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Islamic nations should not let US, Israel exploit Syrian crisis: Pezeshkian

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Trump threatens 100% tariffs on BRICS nations

Detailed News On Page-08



Harry star as England beat New Zealand

Detailed News On Page-06



Govt will uphold State Writ

'Trained miscreants, illegal Afghans were present in PTI rally'

Army neither came in direct clash with PTI miscreants nor they were employed for riot control, says statement

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Days after the chaos in the federal capital city, the Ministry of Interior on Sunday revealed startling details about the Imran Khan-founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) recent "do-or-die" Islamabad protest. The ministry gave a detailed account of the development that unfolded from its talks with the PTI, ahead of the party's November 24 protest march, following an order of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), to busting alleged social media propaganda, the violent incidents as well as the losses incurred to the economy. The ministry said the IHC on November 21 directed the federal government to take all necessary measures to maintain law and order in the federal capital. The high court had directed the interior minister to engage with the PTI leadership in this regard. Given the sensitivity of the Belarusian president and the Chinese high-level delegation's visit, the former ruling party was initially asked to postpone the protest but on their persistence to continue with it, the PTI was subsequently offered Sangjani area as a designated location. "In this regard, out of the ordinary and at odd timings, meetings were also allowed between the PTI leadership and its founder. On the contrary and in spite of the extraordinary concessions extended, the PTI violated the court's orders blatantly and instead of holding a protest at a designated place [Sangjani], unlawfully breached entry towards the Red Zone of Islamabad," the interior ministry added. The ministry said throughout the protest march from Peshawar to Red Zone Islamabad, violent protestors of the PTI aggressively engaged LEAs repeatedly using firearms and all sorts of other weaponry including steel slingshots, stun grenades, tear gas shells and nail-studded batons to force their way to Red Zone Islamabad. "This violent protest was primarily orchestrated and logistically and financially sustained and supported by the resources of the government of

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Murad Saeed hiding in KP CM House, claims Tarar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has claimed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) fugitive leader Murad Saeed is hiding in the Chief Minister (CM) House Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Tarar alleged that Murad Saeed led a contingent during the PTI protest in the federal capital on November 26. "Murad was not only present in the rally but also leading at least 1500 trained miscreants, including undocumented Afghan citizens, in the protest at D-Chowk", the minister said. The information minister maintained that the armed men targeted security forces with heavy weapons, leading to the deaths of many security personnel. Responding to a question, Attaullah Tarar said "Murad Saeed is now hiding in KP CM House, but it does not look good to conduct a raid on the office of the provincial chief to arrest the fugitive opposition leader." Earlier, the Interior Ministry said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's resources were used without restraint in repeated protests in the capital city. "Police and Rangers didn't use live ammunition to disperse violent mobs during the protest," according to the interior ministry. "The military was not engaged with violent mobs,

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PFOWA CHARITY BAZAAR 2024



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar inaugurates the Pakistan Foreign Office Women Association (PFOWA) Annual Charity Bazaar 2024. (More pictures and news on BackPage). - DNA

Dar thanks diplomats for taking part in charity bazaar

Says charity bazaar is pivotal to bring various cultures closer

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has stressed that charity bazaar aimed to contribute to the welfare of the underprivileged. Addressing an inauguration ceremony of the

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Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA) Charity Bazaar, he stressed that such activities must be organised two times in the year. He thanked diplomats for their

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Federal govt creating 'confusions CM rejects Centre's claims of 'ineffective CTD', lawlessness

Firebrand CM castigates Governor Faisal Karim Kundi for summoning APC on law and order situation

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: After the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government was blamed for misplacing the law-and-order priorities, Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur strongly rejected the Centre's claims of his administration's inability to cope with security challenges and empower Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the province. "The law and order situation has improved in our government," said Gandapur in a statement today besides criticising Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's statement pointing towards the CTD's ineffectiveness to proof terrorism in the province. He added that the counterterrorism department was fully functional and carried out "thousands of successful operations" against terrorists.

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PTI demands access to Imran, raises health concerns

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) political committee issued an official statement on Sunday after a crucial meeting, calling for full access to party founder Imran Khan due to concerns over his health and safety. The committee highlighted that Imran Khan's well-being is a matter of grave concern, with growing public apprehensions. It called for immediate restoration of access for his family,

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Briefs

PTA extends VPN registration deadline

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority stops short of announcing new deadline

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The PTA has decided not to block Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) as the deadline for registration of all non-registered VPNs lapsed on Saturday midnight (Nov 30). The government has decided to grant an extension in the registration of VPNs. However, a new date has not been announced for the VPN suspension. The Ministry of Interior had announced to begin the process of shutting down all unregistered VPNs by the middle of November, but later announced a two-week "grace period" allowing the unregistered VPNs to comply with mandatory registration requirements.

Joint military training of cadets starts

The training will provide a comprehensive approach to military-led joint operations

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Joint military training of Pak Army, Navy, Air Force, cadets has started in Pakistan Military Academy Kakul from December 1 where cadets of three armed forces will receive 5 months training. During the training, the cadets will be briefed about various approaches for joint operations. The training is aimed at creating leadership qualities for future requirements. In war like situation, coordination and cooperation between land, sea and air forces ensures victory. The PMA is the premier training institution of Pakistan Army that infuses competent and professional leadership into the defense forces.

During sanitisation operations Two soldiers martyred, 8 terrorists killed in KP

Eliminated militants were involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as innocent civilians



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Two Pakistan Army soldiers, including a captain, embraced martyrdom, while eight terrorists were killed in two separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the military's media affairs wing said on Sunday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR): "Eight khwarij have been sent to hell in two separate operations conducted in KP from November 29 to December 1, 2024." An intelligence-based operation (IBO) was conducted in the general area of Baka Khel, Bannu District, based on reports of terrorists' presence. The ISPR stated that security forces effectively engaged the militants' location during the operation,

killing five terrorists and injuring nine. However, during the operation, Sepoy Ifikhar Hussain, 29, having fought gallantly, embraced martyrdom. In another operation, the security forces neutralised three terrorists and arrested two in the general area of Shagai, Khyber District.

