions to address this emergency. The worsening air quality and persistent smog are serious issues not only for the people and the environment but also for the economy.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: World Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) on Thursday urged the federal government to declare smog a 'national health emergency' to curb the current escalating crisis in the country. Pakistan's cuisine 'The WWF-Pakistan in a letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Chairperson of the Pakistan Climate Change Council Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif outlined immediate and long-term measures to control the smog crisis, which has engulfed several cities across the country. The organization called for the immediate closure of polluting industries and emphasized the need to extend the regulations of the 'Green Lockdown' to other areas of Lahore and other highly polluted cities. It also called for halting construction activities during the peak of the smog season, including the closure of brick kilns. They called upon the quarters concerned to issue necessary orders to immediately remove high-emission vehicles from the roads. Commenting on the smog issue, Hammad Naqi

Khan, Director General, WWF-Pakistan said that the government must take immediate, bold and decisive actions to address this emergency. The worsening air quality and persistent smog are serious issues not only for the people and the environment but also for the economy. He appreciated the government's efforts to tackle the smog issue but stressed the implementation of stricter actions in letter and spirit. "In the long run, there is a need to promote electric vehicles, enhance sustainable development models, segregate industrial zones, expand the mass transit network and switch to renewable energy sources," he added. Proposing long-term measures, WWF-Pakistan suggested for transition to Euro V or Euro VI fuel quality standards and accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in Pakistan, especially two and three-wheelers, to significantly reduce vehicular emissions which are the leading contributor to fine particulate pollution. It also stressed the expansion of the public transport network in metropolitan centres and urged the government to scale green financing, subsidizing alternatives to the burning of crop residue.

Low-cost air quality sensors measure pollutants like PM1.0, PM2.5, NO2, SO2, and O3 and can help identify pollution hotspots across the country. WWF-Pakistan strongly recommends the widespread use of these sensors to monitor air quality to inform smog-control measures. "The urgency of the situation cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the health of millions of Pakistanis", the letter stated. WWF-Pakistan and its associated team of environmental experts have been closely monitoring the situation, its causes, and its impact, and previously published a comprehensive set of recommendations to address the issue before it reached its current, critical state. With the onset of the autumn season, smog has become the most pervasive environmental and health concern for the citizens of Pakistan. In collaboration with the IQAir Foundation, WWF-Pakistan is currently operating the largest network of low-cost air quality monitoring devices in the country, covering 15 cities. These devices have repeatedly reported AQI levels exceeding 1,000 in several cities in Punjab, with particulate matter regularly surpassing WHO guidelines by 30-40 times.



ISLAMABAD: People visiting an Exhibition in the Federal Capital.

ICT Police tightens noose on criminal elements

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Syed Ali Raza held a meeting with Islamabad Police investigation officers on Thursday and issued directives to the officers to ensure the arrest of missing members of criminal gangs and to compile data of accused released in property cases over the past three months. A police spokesperson told APP on Thursday that DIG Raza has directed that the released accused in property cases should be monitored, and if they commit any other crime, they should be immediately arrested. DIG also directed, to ensure the arrests of accused involved in car and motorcycle thefts, and also ensure the arrest of wanted absconders and proclaimed offenders. Effective investigation of cases, timely submission of challan, and effective prosecution can ensure the conviction of accused, DIG Raza said and added that the working reports of investigation officers should be made to assess their performance. Ali Raza emphasized that the protection of citizens' lives and property is our top priority, and any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated.

China, Pak launch joint laboratory to address health, food safety challenges

Professor Song Houhui, Dean of the College of Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine at ZAFU stated that the joint laboratory would focus on talent development, faculty and student exchanges, and scientific research in the coming stages

DNA

BEIJING: The Belt and Road International Joint Laboratory for Health and Food Safety was officially launched by Zhejiang A&F University (ZAFU), China, and Cholistan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (CUVAS), Pakistan in Zhengjiang, China. The signing and unveiling ceremony marked a significant milestone in international academic cooperation. On the occasion, Wu Jiasheng, Vice

President of ZAFU, noted that the establishment of the lab represents a new phase in academic collaboration, enriching scholarly exploration, fostering information exchange, and addressing global challenges to improve social welfare worldwide. As per sources, the laboratory builds upon ZAFU's "China-Australia Joint Laboratory for Animal Health Big Data Analytics" and involves collaboration with universities and research institutions from Pakistan, Russia, Egypt, Iran, Thailand, Australia, It

aims to advance research in areas such as public health, foodborne pathogens, environmental health, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. Professor Song Houhui, Dean of the College of Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine at ZAFU stated that the joint laboratory would focus on talent development, faculty and student exchanges, and scientific research in the coming stages.

Lost and found

I, Named Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi (Resident of: House No. CB-1073, Areefa Grocery Store, Azizabad, Abid Majid Road, Rawalpindi) the undersigned, solemnly declare that I, the undersigned, passed the F.A. examination in 2019 from Rawalpindi Board under Roll Number 815408, Registration Number 20194122982. On my F.A. certificate, my name and my father's name are incorrectly listed as Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Zaidi. According to my NADRA record, the correct name is Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi. Therefore, I request that my and my father's correct names, Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi, be entered on the F.A. certificate, and that the certificate be issued to me accordingly. I have written this statement so that it may be recorded and used when necessary.

I, Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi (Resident of: House No. CB-1073, Areefa Grocery Store, Azizabad, Abid Majid Road, Rawalpindi) the undersigned, solemnly declare that I, the undersigned, passed the Matriculation examination in 2014 from the Federal Board, Islamabad, under Roll Number 115267 and Registration Number 1422051220. On my F.A. certificate, my name and my father's name are incorrectly listed as Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Zaidi. According to my NADRA record, the correct name is Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi. Therefore, I request that my and my father's correct names, Syed Shahzaib Zaidi, son of Tasleem Parvez Zaidi, be entered on the F.A. certificate, and that the certificate be issued to me accordingly. I have written this statement so that it may be recorded and used when necessary.

Country's unemployment rate stands at 6.3%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The unemployment rate in Pakistan stands at 6.3 percent, with the highest percentage affecting youth aged 15-34, Secretary of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development told the National Assembly Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development chaired by Junaid Akbar here Thursday. Pakistan's cuisine In an online briefing to the Committee, the Secretary highlighted the importance of remittances from the Pakistani diaspora as

a crucial source of income for the country. He emphasized that the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOP & HRD) could play a pivotal role in national development by focusing on skilled labor and leveraging the diaspora's potential to drive investment and knowledge transfer back to Pakistan. The Secretary also discussed the ongoing demand for overseas workers, the diversification of skills to meet employers' needs and the improvements in the governance of the emigration process to reduce response times. He further informed the Committee about institutional re-

structuring efforts aimed at boosting remittances, promoting investment, and engaging the diaspora effectively to support national development. Besides Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, the meeting was attended by Sardar Muhammad Yousaf Zaman, Zulfiqar Ali Bhatti, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, Nasir Iqbal Bhasal, Zulfiqar Ali Behan, Syed Rafiqullah, Ms. Shahida Rehmani, Dr. Mahreen Razaq Bhatti, Farhan Chishti, Muhammad Ilyas Choudhary, Sahibzada Sibghatullah, Sajid Khan, Ms. Saba Sadiq MNA'S and senior officers from the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development.

Chairman CDA oversees progress on uplift projects

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, chaired a meeting to oversee and review the progress on ongoing development projects in Islamabad. The meeting was attended by Member (Engineering), Member (Environment), Member (Planning), the relevant project directors, and senior officers. During the meeting, Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa emphasized the importance of maintaining high standards of development work. He stated that there should be no compromise on the quality of work. He emphasized the need for effective coordination and monitoring for the development work. He directed to remove all obstacles to expedite the development work. He stressed the need to follow the timelines for timely completion of the project. The Chairman CDA was briefed on integrated solid waste management for Islamabad. The meeting was informed that the inception report on solid waste management has been reviewed while the work on the bidding documents for is underway. The Chairman directed to incorporate the solid waste management company as soon as possible. The Chairman CDA also reviewed the progress on the Business Facilitation Center. He instructed the Environment Wing to work on the green areas and medians surrounding the Business Facilitation Center. He directed to share the progress on daily basis about construction work on Business Facilitation Center. The Chairman CDA was also briefed on the progress of Parking Plazas Project. The chairman directed to resolve all pending issues with the contractor and to expedite the remaining work on the project. The Chairman CDA addressed the need to manage traffic issues to expedite completion for the Park Road Project. At the Islamabad Expressway project, the Chairman instructed to complete the patchwork on the road connecting at T-Chowk. Furthermore, Chairman has also asked to initiate drainage work at Pothwar Avenue. Regarding the development of Serena Chowk and Jinnah Avenue Interchanges, the Chairman stressed on close coordination and effective monitoring for smooth progress of the project.—DNA

Gilani for increased Pakistan, Spain collaboration in diverse sectors

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Thursday called for increased collaboration between Pakistan and Spain in diverse sectors as the two countries share commonalities and both have a shared vision for peace and sustainable development. The Chairman Senate expressed these views in a meeting with 4-member parliamentary delegation of the Spanish Senate said a news release. Welcoming the delegation, the Chairman Senate termed the relations between Pakistan and Spain as historic, however, he observed that there is still a huge scope for further deepening the mutual collaboration in diverse sectors. The Chairman Senate recognized the longstanding diplomatic

ties between Pakistan and Spain, rooted in mutual respect and shared values and emphasized that this visit marks a valuable opportunity to further deepen these bonds and explore avenues for productive collaboration. He recalled his visit to Spain in 2010 as Prime Minister and said that productive dialogue with Spanish and EU officials regarding Pakistan's textile industry, led to the EU's special trade package to boost Pakistani textile exports. He further mentioned the visit to WTO headquarters, and the fruitful discussions on expanding Pakistan access to international markets and strengthening trade relations, which aligned with Pakistan broader economic goals. He emphasized that the EU trade concessions

were a milestone, facilitated by support from Spain, which provided significant economic benefits to Pakistan's textile industry. The Chairman Senate also highlighted importance of inter-parliamentary relations in strengthening bilateral ties. He commended the Spanish Senate for prioritizing diplomatic outreach with Pakistan. He underlined the need to continue parliamentary interaction, especially through parliamentary friendship groups and other higher level to promote people to people contacts. The Chairman Senate underscored the potential for collaborative exchanges to strengthen democratic institutions. Gilani also emphasized trade relations between Pakistan and Spain mentioning key

exports such as textiles, agricultural products, and called for further encouraging investment in sectors like renewable energy, tourism and agri sectors. He suggested increased cultural and educational exchanges to foster mutual understanding between the people of both the countries. He also acknowledged the Pakistani diaspora's positive role in Spain, which enhances bilateral relations. Gilani also informed the delegation about the Gaza, Kashmir and Palestine situation. The Chairman Senate observed that Pakistan intends to benefit from the Spanish expertise in olive production, sports and other such important sectors. There is also a huge scope for cooperation in IT sec-

tor. 65% of Pakistan's population comprises of youth, he said and IT collaboration would be beneficial for both sides. Leader of the delegation Vincente Azpitarte Perez also agreed with the views of Chairman to diversify mutual collaboration and explore new avenues for cooperation. He expressed his delight to visit Pakistan. The Chairman was flanked by Senators Anusha Rahman and Agha Shahzaib Durrani during the meeting. Both the Senators also welcomed the delegation. The Chairman Senate also briefed the delegation about role, functions and historical evolution of the Upper House of Pakistan. He gave a detailed overview of the democratic and parliamentary journey of Pakistan.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

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

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Marriott.....051-2826121
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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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
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WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Jane highlights depth of ties, celebrates Charles' birthday

Jane Marriott stressed the importance of promoting people-to-people ties between the UK and Pakistan through arts, culture and tourism, emphasizing the need to foster lasting connections

DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Jane Marriott Thursday joyfully celebrated King Charles' 76th birthday, emphasizing the strong bond between the UK and Pakistan where she admired Pakistan's heritage and creative spirit shone through. Jane Marriott shared her excitement about King Charles' birthday schedule in an exclusive interview with a private news channel. The British High Commissioner's gratitude to

those joining the celebrations in Islamabad and Karachi highlights the importance of people-to-people connections in strengthening the UK-Pakistan partnership. The UK-Pakistan partnership is truly special and it is the people who make it thrive. The deep economic connections between the two nations are a testament to this strong bond, she said, adding that the ties between the two countries are undeniable. Jane Marriott stressed the importance of promoting people-to-people ties between the UK and Pakistan

through arts, culture and tourism, emphasizing the need to foster lasting connections, celebrate shared heritage and encourage mutual understanding. She highlighted the UK's world-class network of universities and colleges which provide young people with intercultural and language capabilities, as well as global understanding. The Commissioner also stressed the significance of promoting UK education overseas, building capacity in countries where demand for higher education outstrips supply and of

fering vocational training to help young people into employment. She said this mutually beneficial approach focuses on building progressive and modern partnerships based on trust, respect and mutual benefit. Jane Marriott also praised Pakistan's rich culture and music, highlighting its significant impact on the hearts of British people. She specifically mentioned her fondness for legendary Pakistani singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, whose iconic qawwalis have resonated deeply with people in the UK.

