



Islamabad POST

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Spain legend Rafael Nadal bids farewell to tennis

Detailed News On Page-06

Israel 'cannot impose conditions' for truce: Naim

Detailed News On Page-08



CII Chief blames 'typo' in statement

Detailed News On Page-08



If breakthrough in talks

PTI hints at calling off Nov 24 protest

"Our protest will be called off only if our demands are met," says Imran Khan's lawyer

ANSAR M BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has said that celebrations will be staged instead of a protest if there's a breakthrough in the PTI-government talks, his lawyer said, hinting at calling off the protest. Following a meeting with Khan at Adiala jail in Rawalpindi, lawyer Faisal Chaudhry said: "If there's headway in talks by tomorrow, there'll be celebrations instead of protests. Otherwise, we are prepared for peaceful demonstrations." The lawyer went on to say that the PTI founder has said that this was the second time he had given a protest call since the May 9 protest – which saw state installations being ransacked. Khan also said that there is no option left except for protests, emphasising that political parties are crucial in keeping the country united. The PTI founder also expressed concerns over restrictions faced by the party, saying, "We are not allowed to hold rallies or gatherings." "I have always called for peaceful protests," he claimed. The former premier further stated that he had given time for the negotiations until tomorrow. "Talks will only take place with those who hold the real power," the deposed prime minister's lawyer quoted him as saying. The cricketer-turned-batter, the lawyer said, reiterated that PTI's demands would form the basis of any dialogue and that the cancellation of protests depends on the acceptance of those demands. "It takes effort from both sides for progress to be made." Moreover, the PTI founder also clarified that reports of spending Rs1 billion on protests were baseless, Chaudhry added. The former ruling and now opposition party has announced a "do-or-die" demonstration Islamabad on

Continued on Page 06

Ahead of Nov 24 protest Imran Khan gets bail in new Toshakhana case

"To my knowledge, there isn't any case left, in which Imran has to secure bail," says lawyer Salman Safdar

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: In a major development ahead of the looming November 24 protest by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday approved the bail plea of party founder Imran Khan in the new Toshakhana case. IHC's Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb accepted Khan's bail plea against two surety bonds worth Rs1 million each, which must be submitted by separate guarantors. PTI founder is no longer wanted in any other case within Islamabad's jurisdiction following the latest development. Meanwhile, the IHC cautioned the ousted prime minister not to "misuse the concession of bail and appear

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KARACHI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS) observing display of arms during his visit of the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024). – DNA

Warrior-VIII Pak-China joint exercise kicks off

The exercise is aimed at refining professional skills through joint training

SHAMIM SHAHID

PABBI: The opening ceremony of joint exercise 'Warrior-VIII' between Pakistan Army and Peoples' Liberation Army of China was conducted at National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC), Pabbi, on Wednesday. The Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said three weeks long exercise in counter terrorism domain is eighth in the series of bilateral exercise being conducted annually. The exercise is aimed at refining professional skills through joint training besides harnessing the historic military to military relations among the iron clad brothers. Lieutenant General Shahidm-tiaz, HI (M), Commander Rawalpindi Corps graced the occasion as chief guest.

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No chance of Imran's release, says Tarar

Ataullah Tarar says PTI founder's bail can be cancelled during trial

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ataullah Tarar stated that Imran Khan's release is unlikely, despite being granted bail in the Toshakhana case. Speaking to a private television channel, Tarar explained that while the Islamabad High Court (IHC) approved Khan's bail in the Toshakhana case, the former prime minister remains in custody due to other pending cases. "Imran Khan's bail has not been

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COAS inaugurates advanced Shahpar-III combat drone

Over 300 foreign delegates from 53 countries attended the event and showed full confidence in the exhibition and the defence industry of Pakistan

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: General Syed AsimMunir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024) at the Karachi Expo Centre. During the visit, the COAS commended the active participation of defense manufacturers from friendly nations and observed an impressive display of arms and equipment by both domestic and international exhibitors. A total of 557 exhibitors are participating in the exhibition of which 333 are international exhibitors while 224 are domestic exhibitors. 36 countries established exhibitors' stalls of which 17 countries are participating for the first time. Over 300 foreign delegates from 53 countries attended the event and showed full confidence in the exhibition and the defence industry of Pakistan. During the exhibition, COAS also engaged in meaningful interactions with foreign military officials and defense delegates present at the event.

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Govt to deploy rangers in Islamabad

Rangers and FC will operate under the Anti-Terrorism Act and assist federal police in maintaining

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to deploy rangers and FC in Islamabad ahead of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's protest on Nov 24. The Interior Ministry has issued a notification approving the deployment, following a request from the chief commissioner. As per the notification, the Rangers and FC will operate under the Anti-Terrorism Act and assist federal

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Briefs

PPP formally seeks PAC chairmanship

Mandviwalla requested the speaker's support

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) has officially demanded the chairmanship of Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Senator SaleemMandviwalla wrote to National Assembly Speaker AyazSadiq, urging him a meeting on the requisition submitted by the 11 PAC members. The PPP hinted at convening the session independently if the speaker delays. Mandviwalla requested the speaker's support, suggesting members elect an interim chairman until a permanent one is chosen. Meanwhile, the PTI insists on Sheikh WaqasAkram for the role. The PML-N has signaled support for the PPP's claim, prolonging the PCA's leadership stalemate since March.

Senator Irfan calls on PM

Briefs PM on parliamentary party's performance in Senate

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Senior PML-N leader and chairman of Senate's standing committee on Foreign Affairs Irfan Siddiqui on Wednesday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. Irfan Siddiqui briefed the prime minister regarding the performance of parliamentary party in the Senate. The PML-N leader also lauded the prime minister on achieving the major economic targets. "The senators of PML-N are playing a great role in the upper house of parliament under the leadership of Irfan Siddiqui," said the prime minister. Shehbaz Sharif directed Irfan Siddiqui to remain in touch with other political parties as well in the upperhouseoftheparliament.

President, PM pay tributes Twelve security personnel martyred in Bannu attack

Six terrorists killed in "attempt to attack joint check post" in Bannu's Mali Khel, says ISPR

STAFF REPORT

BANNU: At least 12 security personnel were martyred in a suicide attack in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) District Bannu, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday. The military's media wing, in a statement, said that terrorists or "khwarij" attempted to attack a joint check post in the general area of Mali Khel in Bannu on November 19 (Tuesday). "In [the] ensuing fire exchange, six terrorists were sent to hell," the statement read, adding that the attempt to enter the post was effectively thwarted by the troops, which forced the attackers to ram an explosive-laden vehicle into the perimeter wall of the post. Explaining the attack further, the military's media wing said that the suicide blast led to the collapse of a portion of the perimeter wall and damaged the adjoining infrastructure.

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US committed to support Pak fight against terrorism

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The United States condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Pakistan and said it is "dedicated to enhancing Pakistan's civilian and military capabilities to detect and counter these type of threats". In a press briefing, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said the US was aware of the terrorist attacks in Pakistan, saying "our hearts go out to the families and loved ones of those killed or impacted by recent attacks".

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France and AFD highlight support for polio eradication

\$55 Million Soft Loan and Grant to support Polio Eradication in Pakistan in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Welcoming of the Polio Oversight Board

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the Polio Oversight Board (POB) visit to Pakistan – the highest decision-making body of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative – H.E. Nicolas Galey,



Ambassador of France, hosted a reception at his residence to welcome the delegation. The purpose of the POB visit is to engage with the government, diplomatic corps, and donor community on the status of polio eradication efforts in Pakistan and to advocate for decisive measures to

address the current nationwide polio outbreak. Regular visits by the Polio Oversight Board to Pakistan play a crucial role, providing a valuable opportunity to assess progress, identify challenges, and recalibrate strategies. The Embassy of France and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) are proud to support the global effort to eradicate polio. While the current polio outbreak in Pakistan poses significant challenges, we remain steadfast in our commitment to the program. This includes the \$55 million concessional loan, which comprises a \$20 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This funding, announced by the AFD in 2023 and finalized in July 2024, was made possible through a partnership with the Government of Pakistan and

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KP judicial academy holds workshop on gender-responsive HRM