During the intense exchange of fire, Captain Muhammad Zohaib Ud Din, 25, who was leading his troops from the front, fought bravely, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat. According to the military's media wing, the militants were involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians. "Sanitisation operations were being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area as security forces were determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthened our resolve," said the ISPR. Meanwhile, President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appreciated the security

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FBR fails to attain tax collection target

The taxation authority has collected Rs 852 billion during November

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) would fail to reach its tax target collection for November 2024, sources here said. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) could demand a mini budget from Pakistan if the tax collection authority would fail to attain its target of December, according to sources. Despite heavy taxes imposed, the FBR failing to reach to tax targets with

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Kurram death toll reaches 130 as clashes continues

"The district administration and other relevant authorities have initiated efforts to stop fighting between the two communities but there is no breakthrough yet,"

BUREAU REPORT

KURRAM: The total number of people killed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district has reached 130, while 186 are injured as clashes between tribes continued for the eleventh day despite a ceasefire having been imposed in Lower Kurram, according to a local official. Kurram has been a flashpoint for tribal tensions for decades. They spilled over into a fresh wave of attacks last month when clashes between two groups left dozens dead. Speaking to media, District Health Officer (DHO) Dr Qaisar Abbas said "The total number of people killed is 130, while 186 are injured." The DHO also added that there was a lack of medical facilities to treat the injured. According to the police and hospital sources, the firing between the tribes in Kurram district continues for the eleventh day. Seven more people had lost their lives in clashes on Friday, according to officials. With the cooperation of police forces and elders, most of the clashes have been stopped while the armed

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100 people arrested for growing poppy in Afghanistan

AGENCIES

FAIZABAD: More than 100 people have been arrested for growing poppy in northeastern Afghanistan, police said Sunday, in an area that has previously resisted a Taliban ban on the crop. "During an operation today, the forces of the department arrested more than a hundred people, including residents of various villages... while cultivating poppy," Shafiqullah Hafiz, the director of the police's counter-narcotics department in the province of Badakhshan. "These people were introduced to the primary court of

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GCU campus to be opened in Chiniot: Qaiser

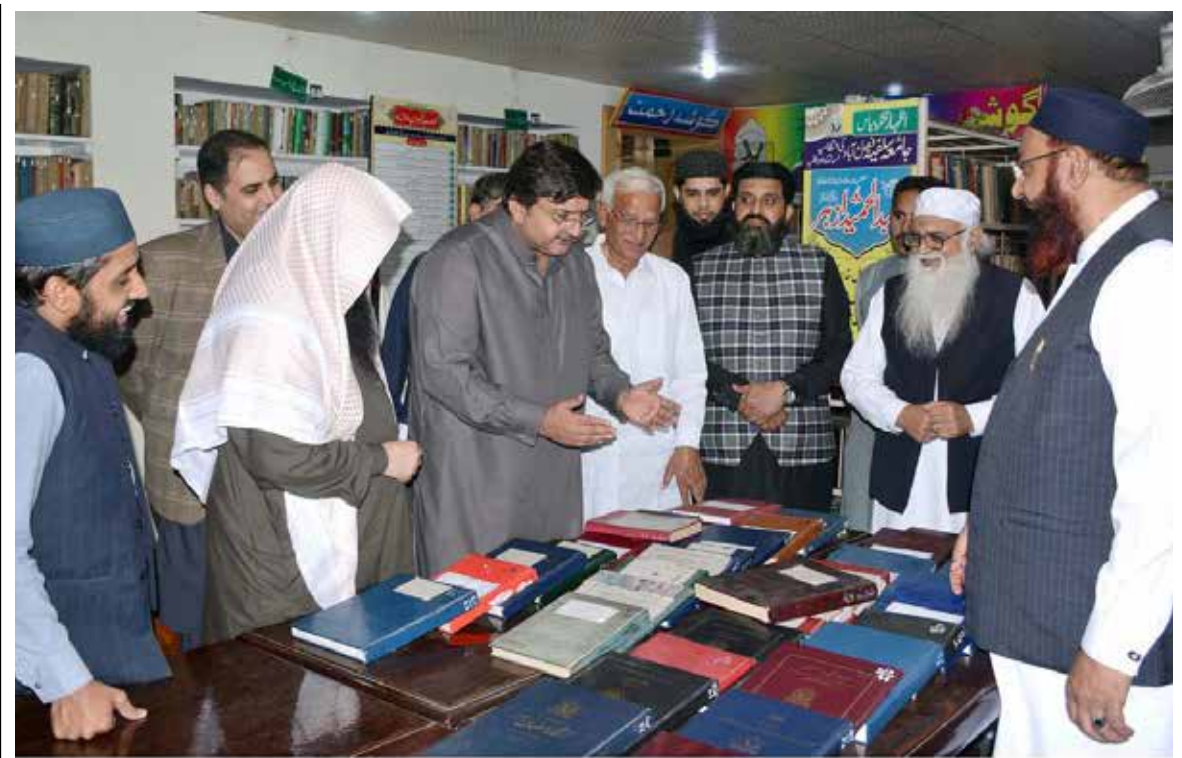
The minister said that Pakistan was bestowed with huge resources. "There is immense potential in the country due to which Pakistan remained ahead of India for 40 years in national progress. Now a temporary break occurred in national development but this issue would be resolved very soon," he added

DNA

FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that GC University campus will be inaugurated in Chiniot this month to provide quality education to people. Addressing the 8th convocation of FAST University Chiniot-Faisalabad Campus on Sunday, he said that quality education was prerequisite for progress and prosperity. "Therefore, the government is concentrating on the provision of quality education to materialize the dream of national progress and prosperity," he added. He said that Pakistan was bestowed with huge resources. "There is immense potential in the country due to which Pakistan remained ahead of India for 40 years in national progress. Now a temporary break occurred in national development but this issue

would be resolved very soon," he added. He said that national unity was imperative for development of the country. "We should end our personal vendetta and prefer to national interests," he added. He said that Pakistan was passing through a crucial stage as more than 100 million people were living near or below the poverty line. However, the government under dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sherif will overcome this issue by promoting quality education and providing this facility at doorsteps of the masses, he added. Qaiser Sheikh said that China focused on education and made progress rapidly. "So we should also concentrate to equip our youths with quality education and latest trend of business. There is a lot of potential in our youths and pace of national development could gain momentum if our youths are provided skills and work

facilities," he added. He also announced a cash prize of Rs.100,000 to each boys and girls who won gold medals in the 8th convocation of FAST University Chiniot-Faisalabad Campus. Bashir Jan Muhammad, Chancellor Institute of Business Management/ Chairman Westbury Group of Companies (Dalta Foods), said that technical education was imperative for national development in addition to overcoming the issue of poverty and joblessness. He advised the students to gain skills and adopt entrepreneurial mindset for becoming job providers instead of job seekers. Some 369 students were conferred degrees while 7 students were decorated with gold medals in the convocation. Rector Prof Dr Aftab Ahmad Maroof, Campus Director Prof Dr Shehzad Sarfraz and a large number of faculty members and university students were also present.