British High Commissioner Jane Marriott further admires Pakistan's hiking sites and cuisine is well-placed, given the country's rich natural beauty and culinary heritage. Pakistan is a paradise for hikers and foodies alike. The country offers some of the most breathtaking hiking trails in the world, with its majestic mountains, picturesque valleys and serene lakes, she mentioned. Jane also expressed optimism about strengthening bilateral relations between the UK and Pakistan across various sectors.

Students council of IMCG G10/4 sworn in

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Model College for Girls (post graduate), G-10/4, held a remarkable celebration to mark two significant events. The day was dedicated to recognizing student's leaders who would take on responsibilities for the academic year and to commemorate the life and contributions of Dr. Allama Iqbal, the poet, philosopher and national thinker of Pakistan. The renowned scholar, Professor Dr. Jamil Asghar Jami, Dean, faculty of Languages, National University of Modern Languages, graced the event as the chief guest while principal Prof Sadia Ibrar presided this auspicious occasion. After the recitation of the Holy Quran and Naat, the oath taking ceremony commenced with the handing and taking over of the office of the students council. The newly elected members were bestowed with a badge of office, symbolizing their role and commitment to the college. They took oath led by the chief guest pledging to uphold the values of the institution, foster unity and discipline. President rabail salim Vice president Fatima habib General Secretary Kiran noor joint secretary kousher bibi and Secretaries of different societies English kanwal khursheed Urdu nimra khan singing madiya Dramatic fiza imran Information Technology jaweria Abdullah Sports romaisa took their oath.

ANF recovers over 41 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations recovered over 41 kg of drugs worth Rs 4.4 million and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Thursday. He informed that 1 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused arrested in Baldia Town, Karachi. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In another operation, 584 grams of heroin was recovered from the trolley bag of a passenger going to Bahrain at Lahore International Airport. 24 kg hashish was recovered from a parcel booked for Karachi and Lahore at a courier office in Peshawar.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Construction work on Jinnah Avenue Flyover and Underpass simultaneously kicked off in the Federal Capital.

Medication plan for smog-affected citizens

The minister also revealed the establishment of special counters in government hospitals to handle emergency cases efficiently. "Our hospitals are equipped to provide immediate care to those affected by smog," he assured

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Imran Nazir Thursday said the government formulated a comprehensive plan to tackle the worsening smog situation in the province and ensured citizens for essential medications and quality healthcare to address the surge in smog-related illnesses. In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, he said the Punjab government under the strict directions of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has taken bold steps to tackle the smog crisis

with support from pharmaceutical companies. Punjab Minister has instructed pharmaceutical companies to increase production of critical medications to address the surge in smog-related illnesses, adding that this proactive approach aims to prevent shortages and guarantee uninterrupted supply in government hospitals. The minister also revealed the establishment of special counters in government hospitals to handle emergency cases efficiently. "Our hospitals are equipped to provide immediate care to those affected by smog," he assured. These dedicated counters will streamline

patient flow, reduce wait times and provide timely treatment, he added. Additionally, he said the health department has set up flu filtration clinics in all THQ hospitals to combat respiratory issues. By taking these decisive steps, the Punjab government demonstrates its commitment to protecting citizens' health and well-being amidst the smog crisis, he added. He said we are actively promoting measures and awareness drives to combat the smog crisis. He also urged citizens to wear masks to protect themselves from the hazardous air quality. But that's not all - the government has also taken concrete steps to tackle the issue.

Modi regime has turned IOJK into open prison

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has condemned the intensified human rights violations in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that the Modi-led Indian government has transformed the territory into an open prison and cantonment war zone. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC leaders, in a meeting held in Srinagar, decried ongoing cordon-and-search operations, mass arrests, property seizures, and other violations carried out under the banner of Hindutva ideology. A statement issued by APHC spokesperson Abdul Rashid Minhas after the meeting emphasized that despite extreme repression, the commitment and sacrifices of Kashmiri detainees and martyrs would eventually compel India to relinquish its illegal hold over IOJK. "The day is not far," said Minhas, "when Kashmir will be free from Indian hegemony." The meeting sought the intervention by international human rights organizations to prevent the Indian government led by Modi.—APP

BISP initiatives bring positive change in unprivileged class

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) organized a South-South Cooperation event in Islamabad under the leadership of BISP Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid. The event was attended by delegates from Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, and Senegal, as well as representatives from international organizations, including the World Bank, WFP, UNICEF, ADB, and GIZ. This event honored representatives from West African nations who, in collaboration with the WFP and World Bank, were on a study tour with BISP from November 11 to 14 to learn from BISP's social protection strategies for marginalized communities. In her welcome address, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted that BISP is Pakistan's flagship social protection program, embodying the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and established in 2008 by then-President Asif Ali Zardari. She emphasized the mutual benefits of this study tour, allowing Pakistan

NA KHALID ON BISP



and participating countries to exchange knowledge for the socio-economic upliftment of underprivileged groups. Senator Rubina Khalid affirmed that collaborative efforts can improve the lives of disadvantaged people, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to national development. She outlined BISP's life cycle approach, focusing on initiatives like Benazir Kafalat, Taleemi Wazaif, and Nushonuma programs, which play crucial roles in providing social security to deserving individuals. Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, expressed

that BISP is committed to the economic empowerment of 9.3 million deserving families across Pakistan, selected solely based on socio-economic need. He expressed gratitude to international development partners, including the World Bank, ADB, WFP, and UNICEF, for their financial and technical support in enhancing education, health, and payment services for BISP beneficiaries. "It is a matter of pride that BISP is viewed as a role model globally, and we are continuously striving to improve our program," he added. At the ceremony, Mr. Redou

wane Mohamed Ali, Minister of Food Security of Mali; Mr. Amedee Bamouni, Secretary of the National Council for Social Protection of Burkina Faso; Ms. Kinday Samba, Country Director of WFP Niger; Mr. Omar Bin Zia, Senior Social Protection Officer of ADB; Dr. Imran Masood, Senior Advisor of GIZ; Ms. Sharmela Rasool, UNICEF Representative; and Ms. Coco Ushiyama, Country Director of WFP, applauded the historic nature of this event for Pakistan. The delegation lauded BISP's exemplary contributions to women's

Chinese-invested solar project provides clean energy for Pakistan

BEIJING: The 350kW rooftop photovoltaic (PV) project at Super Modern Cold Store in Lahore, supplied by CHINT Solar, has been successfully commissioned at full capacity. This marks a significant milestone for CHINT Solar's clean energy solutions in Pakistan, contributing to the country's sustainable development goals while providing a reliable source of clean, efficient energy. According to project manager Muhammad Yousaf, once connected to the grid, the system is expected to generate approximately 498,225 kWh annually. This will save about 200 tons of standard coal and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 497 tons each year, demonstrating substantial environmental benefits. The project utilizes CHINT Solar's ASTRO N5 series modules, which incorporate the company's independently developed N-type TOPCon 4.0 battery technology. Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. This cutting-edge technology offers enhanced performance in terms of power output, temperature coefficient, low-light efficiency, and resistance to LID (Light Induced Degradation) and LETID (Light and Elevated Temperature Induced Degradation). These features ensure long-term and stable energy generation, with a lifespan of about 30 years. With Pakistan's average annual temperature around 27°C and high summer electricity demand, the potential for solar power is immense. For example, in Balochistan, a region with favorable sunlight conditions, a 1kW residential PV system can produce 1,990 kWh annually, outperforming solar output in cities like New Delhi and Shandong by 41% and 59%, respectively. However, in the past, the high cost and technological limitations of solar power have hindered its widespread adoption in Pakistan. CHINT Solar has consistently recognized Pakistan's renewable energy potential and has proactively engaged with local stakeholders to understand the market's needs. In addition to this project, CHINT Solar has held the Astronomy World Tour in Pakistan to discuss energy transformation with local partners, boosting the brand's visibility and influence. This year, Pakistani Consul General in Shanghai, Hussain Haider, visited CHINT Solar's headquarters in Haining, leading to the signing of strategic cooperation agreements with two key Pakistani energy firms—Bahum Associates and Pantera Energy. The successful completion of the Super Modern Cold Store rooftop PV project is a testament to CHINT Solar's commitment to expanding its footprint in Pakistan and contributing to the country's clean energy future.—DNA

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Briefs

Webinar on 'Scaffolding Inspection' today

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) will organize a webinar on "Scaffolding Inspection" today (Friday). The objective of the webinar is to emphasize the importance of regularly inspecting and maintaining scaffolding to ensure the continued structural integrity of erected scaffolds, according to the NPO document shared here. It is crucial that scaffolding has overhead protection to prevent accidents. Any tripping hazards including loose wires, ropes, misplaced tools, or material debris—should be removed. The session will provide information about scaffolding introduction, regulatory standards and guidelines, inspection protocols, common hazards and risks associated with scaffolding, and a hands-on inspection activity. The webinar is designed for middle management, team leaders, and supervisors.—APP

PTA conducts QoS surveys for Fixed-Line broadband

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has successfully completed Quality of Service (QoS) surveys for fixed-line broadband services across 36 major cities in Pakistan, including Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). According to news release issued by the PTA here on Thursday these surveys, conducted over the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2024, were designed to assess the network performance of Broadband Service Providers (BSPs) and ensure the delivery of high-quality internet services to users. Survey results indicate that most BSPs comply with essential KPIs, including Network Availability, Network Latency, and Jitter. However, a notable number of BSPs were found to be underperforming in Bandwidth Utilization, a critical KPI that impacts user experience and can affect service quality during peak traffic hours.—APP

3rd Int'l conference of sciences

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Women University organized the 3rd International Conference of Sciences titled "Revamped Scientific Outlook of 21st Century-2024". The conference was attended by academia, researchers, experts, faculty, students and civil society members from diverse scientific fields, including Botany, Chemistry, Computer Science, IT, Mathematics, Statistics and Zoology to present their research on modern scientific issues and solutions. Various sessions and panel discussions featured research papers and presentations, where new scientific ideas and solutions were explored. Researchers, including the international academia, shared their findings and experiences, contributing valuable insights to modern scientific inquiries.—APP



ISLAMABAD: High Commission of Malaysia Azhar Bin Mazlan kicks the ball to inaugurate Shaheen Sports League Organised by Al Khidmat Foundation on Iqbal Day at Sports Complex.—APP