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy (KPJA), in collaboration with ROZAN Pakistan, organized a two-day training workshop on "Gender-Responsive Human Resource Management" for D&SJs/Zilla Qazis, Senior Civil Judges/A'ala Ilaqa Qazis. Twenty-three (23) Judges/Qazis of various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the training workshop. The workshop was designed to arm the Judges/Qazis with essential skills and knowledge for promoting gender-responsive practices. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Barrister Ikhtiar Khan, worthy Registrar, Peshawar High Court, as the chief guest. Mr. Jehanzeb Shinwari, Director General KPJA, Mr. Zia Ur Rahman, Dean Faculty, Dr. Qazi Ataulah, Senior Director Research & Publication, Director Instructions, and other directors and officers of the Academy, and Representatives of ROZAN Pakistan, also attended the ceremony. Mr. Jehanzeb Shinwari, DG, KPJA, in his inaugural speech, welcomed the chief guest and thanked him for sparing time to grace the occasion. He also appreciated the role of ROZAN Pakistan in arranging this specialized 02-day training workshop on Gender-Responsive Human Resource Management.—APP

DC for accelerated work on uplift projects

KOHAT :Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram has directed the authorities concerned to accelerate work on uplift projects in the merged Tehsil Dara Adam Khel, adjacent to District Kohat and ensure completion of work within the given time lines. He issued these directives while chairing a meeting of the Provincial Task Force formed for the merged districts held at the district level here on Wednesday. The meeting, beside others, was also attended by the authorities concerned of the district administration, Kohat Police, Pak Army, Education, Health, C&W and relevant departments and institutions. The meeting discussed in detail the new, ongoing and proposed developmental projects of the merged Tehsil Darra Adam Khel, adjacent to Koha district, as well as the future action plan. Deputy Commissioner Kohat gave clear directions that each department and institution should prepare and submit its report and future action plan according to the timeline.—APP

Korangi's Traders, Industrialists keen to explore Ethiopian market

Ambassador Dr. Jemal said the Government of Ethiopia has undertaken the Home Grown Economic Reforms which had shown promising results, addressing macro-economic imbalances, increasing productivity, creating ease of doing business and providing a conducive environment for attracting the foreign direct investment

DNA

KARACHI: The Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) on Wednesday shown keen interest in visiting the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to explore business, trade and investment opportunities in diverse sectors of its growing economy. The trade and industrialists from KATI expressed their interest for that matter during a meeting with H.E. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, who highlighted extraordinary business, trade and investment opportunities in five major economic sectors including agriculture & agro-processing, manufacturing, mining, tourism and ICT. H.E. Ambassador Dr. Jemal said the Government of Ethiopia has undertaken the Home Grown Economic Reforms which had shown promising results, addressing macro-economic imbalances, increasing productivity, creating ease of doing business and providing a conducive environment for attract-



ing the foreign direct investment. He said the capital city of Ethiopia—Addis Ababa is a third diplomatic hub hosting a number of international conferences every year including the African Union Summit. "This shows the strategic importance of Ethiopia and safe and secure environment for the global citizens." The Ambassador expressed gratitude to the Government of Pakistan for hosting the

Single Country Exhibition in Addis Ababa in May 2025, which would eventually give a major boost to the bilateral trade between the two countries. He said Ethiopia offered a comparative advantage to the Pakistani investors in terms of strategic location, cheap, clean and green energy, skilled labour, and on top of that full fledge support from the Government. "Let us work together to achieve common

interest of enhancing trade relations between our two countries that enjoy brotherly relations for the last 66 years," he remarked. H.E. Ibrahim Tawab, Honorary Consul of the FDR Ethiopia in Karachi, also addressed the business community and urged them to penetrate in the Ethiopian market which has a huge trade and investment potential. H.E. Junaid Naqi, KATI's President, said the business community of Ko-

rangi is looking forward to the Single Country Exhibition in Addis Ababa, assuring the Ambassador of leading a delegation from KATI to the event. Later, H.E. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula planted a sapling at KATI along with its President as a follow up to the joint tree plantation drive launched by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and KATI under the Green Legacy Initiative of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

Naval Chief inaugurated Pakistan maritime science and technology park

KARACHI: The groundbreaking ceremony of Pakistan's first Maritime Science and Technology Park (PMSTP) was held at EXPO Centre during IDE-AS-2024. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the event as the Chief Guest. While addressing the ceremony, the Naval Chief highlighted historic significance of the project, stating that PMSTP will pave the way for much-needed growth in maritime sciences, technologies, businesses, and industries. He emphasized that this initiative will open new avenues for enhancing Pakistan's GDP and advancing the maritime sector. The Naval Chief further underscored that the success of PMSTP reflects strong partnerships cultivated with visionary individuals and organizations. PMSTP is the country's first dedicated maritime science park, integrating academia, industry, and government in a unique collaboration to foster growth across Pakistan's maritime sectors. The park's initiatives will target diverse fields, including Naval Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Ocean Renewable Energy, Seafood Processing, Shipbuilding, and Coastal Tourism. PMSTP is envisioned as a transformative hub for innovation and advancement, focusing on maritime science and technology to bolster Pakistan's blue economy. The project represents a significant step toward addressing Pakistan's economic challenges, with plans for expansion beyond Karachi to Islamabad, Lahore, and Gwadar.

Preventive steps during rains, snowfall discussed

DIR LOWER: A meeting under the chairmanship of Commissioner Malakand Division Amjad Ali Khan on Wednesday discussed preventive measures to avoid possible losses from rains and snowfall during the winter season. All additional deputy commissioners (Relief) and Secretary to Commissioner Malakand attended the meeting. The meeting reviewed necessary measures in detail in view of possible losses due to rains and snowfall. Commissioner Malakand directed the district administration to ensure provision of heavy machinery to all departments and stakeholders during rains and snowfall. He said that all the institutions concerned should complete preventive measures timely to avoid losses in the wake of heavy rains and snowfall.—APP

New climate change education programme launched in Pakistan

Education is recognised as a major strategy to mitigate climate change because it plays a crucial role in equipping current and future generations with the holistic knowledge and skills to address climate-related challenges at local, national, and global levels

ISLAMABAD: The International Education group of Cambridge University Press & Assessment (Cambridge) Wednesday announced the launch of a new climate literacy programme in Pakistan designed to help students develop climate awareness and become engaged in climate and sustainability issues. Pakistan's cuisine Education is recognised as a major strategy to mitigate climate change because it plays a crucial role in equip-

ping current and future generations with the holistic knowledge and skills to address climate-related challenges at local, national, and global levels. Called Cambridge Climate Quest, the programme is a two-and-a-half-hour free online course that will be available to all learners enrolled in all educational boards across Pakistan. The programme is tailored to Pakistan and students will learn about local climate change-induced events

such as the floods of 2010, the heatwave in 2017 and the current high levels of air pollution in Lahore. Students will also be able to explore some of the country's national plans and policies for climate control, such as national flood protection plans. Uzma Yousuf, Country Director, Pakistan, Cambridge University Press & Assessment is the Climate Quest Ambassador for Pakistan and will spearhead the Cambridge Climate Quest programme. Uzma

said: "Climate change education is more vital now than ever considering the challenges Pakistan and the world is facing as a result of changing climate, and weather uncertainties. This programme will play an important role in allowing students to understand climate change from both a local and global perspective and equip them with the tools to think about solutions for a greener and healthier planet through practical examples.—APP

Chairman CDA reviews ongoing initiatives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, chaired a meeting to review progress on various ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing Islamabad's infrastructure, services, and urban development. The CDA Members along with relevant senior officers attended the session. During the meeting, Chairman CDA received a detailed briefing on integrated solid waste management for the capital city. It was highlighted that the study on solid waste management has been thoroughly reviewed, and bidding documents for outsourcing the services are finalized and undergoing review. The incorporation of a specialized solid waste management company with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) is actively being pursued. The meeting was also briefed about the way forward for unsolicited proposals received by CDA. The preliminary assessments of unsolicited proposals for waste management were also discussed. The Chairman directed further evaluation of these proposals to ensure viability and efficiency of the proposals received so far. The meeting also discussed

best possible options for utilizing hotel plots in Islamabad. It was noted that two luxury hotel plots have already been offered for international auction by 17th December, 2024 targeting overseas Pakistanis and companies. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa was also briefed on IT initiatives to digitize and modernize the city's infrastructure. The recently introduced digital parking system is one of many measures aimed at enhancing service delivery for Islamabad's residents through advanced technological solutions. The meeting focused projects specifically designed for overseas Pakistanis, offering lucrative investment opportunities in Islamabad's thriving real estate sector. These projects aim to attract investments and foster economic growth while providing a platform for overseas Pakistanis to contribute to their homeland's development. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa emphasized the importance of transparency, innovation, and citizen-centric planning and efficient public service delivery in all CDA initiatives. He reaffirmed CDA's commitment to making Islamabad a model city by implementing sustainable, forward-looking, and inclusive development initiatives and projects.