FAISALABAD: Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan is visiting library during certificate distribution ceremony in Jamia Salfia. —APP

Margalla Hills Trail-5 cleanup kicks off

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 14th Pakistan Mountain Festival, organized annually by Devcom-Pakistan to celebrate International Mountain Day, commenced with a successful cleanup drive at Margalla Hills Trail-5 on Sunday. Over 100 enthusiastic students from various universities joined hands to raise awareness about the preservation of mountain ecosystems and the significance of natural resource conservation. International Mountain Day, observed globally on December 11, was established by the United Nations to highlight the critical importance of mountain ecosystems in supporting life on Earth. Mountains cover 22 percent of the planet's land surface and provide vital resources, including freshwater for half of humanity. The day also serves to draw attention to the challenges facing mountain regions, including climate change, habitat loss, and the struggles of mountain communities. Addressing the participants, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director and Founder of Pakistan Mountain Festival, Munir Ahmed emphasized the critical role of mountain ecosystems in sustaining biodiversity, regulating climate, and providing essential services like clean water and air purification. "Mountains are life-support systems for millions of people globally. Protecting these ecosystems is not just a local responsibility but a global imperative," he said.

Free insulin program for diabetic children launched

DNA

LAHORE: For the first time in Pakistan's history, a project has been launched to provide free insulin to children suffering from diabetes. On the directive of Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, insulin will be delivered directly to the homes of type 1 diabetic children. This initiative aims to ease the daily struggles of parents and children who suffer from this life-long condition. Under the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Insulin Program, registration for

diabetic children has officially begun. This program provides a unique facility where parents can register their diabetic children from the comfort of their homes. To support the program, a special helpline (1033) has been set up for guidance and assistance. Parents who wish to receive free insulin for their children can contact National Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) clinics located at the tehsil or district level. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated, "Little children are like flowers; we will not let them wither." As a mother, she expressed her heartfelt understanding of the

challenges posed by such conditions. She added, "As a mother, I can feel the pain and illness of children deeply. We will ensure that insulin is provided at their homes to save them from the hardship of traveling to hospitals." The CM emphasized that insulin is a lifelong requirement for diabetic children, and through this program, she aims to reduce the burden on parents. She assured that the provincial government would spare no effort in providing all necessary resources to ensure proper treatment and health care for children across Punjab.

Seminar held to educate people about HIV AIDS

NAWABSHAH: District Administration, Health Department Shaheed Benazirabad and CDC HIV AIDS Center organized an awareness seminar on the occasion of World AIDS Day at the Darbar Hall of the DC Office. Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon participated in the seminar as the chief guest. Addressing the seminar, Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon, District Health Officer Dr Asadullah Dahri, MSPMC Hospital Dr Yar Ali Jamali, District Focal Person for AIDS Dr Riaz Shah, Incharge AIDS Treatment Center Dr Ghulam Qadir Rajput and others said that World AIDS Day is being celebrated today with the aim of making the public aware of the precautionary measures to prevent AIDS. He added that HIV AIDS is a curable disease which, can be prevented from causing further harm by getting regular treatment. They said that there are multiple reasons including repeated use of syringes, blood transfusion without screening, use of non sterilized machinery for operations and dental treatment, while this disease does not spread by shaking hands or sitting together. Speakers said we have to play a joint role in creating awareness about the harms of HIV/AIDS. Speakers said that in order to cleanse the society from this disease, awareness programs should be conducted in cities and especially in rural areas, to create awareness among the people. They said that the Sindh government is working on an emergency basis to eradicate HIV/AIDS and other diseases and treat patients by providing better treatment facilities to patients suffering from this disease. They quoted that saving the life of one human is saving the life of the entire humanity. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon and others distributed certificates of appreciation and medals among the officers and employees who performed best.—APP

Pakistani food exporters extend Malaysian visit

DNA

LAHORE: Encouraged by the enthusiastic response from Malaysian buyers, a delegation of Pakistani food exporters has extended their two-week visit by an additional week to capitalize on the growing interest and finalize trade agreements. According to a message received on Sunday from Kuala Lumpur, Saif Ur Rehman, the delegation leader, shared that the group has been successfully showcasing Pakistan's diverse and high-quality food products, particularly varieties of Nimko, which have garnered significant attention. "By the grace of Allah, Pakistani products meet international standards and are exceptional in taste," he remarked.

Inept, unprofessional, untrained manpower spoiling BRT service

PESHAWAR: Inept, unprofessional and untrained employees are spoiling the heavy cost operated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project as commuters particularly government employees have started looking for alternative vehicular transport. The staffers particularly those deployed at bus stations of the service are not properly trained to treat the commuters in a professional manner. The security personnel of the Zu Security, a subsidiary of the Urban Mobility Authority are very poorly trained regarding the use of the security equipment including walk-through gates and frisk machines. The security staff deployed at the entrances of the stations are most found involved in exchange of harsh words and arguments with commuters. The commuters are objecting their manual body search in presence of security equipment worth of millions of rupees that are install at the gates. Talking to this scribe, Aslam an employee of a public sector organization expressed his displeasure over the treatment accorded to the commuters at BRT stations by the Zu Security personnel.