Women eco empowerment key to Pakistan's uplift

Addressing the participants, the minister assured that the recommendations made by experts at the conference would be "put into implementation" because the incumbent government believed that the future of the nation was in the hands of youth and women

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday expressed confidence that Pakistan could join the ranks of the world's leading economies by 2047 through the active participation of youth, especially women entrepreneurs. "The country's progress and prosperity are closely linked with the develop-

ment of youth and women entrepreneurs. Their active role and participation in national development can make it possible for Pakistan to join the world's top economies by 2047," he said. He made these remarks while addressing the fifth edition of the Women Entrepreneurship Conference titled "Mumkin Hai" (It is possible), organized by the National Incubation Centre at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) here. The conference featured

panel discussions on aligning entrepreneurial goals with the digital economy in Pakistan. Addressing the participants, the minister assured that the recommendations made by experts at the conference would be "put into implementation" because the incumbent government believed that the future of the nation was in the hands of youth and women. "It is our job to make everything possible for them," he added. Ahsan Iqbal said the intellect and innovation

of youth and women could help establish start-ups, introduce made-in-Pakistan products and effectively compete in international markets, contributing billions of dollars in revenue to the national exchequer. He said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government hoped that, in 23 years, when both Pakistan and India celebrate their 100th year of independence, Pakistan's youth would celebrate it with pride, without any excuses for lagging behind in develop-

ment. The minister highlighted the importance of continuity in policies, peace, stability and a continuous reform process to achieve the national goals of development and prosperity, citing examples of countries that made progress by ensuring at least a decade-long stability and consistency in their policies. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that Pakistan could no longer afford chaos and anarchy, emphasizing the need for greater unity and a peaceful environment to attain national progress.

Govt won't tolerate unconstitutional actions

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political & Public Affairs Rana Sanullah Thursday issued a stern warning that the government and law enforcement agencies will take a strong stance against PTI's protest call and implement stringent preventive measures against those involved in the May 9 incident. In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, he said that the government will not tolerate any unconstitutional actions or unrest similar to the events of May 9. Those who plan protests or incite unrest will face severe consequences, as the government is committed to maintaining law and order, he stressed. Any attempts to disrupt the country's stability will be met with swift and decisive action, he added. His warning comes as a response to PTI's protest call on 24 November, indicating the government's resolve to prevent chaos and ensure public safety.—APP

Two brothers among three killed

ISLAMABAD: A fatal incident in Rahwali, Gujranwala district of Punjab claimed the lives of at least three youngsters, including two brothers, on Thursday afternoon. According to details, rescue officials tragic accident occurred in Gujranwala when three youths were fatally hit by a speeding truck, a private news channel reported. Authorities responded swiftly to the tragic incident in Gujranwala, with police and rescue teams arriving at the scene. An investigation is underway and the victims' bodies have been transported for further procedures. Meanwhile, the truck driver fled the scene.—APP

Chinese firm to drive sustainable urban uplift

Spanning over 250,000 Kanals on both sides of the M2 Motorway, this visionary city is rapidly emerging as a global tourist and investment hub, enhancing Pakistan's international profile

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shanghai-based Yuanhe Group, an eco-city investment and construction firm, has recently signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Blue World City in Pakistan. This collaboration will focus on advancing sustainable development and urban modernization efforts in the region. The partnership was facilitated by the Sino-International Entrepreneurs Federation and China Rail Sixth Group. Blue World City's ambitious Blue World Economic Zone is under development along the Islamabad-Lahore Motorway, strategically linked to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The project is designed to foster growth for small and medium-sized enterprises through the establishment of an industrial zone, dry port, warehousing, and whole-

sale facilities, creating a business-friendly environment aligned with the CPEC initiative. As part of the agreement, Yuanhe Group will take charge of the master planning, architectural design, and implementation of the Blue World City demonstration zone. This will contribute significantly to Pakistan's urban modernization and economic transformation by introducing advanced development models and planning concepts. Blue World City is positioned to become a flagship destination, offering world-class amenities, cutting-edge infrastructure, and scenic attractions. With its potential to become a major hub for global tourism and investment, the project is set to play a pivotal role in Pakistan's economic resurgence. Yuanhe Group will also collaborate on various aspects of the project, including the development of a master plan for the Blue World

Technology Park located along the M2 Motorway, the modular construction of mixed-use high-rise buildings within the park, and the construction of 500 residential homes. According to Gwadar Pro, Yuanhe Group will provide a comprehensive suite of services, including the development of technology parks and smart communities, green construction solutions, and low-carbon infrastructure. The company's expertise in sustainable and modern development models will be instrumental in ensuring that Blue World City meets international standards of urban excellence. Strategically located along the CPEC route, Blue World City is set to unlock Pakistan's untapped potential. Spanning over 250,000 Kanals on both sides of the M2 Motorway, this visionary city is rapidly emerging as a global tourist and investment hub, enhancing Pakistan's international profile.

Search operations in different areas

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Police here on Thursday carried out search operations in the jurisdiction of different police stations and arrested seven renting rules violators. According to a police spokesman, the search operations were conducted in order to maintain law and order and flush out suspects following the directions of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani. He informed, senior police officers and police personnel including women police took part in the search operations. Police checked houses, shops, hotels, tenants and a large number of individuals during the search operations. Police also arrested six suspects namely Sabtain, Javed, Hazar Gul, Bashir, Hamza, Adnan and Kashif on renting rules violations. The spokesman said that police were fully prepared to shield the lives and property of the public and combing and search operations were being done to flush out the suspects and hardcore criminals. He said that police were more vigilant to keep an eye on suspects and maintain law and order in Rawalpindi.—APP

AIOU to hold convocation at Karachi
To facilitate students, Dr. Nasir has directed to hold convocation chapter-wise in all four provinces and the federal capital, Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) will hold its Sindh chapter convocation on November 17 in Karachi as part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations. According to AIOU, Federal Minister for Education Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui will grace the event as chief guest. Heads of educational institutions across Sindh, prominent journalists, and notable political and social figures will attend the event. Degrees and gold medals will be awarded to graduates of AIOU from Fall 2004 to Spring 2022 semesters belonging to Sindh Province. Students' families are also invited to join them. Federal Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood will distribute gold medals and degrees among the students. It is to be mentioned here that Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood has designated 2024 as the Golden Jubilee year of AIOU and decided to hold events throughout the year. To facilitate students, Dr. Nasir has directed to hold convocation chapter-wise in all four provinces and the federal capital, Islamabad. The Islamabad chapter's convocation was held on January 31, the Punjab chapter's on April 28, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter's on June 9, the Balochistan chapter's on September 8, and now the Sindh chapter's convocation will take place on November 17.—DNA

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Jemal urges RCCI to participate in single-country exhibition

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Special Envoy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Jemal Bekir Abdula on Thursday urged the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) to take part in the Single-Country Exhibition, scheduled for May next year in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Presiding over the Pakistan-Ethiopia business forum along with RCCI President Usman Shaukat at the RCCI, the Ambassador said it is high time for the business community of Pakistan to enter and operate in Africa through Ethiopia which gives a seamless and swift access to the continent of over 1.4 billion people. He said the Ethiopian Airlines had already started its operations in Pakistan, boosting its connectivity with the whole Africa which is a continent of hope, brimming with lucrative business, trade and investment op-



portunities. The Ambassador said Ethiopia is the fastest growing economy in Africa, registering an economic growth of 8.1 per cent in the last year, and aiming for 8.4 per cent in the current year. Ethiopia gives a comparative advantage to the business community of Pakistan in terms of cheap, clean and green energy and quality human resource. "Our doors are opened and the people of Ethiopia are looking forward to welcome their brothers from Pakistan," he said, while highlighting the business, trade and investment opportunities in major economic sectors including agriculture and agro processing, manufac-

turing, mining, tourism and ICT. The Ambassador said the Ethiopian Government led by H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, had introduced substantive foreign policy, economic and legal reforms which has not only made Ethiopia an investment hub, but also increased its outreach across the globe. On the occasion, RCCI President Usman Shaukat provided an overview of RCCI's ongoing initiatives and highlighted Ethiopia's potential as a valuable market for Pakistan's non-traditional exports, particularly in pharmaceuticals, agri-food, and IT services. He assured the Ambassador that a delegation of RCCI would take part in the Single Country Exhibition which would further enhance the bilateral trade between the two countries. The President said the RCCI would coordinate with the Ethiopian Embassy in this regard, strengthening the RCCI's active role in promoting Pakistan's "Look Africa" policy.

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Unbreakable hope amid genocide

In a scene that is no less significant than those strong arms that bear weapons and continue to resist against the brutal Zionist aggression for 404 consecutive days without fatigue or weariness, a child in Gaza appears with the determination of a fighter, the strength of a young man, and an ambition that touches the sky. He breaks the barriers of logic and the laws of physics, rolling up his sleeves and shouting, "Grant me strength, O Allah," before lifting large water containers that even adults might struggle to carry. Then he walks barefoot, stepping on the gravel of the road with the dignity of a believer who has lost hope in the support and solidarity of his nation, turning to God for strength and resolve to bear the burdens of his people and family, delivering a "sip of water" that saves their lives amidst the humiliation faced by the people of Gaza in these times of Arab and Islamic degradation. This is a picture of the heroism still being written by the children of Gaza before their elders, in the narrative of legendary resilience that has inscribed the history of dignity and glory with golden ink and letters of light for a people still enduring all forms of genocide and terror, stripped of their most basic human rights. They face tremendous horrors that have aged these children far beyond their years. You find such children and others like them undertaking hard labor and carrying heavy burdens after the Israeli occupation army has brutally killed their fathers, older brothers, and mothers, leaving them homeless as they seek to support the remaining family members. They perform the duties of adults out of necessity, sacrificing their rights to a childhood they deserve. Despite all this, they remain steadfast in their hope that the aggression will come to an end. A question arises in the minds of many: What has been the situation of the children in Gaza for over 400 days of Israeli aggression against the Strip? Since the beginning of the war on October 7, 2023, we have seen children with strong bodies resisting the harshest living conditions imaginable, according to a report by Al Jazeera Net. Children who astonish the world with their way of thinking, faith, and eloquence, as if we are witnessing strong, wise men, yet they are still children. Children in the besieged Gaza Strip have a life experience that is completely different from that of other children around the world. They grow up quickly due to their awareness and the reality around them, as well as the experiences they endure, especially the traumatic experiences of war that cause them pain but also make them resilient, courageous, and more aware of their responsibilities. We may empathize with them and feel pain when we see them crying, suffering from loss or injury. Yet, despite all the hardships and circumstances imposed by the occupation, they continue to live life and have never surrendered. The number of child martyrs in Gaza has surpassed that in conflicts worldwide over the past four years. United Nations figures show that 12,193 children were killed in conflicts around the world between 2019 and 2022. These figures have been compared with reports from the Ministry of Health in Gaza, which indicates that more than 17,385 children have been martyred in the Palestinian territory during 400 days of this genocidal war.