HEC holds English faculty development training program

ISLAMABAD: National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) which is the national hub for the capacity building and continuous professional development of teaching faculty and management of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across Pakistan organized a much desired and long-awaited ELT Training endeavour with the collaboration of the Regional English Language Office (RELO) of the U.S. Embassy on Wednesday at HEC Islamabad. Pakistan's cuisine RELO and HEC have a long history of collaboration in terms of faculty development by providing fully funded International Resource Persons from US to Pakistan to facilitate and professionally develop and orient faculty from English departments of HEIs and affiliated Colleges with the best learning techniques and practices. RELO is part of the Public Diplomacy Section of the United States Embassy in Pakistan. RELO Pakistan supports public diplomacy outreach through professional development and English language learning opportunities for English language teachers and learners throughout Pakistan. In this regard HEC and RELO jointly organized and inaugurated the English Faculty Development Training Program at NAHE HEC Islamabad. This highly anticipated event, scheduled from 20th to 22nd November 2024, brings together English language educators from across Pakistan, particularly from Islamabad and Rawalpindi, to enhance their teaching expertise. The program focuses on three key themes aimed at addressing modern challenges and opportunities in English language education. It includes Teaching Language through Literature, Exploring Culture in the Language Classroom, and Redesigning Assignments in the Age of AI. The opening ceremony was chaired by Managing Director of NAHE, Noor Anna Malik. Addressing the audience, Malik emphasized the importance of continuous professional development for educators, stating, that empowering teachers through such training programs is a cornerstone for advancing the quality of higher education in Pakistan.—APP

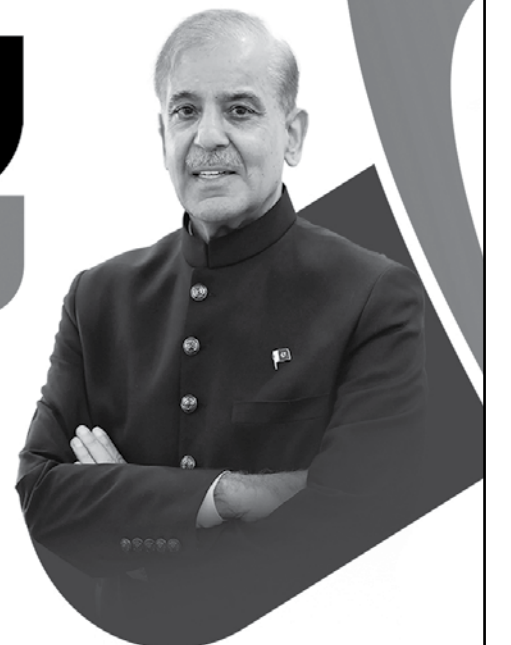
Jeeto Aik Ho Ker

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ICT 4 govt schools selected for Cambridge qualifications

The selected schools included Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-6/2, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Boys, G-6/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Boys, F-8/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-8/1, Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment on Wednesday agreed to offer Cambridge qualifications in four selected federal government schools in Islamabad. In that regard, a delegation led by Mr. Rod Smith, Group Managing Director, International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment visited the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and met with Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui to sign an MoU. Talking to the delegates, Dr. Khalid said that Cambridge is playing a positive role in imparting quality education to the youth of Pakistan. He stressed that Cambridge needs to expand the horizon of their role in Pakistan. He especially emphasised its role in creating enhance assessment capabilities of the local education boards. He said that transparency in assessment and enhanced engagement is the need of the hour. Federal Minister was briefed by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani that the MoU sets forth the understanding and cooperative framework between Cambridge and The Ministry to offer Cambridge qualifications in four selected federal government schools in Islamabad. He said the initiative aims to enhance educational standards and provide international qualification pathways for students in these schools. The selected



schools included Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-6/2, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Boys, G-6/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Boys, F-8/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for

Girls, F-8/1, Islamabad. Wani said that this MoU will introduce Cambridge Lower Secondary, IGCSE and A-Level qualifications in four designated federal government schools in Islamabad in order

to improve the quality of education by providing students with access to internationally recognized qualifications and fostering a learner-centred approach. Furthermore, he said that it will build

capacity among teaching staff to effectively deliver the Cambridge curriculum while support students in accessing diverse global opportunities for higher education and career development.

Planning minister directs sites' identification, concept paper preparation for M-SEZs

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday directed the officials concerned to identify suitable sites for the establishment of Model Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and prepare a comprehensive concept paper for the purpose. He passed these directives while chairing a meeting on Model-SEZs and the policy framework for the relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan, following a detailed briefing by officials from the Board of Investment (BOI). Stressing the need to enhance G2G (government-to-government) joint cooperation with China, he said Pakistan would provide land to Chinese industries, while they would manage the infrastructure and market these zones themselves. Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the importance of industrial zones and said that a one-window facility would be provided to these zones so that investors do not face any difficulties. He also mentioned that no negligence would be tolerated in the construction of the zones or the provision of facilities there. The planning minister further said there would be regular meetings with Chinese companies every month to address their problems promptly, if any arose. He termed the security of Chinese citizens as the 'top priority' of the government and vowed that the enemies of Pakistan and development would not be allowed to cause any dent to Pakistan-China relations.—APP

Harimau Markhor ceremony concludes successfully

The two-week joint exercise, which ran from 4 to 15 November 2024, focused on Counter-Terrorism Operations in jungle environments

ISLAMABAD: The closing ceremony of exercise HarimauMarkhor Series 2/2024 was successfully held at the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) here on Wednesday. Pakistan has significantly strengthened the military-to-military cooperation between Malaysia and Pakistan. The event was attended by Malaysia's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ambassador Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, who highlighted the exercise's success in fostering closer defence ties between Malaysia and Pakistan. The ceremony was officiated jointly by the Commander of the 2nd Infantry Division Malaysia (2 Div), Major General Dato' Hj Fazal Hj Abdul Rahman, and the Commander of the 23rd Division of the Pakistan Army, Major General Muhammad Intikhab Alam, said a press release issued by Malaysian High Commission in Islamabad. The two-week joint exercise, which ran from 4 to 15 November 2024, focused on Counter-Terrorism Operations in jungle environments. It facilitated the exchange of tactics, techniques, and procedures, along with valuable insights into Pakistan's diverse and challenging terrain. The 2nd HarimauMarkhor exercise has significantly strengthened the military-to-military relationship between Malaysia and Pakistan and developed greater understanding through the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and operational skills. The exercise involved five (5) officers and 13 personnel from the 5th Battalion of the Royal Ranger Regiment (5RRD), along with a Doctrine Evaluation Officer from the Headquarters of Army Training and Doctrine Command (MK PLDTD). The Pakistan Army was also represented by five (5) officers and 28 personnel from the 4th Light Commando Battalion (LCB). As part of the closing ceremony, attendees witnessed a Clearance of Stronghold demonstration, followed by a formal Closing Parade. During the visit, the Malaysian delegation, led by the Commander of 2 Div, conducted courtesy calls on the Commander of the 23rd Division of the Pakistan Army and the Commandant of the NCTC. The event was also attended by key dignitaries, including Malaysia's Defense Adviser in Islamabad, Colonel Noraripin Othman, the Staff Officer 1 (Operations) of 2 Div HQ, Lt Colonel Ku Syairi Ahmad, the Commanding Officer of 5 RRD, Lt Colonel Chai Kean Seng and the First Secretary of the High Commission of Malaysia in Islamabad, Mr. Muhammad Zulasri bin Rosdi.—DNA

Commerce Minister, Turkish business leader discuss trade ties

The discussion also emphasized sustainable practices in steel production and fostering innovation to meet global environmental standards. Prof. Dr. Ismail Demir expressed Turkey's commitment to strengthening economic ties and thanked the Minister for the warm hospitality

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday met with the Turkish industry leader to strengthen bilateral economic trade relations and the future plan of action for increasing business to business ties.

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan hosted Prof. Dr. Ismail Demir, Chairman of the Board of KARDEMIR (Karabuk Iron and Steel Works), Turkey, during a sideline meeting of IDEAS 2024, said a press release issued on Wednesday. The two leaders discussed

matters of mutual interest, focusing on enhancing trade, investment, and collaboration in the steel and manufacturing sectors. Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted the exemplary historical, political, and cultural ties between Pakistan and Turkey. He praised Turkey's significant advancements in defense, aerospace, and manufacturing, noting their contribution to Pakistan's industrial and defense sectors. "Our partnership with Turkey has fostered self-reliance in key industries, and there is vast potential to expand trade and investment", he said. The discussion also emphasized sustainable practices in steel produc-

tion and fostering innovation to meet global environmental standards. Prof. Dr. Ismail Demir expressed Turkey's commitment to strengthening economic ties and thanked the Minister for the warm hospitality. He presented a souvenir to the Minister as a token of goodwill. The meeting underscored the need for deeper collaboration in technology and infrastructure, with a shared vision to enhance trade opportunities and establish sustainable linkages between the steel industries of both nations. The leaders agreed on pursuing initiatives to further expand economic cooperation, benefiting both countries.