He said that the security staff often check them manually despite adherence to the standard security standard operating procedures (SOPs) followed by the security personnel at all sensitive installations and facilities like airports, railway stations and hotels not only in Pakistan rather across the world. When asked about filing a formal complaint against the security personnel with the management of the BRT, he said that he had even talked to the incharge of the Zu Security, he instead of taking action or slamming the arrogant personnel supported them and told him to file a complaint against them on the CM's Complaints Portal. He said that now being disgruntled of the constant mistreatment at the hands Zu security staff he has repaired his abandoned motor cycles to use it for commuting to his office. Same is the case with hundreds of regular commuters of the service and they are mulling over abandoning the use of BRT service. When this scribe asked a Zu Security personnel about their professional training and particularly friendly treatment of the commuters, he on condition of an-

onymity said that they are being told that no one should pass through without their manual body search, either the passerby is even their father. This attitude of the BRT top management and security personnel is even the violation of their own adapted and advertised security code of conduct. The service is regularly demonstrating it through playing a video, asking the commuters to take out metal-oriented articles from their pockets and then pass through the walk-through-in gates. But the security personnel are bent upon the humiliation of the commuters while the management has turned deaf ears to the public complaints in this regard. Following the operation of the BRT service, the commuters have no alternative vehicular transport as the provincial government has established the monopoly of the public sector transport service and has banned the issuance of route permits to any vehicle on the routes on which BRT is operated. The provincial government has fixed highest fare for the BRT service than other provinces, particularly against the metro bus services of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad.—APP

Sindhi Cultural Day celebrates across northern Sindh

SUKKUR: The people of northern Sindh on Sunday celebrated Sindhi Culture Day including Sukkur, Khairpur, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Kashmore-Kandhkot, Ghotki, Noshaheroferoze and other big and small towns with fervour and zeal. The colourful activities, including rallies, were organized by political parties, civil society and social organisations, which were attended by people in large numbers wearing Sindhi Topi and Ajrak to mark the Sindhi culture. The speakers stressed the need for brotherhood among all people in the country. Welcome camps were set up outside the Sukkur Press Club by different media houses, where caravans of political parties and civil society activists gathered. Sukkur city witnessed a hub of activities to mark Sindhi culture as people wearing Sindhi Ajrak and Sindhi Topi enjoyed Sindhi songs, which spread a message of love with Sindh. People from all walks of life, including elders, youths, and children gathered at Sukkur Press Club and participated in culture day, where local artists sang the songs of love with Sindhi culture. A large number of children and men were wearing national dress, Shalwar-Kameez, besides Sindhi Topi and Ajrak and Patko. They were holding flags and banners and chanting different slogans. They danced to loud music and Sindhi songs. Moreover, the fishermen and Jogi community also celebrated the culture day with enthusiasm. In Khairpur, a big ceremony was held at Ambrella Chowk which was addressed, among others, by President Khairpur Traders Association Lala Abdul Ghaffar Shaikh and others, who highlighted the culture, history, and traditions of Sindh. The public and workers of political parties took out rallies, carrying party flags in their hands and wearing Sindhi Topi and Ajrak in Shikarpur. While a rally was taken out in the town which, after marching through different roads, ended at Ghotki press club. In Ghotki, several rallies were taken out to mark the day. The Shaheed Dodo Soomro Welfare Organization (SDSWO), Mahar, Memon-Bhaya and other communities took out separate rallies across the region. Talking to media participants stressed the needs of uniting all nationalist parties at one platform to carry on the mission. They said fighting individually was quite difficult and moving with a single goal and voice would lead to victory. A big rally was also held in Kashmore, Kandhkot to mark Sindhi Culture Day. The participants, in a long motorcade procession, were warmly received on the outskirts of Kashmore.—DNA

Secretary Forests urged to review transfer orders of low-paid employees

Many of these workers have salaries barely sufficient to support their families under normal circumstances. Low-paid workers cannot afford private rental accommodations in distant locations, leaving them vulnerable to instability

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



ISLAMABAD: The decision by the Secretary of the Punjab Forest Department to transfer over 250 low-paid

employees, including forest guards, foresters, and clerks, to remote areas has sparked significant concern and criticism. These employees, hailing from districts such as Murree, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Sialkot, and Narowal, find themselves in a challenging situation due to a lack of essential facilities. The absence of transport allowances, daily allowances (TA/DA), or accommodations compounds their difficulties, leading to justified calls for reevaluating such transfers. The Punjab Forest Department, like many public organizations, plays a critical role in conserving forests, maintaining biodiversity, and implementing environmental policies. Field employees such as forest guards and foresters are the backbone of such initiatives. They are tasked with duties that include forest

surveillance, wildlife protection, and ensuring compliance with conservation laws. While the importance of their roles cannot be overstated, these employees often work under challenging conditions with limited resources. The recent transfer orders for over 250 low-paid employees to remote forest divisions are reportedly aimed at addressing staffing shortages in these regions. However, the manner in which these transfers have been implemented has drawn criticism. The absence of travel and daily allowances (TA/DA) places a significant financial burden on low-paid employees. Many of these workers have salaries barely sufficient to support their families under normal circumstances. Low-paid workers cannot afford private rental accommodations in distant locations, leaving them vulnerable to instability.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

DECEMBER

- Dec 01/Romania National Day
- Dec 02/United Arab Emirates National Day
- Dec 02/Laos Republic National Day
- Dec 05/Thailand National Day
- Dec 06/Finland Independence Day
- Dec 07/India Armed Forces Flag Day
- Dec 09/Tanzania National Day
- Dec 11/Oman Armed Forces Day
- Dec 12/Kenya Independence Day
- Dec 12/Turkmenistan Neutrality Day
- Dec 16/Bahrain National Day
- Dec 16/Kazakhstan Independence Day
- Dec 18/Qatar National Day
- Dec 18/Niger National Day
- Dec 23/Philippines Armed Forces Day

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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
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

German Christmas Market 2024 attracts huge audiences

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad orchestrated a festive extravaganza by hosting an annual Christmas Market at Islamabad Serena Hotel. This enchanting event immersed attendees in the rich traditions of German Christmas celebrations, offering a delightful blend of culinary delights, shopping, and joyous merriment. The market showcased an array of authentic German delicacies that tantalized the taste buds of visitors, including homemade cakes and cookies meticulously crafted to capture the essence of German holiday traditions. Attendees were treated to a sensory journey, experiencing the warmth and flavors synonymous with Christmas in Germany. The air was filled with the spirit of the season as visitors strolled through the market, discovering unique treasures and handcrafted gifts that reflected the artistry and craftsmanship of German culture. From charming ornaments to exquisite trinkets, the shopping experience transported attendees to a winter wonderland brimming with festive cheer. The ambiance was further heightened by the vibrant atmosphere, resonating with laughter and the joyful sounds of the season. Families and friends came together to partake in the festivities, creating cherished memories against the backdrop of the embassy's beautifully adorned Christmas Market. In organizing this



event, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany aimed to share the magic of German Christmas traditions with the local community, fostering cultural exchange and promoting the universal spirit of joy and togetherness during the holiday

season. The Christmas Market served as a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and goodwill between Germany and Pakistan, as both nations came together to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year in true German style.