Pace of EU vassalisation

Like the vengeful furies of Greek tragedies, three top female leaders of the European Union are unleashing more war and calamities on the continent. Rather than charting a more independent course for the bloc of supposedly independent Western democracies, the re-election of Donald Trump has made them shrill even louder the better to grovel at his feet. As usual, European Commission president and honorary American Ursula von der Leyen takes the lead. The collapse of industries under the mounting weight of unaffordable energy costs in her home country of Germany means little, nor the rising cost of living pushing many ordinary Europeans to breaking point. Now she wants to step on their wounds and twist some more. Despite Brussels and Washington's insistence that China is helping Russia in its war in Ukraine by buying cheap Russian oil and gas, among other things, the EU itself still buys less than 20 per cent of LNG from Russia. Does that mean Brussels is aiding the Russian war efforts? Acknowledging the continuing EU purchase of Russian gas, von der Leyen has come up with a brilliant idea: "Why not replace it with American LNG, which is cheaper for us and brings down our energy prices? It's something where we can get into a discussion, also [where] our trade deficit is concerned," she declared. It's a claim that has been roundly ridiculed around the world, even in the United States. It's true the prices of abundant US shale gas have hit a bottom - in North America. But once the LNG is loaded onto tankers and has crossed over to the other side of the Atlantic, the costs could be nearly four times higher. It's not that US gas is cheaper, as von der Leyen must be well aware, but keeping American gas producers afloat will please Trump, who has long professed a love of the US oil and gas industry over alternative energy. Meanwhile, Kaja Kallas, who is expected to be the next EU foreign affairs chief, is threatening to make China pay for supporting Russia. "Without China's support to Russia, Russia would not be able to continue its war with the same force. China needs to also feel a higher cost," the former prime minister of Estonia, with a population of 1.35 million, told the European Parliament this week. "We have to be very clear that it has consequences ... [on] China's support for Russia." Yeah, sure, China and everyone else outside the West have refused to join sanctions, with most trying to maintain trade and business, in many cases risking secondary US-EU sanctions. India is doing exactly the same, as it's as close to Moscow as China. But hey, always insinuate and exaggerate the China connection. If all the Western sanctions and Nato weapons couldn't beat Russia in Ukraine, it's your own problem. Don't blame China for your own incompetence. Kallas is expected to replace the retiring Josep Borrell, who at least has tried to be more even-handed in dealing with China. But her indignation at China may be a tad embarrassing in light of the scandal that engulfed her husband Arvo Hallik's business with Russia last year. According to Estonian news media, he was the part owner of a transport company called Stark Logistics, which does business with another trading company called AS Metaprint. The majority owner of both companies turns out to be Hallik's business partner Martti Lemendik. Metaprint had sold €47 million (HK\$388 million) worth of goods to Russia since the start of the Ukraine war and August last year.

The complex reasons behind Kamala Harris's election loss

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



One of the primary challenges Harris encountered was her late entry into the election. This delay afforded her limited time to establish a robust campaign strategy and cultivate meaningful connections with the American electorate. Unlike Trump, who had already laid significant groundwork with a fervent base and clear campaign agenda, Harris was still developing her platform. Her late start meant she faced an uphill battle in gaining the traction

Kamala Harris's recent election loss can be attributed to a variety of interconnected factors. While her late entrance into the race against Donald Trump may have been one consideration, it was the broader strategy or lack thereof that significantly impacted her campaign. From missed opportunities to address critical international issues to a strategic misalignment with key voter concerns, Harris's candidacy faced substantial hurdles that her team was unable to overcome. One of the primary challenges Harris encountered was her late entry into the election. This delay afforded her limited time to establish a robust campaign strategy and cultivate meaningful connections with the American electorate. Unlike Trump, who had already laid significant groundwork with a fervent base and clear campaign agenda, Harris was still developing her platform. Her late start meant she faced an uphill battle in gaining the traction necessary to challenge an opponent with years of consolidated support. Trump's early involvement also enabled him to present a cohesive and consistent narrative, resonating with voters already familiar with his positions, while Harris struggled to establish a comparable level of familiarity and rapport. However, more than the timing of her entry, Harris's party appeared to adopt a cautious, perhaps even overly restrained, approach on several pressing issues. Chief among these was the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis affecting Palestine and Lebanon. For decades, the United States has been closely aligned with Israel, a position that has garnered both domestic and international critique, especially as conflicts have intensified and images of suffering have circulated widely on social media. In this age of instantaneous digital communication, the American public has access to a near-constant stream of updates, videos, and images capturing the realities of conflict. Social media platforms have provided an unfiltered view of the atrocities occurring in these regions, sparking significant public discourse on human rights and the United States' role in addressing or failing to address these injustices. Harris's silence, as well as that of her party, on the treatment of Palestinians and Lebanese civilians by Israeli forces did not go unnoticed by the American public. Historically, the Democratic Party has positioned itself as a champion of human

rights, and its inability to unequivocally address these issues seemed incongruous with its stated values. Many voters, particularly younger and more progressive individuals, voiced disappointment with the party's unwillingness to take a firm stance against what they perceived as human rights abuses. By remaining silent, Harris's campaign missed an opportunity to rally support among those passionate about social justice and international humanitarian concerns. Her stance, or lack thereof, may have left voters feeling disillusioned with the party's commitment to genuine human rights advocacy. Another misstep was the overall strategic direction of Harris's campaign. Rather than focusing on a few core issues that deeply resonated with the American public, her campaign often felt fragmented. Issues like the economy, healthcare, and domestic social justice movements undoubtedly remained central to her platform, yet there was a perceived lack of cohesion in how these policies were presented. In contrast, Trump's campaign capitalized on a simpler, albeit more polarizing, message that was easily digestible and designed to activate his loyal base. Harris's team, by contrast, struggled to crystallize a narrative that resonated as strongly, making it difficult for her to cut through the noise in an already crowded political landscape. Moreover, Harris's party failed to fully grasp the powerful role social media now plays in shaping public opinion. American citizens, known for their strong convictions on human rights, are not only passive observers of global events but also active participants in discussions through social media. During the crises in Palestine and Lebanon, the immediacy of shared stories and images amplified the public's empathy and outrage. Many expected Harris's party to reflect these sentiments and provide clear positions and solutions, not just for international matters but for pressing domestic issues as well. The lack of a clear, outspoken response on these topics from Harris's team may have left voters questioning the sincerity of her leadership and the principles of her party. Additionally, Harris's campaign struggled to counter Trump's narrative effectively. His bold, often controversial statements garnered significant media coverage, shaping public perception in ways that Harris's more measured approach could not. This gave Trump a platform where his policies and opinions, however polarizing, reached a wide audience quickly. For many

undecided voters, Trump's directness, despite its divisiveness, appeared to offer clarity and strength. Harris's campaign, aiming perhaps for caution and inclusivity, lost out on opportunities to connect with voters who sought decisive leadership in uncertain times. Another dimension worth noting is the growing frustration among American voters with political establishments. Harris, as a prominent Democratic figure, was often seen as part of the political status quo that some Americans believe has failed to deliver tangible improvements to their daily lives. This perception was particularly strong among voters impacted by economic instability, rising costs of living, and concerns about national security. Trump, despite his own record, managed to tap into this sentiment by portraying himself as an outsider willing to challenge the "Washington elite." This portrayal, though arguably inconsistent with his own history, resonated with many who felt that the traditional political system no longer represented their interests. Finally, the complexity of today's media environment posed yet another obstacle. With so many avenues of information, from traditional media to independent online outlets and social media influencers, shaping public opinion has become an increasingly nuanced task. Harris's campaign struggled to maintain control over its narrative, and as a result, her messages sometimes seemed to get lost amid competing voices. The rapid pace of information flow also meant that any missteps were swiftly amplified, leaving her campaign in a constant state of damage control rather than focusing on advancing a proactive vision for the nation. In the end, Harris's loss cannot be attributed to a single factor but rather a culmination of strategic missteps, delayed decisions, and an inability to connect with an electorate looking for authentic representation. Her campaign's hesitance to address critical international and domestic issues, combined with a perceived disconnect from the prevailing sentiments of American voters, cost her the trust and support she needed to secure a victory. The election results reveal a complex narrative about the expectations of American voters, the importance of timely and authentic communication, and the pressing need for leaders who can adapt to the evolving dynamics of public opinion in a digital age.

The U.S. election 2024

Zakaullah Khan



We will look at how the process moves from primary elections to party conventions and finally to the general election, where the unique Electoral College system decides the winner. After discussing the election process, we will also discuss the careers of both political leaders, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, including their backgrounds, accomplishments

As a global superpower, the United States has a reach that extends across continents, impacting international economies, diplomatic relations, and security. When Americans choose their president, it influences trade agreements, and peace treaties that involve countries around the world. Each administration sets priorities that can shift the direction of global affairs, impacting on their allies and rivals alike. That is why, the U.S. election matters not only to American citizens but also to the global leaders and countries, who look to the U.S. as a partner, a competitor. The U.S. presidential election unfolds in several key steps, which I shall explain here. We will look at how the process moves from primary elections to party conventions and finally to the general election, where the unique Electoral College system decides the winner. After discussing the election process, we will also discuss the careers of both political leaders, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, including their backgrounds, accomplishments, and campaign strategies. The U.S. presidential election is a unique process with many important steps. It starts with primary elections and caucuses, where each major political party, the Democrats and Republicans chooses its candidate. In primaries, people vote directly for their favourite candidate, while in caucuses, voters gather in groups to discuss and decide. These events help each candidate win delegates who pledge to support them at the party's national convention. After this, each party holds a convention to officially nominate its candidate for president and vice president and to share its main ideas and goals. Then, in November, the general election takes place. But instead of counting all the votes nationwide, the U.S. uses the Electoral College. Each state has a certain number of "electoral votes" based on their population, and all these states give all of their electoral votes to the candidate who wins the most votes there. To become president, a candidate needs to win at least 270 out of 538 electoral votes. This process means that states, could go to either party, are very important in deciding the winner. The Republican candidate, former President Donald Trump initially gained fame as a businessman and television personality. His enter into politics in 2016 marked a significant shift as he appealed to voters disillusioned with traditional politics, promising a more direct, outsider approach. His time as president included a con-

troversial but impactful tenure because by tax reforms, relationship with Russia, and significant shifts in foreign policy in Afghanistan war and terror. Trump critics over contributed to national polarization and sexual abuses against women. But his blindly followers view him as a defender of their traditional American values. He is wanting a return to the White House. His campaign themes of strong economic policies, national security, and a return to conservative values, targeting states where his 2016 message of "America First" and to stop Russian Ukrainian war. Trump's rallies are aimed at mobilizing his core supporters, particularly in regions hit by deindustrialization, like parts of the Midwest. Trump's strategy heavily relies on energizing his base and appealing to swing voters in states like Michigan and Pennsylvania, which are crucial for an electoral victory. On the other hand, the Democratic nominee, Vice President Kamala Harris has a career started as law enforcement, policy making, and progressive activism. As California's Attorney General, she earned a reputation as a tough prosecutor, and later, as a U.S. Senator, she is play important role in criminal justice reform and social justice issues. Her election as Vice President in 2020 marked a historic moment, making her the first female, Black, and South Asian person to hold the office. Harris's background in law and policy has influenced her approach, which prioritizes unity and values. She presents a contrasting vision focused on unity, social justice, and expanding economic opportunities. Harris's campaign appeals particularly to young voters, minorities, and urban residents. She has made healthcare reform, climate action, and social equity cornerstones of her platform. Unlike Trump, whose base remains largely rural and suburban, Harris targets urban and suburban regions where progressive ideas have a stronger foothold. She has focus on states like Arizona, Georgia, and Nevada, where demographic shifts have created new opportunities for Democratic candidates. According to the latest surveys, both political leaders, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris are nearly matched in popularity, with each receiving around 50% support. This close split in public opinion reflects a highly competitive election, where each candidate Popular in with different groups and regions across the country. The equal support in the election could come down to a few key states, making every

campaign strategy and voter demographic crucial in deciding the outcome. A unique aspect of the U.S. electoral system is the swing states that are not considered loyal to one party and can be won by either candidate. These states, including Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Arizona, often receive a disproportionate amount of attention from candidates due to their potential to swing the election. For example, Trump's popularity in Florida has historically been high, largely due to his support among older voters and Cuban-Americans. On the other hand, Harris has seen rising support in Arizona, a state where growing younger populations have shifted political tides. Certain demographic trends are important. Trump's appeal tends to be strongest among rural voters, white working-class individuals, and evangelical Christians. Meanwhile, Harris Popular In urban populations, younger voters, and minority groups, especially African Americans and Hispanics. These demographics help explain each candidate's focus on specific states and regions. Trump's rallies often target rural areas in the Rust Belt, while Harris concentrates on college towns and metropolitan areas in Sun Belt states. In my prediction, Kamala Harris is likely to win in the upcoming U.S. presidential election, largely due to her intellectual Power and strong political background and also as first female black president. As a former attorney general and U.S. senator, Harris has demonstrated a deep understanding of the law and a commitment to social justice, making her a more appropriate candidate. Her ability to connect with diverse voter groups, particularly among young people and marginalized communities, sets her Popular in them. Harris's campaign focuses on key issues such as healthcare reform, climate change, and economic equality, which resonate with many Americans who are seeking progressive change. Her experience in navigating complex political landscapes, along with her role as Vice President, has equipped her with the skills to tackle the challenges facing the nation. Harris's message of unity and Harmony and her intellect becoming popular in Americans. This approach may appeal to voters looking for a leader who promotes collaboration and understanding. Given her track record and the current political climate, I believe that her combination of intellect, experience, and a vision for a more equitable society will ultimately lead her to victory.