Shaza urges TikTok to use for education

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday urged TikTok to use its platform for educational purposes. "Various skills and basic education can be imparted through TikTok, and the Ministry of IT will fully support TikTok in achieving this objective," she said during a meeting with a TikTok delegation led by its Director of Public Policy, Mr. Emir Gelen. According to a news release, the meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, including the availability of quality and productive content on social media platforms. Secretary IT, Zarrar Hasham Khan, was also present during the discussion. The TikTok delegation briefed the Minister on the platform's initiatives in Pakistan and outlined upcoming programs. Shaza Fatima emphasized the importance of ensuring that quality content is accessible, noting that TikTok has a vast user base in Pakistan. The delegation assured the Minister that TikTok would prioritize meaningful and educational content.—APP

PTI's final call for protest deemed failure

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Amir Muqam, Wednesday dismissed PTI's November 24 protest call as a 'flop show,' claiming it would yield no significant results. Engr Amir Muqam, the PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President, has described Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) "Final Call" for protests at D-Chowk on November 24 as nothing more than a 'miscall.' He accused the party of attempting to provoke unrest and violence. Muqam stated that Pakistan remains committed to combating terrorism in politics, warning that those who bring terrorism into politics will face the same consequences as terrorists. He emphasized this stance as a reflection of Pakistan's dedication to eradicating extremism and promoting peace. Engr Amir Muqam claims PTI leaders are using the protest call as leverage for a deal, while simultaneously seeking behind-the-scenes apologies and concessions. Muqam stated that the PTI founder's refusal to engage with other political parties raises concerns about his political judgment and commitment to democracy. He added that by avoiding discussions, Khan appears to lack trust in the democratic process, sparking worries about his unwillingness to consider opposing viewpoints or find common ground. Federal Minister stated that Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin, should not act as the PTI founder's suicide bomber. He warned that if the law is taken into one's hands, it will intervene. Muqam also pointed out that Imran Khan has instigated a revolution by handing over the party to his wife and sister. He urged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin to focus on addressing the rising terrorism in his province rather than expending energy on federal conflicts. Imran Khan's actions have drawn criticism, with many accusing him of hypocrisy. His involvement in violent riots after his arrest on May 9, 2023, has raised doubts about his commitment to peaceful protest and democracy.—DNA



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Briefs

08 held for possessing illegal arms

RAWALPINDI :Rawalpindi Police have arrested eight illegal arm holders and recovered arms, ammunition from their possession during crackdown here on Wednesday. According to a police spokesman, Bani police held Karman and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession and 01 pistol 30 bore was also recovered from Najaf. Similarly, New Town police nabbed Zain and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his custody. While, Cantt police arrested Ibrahim and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from him. Additionally, Mandra police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Sajid. Following operation, Jatlai police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Bashir Ahmed. Dharmyal police recovered 01 rifle 12 bore from Mudassar and 01 pistol 30 bore was seized from Ghulam Abbas. Police have registered 8 cases against the accused and further investigation has been started. Divisional SPs commended police teams said that strict action will be continued against those carrying illegal weapons.—APP

Naqvi pays tribute to martyred soldiers

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a security forces checkpoint in the Bannu region. In a statement, Naqvi expressed his profound sorrow over the loss of 12 soldiers who embraced martyrdom while valiantly defending the nation. Paying tribute to the martyrs, Naqvi stated, "The brave sons of our homeland sacrificed their lives to thwart the nefarious designs of terrorists. They are the true heroes of our nation." He extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs, assuring them of unwavering support. "We stand with the families of the martyrs and will always support them," Naqvi said.—APP

Housemaid, nephew arrested for jewellery theft

RAWALPINDI: The Morgah Police have arrested a housemaid and her nephew for stealing jewellery from the house of her owner and recovered its sale proceeds of Rs 3.4 million from them. Accused Mansab Mai had stolen jewellery from the house, which was sold by her nephew Abdul Waheed, a police spokesman said on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Naseerabad Police nabbed an accused Abbas for killing Shahi Gul over a business dispute and also recovered the weapon used in the murder. One of his accomplices was already in custody while the police were conducting raids to arrest the rest, the spokesman said. The Naseerabad Police had registered a case against the accused on the complaint of the deceased's brother, he added.—APP

PTA, NERA sign an agreement for next-gen broadband services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has acquired consultancy services of National Economic Research Associates Inc (NERA) for "Release of IMT Spectrum for Improvement of Next Generation Mobile Broadband Services in Pakistan. According to news release the contract was signed on November, 5 2024, accordingly. Stakeholder consultation has been initiated, consultant will recommend to government on salient features of upcoming spectrum release process including proposed reforms, spectrum valuation and auction design. The process will most likely be completed by April 2025.—APP

Ahsan proposes GSP-Plus to get export-led economic growth

Addressing the gathering, Ahsan Iqbal called for seizing the opportunity to strengthen governance and build resilience and position Pakistan as a globally competitive economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday proposed a multi-pronged strategy, aligning the GSP-Plus programme with the 5Es framework to get export-led economic growth secure a prosperous future for Pakistan. "The GSP-plus programme represents more than just trade preferences. It is a roadmap for sustainable development and good governance. By aligning it with the 5Es framework, we can unlock the true potential of export-led growth, empower our citizens and secure a prosperous future for Pakistan," he said. The minister was speaking as the guest speaker at a conference titled "Promoting Good Governance through Trade - Leveraging through GSP+," organized by Fredrick Naumann Foundation. Addressing the gathering, Ahsan Iqbal called for seizing the opportunity to strengthen governance and build resilience and position Pakistan as a globally compet-

itive economy. "Together we can ensure that trade becomes not only a driver of economic prosperity but also a catalyst for equity, transparency and sustainability," he added. Despite the successes, he said challenges remained, adding weak enforcement of laws, low diversification of exports and environmental vulnerabilities needed immediate attention to maximize the benefits of GSP-Plus and align with 5Es framework - Exports, E-Pakistan, Environment and Climate Change, Energy and Infrastructure, Equity and Empowerment. Elaborating his proposed strategy, the minister suggested establishing export diversification centers with incentives for green technologies and high-value products. He asked for setting up a National Compliance Task Force to oversee GSP-plus implementation and address gaps in governance on permanent/quarterly basis. "I hope this task force will be set up soon and with this we can have a permanent institutional mechanism", he added. Besides, the minister called for strengthening public-private part-

nership to modernize industries, enhance skills and adopt innovation. He proposed investing in export-oriented energy projects to ensure affordable and reliable energy for exporters and leveraging digitization for enhanced transparency in trade practices and reduce inefficiencies. The planning minister said trade and governance were deeply interconnected; and through deliberated efforts, "We can harness this relationship to derive sustainable development and enhance transparency and uplift lives of millions of Pakistanis", he said. The GSP+ programme introduced in 2014, he said, had been a cornerstone of Pakistan's export strategy, enabling duty free or reduced tariff and access to European Union, a market of over 500 million consumers. Over the past decade, he said Pakistan's exports to EU had grown by more than 100 per cent reaching almost up to \$10 billion with trade volume of textile and apparel sectors. "GSP-plus is a very important mechanism for Pakistan because it helps Pakistan mitigate its climate change vul-

nerability. Instruments like this have really helped Pakistan to mitigate the effects of climate disaster we faced in 2022 and feared in future," he said. This preferential access was more than an economic boost, Ahsan Iqbal said, as it reflected a partnership based on shared values, human rights, labour standards, environmental protection and good governance. By demonstrating our commitment to the 27 international conventions under the GSP-plus framework, Pakistan has positioned itself as a responsible and competitive global partner", he said. At the heart of Pakistan's development vision, he said, was the 5Es framework, Exports, E-Pakistan, Environment and Climate Change, Energy and Infrastructure, Equity and Empowerment. "Among these pillars, export-led growth is our top priority and the GSP-plus schemes serve as vital drivers of this strategy", he maintained. The Planning minister said the GSP-plus had enabled Pakistan to diversify its trade portfolio and enter new markets. "For exports to the EU accounted

for nearly 33% our total exports in 2023 and this access has directly created millions of jobs, particularly in text, leather and agro-industries", he added. However, he said the potential was even greater to achieve the export-led growth target of \$60 billion by 2030, adding "We must capitalize on GSP plus by moving up the value chains, producing high-end garments, sustainable goods and technology-driven products." "The GSP-plus aligns with our digital vision where smart supply chains, e-commerce platforms and digital compliance mechanisms enable faster, transparent and more competitive exports," he highlighted. Ahsan Iqbal said environmental sustainability was a core focus of the GSP-plus conventions, from reducing industrial emissions to investing in green technologies. "Compliance with these standards enhances our global reputation and aligns with our broader commitment to combat climate change under our future Pakistan Vision 2047, which is under development," he remarked.