The German Ambassador to Pakistan, Alfred Granas, said on this occasion: "With this bazaar we want to welcome the merriest time of the year - especially for all those away from their homes. Christmas is all about sharing our joy. This is why the



proceeds from this event will be donated to families in need." The German ambassador also visited various stalls and showed keen interest in items displayed on the stalls. He interacted with the stalls owners as well and got first hand information about their experiences.

Earlier the German Defence Attache Christian Ziese spelled out salient features of the Christmas bazaar. He welcomed the audience. Last year, the German embassy successfully hosted a bazaar at the same venue. The event garnered significant attendance, with

diplomats and the general public alike participating in large numbers. Their presence reflected a shared commitment to supporting the German embassy's commendable initiative, which aims to provide substantial assistance to those in need

CDA to install permanent decorative lights on major avenues

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to install decorative lights permanently on major thoroughfares to enhance beauty of the federal capital. The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by the authority's chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa to review the Islamabad beautification plan. In the first phase, LED floodlights will be installed along Constitution Avenue. The Chairman CDA stated that the lights should be energy-efficient and cost-effective. He emphasized that effective and permanent measures should be taken for protection of lights. He instructed to prepare PC-I of the project and to present it for approval at the earliest. The Chairman CDA directed to carry out repair of all sign and direction boards installed in the city immediately under the Beautification. He instructed that a plan be presented to beautify the city's key buildings. He directed that a team consisting of architects be formed to assist with the beautification plan. The meeting decided that all avenues in the city would be beautified in phases. During the briefing, it was informed that under the Beautification Plan, plants have been planted that will ensure the city remains adorned with beautiful flowers throughout the year. The meeting was informed that the plan aims to balance the city's natural beauty with modernity. It was also mentioned that symmetry will be ensured among the elements contributing to the beautification of the city. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa also said that a plan to enhance the facilities at F-9 Park should be presented. He stated that Fatima Jinnah F-9 Park will be developed as a center for recreational activities. —DNA

'Desi Food Fever' grips Punjab cities as winters approaches

ISLAMABAD: As the winter months continue, Desi breakfast shops across the country are expected to remain hubs of joy and tradition, serving up delicious, warming meals that bring families and friends together especially on weekends. A report aired by a Private news channel, with the winter season sets in, breakfast shops across Punjab cities are cashing in on the Desi food craze. The shops are witnessing

a surge in demand for traditional Pakistani breakfast dishes such as Saag, halwa puri, nihari, and Siri Paye, keema paratha. The owners of these shops are attributing the increased demand to the cold weather, which is making people crave warm and comforting food, the report added. "It is a winter tradition that we look forward to every year," said a regular customer at a popular Desi breakfast shop

in Rawalpindi. "There is nothing like a warm, delicious breakfast to bring the family together on a cold winter's morning," said a customer in Lahore. "I love the smell of saag and halwa puri wafting through the air," said Muhammad Ahmed, a student at Punjab University. Shopkeepers are also thrilled with the surge in demand for Desi breakfast dishes during the winter months. Winter is our busiest season,"

said the owner of a popular Desi breakfast shop in Lahore and added, "People come from all over to enjoy our traditional breakfast dishes, and we are happy to oblige." "Our sales increase by at least 50% during the winter months," said another owner of a Desi breakfast shop in Multan. He said, "People just can not get enough of our saag, halwa puri, and siri paye." "I love the variety of Desi breakfast dishes available in Pakistan. From saag to halwa puri, there is something for everyone," said a female. "Desi breakfast shops are a staple of Pakistani culture. They bring people together and provide a sense of community and tradition," said a businessman.—APP

Police honors bravery, sacrifices of officers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Territory (ICT) Police organized a prestigious ceremony on Saturday to pay tribute to its brave, fearless, and dedicated officers. A public relation officer told APP that the ceremony was held at the Police Lines Headquarters to recognize the police officers who demonstrated exceptional bravery and courage during recent law and order. Inspector General of Police (IGP), Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, was the chief guest, while DIG Syed Ali Raza, DIG Headquarters/Security

Muhammad Jawad Tariq, all AIGs, SSPs, SPs, and police officers from all divisions were presents. IGP Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, who displayed unmatched bravery and made eternal sacrifices to uphold law and order in the federal capital. He said, "I am proud to lead this brave force, and I will always remember my time serving with Islamabad Police. Every officer in this force is chosen and appointed by Allah. By renewing your commitment to Allah, you have safeguarded the lives and property of the people and thwarted the miscreants in their nefarious

plans." He further emphasized, "My force has shown extraordinary bravery in serving and protecting the citizens, as well as maintaining law and order in the city. All of my officers—whether executive or ministerial staff—were present at the forefront of every action. By working tirelessly, day and night, they ensured the peace and security of the city's residents. No citizen's life or property was harmed. All law enforcement officers worked together as a family, successfully repelling the invasion of the federal capital by miscreants." IGP Islamabad reiterated, "Islamabad Police

stands out among all police forces, setting examples of courage and bravery, and has become a beacon for others. You have made your families, your teachers, your commander, and the citizens of this city immensely proud. The people of Islamabad hold you in great regard." In his message to all forces, he reaffirmed, "Islamabad Police remains the leading force in ensuring law and order in the federal capital." IG Rizvi concluded by honoring the memory of the 63 martyrs and the valor of the ghaizis, stating, "All officers of Islamabad Police have carried the department's legacy with pride."

Railways leases out 14,042 acres of land through open competition

ISLAMABAD :Pakistan Railways has leased out approximately 14,042 acres of its land to private individuals and various government departments under an open competition policy to generate revenue. An official from the Ministry of Railways told APP that the leasing process is being done according to the Pakistan Railway Property & Land Rules-2023," which were approved by the Federal Cabinet. Of the total leased land, around 10,747 acres have been allocated to private individuals through open competition for agricultural, commercial, and stacking purposes, while 3,295 acres have been leased to different government departments. The department through this process generated revenue amounting to Rs. 3,323 million during the financial year 2022-23, the official added. In response to a query, the official said Pakistan Railways has intensified efforts to reclaim approximately 13,972 acres of land, worth billions of rupees, which is currently under illegal occupation by private individuals and various government departments across the country. The breakdown of illegally occupied land includes 5,809 acres in Punjab, 1,181 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,948 acres in Sindh, and 1,034 acres in Balochistan. Giving details of the land, the official said that around 769 acres were commercial in all the provinces, 3,309 residential, 5,512 acres agricultural and 4382 were under encroachment of various persons or departments. To address this issue, Pakistan Railways has decided to intensify its anti-encroachment operations nationwide to recover its land from individuals, groups, and business organizations who have been using it for residential, commercial, or agricultural purposes for decades. Joint procedural orders have been issued to all Divisional Superintendents of Pakistan Railways to reclaim encroached land," the official said. He explained that anti-encroachment operations are being initiated across the railway network by the concerned divisions. Notices are issued to encroachers under the Possession Ordinance of 1965, requiring them to vacate railway land or structures within 14 days. The official added that Pakistan Railway Police, district administrations, and law enforcement agencies are being informed to provide necessary assistance during these operations.