Briefs

Major among 2 martyred during...

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when a suicide bomber blew himself up at a railway station in Quetta, killing at least 27 people and injuring over 60 others. As per a report issued by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), 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. 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.

NAB urges IHC to overturn...

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"jail trial" with rushed proceedings that violated his clients' rights. He highlighted that on January 29, the right to cross-examination was cut short, and Bushra Bibi's statement was recorded late at night. He noted that Khan's statement was not recorded until January 31, and argued that the rushed process had compromised the defence. Following Zafar's arguments, Justice Farooq directed him to consult further with Imran Khan regarding the prosecutor's remand request, warning, "If you oppose NAB's proposal, we will rule on merit." Justice Aurangzeb added that if technical errors are ignored, the court could choose between ordering a retrial or addressing the case's merits directly. Zafar responded, asserting that the sentencing decision "cannot stand." The court adjourned the hearing until November 21, instructing Zafar to present a clear stance on NAB's proposal by then. A special court in Islamabad on Thursday dismissed acquittal pleas of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi, in the Toshakhana 2.0 case. Special Judge Central Shahrukh Arjumand announced the verdict, with formal charges expected to be framed on November 18. Imran Khan attended the court proceedings, while Bushra Bibi was notably absent. The hearing had previously been postponed to November 14 due to the judge's unavailability on November 12, the original date set for the decision.

Fazl denies involvement in efforts...

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principles, he was not involved in any negotiations or activities related to Imran Khan's release. Express News reported. FazlurRehman further criticised the broader political landscape, stating that the weakness of democracy in Pakistan is largely due to the actions of the country's politicians. He emphasised that many politicians had compromised on democratic values for their personal gains, undermining the foundation of the country's political system. He also condemned the recent incident involving Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif in London. Rehman asserted that it was the responsibility of the UK authorities to handle the matter in accordance with the law. On the issue of the US's influence on Pakistan's politics, Rehman reiterated that Pakistan should avoid interference in US politics and likewise, should not allow foreign entities to meddle in its own internal matters. He remarked that whether it is the Republican Party or the Democrats in the US, the country's policies remain consistent and do not directly impact Pakistan's political sovereignty. FazlurRehman reiterated his opposition to the imprisonment of any politician.

Serena Hotels and PSF jointly unveil int'l squash championship

The significant tournament offers a prize purse of USD 15,000 and has attracted the top-ranked international players, promising an exciting week of world-class squash

SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels under its Sports Diplomacy initiative in collaboration with The Pakistan Squash Federation, is proud to announce the upcoming Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship, set to take place at the Mushaf Squash Complex in Islamabad from November 18 to 22, 2024.

The significant tournament offers a prize purse of USD 15,000 and has attracted the top-ranked international players, promising an exciting week of world-class squash. A total of 24 players will compete, including 17 internationally ranked athletes from various countries such as Belgium, Hong Kong-China, Ireland, the Netherlands, England, Kuwait, Malaysia, and Egypt, alongside 7 of Pakistan's best. Leading the list is World No. 62 Ibrahim Elkabbani from Egypt, seeded as the tournament's top play-



er, with Pakistan's World No. 82 Noor Zaman seeded second. Audiences can look forward to thrilling performances as these athletes compete for the championship title. The press conference was held to mark the tournament's launch. The event was attended by Mr. Qamar Zaman, Vice President of the Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF), along with other PSF and Serena Hotels officials. Speaking at the press confer-

ence, Air Commodore (Retd.) Amir Nawaz, Secretary of the Pakistan Squash Federation, extended heartfelt appreciation to Serena Hotels for their generous support in co-organizing this significant squash event. He commended Serena Hotels for their commitment to promoting squash and encouraging sports activities in Pakistan.

As part of Serena Hotels' ongoing Sports Diplomacy Initiative, this partnership with PSF underscores a commitment to using sports as a platform for cultural exchange, national pride, and international goodwill. The initiative aims to connect people and communities, showcasing Pakistan's hospitality and promoting the nation as a center for competitive sports. The championship is expected to draw large audiences to the Mushaf Squash Complex, where they will witness top-tier matches featuring remarkable talent and sportsmanship, adding another vibrant chapter to Pakistan's squash legacy.

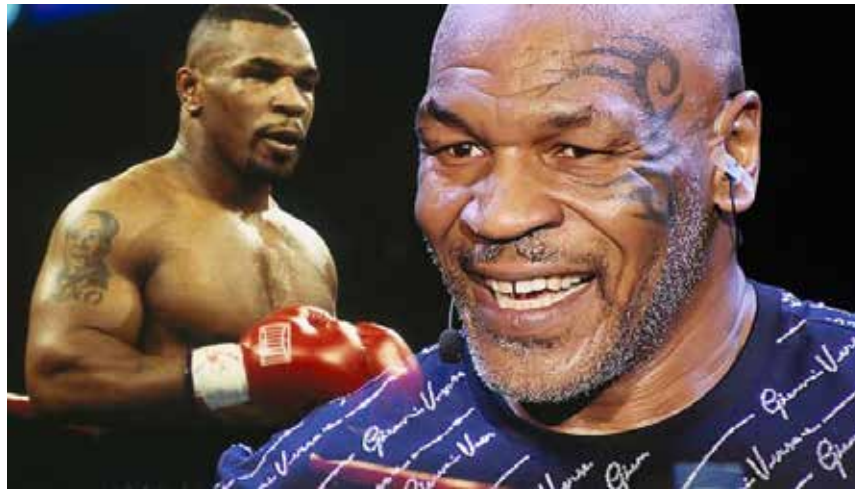
Mike Tyson to get back in ring after 19 years

NEW YORK: A 58-year-old Mike Tyson, who made his professional debut nearly 40 years ago, will climb back into the ring on Friday, 19 years after being battered into retirement, for a Netflix-backed bout against YouTuber Jake Paul that has drawn widespread condemnation across the boxing world. Tyson, who terrorised the heavyweight division during an imperious reign in the late 1980s, is lacing up the gloves once more to take on 27-year-old Paul in an officially sanctioned fight at AT&T Stadium, the home of the Dallas Cowboys, in Arlington, Texas. The fight, which will be comprised of eight two-minute rounds, was initially due to take place in July but was postponed in May after Tyson required medical treatment on a flight from Miami to Los Angeles after vomiting blood due to a bleeding ulcer. That gory mid-air emergency has provided another piece of ammunition for the numerous critics who have condemned Friday's contest as a macabre circus act that poses an unacceptable level of risk for Tyson, who last graced a professional ring in 2005 when he was beaten via a technical knockout after quitting on his stool against Irish journeyman Kevin McBride. "Twenty years ago, Mike Tyson retired from boxing, and was shot to pieces, right? I mean, completely shot," the prominent British fight promoter Eddie Hearn said this week. "If anyone thinks

that Mike Tyson should be in a ring at this age, you either have absolutely no emotional feelings toward the man, or you're an idiot. It shouldn't be happening." Hearn's rival promoter Frank Warren echoed those sentiments. "Mike Tyson

all I can say," he said earlier this year. "The people who said that wish they were up here. No one else can do this." At an open workout in Texas this week, Tyson declared that a gruelling training camp had left him with the conviction "that

work pays off. His opponent Jake Paul – who was born six months before Tyson bit off a chunk of Evander Holyfield's ear in their infamous 1997 rematch – rose to prominence as a YouTuber, before turning his attention to boxing. Since his



is 58 years of age and he shouldn't be fighting," Warren said after the bout was announced. "It's as simple as that. "Anyone with an ounce of brains knows that it is ridiculous. You can be on a motorway stuck in a traffic jam and you get to the end of it and all it is people who have stopped to look at a crash – and that's what this is." Tyson, who US reports say is being paid around \$20 million for Friday's contest, has brushed off the concerns for his wellbeing, insisting that critics from the boxing world are motivated by jealousy. "I'm beautiful, that's

I'm tougher than I believed I was." "When I agreed to this fight and started training, I thought 'What was I thinking of?' But I've finished the process. The fight is the party. All the hard work is done." At a final press conference in Texas on Wednesday, a stony-faced Tyson pointedly declined to engage in the pre-fight hype. "I'm just ready to fight," he said. "I'm looking forward to fighting." A global audience of several million watching on Netflix, and tens of thousands inside the AT&T Stadium will be watching on Friday to see whether Tyson's hard

first fight against a fellow YouTuber in 2018, Paul's opponents have included a basketball player, mixed martial arts fighters and other professional boxers. In 11 fights he has won 10 (seven by knockout) and lost one. "I feel really good, sharp, powerful and explosive. It's going to be a short night for Mike," Paul said at Tuesday's open workout, where he appeared wearing a bizarre head-dress in the form of a rooster. It goes without saying that a prime, 1980s-era Tyson would almost certainly have dealt with Jake Paul within a few minutes. – Agencies

Pak dismisses report on...

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stories about the nature of our cooperation. "Pakistan and China have robust dialogue and cooperation on [a] range of issues, including counterterrorism and security of Chinese nationals in Pakistan," she said, adding that the dialogue was based on mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation. "We will continue to work with our Chinese brothers for the safety and security of Chinese nationals, projects and institutions in Pakistan," the spokesperson said. Quoting her Chinese counterpart, Baloch said: "Attempts to undermine the mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries will not succeed." "We urge Afghan authorities to take Pakistan's repeated requests seriously and ensure that action is taken against these terror groups," Baloch said in today's media briefing today. "The patience of Pakistani people must not be tested with respect to the terror threat we continue to face from entities and individuals in Afghanistan," she added. In response to a question about the attack on

QaziFaiz Isa in London, the spokesperson said that any form of protest should be conducted within the boundaries of the law. "Pakistanis, wherever they are, should be treated with respect and dignity, and no one should be allowed to use abusive language." Regarding India's refusal to participate in next year's Champions Trophy scheduled in Pakistan from February 19 to March 9, the spokesperson said that only the cricket board can comment on the Indian team's visit to Pakistan. However, she added, no backdoor channels are in operation for the Champions Trophy and sports should not be politicised. She also stated that Pakistan and the United States share a long-standing relationship based on mutual interests and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. "Pakistan cannot demand the appointment of anyone within the U.S. administration," she said. Additionally, the spokesperson clarified that ZalmayKhalilzad holds no official position, and that any statements on social media cannot be responded to.