POL imports up by 1.68% to \$5.11 bln in 4 months

ISLAMABAD, Nov 20 (APP): The petroleum group imports increased by 1.68 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year as compared to the imports of the same months of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The imports of overall petroleum group during July-October (2024-25) stood at \$5,113.616 million as against the imports of \$5,029.009 million during July-October (2023-24), according to PBS data. Among petroleum commodities, the import of petroleum products declined by 18.89 percent, from \$ 2,161.831 million last year to \$1,753.458 million during the time period under review. However, the imports of petroleum crude increased by 16.80 percent, from \$1,486.957 million to \$1,736.712 million; natural gas liquefied by 10.97 percent, from \$1,176.718 million to \$1,305.831 million whereas the imports of petroleum gas liquefied went up by 56.03 percent and reached \$203.463 million as compared to \$317.472 million last year. The imports of all other petroleum group products also increased by 257.50 percent and went up to \$0.004 million from \$0.0143 million. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the petroleum group imports witnessed decrease of 30.55 percent during the month of October 2024 as compared to the same month of last year. The petroleum imports during October 2024 were recorded at \$1,060.601 million against the imports of \$1,527.147 million during October 2023. On a month-on-month basis, the petroleum imports into the country, decreased by 23.61 percent during October 2024, as compared to the imports of \$1,388,420 million in September 2024, according to the data. It is pertinent to mention here that the merchandise exports from the country increased by 13.45 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year. Exports during July-October (2024-25) were recorded at \$10.880 billion against \$9.590 billion during July-October (2023-24), according to PBS data.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan Siddiqui called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

OGDCL accelerates tight gas exploration with strategic initiative

To support this ambitious initiative, OGDCL announced an international tender on March 7, 2024, for an Integrated Study of Tight Gas Prospectivity Evaluation

ISLAMABAD: Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Pakistan's industry leader in exploration and production (E&P), is making significant strides in the development of the country's unconventional hydrocarbon resources. This follows incentives introduced by government under the new tight gas policy in 2024, which offers a 40% premium over the 2012 policy price to promote the exploration and commercial exploitation of tight gas, said a news release. OGDCL has already made notable progress in this area, with the successful production of its first tight gas well, Nur West-1, followed by additional wells to be fracked through in-house expertise. As part of its ongoing efforts to unlock the full potential of Pakistan's tight gas resources, OGDCL has launched a comprehensive study to assess tight gas prospectivity across key areas in the Lower Indus

Basin, Sindh. To support this ambitious initiative, OGDCL announced an international tender on March 7, 2024, for an Integrated Study of Tight Gas Prospectivity Evaluation. After a rigorous two-stage evaluation process involving 11 international bidders and 7 shortlisted companies, Schlumberger (M/s SLB) was selected as the preferred contractor. The selection was based on Schlumberger's proven technical capabilities and financial competitiveness. The study, which will identify the most promising tight gas areas and wells, will play a crucial role in shaping OGDCL's future drilling and production strategies. Upon completion, the study will pinpoint optimal locations for new wells, as well as re-entry opportunities for existing wells, to conduct hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and unlock gas from tight reservoirs. This will help OGDCL to commercialize tight gas

resources on a fast-track basis, helping to meet Pakistan's growing energy needs. OGDCL's partnership with Schlumberger is a key milestone in its ongoing efforts to leverage advanced technologies and best practices in unconventional resource development. This collaboration is expected to bring valuable expertise and innovation to Pakistan's tight gas sector, ensuring the sustainable and efficient exploitation of the country's hydrocarbon resources. Based on regional studies and using preliminary data, it is estimated the total prospective resource of Pakistan's tight gas is 25.2 TCF. On its part, OGDCL plans to execute 25 wells, with an initial production potential of 60-75 MMSCFD and an estimated reserve of 75-90 BCF over the next 5 years. Through this strategic initiative, OGDCL reaffirms its commitment to driving Pakistan's energy security and contributing.—APP

ANF seizes over 83 kg drugs; arrests 7 suspects

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations managed to recover over 83 kg drugs worth Rs 10 million and arrested 7 suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Wednesday. He informed that 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested on KKH Road in Haripur. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In another operation, 2 kg heroin and 1 kg ice were recovered from the trolley bag of a passenger going to Doha at Peshawar International Airport. 43.2 kg hashish and 16.8 kg opium hidden in secret cavities of a vehicle was recovered near Ravi Toll Plaza Lahore and an accused was arrested during the operation. 13.2 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of a drug dealer netted near Kot Momin, Sargodha. A total of 4.6 kg hashish was recovered from two accused held on M-1 Motorway, Islamabad. 1.3 kg ice was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up on Sakhi Sarwar Road in Dera Ghazi Khan.—APP

Pak needs political stability: Nusrat

In response to a question, Nusrat Khan said that we must understand that Pakistan has changed

ISLAMABAD: Political and social leader Nusrat Khan has said that there is a need to bring stability to national politics today. Political tension harms both the country and the nation. In a statement, Nusrat Khan stated that Pakistan is once again caught in crises. It is regrettable that those responsible for resolving the country's issues are, in fact, the ones responsible for creating them. In response to a question, Nusrat Khan said that we must understand that Pakistan has changed. Today, from Khyber to Karachi, the common Pakistani is well aware of the underlying causes of our problems. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend the rapidly changing circumstances instead of using outdated tactics from the past. Otherwise, the harsh realities of the situation could easily consign those imposing their will upon us to the dustbin of history.—DNA



WHO Regional Director for Europe hails excellent organization of COP29

ISLAMABAD :Teymur Musayev, Azerbaijan's Minister of Health, met with Hans Henri Kluge, the WHO Regional Director for Europe, on the margins of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Minister Musayev emphasized Azerbaijan's strong commitment to cooperation with esteemed health institutions, including the WHO, according to Azerbaijan news agency Azertac. Highlighting the significance of the Global Climate Conference in Baku, he also noted that Azerbaijan has officially joined the ATACH and will serve as a co-organizer of the Alliance from 2024 to 2026.—APP

China, Pakistan boost vocational edu collaboration in new energy vehicles

Nearly 100 government officials and enterprise leaders from China and Pakistan witnessed the official commencement of the international teaching resource project in energy-saving and new energy vehicles under the China-Pakistan Digital Education Alliance

DNA

BEIJING: China and Pakistan will boost vocational education collaboration in new energy vehicles, according to China Economic Net (CEN). A seminar on Developing International Teaching Resources in Energy-saving and New Energy Vehicles was held in Hunan Automotive Engineering Vocational University recently. Nearly 100 government officials and en-

terprise leaders from China and Pakistan witnessed the official commencement of the international teaching resource project in energy-saving and new energy vehicles under the China-Pakistan Digital Education Alliance. According to Yin Wanjian, President of Hunan Automotive Engineering Vocational University, they will introduce Chinese new energy vehicle technologies and cases in keeping with the current status and development goals of Pa-

kistan's new energy industry into the international teaching resource project. "China-Pakistan cooperation in vocational education holds great significance. We hope that through the international teaching resource project in energy-saving and new energy vehicles, Pakistani youth can benefit from the latest technological progress in China to further enrich their knowledge and enhance their skills, thereby contributing to the well-being of the peo-

ple of the two countries," said Mehr Shahid Zaman Lak, Chief Operating Officer of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA), Government of Punjab. In the seminar, participants engaged in discussions on the feasibility of setting up international standards, curriculum systems and joint construction of a workshop for highly skilled talents in energy-saving and new energy vehicles in Pakistan.