IRSA releases 100,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD:Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 100,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 46,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1493.17 feet and was 95.17 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 22,600 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1156.10 feet, which was 106.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 4,900 cusecs and 27,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 59,300, 45,400, 36,900 and 6,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 12,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

PARC introduced high-yielding pulses seed

ISLAMABAD :Chairman Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali has said that the Variety Evaluation Committee of the Council during current year has approved 10 high yielding pulses varieties to boost output of pulses in the country. Talking to APP here on Sunday, he said that pulses play a crucial role in global food security and nutrition of the country, adding that Pakistan needs 1.56 million tons of pulses annually. "We have become self-sufficient in mung production during 2021-22 which was 0.263 million tons against the total requirement of 0.180 million tons," he said. These ten high-yielding pulse varieties are poised to revolutionize the pulse output, adding that now the country is focusing on increasing the production of other pulse crops, such as chickpea, lentil and mash bean. Out of the recommended 10 pulses varieties included 05 chickpeas and 01 mung bean variety of NIAB, Faisalabad, 01 lentil and 01 mung bean variety of Pulses Research Program, NARC, Islamabad, he said adding that 01 mung bean variety by Pulses Research Institute, AARI, Faisalabad and a mung bean variety of NIFA, Peshawar. This achievement is due to the consistent backup support by PSDP, Pulses Project "Promoting Research for Productivity Enhancement in Pulses" to its research components throughout the country, he added. The Chairman said that high-yielding, disease and climate-resilient varieties play an important role in improving pulse productivity. However, he was of the view that as the pulses gene pool has widened, therefore, all pulses scientists across the country are urged to focus on strengthening the pulses foundation seed production including BNS, Pre-basic and basic seed. Moreover, there was a need for a strong nexus among researchers and extension workers so that more seed can be produced to shrink the gap between pulses production and requirements in the country, he added.—APP

Briefs

Chinese small hydropower tech helps alleviate poverty in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China-Pakistan Belt and Road Joint Laboratory on Small Hydropower Technology won the Best Poverty Reduction Practice Award at the 2024 International Seminar on Global Poverty Reduction Partnerships recently held here. It was collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty in Pakistan by Ministry of Water Resources of China and National Research Institute for Rural Electrification of the Ministry of Water Resources of China, according to a report carried by China Economic Net (CEN) on Saturday. Though boasting an abundance of hydropower resources, Pakistan is still facing issues such as power shortage and unstable grids because of lack of advanced technology for resource development and equipment manufacture. Inaugurated in 2015, China-Pakistan Belt and Road Joint Laboratory on Small Hydropower Technology has been easing local power shortage in Pakistan to improve people's livelihood and drive rural economic development through joint research, technology demonstration, application promotion and talent cultivation, achieving progress towards economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Up till now, the lab has provided assessment technologies for Pakistan's hydropower resources, top-level design methods for regional power systems and development plans for hydropower resources in typical rivers of Punjab, completed the proposal for Pakistan's small hydropower standard system and structural framework, and developed intelligent small hydropower control equipment.

Expert stresses need for heightened screening

ISLAMABAD: On World AIDS Day, a renowned expert Sunday stressed the need for public awareness and advocacy to change societal attitudes towards HIV/AIDS and emphasized the importance of heightened screening, particularly before marriages, to prevent the transmission of the disease. In an interview with a private news channel, the expert said December 1 is World AIDS Day, a day to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and honour the millions of people who have died from AIDS-related illnesses. The theme for this year's World AIDS Day is "Take the rights path: My health, my right" emphasizing the importance of protecting human rights and addressing inequalities to end the AIDS epidemic. Dr AD Usmani, Head of AIDS Control in Quetta talking to a private news channel stressed the importance of promoting open discussions and inclusivity to ensure those affected receive necessary support and care. By promoting pre-marital screening, individuals can make informed decisions about their health, reducing the risk of HIV transmission, he said, adding that addressing the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS is also crucial, encouraging open discussions.—APP

IESCO issues power suspension notice

DNA

ISLAMABAD: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman, System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule: On 03rd December 2024, from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Athal, F-7/2, Sharifabad, Burma, Waheedabad, Khanna East, G-8/2, F-8/1, G-10/1, F.H.S, I-10/1, G-13/2, Shahullah Ditta, T&T, Company Bagh, Nimal, Patriata, Upper Topa, Treat Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, 6th Road, T&T, B-Block, Dhok Khaba, Jami Masjid, Shakri-

Timely completion of maternity-child hospital

Speaking during the briefing, Maryam Aurangzeb said that the project was started with public money but has been continuously stalled. She said that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has directed to complete and activate the project for the welfare of the people

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Senior Punjab Minister, Maryam Aurangzeb on Saturday visited the long-stalled federal government project Zacha Bacha Hospital, Rawalpindi and reviewed the details regarding the handing over of the project to the Punjab government. According to the details, the minister inspected the constructed parts of the hospital and was briefed about the project.

A detailed briefing on the work done and the remaining project was given to the minister. Speaking during the briefing, Maryam Aurangzeb said that the project was started with public money but has been continuously stalled. She said that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has directed to complete and activate the project for the welfare of the people. She said that the process of transferring this project from the federation to the provincial government of

Punjab was being reviewed and important decisions would be taken in this regard in a special meeting to be chaired by the chief minister. The minister further said that the chief minister does not want any accusations regarding this project and she wants immediate implementation of this project for public welfare.