Pak Shaheens beat Sri Lanka 'A'

RAWALPINDI: Mohammad Suleman and Ali Zaryab scored anchoring half-centuries and led Pakistan Shaheens to a comfortable seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka 'A' on the final day of the first four-day match here at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday. Set to chase 222, the Shaheens raced to victory in just 53 overs, courtesy of a match-defining third-wicket partnership between Suleman and Zaryab. The Shaheens had a contrasting start to the pursuit as they lost both their openers – skipper Mohammad Huraire (9) and Abdul Faseeh (22) – with just 32 runs on the board. – DNA

Australia beat Pakistan in first T20

Australia secure 1-0 lead in the three-match series

SPORTS DESK

BRISBANE: Glenn Maxwell's quickfire knock, followed by a combined bowling effort, led Australia to a convincing 29-run victory over Pakistan in the rain-hit first T20 of the three-match series here at The Gabba on Thursday. Chasing a daunting 94-run target in seven overs, Pakistan only managed 64/9. The visitors had a decent start to the pursuit as they amassed 12 runs for the loss of one wicket in the first over. The touring side then ran into a gruelling middle-order collapse – included the dismissals of key batters Babar Azam (3) and Mohammad Rizwan (0) – and were consequently reduced to 20/5 in three overs. Xavier Bartlett, who picked up two wickets in his first over, dismissed Salman Ali Agha (4) to keep Pakistan under pressure. The right-arm pacer recorded brilliant bowling figures of 13/3 in his quota of two overs. Coming out to bat at No.8 with the visitors reeling at 24/6 in 3.2 overs, Abbas Afridi offered a notable fightback against the momentum-filled Australian bowling attack with an unbeaten 20-run cameo. His efforts, however, were not enough to steer his

side over the line as Pakistan succumbed to a 29-run defeat in the series opener. Nathan Ellis led the bowling charge for Australia with astounding figures of 3/9 in two overs, while Adam Zampa bagged two wickets. In a match that was reduced to seven overs per side, Pakistan's captain Mohammad

Rizwan won the toss and put Australia into bat. The hosts came out all guns blazing with openers Jake Fraser-McGurk and Matthew Short scoring 16 runs off the first over, bowled by ace pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi. Naseem Shah drew first success for Pakistan by dismissing Fraser-McGurk,

nine off five, on the first delivery of his spell. But Maxwell, promoted to bat at No.3, made sure the dismissal did not halt the flow of runs for the home side and dominated the proceedings despite Short's departure in the third over. The hard-hitting batter eventually fell victim to Mo-

hammad Abbas in the penultimate over, which also saw the ouster of Tim David (9) as Australia slipped to 73/4 in six overs. Maxwell remained the top-scorer for Australia with a 19-ball 43, laced with five fours and three sixes. Marcus Stoinis then smashed Naseem for 20

runs in the final over and bolstered Australia's total to 93/4 in the allotted seven overs. The right-handed batter remained unbeaten with a seven-ball 21, which featured two fours and a six. For Pakistan, Abbas bagged two wickets, while Shaheen and Naseem shared two between them.



PML-N not upholding political agreements, accuses...

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Sindh compared to the rest of the country," he added. The PPP leader also criticised the lack of consultation in key governance decisions, particularly the approval of projects like the canals under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). "We had agreed on consultation, but instead, decisions were made without proper dialogue," Bilawal said, expressing disappointment at the government's actions. When asked about the recent killing of Chinese nationals in Pakistan, Bilawal condemned the act, aligning with the Chinese ambassador's statement that the murders were "unacceptable." "A murder is a crime against humanity," he said, adding that Chinese nationals, who contribute to Pakistan's economy, should be protected. Bilawal also discussed the rising security challenges, especially terrorism, urging the government to take more concrete action. "We need less talk and more action to combat terrorism effectively," he stated, stressing the need for a national action plan to tackle growing extremism, particularly in regions like Balochistan and former tribal areas.

CJP -led parley sees use of tech...

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briefing on the judicial reforms. Sher Shah, a development expert, presented a short-term plan based on the vision of CJP regarding judicial reforms. Meanwhile, Humayun Zafar presented several plans regarding the digital transformation of judicial system. CJP Afridi said there was a need to bring about reforms in both superior and lower judiciary. He also lauded the roles of universities in bringing judicial reforms in Pakistan. It was decided in the meeting that modern technology should be introduced to bring judicial reforms. All the stakeholders including the people of Pakistan would also be consulted in this regard, said the statement issued by the Supreme Court. It merits mention here that the policy of CJP YahyaAfridi to reduce the number of cases pending with the superior court started yielding results as over 377 cases were disposed of during last week.

Apex committee meeting...

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during a meeting of the Central Apex Committee on the National Action Plan (NAP), chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "Azm-e-Istehkam will integrate and synergise multiple lines of effort to combat the menaces of extremism and terrorism in a comprehensive and decisive manner," said a press release issued by the PM Office Media Wing. "The forum reiterated that the fight against extremism and terrorism was Pakistan's war and was absolutely essential for the nation's survival and well-being. The forum resolved that no one would be allowed to challenge the writ of the state without any exception," it was added.

DPM Dar to reach UAE today

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honour their climate finance pledges to provide accessible and grants-based climate financing to achieve developing countries' climate goals. The deputy prime minister attended a high-level event convened by the United Nations Secretary-General on 'Delivering Early Warnings for All (EW4All) and Addressing Extreme Heat' on the sidelines of the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) on Wednesday. Addressing the high-level event, the deputy prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to safeguarding lives and protecting communities from the unpredictable and severe impacts of climate change.

Briefs

Rupee gains 11 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Thursday appreciated by 11 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.74 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.85. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.40 and Rs 278.90 respectively. The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.53 to close at Rs 293.07 against the last day's closing of Rs 294.60, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.78, whereas a decline of Rs 1.42 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 352.43 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 353.85. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 75.61 and Rs 73.92, respectively. He affirmed the government's commitment to prosecuting all those who threaten national sovereignty, commending the vital role of security forces in combating terrorism. He also highlighted Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's dedication to Balochistan's development, noting the province's strides toward economic growth. Condemning the Quetta railway station attack as a cowardly act by those who feel threatened by Balochistan's progress, Syedaal reiterated his commitment to ensuring peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.—APP

Gold price per tola falls Rs5,500

KARACHI: Gold prices in Pakistan fell on Thursday in line with their decline in international rates. In the local market, the price of gold per tola decreased by Rs5,500, clocking in at Rs266,400. Similarly, 10-gram gold was sold at Rs228,395 after it recorded a decrease of Rs4,716, according to rates shared by the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewelers Sarafa Association (APGJSA). On Wednesday, gold price per tola increased by Rs1,400 to settle at Rs271,900. The international rate of gold decreased on Thursday. As per APGJSA, the rate was \$2,552 per ounce (with a premium of \$20) and was down by \$55 during the day. Silver prices remained unchanged at Rs3,250 per tola. Last month, gold hit an all-time high of Rs287,900 per tola in Pakistan.—APP

Australia's jobs market comes off the boil

SYDNEY: Australia's employment growth slowed in October after a strong run, but the jobless rate stayed low and underlying trends remained relatively healthy, suggesting there is little rush to cut interest rates. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics on Thursday showed net employment rose 15,900 in October from September, when they jumped by a revised 61,300. That was the smallest increase in seven months and came in under market forecasts for a 25,000 rise, but annual jobs growth still ran at a strong 2.7%. Gains were again driven by full-time roles. The jobless rate held at a historically low 4.1%, where it has been since April, while the participation rate edged down to 67.1% from an all-time high of 67.2%. National Australia Bank on Thursday pushed out its call for the first rate cut from the Reserve Bank of Australia to May from February given the overall strength in the labour market. Other major Australian banks still tipped February for the start of the easing cycle. "Given the data flow to date, it now looks unlikely the RBA will have enough confidence in the trajectory of inflation by then. There is a real risk that policy rates stay on hold even deeper into 2025," NAB analysts said in a note.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Mian Akram Farid, Chairman of the Central EFP presenting a shield to Geir T. Tonstal, ILO Country Director.

Iran refuses to negotiate under 'intimidation'

"We agreed to proceed with courage and goodwill. Iran has never left the negotiation table on its peaceful nuclear programme," he said. Grossi also met the head of Iran's atomic energy organisation, Mohammad Eslami

EHRAN: Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday that Iran will not negotiate under "intimidation" as he held crunch talks with the UN nuclear chief weeks before US President-elect Donald Trump takes office. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi said achieving "results" in nuclear talks with Iran was vital to avoid a new conflict in the region already inflamed by Israel's operations against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. His visit comes just days after Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Iran was "more exposed than ever to strikes on its nuclear facilities" giving Israel "the opportunity to achieve our most important goal".

Grossi said Iranian nuclear installations "should not be attacked" but Trump is expected to give Israel a far freer rein after he takes office in January. The IAEA chief described his meeting with Araghchi as "indispensable" in a post on X. "We agreed to proceed with courage and goodwill. Iran has never left the negotiation table on its peaceful nuclear programme," he said. Grossi also met the head of Iran's atomic energy organisation, Mohammad Eslami. Eslami told a joint news conference that Iran would take "immediate countermeasures" against any sanctions from the IAEA's board of governors. "Any interventionist resolution in the nuclear affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran

will definitely be met with immediate countermeasures," Eslami said. Grossi's visit is his second to Tehran this year but his first since Trump's re-election. During his first term in the White House from 2017 to 2021, Trump adopted a policy called "maximum pressure" which reimposed sweeping US economic sanctions that had been lifted under the 2015 deal. In response, Iran started to gradually roll back its commitments under the deal, which barred it from enriching uranium to above 3.65 per cent. The IAEA says Iran has significantly expanded its stocks of uranium enriched to 60pc, a level that has triggered international alarm as it is much closer to the 90pc level needed

for a nuclear warhead. Iran has blamed the incoming US president for the standoff. "The one who left the agreement was not Iran, it was America," government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mo-hajerani said on Wednesday. "Mr Trump once tried the path of maximum pressure and saw that this path did not work." Trump's looming return to the White House in January has only added to international fears of an all-out conflict between Israel and Iran after the archfoes exchanged unprecedented direct attacks earlier this year. "The margins for manoeuvre are beginning to shrink," Grossi warned in an interview with AFP on Tuesday, adding that "it is imperative to find ways to reach diplomatic

solutions". Grossi has said that while Iran does not currently have a nuclear weapon, it does have plenty of enriched uranium that could eventually be used to make one. Later Thursday, Grossi was due to hold talks with President Masoud Pezeshkian, who won election in July on a platform to improve ties with the West and revive the 2015 deal. However, all efforts to get the nuclear agreement off life support have failed. The IAEA chief has repeatedly called for more cooperation from Iran. In recent years, Tehran has switched off surveillance devices used to monitor its nuclear programme and effectively barred IAEA inspectors. The foundations of Iran's nuclear pro-

gramme date back to the late 1950s, when the United States signed a civil co-operation agreement with the Western-backed Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. In 1970, Iran ratified the NPT, which requires signatory states to declare and place their nuclear materials under IAEA control. But with Iran threatening to hit back at Israel for its latest missile strikes, some lawmakers have called on the government to revise its nuclear doctrine to develop an atomic bomb. They called on supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who wields ultimate authority in Iran, to reconsider his longstanding religious edict or fatwa banning nuclear weapons.—APP