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COP29 and BRI

AS world leaders gather in Baku, Azerbaijan, for the UN climate change conference Cop29, an opportunity has arisen to align climate action with economic initiatives, in particular the Belt and Road Initiative. One of the largest infrastructure programmes in history, the Chinese initiative was launched in 2013 to enhance global connectivity and economic integration across Asia, Europe and Africa. Recognising the environmental challenges, China is focusing on a green transformation of the Belt and Road Initiative. With participation from over 140 countries and about US\$1 trillion invested since its inception, the initiative holds enormous potential for promoting sustainable development. Azerbaijan, as Cop29 host, and China, as architect of a green Belt and Road Initiative, can work together to support the initiative's evolution. Nearly every belt and road country is represented at Cop29, united by a shared goal: to make their projects and nations greener and more sustainable. This is an excellent starting point for collaboration. In particular, Cop29 can catalyse the "greening" of the belt and road by acting as a platform for the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition (BRIGC). Established in 2019, the BRIGC is a collaborative platform that brings together governments, corporations and environmental organisations to promote sustainable practices within the belt and road framework. Its primary responsibility is to ensure the projects meet high environmental criteria and contribute to global sustainability objectives. For the BRIGC, Cop29 provides an excellent opportunity to form strategic partnerships and share knowledge. By fostering collaborations with global partners, the BRIGC can enhance the Belt and Road Initiative's capacity to implement green technologies and practices across diverse regions. Chinese President Xi Jinping unveils 8-point vision for nation's Belt and Road Initiative at forum This collaborative environment is critical to the scaling up of successful green initiatives and to ensure their widespread adoption. Through dialogues and workshops, the BRIGC can exchange best practices and innovative solutions for green infrastructure. Such knowledge-sharing is vital for the replicating of successful models and to overcome the challenges in different belt and road countries, and can accelerate the achievement of sustainability targets. China is firmly committed to the energy transition, with a US\$676 billion investment in green technology last year, leading global investment in this sector with its 38 per cent share. Since its 2021 pledge to curb overseas coal financing, its green energy investments under the Belt and Road Initiative have been rising, reaching US\$7.9 billion last year for solar and wind energy projects, and US\$1.6 billion for hydropower. Over the next two decades, China intends to increase its efforts by investing over US\$6 trillion in low-carbon power generation and clean energy technologies. Cop29 should draw more attention to these efforts and promote investment and innovation so green belt and road programmes can meet their ambitious goals. For example, Cop29 brings together stakeholders from all over the world, providing an excellent chance for Chinese state-owned enterprises and private organisations that are pioneers in the renewable energy industry to network, collaborate and scale up their initiatives globally. Exhibitions and demonstrations of solar, wind and smart grid technologies by Chinese companies can inspire similar investments globally, accelerating the shift to renewable energy.

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Multilateral institutions

IN less than a month, the world has been swept up in a whirlwind of diplomatic activities, with the BRICS summit, APEC 2024, and the G20 summit all taking place in quick succession. These multilateral institutions are indicative of the shifting sands of global aspirations and priorities among members. The aspirations of the global majority - sometimes euphemistically called the Global South - have featured strongly in all these meetings. Ongoing cross-border economic collaboration by way of intensified trade and investment flows is a common theme among the global majority. The ability to pursue such relationships, without fear of being sanctioned or punished by historically dominant Western powers, featured strongly at the BRICS meeting in Kazan. There, participants agreed to strengthen trade and financial settlement in local currencies, study feasibility of an independent cross-border settlement and depositary infrastructure. BRICS nations seek mechanisms to pursue national economic development free from the pernicious financial architecture of the post-World War II Bretton Woods institutional set-up. In particular, the focus on the use of local currencies in financial transactions between BRICS countries and their trading partners, as well as the feasibility of establishment of an independent cross-border settlement are central to this focus. The recently concluded APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima reinforced a widespread commitment from participants to open trade as a foundation of economic development among nations. This has been a cornerstone of APEC from its very beginning, and most participants remain committed to the pursuit of open trade. "We acknowledge the importance of, and will continue to work to deliver a free, open, fair, nondiscriminatory, transparent, inclusive and predictable trade and investment environment," the leaders of the 21-member APEC said in a statement adopted at the end of their two-day summit in Lima, Peru. Americans have signalled a reluctance on this front. As nations of the global majority are seeking expanded trade and non-discriminatory interconnectedness, the US appears to be drawing away from such commitments. Over the years, the US has systematically blocked the appointment of new Appellate Body members and judges and de facto impeded the work of the WTO appeal mechanism. The weaponization of the US dollar and SWIFT messaging system has further undermined the dependability of post-World War II cross-border institutions. The threat of the expansion of tariffs raises further questions about the extent to which the US is committed to open multilateralism. As for the G20, the host nation, Brazil, has long declared a three-point agenda, namely combating hunger, poverty and inequality; focusing on three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental); and the reform of global governance. These topics have been chosen keeping the objective of reducing inequalities at the heart of the reform effort as is reflected in the motto of the Brazilian presidency, "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet." In their own ways, developing countries in BRICS, APEC and G20 are making it clear that the majority of nations seek institutions and approaches that can facilitate greater collaboration and coordination in the name of economic development and shared prosperity. They also recognise that many of the challenges today transcend national boundaries, and require collective action.

Settler monster is stealing Jerusalem's authentic tale

Daoud Kuttab

This decision came after the General Custodian saw an opportunity to evict Castro because he was carrying out renovation work. With time and general weather conditions, the cafe's walls had become dilapidated. Without realizing he needed to get a permit to fix the wall, Castro fell afoul of a legal loophole. Him carrying out renovation work without permission was considered sufficient justification to request his eviction. After several legal battles, the Israeli High Court approved the eviction decision and, on Sunday, Israeli police came to the small cafe and took away all its contents in trucks. It is unclear who will take over the location, but the likely new tenant will be a settler, causing yet another point of provocation for all the other shops in the area

AS diplomatic envoys and politicians are trying to bring a ceasefire to Lebanon and possibly then to Gaza, the right-wing Israeli government is using this preoccupation with the north and the south to strengthen itself in the center. Jerusalem, the jewel in the crown for the Palestinians, is witnessing an unprecedented and largely unreported campaign to make the Old City and the nearby surroundings more Israeli. While Israeli religious fanatics are looking to set foot in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound (possibly by taking over the Bab Al-Rahma Mosque area), the bigger campaigns are happening in Silwan and Musrara. Silwan, which is the closest highly populated Palestinian housing area to Al-Aqsa, has been a target of the settler movement for years. Palestinian homes and centers are being demolished and replaced by Jewish settlers and institutions. Naturally, with every house taken over by the settlers, an army of guards, cameras and fences are created, taking over even more property. In Silwan, Israel has delineated the nearest built-up area to the Old City of Jerusalem, Al-Bustan, and marked it for takeover using a variety of legal and administrative means. Among the homes and centers that the Israelis have demolished using a different legal justification was a cultural center that the French government had been supporting for years. Last week's destruction of the center brought a quick and strong French response. French Foreign Ministry spokesperson Christophe Lemoine expressed concerns over the action, calling it "part of the Israeli colonization policy which is illegal under international law and threatens the two-state solution and the status of Jerusalem." Another location that has been the target of Israeli settler activity is the Musrara shopping area just outside the Damascus

Gate. This area received a jolt when the Israeli authorities evicted a small coffee shop that had been operating in the same location for decades. Castro Cafe in the Musrara neighborhood might not have been known to many Jerusalemites, although they must have passed by it on their way to or from the Old City. This modest cafe catered to customers who were either passing workers or people waiting for someone to call them to do a quick job. However, for many, it has now become symbolic of the Palestinians' struggle for the city's identity and its tolerant, pluralistic character, as opposed to the monolithic, intolerant character that dominates. Mohammed Awda Castro had owned the small business in the Musrara neighborhood since 1954, when he rented it from the Jordanian government, which ruled East Jerusalem at the time. Castro says that, in 2010, an eviction order was issued by the Israeli authorities. After he appealed the eviction, the Israeli Central Court issued an order allowing him to remain, while denying him the tenant protection rights that apply to Jerusalem. But settlers, along with the Israeli authorities, continued to go to court to evict him from the cafe and they finally got what they wanted when the Supreme Court issued a decision to evict him. This decision came after the General Custodian saw an opportunity to evict Castro because he was carrying out renovation work. With time and general weather conditions, the cafe's walls had become dilapidated. Without realizing he needed to get a permit to fix the wall, Castro fell afoul of a legal loophole. Him carrying out renovation work without permission was considered sufficient justification to request his eviction. After several legal battles, the Israeli High Court approved the eviction decision

and, on Sunday, Israeli police came to the small cafe and took away all its contents in trucks. It is unclear who will take over the location, but the likely new tenant will be a settler, causing yet another point of provocation for all the other shops in the area. It is known that Musrara, which is considered the first entrance to the Old City, is a historical neighborhood. It is considered to be one of the first neighborhoods built outside the walls of the Old City after the Ottoman Empire allowed it in 1830. So, its buildings are characterized by the Ottoman architectural style, like in other neighborhoods that were built outside the Old City, such as Katamon and Sheikh Jarrah. In the Roman era, the area was used as a slave market. It was also called the Aqbat Al-Manzel Road in the Ottoman period, as it connected Jerusalem and Hebron. The Castro Cafe will not be the last of the shops, homes and centers to disappear from the areas outside the city walls. Israel is replacing an entire Jerusalemite Palestinian neighborhood with Jewish settlers. Along with the campaign against Silwan, the Israelis are rushing through their actions while the world is busy with the ceasefire talks in Lebanon and the war on Gaza. With these actions, it is not only physical buildings that will disappear, but also the story of a city struggling over its narrative. Jerusalem will lose its authentic tale in the face of this monster coming toward it with the clear aim of changing it, literally under Palestinian feet and in front of their own eyes. The overarching Israeli goals are completely divorced from the natural development that most cities witness. The lesson is primarily aimed at the Palestinian people of Jerusalem - namely that the city they would like to see as their capital will never be theirs.