Maryam Aurangzeb said that the Punjab government would plan to increase the number of beds from 200 to 400. A formal

timeline of the project will be drawn up and the project will be realistically completed after handing over to Punjab, she added. Speaking on the occasion, Member National Assembly Hanif Abbasi said that the PML-N government started mega projects like Metro Bus Service and Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology in Rawalpindi, and functionalised them in timely for public interest. He said that cutting the ribbon and laying the foundation stone of

the project is not a big deal, but the on-time completion of the project should be focused. Earlier during the briefing, it was informed that the project was started 20 years ago with a cost of 1.6 billion rupees and now its cost has reached 8 billion rupees, but the project has not been completed. MNAs Tahira Aurangzeb, Malik Ibrar, VC Rawalpindi Medical University and Commissioner Amir Khattak were also present during the briefing.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani, Ambassador of Ethiopia Jemal Bekar, Ambassador of Tajikistan and clothes attending the PFOWA Annual Charity Bazaar.(More Pictures and news on Back Page).—DNA

Tariq sworn in as Chairman of Founder Group ICCI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tariq Sadiq, former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), was sworn in as the new Chairman of the Founder Group of ICCI. The oath was administered by the outgoing Chairman, Khalid Iqbal Malik. The ceremony was graced by Atif Ikram Shaikh, President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), who attended as the Chief Guest. He congratulated the newly elected Chairman, Tariq Sadiq, and expressed confidence that he would serve the business community with his exceptional abilities. Shaikh also lauded the outgoing

Chairman, Khalid Iqbal Malik, for his relentless efforts in fostering unity within the business community. Atif Ikram Shaikh emphasized the FPCCI's commitment to improving the business environment. He highlighted the Federation's achievements, including an initiative to launch a national airline. This venture, he noted, would not only enhance Pakistan's connectivity and global image but also generate foreign exchange and create employment opportunities. Newly elected Chairman Tariq Sadiq thanked the members of the Founder Group for entrusting him with this significant responsibility. He assured them that he would work towards strengthening the Group and making major decisions in consultation with its mem-

bers. He also expressed his commitment to guiding ICCI in promoting the interests of the business community more effectively. Tariq acknowledged the valuable services of the outgoing Chairman Khalid Iqbal Malik and stated that he would draw upon his experience to make the Group stronger and more dynamic. Sadiq also addressed the current economic and political challenges facing the country, emphasizing the importance of coordinated efforts to overcome these crises. He highlighted the need to address irrational power tariffs, high bank markups, and bureaucratic bottlenecks at the Capital Development Authority (CDA). Additionally, he proposed allying regional chambers to amplify the business community's voice and

make it more impactful. Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of ICCI, congratulated Tariq Sadiq on assuming the role of Chairman and commended the services of former Chairman Khalid Iqbal Malik. He also shared the initiatives he had introduced to enhance the Chamber's service delivery, including the digitalization of the membership process, aimed at benefiting the business community. He expressed his determination to further elevate the stature of ICCI with the support of his dynamic team. Khalid Iqbal Malik reflected on the successes of the Founder Group during his tenure, thanking both senior and junior colleagues for their contributions, which led to the historic victory of the Founder Group in the elections.

CG COMSTECH for knowledge-driven socioeconomic uplift

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The 23rd Science Council of Asia Conference (23rd SCAC) held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from November 30 to 3 December, was organized by the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences and the Science Council of Asia, with support from the Ministry of Science & Technology, Bangladesh. The theme of the conference, "Fourth Industrial Revolution and Future Society," resonated deeply with the challenges and opportunities facing societies in this era of rapid technological advancement. Coordinator General COMSTECH Prof. Dr M. Iqbal Choudhary emphasized knowledge-driven socioeconomic development at the Conference 2024 in Bangladesh. Addressing the 23rd Science Council of Asia Conference 2024, CG COMSTECH and Vice President of the World Academy of Sciences (South and Central Asia), emphasized that in today's world, socioeconomic development is no longer reliant on natural resources but rather on knowledge and its applications. During his speech, referencing a 2019 report by the McKinsey Global Institute, Prof. Choudhary noted that 12 disruptive technologies are expected to generate over \$33 trillion in wealth by 2025. These include advancements in mobile internet, artificial intelligence, IoT, advanced robotics, genomics, nanotechnology, and regenerative medicine. However, he pointed out that much of this progress is concentrated in the Global North, while many developing nations continue

to grapple with superstition and ignorance. He quoted Klaus Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum, who stated, "We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another." Prof. Choudhary emphasized that the Fourth Industrial Revolution is evolving at an exponential pace, disrupting industries and transforming systems of production, management, and governance globally. The theme of the conference directly aligned with this rapidly changing landscape, where technological innovation is reshaping not just economies but entire societies. During his visit to Dhaka, Prof. Choudhary also held productive meetings with senior officials from Bangladesh's Ministry of Science & Technology and other key stakeholders. These discussions reaffirmed Bangladesh's keen interest in fostering collaboration with COMSTECH and Pakistani institutions. Both sides expressed a shared commitment to working together for the advancement of science, technology, and innovation, aiming to bring tangible benefits to the people of both brotherly nations. To ensure that developing nations can benefit from these technological advancements, Prof. Choudhary called for bipartisan political support for education, science, and technology. He stressed the need for increased investment in education, research, and development, as well as greater female participation in science. He also highlighted the importance of protecting intellectual property rights and fostering global collaboration in science.

Afnan Ullah Khan slams PTI's chaotic politics

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-N Senator Dr Afnan Ullah Khan Sunday stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was damaging the country's reputation with false claims and prioritizing their agenda over the country's well-being. He suggested they should not compromise the country's national interests over their personal gains. Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan, while speaking to a private news channel, accused the PTI of blackmailing the state by politicizing dead bodies, despite having no video evidence to support their claims. Afnan Ullah further criticized the PTI leadership for abandoning their supporters during a recent protest in Islamabad, adding that the PTI leadership, including Bushra Bibi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, were accused of retreating from the scene, leaving their supporters to face the consequences alone. Senator urged the PTI to shun its chaotic approach to politics and refrain from damaging Pakistan's reputation with false narratives and work towards the betterment of the country. Pakistan's economy is on the path to recovery, but the PTI's nefarious agenda may jeopardize this progress, potentially leading to the country's downfall, he added. Senator accused the PTI of promoting a culture of violence and intolerance in the country. He further added that the PTI's leadership is responsible for inciting violence and hatred among their supporters, which is damaging the country's social fabric and democratic values.