Turkey seizes nearly 9 tonnes of drug

ISTANBUL: Turkish officials have seized nearly nine tonnes of methamphetamine, half of it at the Iranian border, in the last two weeks, the interior minister said on Thursday. Ali Yerlikaya said 4.16 tonnes of methamphetamine were seized during this period, including 3.5 tonnes in Istanbul and the rest in other cities including Izmir in the west and Hakkari near the border with Iran and Iraq. According to Turkish customs, more than 4.5 tonnes were found at the beginning of November in three trucks crossing into Turkey from Iran. Turkish police confiscated nearly 22 tonnes of methamphetamine last year, a sharp increase over previous years, according to official figures. Methamphetamine is a stimulant whose effects are two to five times more intense and long-lasting than amphetamine, with greater addictive potential, experts say. This synthetic drug, popular in Turkey, is sold in Europe or North America in the form of crystals, powder, capsules or tablets. The European Union Drugs Agency says the increase in methamphetamine seizures in Turkey could be explained by a rise in production in Iran and Afghanistan, where its trade has intensified since the Taliban imposed a ban in 2022 on the cultivation of opium poppies, used to manufacture heroin.—APP

Qatari Emir to discuss cooperation Erdogan

ANKARA: Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani arrived in Ankara on Thursday to chair a Turkey-Qatar High Strategic Committee meeting with President Yayıp Erdogan, after which the sides are expected to sign off on investment-related accords. The visit, focused on investment and trade, comes after Doha said at the weekend it had told Hamas and Israel it will stall efforts to mediate a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal until they show willingness and seriousness. Turkey, which fiercely criticised Israel over its offensives in Gaza and in Lebanon, does not deem Hamas a terrorist group, and some of its political officials regularly visit Turkey. Erdogan and al Thani will hold a bilateral meeting and then will chair the tenth meeting of the Turkey-Qatar High Strategic Committee. They will then attend a ceremony for the signing of various agreements.—APP

Sri Lankans vote with issues of economic reforms at stake

COLOMBO: Sri Lankans began voting on Thursday in a snap election to decide if the Indian Ocean island will give its new leftist president greater strength to help the poor as it recovers from a financial meltdown. Just over 17 million Sri Lankans are eligible to elect lawmakers to the 225-member parliament for a five-year term. A record 690 political parties and independent groups are in the fray across 22 electoral districts. "I think we are seeing the first signs of a positive political change in Sri Lanka after the president was elected and we should give him the chance to continue that change," said Umeshi Perera, 32, who queued to vote in a Colombo suburb. The president, Marxist-leaning Anura Kumara Dissanayake, 55, was elected in September but his National People's Power (NPP) coalition had just three of parliament's 225 seats, prompting him to dissolve it and seek a fresh mandate. Voting was proceeding smoothly, a police spokesman said, after more than 7,000 officers fanned out to more than 13,400 polling stations nationwide to keep the polls free and fair. "The military is also on standby to assist the police but we do not expect any incidents," the spokesman, Nihal Thaldawa, added. People trickled into temples, schools and other public buildings being used as polling stations soon after polls opened. Votes will be counted soon after polling closes on Thursday, with results set for Friday.—APP

India's toxic smog cuts off visibility in several areas

NEW DELHI: Toxic smog blanketed northern India on Thursday, becoming too thick to see through in several places, as high levels of pollution combined with humidity, low wind speed, and a drop in temperature, officials said. The city of Lahore in neighbouring Pakistan ranked as the world's most polluted in winter's annual scourge across the region, worsened by dust, emissions, and smoke from fires burnt illegally in India's farming states of Punjab and Haryana. However, operations at New Delhi's international airport were not affected by the smog, which weather officials expect to scatter during the day as breezes pick up. Visibility remained at 300 m (980 ft), the airport operator, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) said, while some airlines warned flights could be affected. "Winter fog may impact flights" with Delhi, the city of Amritsar in Punjab, where authorities said visibility was zero, and the temple city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. IndiGo said in a message on X. New Delhi's international airport diverted some flights on Wednesday. The minimum temperature in Delhi fell to 16.1 degrees Celsius (61°F) on Thursday from 17 degrees C the previous day, weather officials said. Its pollution ranked in the 'severe' category for the second day in a row, with a score of 430 on an index of air quality maintained by the top pollution panel that rates a score of zero to 50 as 'good'. Pollution in New Delhi is likely to stay in the 'severe' category on Friday as well, the earth sciences ministry said, worsening to 'very poor' later, or an index score in the range of 300 to 400.—APP

Affordable food gov't's top priority

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) celebrated World Food Day on Thursday at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in partnership with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the International Trade Centre (ITC). Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, attended as Chief Guest, alongside prominent figures such as UN Resident Coordinator Mohamed Yahya and FAO Representative Florence Rolle. The event drew government officials, academia, UN agency representatives, and students. In his address, Minister Hussain reiterated Pakistan's commitment to food security.—APP

China-Pak medical institutions sign MoU to deepen health cooperation

The move aims to overcome geographical barriers and facilitate academic exchanges and personnel visits, furthering the goal of empowering healthcare systems along the Belt and Road

KASHGAR: Medical institutions from China and Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to enhance bilateral cooperation in the health sector, focusing on medical services, research, and technology. The agreement, facilitated by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Hospital Cooperation Alliance, aims to improve healthcare services, foster deeper exchanges in fields like liver echinococcosis treatment, medical imaging technology, and the transformation of research outcomes. During the signing ceremony, representatives from the Kashgar Health Commission, along with officials from the First People's Hospital of Kashgar Prefecture and other local healthcare facilities, engaged in detailed discussions with medical leaders from Pakistan's Gilgit Provincial Hospital, Gwadar Port reported on Thursday. Key topics included international medicine, telemedicine, infectious disease control, artificial intelligence, big data applications, and the promotion of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). On the occasion, officials with the Kashgar Health Commission emphasized their commitment to advancing international telemedicine platforms, combining "smart hospital" initiatives with multilateral online consultation services. The move aims to overcome geographical barriers and facilitate academic exchanges and personnel visits, furthering the goal of empowering healthcare systems along the Belt and Road. — DNA

OGRA hosts workshop on track and trace technology for OMC'S

He shared that FBR and customs authorities have intensified efforts against smuggling and illegal trade by leveraging advanced technology and have recently closed over 1,200 illegal fuel pumps

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move to enhance transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency in Pakistan's oil sector, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has organized a workshop focused on implementing effective track and trace technology. This event, conducted in collaboration with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC), and the Oil Marketing Association of Pakistan (OMAP), brought together renowned solution providers from across the country to present potential digital solutions for the sector. In his opening and concluding remarks, the Chairman

of OGRA highlighted the critical role a robust track and trace system could play in preventing financial leakage, enhancing accountability, and promoting economic stability. "Implementing a comprehensive tracking system is essential, especially in challenging economic times, to protect the national exchequer, curb illegal activities, and boost the industry's overall integrity," he noted. The Director General of FBR (Reforms and Automation) addressed participants, underscoring the need for a track and trace solution for the oil sector akin to systems already implemented in other industries. He shared that FBR and customs authorities have intensified efforts against smuggling and illegal trade by lever-

aging advanced technology and have recently closed over 1,200 illegal fuel pumps. He

also emphasized strict enforcement, including penalties of up to Rs. 10 million and

seizure of illicit products for those engaged in illegal activities. The DG urged Oil Mar-

keting Companies (OMCs) to work with OGRA to identify appropriate technologies, such as RFID and Automated Tank Gauging Systems (ATGs), and to propose feasible timelines and cost-effective solutions for implementing these technologies on tank lorries and petrol pumps. "The country faces challenging times, and we must collaborate to implement a system that deters smuggling and illegal activities, thereby safeguarding both industry interests and national priorities," he stated. This workshop reflects OGRA's ongoing commitment to adopting digital solutions that foster transparency, sustainability, and long-term resilience in Pakistan's oil industry.



Briefs

Imran Khan approaches Supreme Court

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday filed a constitutional petition in the Supreme Court, seeking judicial redress over alleged breaches of his party's fundamental rights. Khan in the petition, called for a judicial inquiry led by three senior Supreme Court judges to investigate what he claims are systematic anti-PTI actions that violate basic constitutional rights. The petition urges the Court to issue directives for the restoration of PTI's fundamental rights. It also pleads an immediate halt to the misuse of Section 144 and detentions under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) ordinance. Khan further requested orders against the withholding of no-objection certificates (NOCs) for PTI meetings and gatherings. The federal government, including the Ministries of Defence, Interior, and Cabinet Division, are made as respondents in the petition in addition to four provincial governments. This move comes amid heightened political tensions, as PTI alleges targeted crackdowns and restrictions on its political activities across the country.

Court extends Swati's physical remand

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Terrorism Court has extended the physical remand of former federal minister Azam Swati in a case related to rioting and vandalism. The hearing was held in Rawalpindi, where Judge Amjad Ali Shah presided over the case and Azam Swati was presented before the court. During the proceedings, the police requested an extension of Swati's physical remand, which the court granted. The court approved a seven-day extension in Swati's physical remand, ordering that he be presented again on November 21. It is important to note that a case against Azam Swati has been registered at the Taxila police station under charges of vandalism, rioting, and under the Anti-Terrorism Act. Azam Swati was arrested by the Taxila police on November 5.

Resistance front to avenge any aggression

WEB DESK

TEHRAN: The chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has warned that the resistance front will avenge any Israeli aggression, adding that the enemies of Islam will receive "painful" blows in case of a broader conflict with Muslims. Major General Hossein Salami raised the alarm in an address to IRGC forces in a combat-security drill in the capital Tehran on Thursday as he praised the Iranian nation's resilience and determination in tough times as well as sacrifices of Muslims in defending their territories over the years. Stressing that the world's major powers cannot stand up to the Islamic Republic's resolve, Salami said the whole "evil powers" have at the present time lined up against Islam and Muslims in a historical confrontation. "The most modern armies of the world have come to the aid of the Zionist regime. The stage depicts a global formation of powers that intend to force us to submit to their will so that they will rule over the fate of Muslims, occupy their lands and rob them of their religious identity," the IRGC chief said. "A real and historical confrontation is in the making," Salami added.

Pak, Hungary will establish hotline to resolve issues

The Interior Minister thanked his Hungarian Counterpart for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Hungarian Government for the 7th Ministerial Conference of Budapest Process

NEWS DESK

BUDAPEST: Pakistan and Hungary will establish a hotline to resolve illegal immigration and other issues. This agreement was reached during a meeting between Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his Hungarian counterpart Sandor Pinter in Budapest today. It was decided that the hotline will be established between the interior ministries of both the countries. Besides, the two sides engaged in fruitful discussions on matters of mutual interest and cooperation in various fields. The Interior Minister thanked his Hungarian Counterpart for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Hungarian Government for the 7th Ministerial Conference of Budapest Process. It was agreed to celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Hungary in a grand manner next year. The Interior Minister, on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, invited the Hungarian Prime Minister to visit Pakistan in 2025 on the occasion of the completion of 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Mohsin Naqvi also in-



visited his Hungarian counterpart to visit Pakistan, who accepted this invitation. On the proposal of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, a high-level Hungarian delegation will visit Pakistan to prevent illegal immigration and encourage legal immigration. The Hungarian delegation will provide as-

istance in various fields, including illegal immigration and human trafficking. The delegation from Budapest will prepare a report and the Hungarian Interior Minister will visit Pakistan to finalize cooperation in this regard. The Hungarian Foreign Minister will also visit Pakistan next month.

Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Hungary and exchange of delegations is necessary for the promotion of bilateral ties. Pakistan's Ambassador to Hungary Asif Husain Memon and senior diplomatic officials were also present on the occasion.