• Daoud Kuttab is an award-winning Palestinian journalist

The West can't have it both ways on overcapacity

Boris Babicand Herman Cappelen

The overcapacity argument is often reinforced by the claim that this manufacturing ability has been achieved unfairly - through government support of China's clean energy expertise and manufacturing. Yet upon closer inspection, the claim is equally hypocritical. Many important industries would not have come to fruition absent significant government support. This July, the US announced US\$160 million in grants for the clean manufacturing of steel and other construction materials. This follows a long tradition of US...

POLITICAL hypocrisy is a contradiction between a state's professed ideals and actual practices - an inconsistency that undermines the coherence of its professed moral and political views. As philosophers, we would say that, at its core, hypocrisy violates the principle of non-contradiction: if you simultaneously hold and act against a particular value, you engage in a form of self-defeating reasoning. The hypocritical agent is thereby legitimately seen as immoral, deceptive and lacking in seriousness. At any rate, the agent loses credibility and undermines the integrity of their political relationships with their counterparts. In academia, we are interested in how hypocrisy affects multilateral relationships and political trust. At the moment, we have a particularly glaring case of hypocrisy - the destructive tariffs against Chinese electric vehicles (EVs). The ongoing debate over electric vehicles provides a vivid illustration of political hypocrisy and its damaging consequences. Major Western nations have been scrambling to impose extraordinary tariffs on electric vehicles made in China, as well as photovoltaic solar cells and lithium-ion batteries. In May, the United States announced it would increase its tariffs on electric vehicles made in China to 100 per cent. The changes were implemented in September. Canada soon followed suit, also announcing a 100 per cent tariff. Then, in October, the European Union decided via a contentious qualified majority vote to impose its own tariffs of up to 45 per cent. Given the extraordinary size of these duties, it seems more appropriate to see them almost as import bans. The pressure to impose such bans will only increase with the re-election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States. The arguments for these near import bans are at their core hypocritical along three dimensions: overcapacity, state support and public international law. Overcapacity has been a trendy term

of late - used as the basis of an accusation levelled against Chinese manufacturing of electric vehicles, namely, that China is somehow engaging in unethical trading behaviour. But it is a strange accusation because it is far from clear why overcapacity is bad. The World Trade Organization, just like its predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, allows for measures against state-supported dumping practices. Dumping was understood to consist of exporting a product at a lower price than what it would be sold for inside one's own country. Dumping is the mirror image of a tariff - tariffs make other countries' products more expensive in one's own country while dumping makes your product cheaper in other countries. But overcapacity is not dumping. Rather, overcapacity entails constructing larger manufacturing capability than the current demand calls for. On its own, this is nothing to fear. Indeed, absent growing demand it will ultimately hurt the manufacturer. Moreover, Western nations have pervasively engaged in similar overcapacity in strategic sectors. For example, American soybean manufacturers are ramping up their manufacturing and planning to increase their output by 23 per cent in the next three years, according to a report by CoBank, to gain an edge in renewable fuel material manufacturing. The overcapacity argument is often reinforced by the claim that this manufacturing ability has been achieved unfairly - through government support of China's clean energy expertise and manufacturing. Yet upon closer inspection, the claim is equally hypocritical. Many important industries would not have come to fruition absent significant government support. This July, the US announced US\$160 million in grants for the clean manufacturing of steel and other construction materials. This follows a long tradition of US government support for the steel industry. Interestingly, the Truman administration pushed heavily for capacity expansion in steel, precisely in part so

that American steel manufacturers could gain an advantage in the international steel trade. Meanwhile, Canada has supported its softwood lumber manufacturers at every level of government for decades. Most glaringly, the countries imposing tariffs on EVs made in China have their own subsidies and tax breaks for EVs, such as the US' clean vehicle tax credits and Canada's Incentives for Zero-Emissions Vehicles programme. If we are correct above - and the charges of overcapacity are just hypocrisy in disguise - how can these tariffs possibly survive review by the WTO? Ordinarily, the most-favoured-nation and national treatment principles would require treating EVs made in China on par with the most favourably treated foreign manufacturers or domestic manufacturers. This is especially curious given that even modest tariffs would historically have been held up in mediation and arbitration for years, as was the case in the US-Canada softwood lumber dispute, which passed through the North American Free Trade Agreement, the WTO and bilateral rounds of negotiation. However, the Trump administration blocked appointments to the WTO's Appellate Body, causing it to lose quorum and become irrelevant since 2019. The Joe Biden administration has maintained the Trump policy and has not permitted appointments to the WTO's dispute-resolution body, exacerbating what is referred to as the Appellate Body crisis. As a result, public international law governing trade has become crippled. In imposing such extraordinary tariffs outside the agreed-upon legal mechanisms and sabotaging the very institutions designed to guard against this, the US and other Western economies contradict their stance as defenders of fair trade and multilateralism. Hence, political hypocrisy is not only creating an environment that is inhospitable to trade, it is eroding the very institutions that are designed to protect us from such an environment.

Briefs

Fawad Ch seeks apology in contempt case

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry requested an apology during the hearing of the contempt case against him in the Election Commission. The hearing was conducted by a four-member commission, led by Member Sindh Nisar Durran, in which Fawad Chaudhry appeared. Fawad Chaudhry stated before the commission that he had apologised in all three cases and had submitted an apology letter. In response, Justice Ikramullah, Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, remarked that the charge was to be framed today, to which Fawad Chaudhry pleaded for an apology. The commission member asked if he was saying the same things outside the commission or if there was a difference. Fawad Chaudhry replied, "These days, you are not the center of attention; you forget others' matters but remember mine." The commission member noted that witnesses in the case should mark their attendance. The Election Commission then adjourned the case hearing until December 10.

Israel 'cannot impose conditions'

BEIRUT: Hezbollah's leader delivered a defiant speech on Wednesday saying Israel cannot impose its conditions for a truce, as US envoy Amos Hochstein headed from Lebanon to Israel to try to end the war. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar, in a near-simultaneous statement, said any ceasefire deal must ensure Israel has the "freedom to act" against Hezbollah. Hochstein announced in Lebanon that he would head to Israel on Wednesday to try to seal a ceasefire agreement in the war in Lebanon, which escalated in late September after nearly a year of deadly exchanges of fire across Israel's northern border. Israel expanded the focus of its operations from Gaza to Lebanon, vowing to secure the north and allow tens of thousands of people displaced by the cross-border fire to return home. - Agencies

40 killed in Sudan attack

PORT SUDAN: A medic on Wednesday said 40 people were killed "by gunshot wounds" during a paramilitary attack on the Sudanese village of Wad Oshaib in the central state of Al-Jazira. Eyewitnesses in the village told AFP the Rapid Support Forces, at war with the army since April 2023, attacked the village on Tuesday evening. "The attack resumed this morning," one eyewitness said by phone Wednesday, adding that paramilitary fighters were "looting property." - Agencies

Naqvi, Saudi minister agree on slew of bilateral benefits

They also talked about the exchange of paramilitary forces, joint training programmes

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met Saudi Arabia's Deputy Interior Minister Dr Nasir bin Abdulaziz Al-Dawood, who was accompanied by Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saad Ahmed Al-Malki. During the meeting, the leaders discussed matters of mutual interest, including the strengthening of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relations. They also talked about the exchange of paramilitary forces and police officers, as well as joint training programmes. Minister Naqvi proposed declaring Islamabad and Riyadh twin cities, a suggestion that was agreed upon by the Saudi minister. It was decided that further necessary steps would be taken in this regard. The conversation also covered the crackdown on the mafia sending beggars from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia. Both leaders agreed to implement a prisoner exchange agreement between the two countries. Minister Naqvi mentioned that legal proceedings for the repatriation of 419 Pakistani prisoners from Saudi Arabia would be completed soon. He emphasised that Saudi Arabia was a close Islamic brotherly country, and Pakistan would offer full cooperation to promote bilateral ties. He also shared that 4,300 beggars' names had been added to the Exit Control List (ECL), with a zero-tolerance policy towards beggars travelling to Saudi Arabia. A nationwide crackdown was underway against this mafia. Furthermore, Minister Naqvi announced that no visa would be required for Saudi citizens to visit Pakistan, allowing



them to visit at any time. Praising Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030, Minister Naqvi expressed confidence that Saudi Arabia would emerge as a global leader in economic, social, and cultural sectors by 2030 under its current leadership. On his part, Saudi Deputy Minister Al-Dawood reaffirmed the strong ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and expressed a desire to further enhance cooperation, particularly in the exchange of paramilitary forces, police, and joint training initiatives. Meanwhile, The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has launched an investigation into 25 Pakistani workers who were deported from Saudi Arabia, allegedly for begging. According to sources within the FIA claimed that these individuals were not beggars, but rather Iqama holders who had been imprisoned in Saudi Arabia for various cases, including complaints filed by their Saudi sponsors. It is worth mentioning here that the Pakistani government is tightening its grip on begging in Saudi Arabia by introducing a stringent Umrah policy. As per details, the

move aims to curb the begging mafia that has been tarnishing Pakistan's image in the holy land. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has decided to take drastic measures against beggars, including obtaining an affidavit from pilgrims before departing for Umrah, promising not to beg. Those who violate this affidavit will face strict legal action. To further prevent begging, Umrah pilgrims will only be allowed to travel in groups, not individually. This measure ensures that pilgrims are accountable for their actions and are less likely to engage in begging.

CNS inaugurates maritime science and technology park

PMSTP is the country's first dedicated maritime science park, integrating academia, industry, and government in a unique collaboration to foster growth across Pakistan's maritime sectors



NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The groundbreaking ceremony of Pakistan's first Maritime Science and Technology Park (PMSTP) was held at EXPO Centre during IDEAS-2024. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the event as the Chief Guest. While addressing the ceremony, the Naval Chief highlighted historic significance of the project, stating that PMSTP will pave the way for much-needed growth in maritime sciences, technologies, businesses, and industries. He emphasized that this initiative will open new avenues for enhancing Pakistan's GDP and advancing the maritime sector. The Naval Chief further underscored that the success of PM-

STP reflects strong partnerships cultivated with visionary individuals and organizations. PMSTP is the country's first dedicated maritime science park, integrating academia, industry, and government in a unique collaboration to foster growth across Pakistan's maritime sectors. The park's initiatives will target diverse fields, including Naval Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Ocean Renewable Energy, Seafood Processing, Shipbuilding, and Coastal Tourism. PMSTP is envisioned as a transformative hub for innovation and advancement, focusing on maritime science and technology to bolster Pakistan's blue economy. The project represents a significant step toward addressing Pakistan's economic challenges, with plans for expansion beyond Karachi to Islamabad, Lahore, and Gwadar.

SC judge annoyed over judiciary's global ranking

"I don't know where these numbers emerge from," says Justice Mandokhail during constitutional bench hearing

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail has expressed annoyance over global bodies' rankings of Pakistan's judiciary, which place it extremely low. "I do not know where these numbers emerge from. Some place our judiciary on 120 while others on 150," he said during a hearing conducted by the constitutional bench over litigants' lack of access to the apex court. World Justice Project's Rule of Law index for the year 2024 shows Pakistan's global ranking at number 129 out of a total of 142 countries assessed, which is a slight improvement from the previous year. Justice Mandokhail is part of the constitutional bench - led by Justice Aminuddin Khan - formed under the 26th Constitutional Amendment. Apart from Justices Khan and Mandokhail, the bench includes five other members - Justice Ayesha Malik, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, and Justice Musarrat Hilali. Multiple pleas were heard by the constitutional bench today, which included a lack of petitioners' access to SC and government employees who were not assigned duties. A petition was also heard against declaring the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) as a parliamentary party. The SC heard a petition regarding the lack of access for litigants to the country's highest court. During the proceedings, the petitioner argued that 90% of litigants are unable to approach the Supreme Court, highlighting the challenges faced by the public in seeking justice. Responding to the claim, Justice Mandokhail remarked that the petitioner's arguments were being heard directly, questioning what further access was required. Justice Mandokhail also expressed annoyance, stating that such petitions undermine the institution itself. Referring to international rankings, he noted that while some claim Pakistan's judiciary ranks 120th globally and others 150th, it remains unclear where these figures originate. After deliberation, the constitutional bench ultimately dismissed the petition. Moving on, the seven-member bench heard a petition challenging the declaration of the SIC as a parliamentary party. The petitioner argued that the petition had been submitted within the prescribed time frame; however, now, a review plea was currently pending.

Naeemi blames 'typo' in CII statement

Using social media for blasphemy, religious hatred, extremism is "un-Islamic", says CII chief

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: As the federal government gears up for a crackdown on unregistered virtual private networks (VPNs), Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Chairman Dr Raghib Hussain Naeemi clarified on Wednesday that there was a "clerical error" in its previous statement which caused confusion that the use of these encrypted networks is against the shariah. "No one has declared the VPNs against shariah or un-Islamic," said Naeemi in a press conference in Islamabad, adding: "A typing error in our previous statement created a misunderstanding after 'not' was omitted from it." This formal statement came after the council's November 15 fatwa (Islamic decree) declaring the use of VPNs "un-Islamic" drew much criticism from different quarters. He said that the council held a session to discuss the use of social media in the country in light of the Islamic principles. Elaborating on the CII's stance on using social media platforms, Naeemi said that these platforms are effective mediums of public expression, however, they should not be used for blasphemy, religious hatred, extremism, and terrorism.

SC removes Justice Ayesha from bench

The matter of military courts has been referred to Judicial Commission for nomination of 7th member

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A three-member constitutional committee of the Supreme Court has removed Justice Ayesha Malik from the seven-member constitutional bench hearing intra-court appeals regarding the May 9 military court trials. The third meeting of the constitutional committee, chaired by Justice Aminuddin Khan and attended by Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Muhammad Ali Mazhar, reviewed the scheduling of cases related to civilian trials in military courts. Meeting minutes revealed that Justice Ayesha Malik had already heard the May 9 military courts case, and the pending appeal will now be heard by a reconstituted seven-member bench. The matter of military courts has been referred to the Judicial Commission for nomination of the seventh member. Key decisions included establishing a separate branch for constitutional cases, introducing "green tagging" for case categorization, and delegating responsibilities to the Registrar for procedural development.

US vetoes ceasefire resolution, as Israeli strikes kill 33

"Following the arrest of 45 members of the medical and surgical staff and the denial of entry to a replacement team, we are now losing wounded patients daily

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: The Security Council vote on the Gaza ceasefire resolution has ended with 14 votes for it and one vote against. Meanwhile, Israeli forces killed at least 33 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, including a rescue worker, health officials said, as troops deepened an incursion along the territory's northern edge, bombarding a hospital and blowing up homes. Medics said at least 12 people were killed in an Israeli strike on a house in the area of Jabalia in northern Gaza earlier on Wednesday, and at least 10 people remained missing as rescue operations continued. Another man was killed in tank shelling nearby, they said. Later on Wednesday, an Israeli airstrike killed seven Palestinians, including a girl, in Al-Mawasi, a humanitarian-designated area in western Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, Gaza medics said. Palestinian and UN officials say no strike in the enclave is safe. Another air strike on a house in Remal neighborhood in Gaza City killed four people, while a strike killed three Palestinians and wounded at least 20 others at a school sheltering displaced fam-

ilies in central Gaza Strip, medics said. Hussam Abu Safiya, director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya, one of three medical facilities barely operational in the besieged northern area, said the hospital "was bombed across all its departments without warning, as we were trying to save an injured person in the intensive care unit" on Tuesday. "Following the arrest of 45 members of the medical and surgical staff and the denial of entry to a replacement team, we are now losing wounded patients daily who could have survived if resources were available," he told Reuters in a text message. "Unfortunately, food and water are not allowed to enter, and not even a single ambulance is permitted access to the north." There were 85 injured people, including children and women, at the hospital, six in the ICU. Seventeen children had arrived with signs of malnutrition as a result of food shortages. One man died of dehydration a day ago, Abu Safiya added. Israeli operations in Gaza have focused for weeks on the northern edge of the territory, where the military has laid siege to three major towns and ordered residents to flee. Residents in the three towns - Jabalia, Beit Lahiya, and Beit Hanoun - said forces had blown up dozens of houses.

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