UN resolutions back Palestinian sovereignty

LONDON: The UN Economic and Financial Committee has approved resolutions calling on Israel to compensate Lebanon and Syria for an oil slick, and to hand sovereignty to the Palestinians over their natural resources. The US, Argentina, Canada, Israel, Micronesia, Nauru and Palau voted against both resolutions. The slick occurred after the Israeli Air Force struck storage tanks near the Jiyah electric power plant in 2006, covering two-thirds of Lebanon's coastline with oil. The draft resolution was introduced by Uganda's representative, who highlighted the disastrous impact the slick has had on biodiversity and the local economy. It reiterated the UN General Assembly's "deep concern" over the negative impact the incident has had on Lebanon's long-term sustainable development, and reaffirmed a UN report that damage to the country caused by the slick amounted to \$856.4 million in 2014. The resolution was passed by 161 votes in favor to seven against, with nine abstentions. It called for "prompt and adequate compensation" from Israel to Lebanon and Syria, which was also affected by the slick. Lebanon's representative thanked his country's supporters at the UN, the World Bank and elsewhere. - Agencies

Constitutional bench hears decades-old pending cases

"Leave Qazi sahib alone," says bench, dismissing plea challenging appointment of ex-CJP Isa as BHC CJ

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The six-member constitutional bench on Thursday started hearing cases that have been pending in the Supreme Court for years, in Court Room No 3, aiming to clear the large backlog and provide justice to petitioners. This marks the first hearing of cases by the new bench, constituted under the 26th Constitutional Amendment. The Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan-led bench is to hear around 34 cases as per the cause list for November 14 and 15. Eighteen of these cases are scheduled for hearing today, with the remaining 16 set for Friday (tomorrow). With Justice Khan in the lead, the constitutional bench includes Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali, and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan. Owing to the unavailability of Justice Ayesha A Malik on November 14 and 15, a relevant committee decided that a bench

comprising all available judges should be constituted to proceed with cases on these dates. The bench is also hearing environment-related cases, including some that have been pending in the Supreme Court since 1993. A review petition against the dismissal of a case challenging the nomination of Justice QaziFaez Isa as Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court, filed by Advocate RiazHanif Rai, was also addressed by the bench. The bench additionally took up a plea seeking rescheduling of the 2024 elections, with a request before the court for elections to be held between February and March. Similarly, the constitutional bench heard cases related to pleas for the disqualification of lawmakers with foreign business and assets. Other cases heard by the bench involved pleas seeking a ban on government servants contracting marriages with foreign nationals, and suomotu cases initiated by former CJP Isa regarding the use of Islamabad's Convention Centre for private events. Apart from the other pleas, the Supreme

Court's Constitutional Bench also dismissed a petition challenging the appointment of former CJP QaziFaez Isa as Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court. During the proceedings, the petitioner argued that the Supreme Court had heard the Bhutto case 40 years later, suggesting a precedent. In response, Justice Mandokhail clarified that this was a review petition and that the original case could not be reopened. Justice Hilali remarked that the court was not a platform for political speeches, and urged the petitioner to focus on the law, saying, "Leave Qazi Sahib alone." Justice Amin-ud-Din questioned the legal basis for requiring consultation with the chief minister for such an appointment, to which the petitioner's lawyer admitted they lacked the necessary records but suggested that these could be requested from Balochistan. Justice Mandokhail proposed that such petitions be referred to the Pakistan Bar Council for consideration. The Constitutional Bench ultimately dismissed the review petition against Isa.

Pak-Lebanon shares historical ties: Rana

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Thursday expressed hope that peace would be restored soon in Lebanon. During a meeting with the Lebanese Ambassador Ghassan El Khatib to discuss various initiatives and collaborations aimed at empowering the youth of both countries, he said that Pakistan and Lebanon shared a history of friendly and cooperative relations rooted in shared cultural and religious values. He emphasized his long-standing commitment to youth affairs, having served in this domain since 2002. He added that though Lebanon was currently experiencing a difficult period, the miseries of the Lebanese people would soon be resolved. Mashhood said that Pakistan attaches special importance to Lebanon and that both countries enjoy excellent cooperation at various multilateral fora, including the United Nations and the OIC. Lebanese Ambassador Ghassan El Khatib expressed his admiration for Pakistan's cooperation and said that Pakistan always expressed solidarity with its Muslim brethren country. Moreover, Khatib expressed a keen interest in enhancing cooperation in different sectors highlighting the importance of collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme to implement strategic initiatives. The meeting concluded with both leaders expressing optimism about future collaborations that would foster closer ties between Lebanon and Pakistan. The meeting was attended by key officials including the focal Person for PMYP's international relations Syeda Aamna Batool. - DNA



Akbar alleges fraud in PTI's intra-party polls

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) estranged founding member Akbar S. Babar highlights alleged fraud in PTI's intra-party elections held on March 3, and claimed that if the decision in the foreign funding case is enforced, PTI's top leadership will face imprisonment due to large-scale irregularities. He reiterated that he had filed the foreign funding case a decade ago. "I was the first to expose the fraud and corruption within this so-called tsunami," Babar added. He noted that while a verdict had been reached in the foreign funding case, its implementation had not been carried out. He states that calls for protests and marches are being made on a daily basis and criticized the justice system, urging it to play a more active role in maintaining the rule of law.

IMF expresses concerns over \$1.2bn Saudi oil facility

Pakistan misses Structural Benchmark for amending Agriculture Income Tax by October 2024

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission has raised concerns about the execution of the \$1.2 billion Saudi Oil Facility (SOF) amid worries that Saudi Arabia may condition the disbursement on progress in the multi-billion-dollar RekoDiq project, potentially leading to delays. Saudi Arabia had initially assured the IMF of the \$1.2 billion SOF as part of Pakistan's \$7 billion bailout package, approved by the IMF's Executive Board a few months ago. However, the IMF now fears the oil facility may face hurdles, although a delegation from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) is expected to visit Islamabad next month. However, the sources close to the Prime Minister's Office reveal that Pakistan possessed a Plan-B, which excludes the SOF, but they did not share its details. In another blow, Pakistan has missed out a Structural Benchmark (SB) for amending the Agriculture Income Tax (AIT) by the four legislating assemblies under the IMF condition till end October 2024. Although, the provincial cabinets already granted their nod, but, so far, the provincial assemblies had not yet approved the piece of legislation. Pakistan might have to seek a

waiver from the IMF's Executive Board on this slippage of implementing the SB within the stipulated timeframe. The IMF explicitly wrote in its staff report that "provincial tax reforms will include the (i) full alignment of their AIT regimes with the federal personal and corporate income taxes by October 2024 (end-October SB) with implementation from January 1, 2025 and collection in July 2025". The IMF has pointed out a risk to \$2.6 billion for securing external financing arising out of a potential gap for the current fiscal year. The IMF Staff Mission is becoming stricter in the wake of Executive Board members assessments whereby "directors noted the Ex-post Peer Review assessment and the negative impact caused by deviations from programmed policies, and stressed the importance of strong ownership for programme implementation and financing. They emphasised the need for effective communication to build broad consensus and support for reforms". Meanwhile, in another development, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Rashid MahmoodLangrial requested the Senate panel on finance for holding an in camera session when Senator Faisal Sabzwari asked about mini budget under the IMF conditionalities. The MQM-Pakistan senator stated that he was interested to

know whether the AIT was going to be slapped as currently the amount collected through traffic challan in metropolitan Karachi was higher than the collection of the AIT in his province. The FBR chairman replied that the discussions were underway with the IMF, so it would be appropriate to hold briefing on this issue in camera in next meeting. Senate Standing Committee on Finance Chairman SaleemMandviwalla said that the media gets annoyed with in camera sessions but agreed to the request made by the FBR chairman for holding in camera briefing on IMF programme and mini budget. The Ministry of Finance and the IMF high-ups continued parleys on Wednesday and in the first session the external financing gap came under discussion. The Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs Division and State Bank of Pakistan informed the IMF that the China had struck currency swap deal of 3 billion Yuan (approximately \$450 million) but they did not entertain the request to increase the currency swap limits. On Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB), the IMF was told that there was a link of \$500 million guarantee from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and things would be finalised soon. In the second session, the Ministry of Finance briefed the IMF on domestic

borrowing plan envisaging that the debt servicing cost would be reduced in the aftermath of reduction in policy rate from 22 to 15 percent. It would save Rs1.3 trillion in debt servicing bill. The FBR high-ups claimed that the envisaged tax collection target of Rs12,970 billion would remain unchanged, without explaining that how the tax shortfall occurred in the first four months of Rs189 billion would be bridged in remaining period of the current fiscal year. They also said that the GST on petroleum products would not be slapped. It's true because it would become part of the federal divisible pool and 60 percent collected amount can be transferred to the provinces under NFC Award. The option is to jack up petroleum levy. The FBR high-ups argued that they fetched Rs11.84 billion from retailers in first four months as the number of filers went up from 218,015 in tax year 2023 to 607,685 in 2024 and paid-up tax increased from Rs5.3 billion in last tax year to Rs9.3 billion so far in 2024. The increase in tax collection stood at Rs4.076 billion. Under Withholding (WHT) compliance, the retailers/wholesalers paid up Rs6.7 billion under section 236G of Income Tax Law in 2024 against Rs3.18 billion in tax year 2023. Under 236H, the retailers paid tax of Rs9.799 billion in 2024 compared to Rs5.6 billion in 2023.

UNSC deplores attacks on UN peace keepers

NEW YORK: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has denounced recent attacks on the peacekeeping mission in Lebanon as Israel keeps targeting its bases deliberately. In a press statement released on Wednesday, the 15-member body "condemned the several incidents that impacted the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) positions and injured UNIFIL peacekeepers in the past weeks." It also urged the parties to the conflict in Lebanon to take all measures to respect the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel and premises, stressing that peacekeepers must never be the target of an attack. Israel has been carrying out bloody acts of terror and aggression across Lebanon after the regime unleashed its genocidal war on the Gaza Strip. At least 3,287 people have been killed and 14,222 others injured in Israeli assaults on Lebanon since early October 2023, according to the country's health ministry. Israel launched a ground invasion of Lebanon on 1 October. Since then, the occupation forces have repeatedly fired on positions held by UNIFIL, an international body of over 10,000 civilian and military personnel from 50 countries. Last week, UNIFIL said that the Israeli military's "deliberate and direct destruction" of its property is a flagrant violation of international law. Additionally in its statement, the UNSC reiterated its "full support" for UNIFIL, appreciating the countries that contribute troops to the international force. - Agencies

Trump stuns with Gaetz, Gabbard picks

WASHINGTON: President-elect Trump stunned Washington with two controversial picks to lead important law enforcement and intelligence roles in his administration, tapping Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) to serve as attorney general and Tulsi Gabbard, a former Democratic representative, to serve in the nation's top intelligence job. Trump tapped a loyalist to lead a Justice Department he has raided against both inside and outside of the White House - one he sees as a vehicle for carrying out the retribution he has vowed his perceived enemies would see under a second term. In Gabbard, Trump selected a figure who has floated numerous conspiracy theories that defy the conclusions reached by the U.S. intelligence agencies she would oversee. She has routinely espoused narratives likewise peddled by Russia. Gaetz's selection seemed to catch lawmakers off guard. He was not among the names reported to be up for the position, and Democrats are sure to raise that he was previously investigated as part of a sex-trafficking probe launched by the Justice Department. - Agencies

Israel committing war crimes: HRW

LONDON: Israeli authorities have caused massive and deliberate forced displacement of Palestinians in Gaza, in what amounts to a war crime, a new report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) has found. The international human rights organisation analysed satellite imagery, Israeli forced evacuation orders and statements by senior Israeli officials to show that authorities in Israel are deliberately and permanently making returning to large areas of Gaza effectively impossible for the Palestinian population. "Israeli forces have destroyed the majority of Gaza's water, sanitation, communications, energy and transport infrastructure as well as its schools and hospitals" and "systematically razed orchards, fields and greenhouses" report author Nadia Hardman told journalists in a news conference in advance of the report's release on Thursday. - Agencies