Dar opens Charity Bazaar at Foreign Office

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA). Cultural stalls from various foreign embassies were displayed at the event held at the Foreign Office. The Bazaar, aimed at supporting underprivileged communities, brought together diplomats and their families, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of different countries.

Northern regions transformed into winter wonderland

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's northern regions have transformed into a breathtaking winter wonderland, mesmerizing tourists and locals alike where Naran and Kaghan, two popular tourist destinations, received heavy snowfall, turning them into a paradise for winter sports enthusiasts and nature lovers. A report aired by a private news channel said that the snow-clad mountains, trees and roads presented a picturesque view, attracting a large number of tourists from across the country. The recent snowfall in the northern regions has transformed the area into a winter wonderland, with snow-capped peaks, frozen lakes and picturesque valleys. Popular destinations like Naran, Kaghan, Hunza and Skardu are now more alluring than ever, offering a range of activities such as skiing, snowboarding, trekking and ice skating. The temperatures in the region dropped significantly, with some areas experiencing temperatures as low. "It is a dream come true to see Naran and Kaghan covered in snow," said a tourist. "The scenery is breathtaking, and we are having an amazing time here," he added. Another tourist commented, "We have never seen snowfall before, so this is a thrilling experience for us. The roads are slippery, but the scenery is totally worth it." The local administration and tour operators will also take necessary precautions to ensure the safety of tourists, including clearing roads and providing emergency services. "Naran and Kaghan are truly heaven on earth, the snowfall has made them even more beautiful," said a tourist from abroad. "The snowfall has brought a new life to the region. I am planning to visit Naran and Kaghan soon with my family," said another citizen.—APP

Shaza pledges to revamp internet infrastructure

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecoms Shaza Fatima Khawaja Sunday pledged to revamp the country's internet infrastructure, vowing to restore optimal internet speeds and bolster the telecom sector's infrastructure. "My ministry is leaving no stone unturned to ensure seamless continuity in the industry. The recent surge in cyber attacks has put us on high alert and we are taking swift and decisive action to address these challenges and fortify our digital defenses," she said in an interview with a private news channel. Shaza Fatima Khawaja also affirmed the government's commitment for protecting IT and Telecom industry, citing it as a top priority. To achieve this goal, the government is upgrading existing systems and focusing on key areas, including enhancing tower intensity, broadening broadband internet access and tackling pressing cybersecurity concerns to provide better coverage, boost economic growth and ensure a secure online environment for citizens, she added. Responding to a query, the minister said that the Ministry of Interior will instruct the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to probe and resolve issues faced by citizens when sending videos while ensuring overall 100% internet speed remains unaffected. The minister revealed that in the event of any issues, the Interior Minister reaches out to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for assistance.—APP

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Brandishing 'tip of the spear'

AS the first Virginia-class nuclear attack submarine, USS Minnesota, deployed to Guam, arrived on Tuesday local time, the US Navy issued a press release referring to Guam's nuclear attack submarines as "the tip of the spear." The statement claimed that this deployment is part of the US Navy's strategic laydown plan for naval forces in the Indo-Pacific region, emphasizing that the security environment in the region requires that the US Navy station the most capable units forward. The release also mentioned promoting "a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region." While the US military continually stabs at the peace and stability of the region with its "tip of the spear," it simultaneously talks about promoting Indo-Pacific peace and prosperity. This double standard is truly ironic. This is not the first time US nuclear submarines have been deployed to Guam, but it does mark a clear military buildup. In terms of numbers, before November 2021, only two attack nuclear submarines had been deployed to Guam. With the arrival of Minnesota, the total number reaches five. In terms of capability, the previous submarines stationed at Guam were Los Angeles-class attack nuclear submarines, while this deployment upgrades to the fourth-generation Virginia-class. The other four nuclear submarines in Guam will also be replaced by Virginia-class submarines once they retire. Some media have claimed that these deployments bring the "tip of the spear" significantly closer to China, reducing the distance by thousands of kilometers. Deployment of the Minnesota further confirms that the US plans to turn Guam into a "weapon" piercing regional peace and stability. In recent years, the US Department of Defense has put over \$1 billion annually to enhance Guam's military readiness, with some saying that the US aims to turn it into a so-called "unsinkable aircraft carrier" on the "second island chain." What's even more noteworthy is that this military buildup carries a strong sense of targeting a hypothetical enemy and preparing for actual combat, making it one of the direct triggers for escalating regional tensions. In recent years, the US has been vigorously promoting its so-called "Indo-Pacific Strategy" in the Asia-Pacific region. By strengthening the "Five Eyes Alliance," advancing the "Quad mechanism," assembling various exclusionary "small cliques," and frequently conducting military exercises aimed at China, the US attempts to fragment the Asia-Pacific into several mutually defensive blocs. In April, the US Congress passed a \$95 billion supplemental military aid and expenditure bill, with \$8.1 billion earmarked for countering China in the Asia-Pacific. It can be said that the US has gone to great lengths in pursuing its "Indo-Pacific Strategy." The deployment of Minnesota exposes the hypocrisy of the US' so-called "managing differences with China" narrative. It demonstrates that Washington's true intention is to compel China to fully accept its coercion and suppression without any response, thereby reducing the risks and costs of its provocative actions. At the same time, the US aims to bolster its military deployments to convince its allies that following US' provocations and containment of China poses no risks, thereby accelerating the process of NATO's Asia-Pacificization.



In a world of tariff threats

WITH Donald Trump elected again as US president, China is concerned about the self-professed "Tariff Man" and his threats to kill off Chinese imports with big increases in tariffs, which are to be imposed on his first day back in the Oval Office next January. Over the past five years, China's trade landscape has been marked by the burgeoning of its electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and photovoltaic products – dubbed the "new trio" – all technology-intensive exports leading the global energy transition. In response, the Biden administration and its Western allies complain about China's "industrial overcapacity" and attribute the competitiveness of the "new trio" to government subsidies. The United States and Canada are working to close their doors to Chinese EVs and the European Union recently levied additional tariffs of up to 35 per cent. Amid continuing negotiations, the EU has proposed that Chinese EV makers commit to a minimum export price, or price undertaking, in exchange for the EU dropping the countervailing duties. This is reminiscent of the 1980s US-Japan trade war, when the US demanded that the Japanese car industry commit to voluntary export restraints – which the World Trade Organization prohibits. Rather than a subsidy-induced overcapacity, the success of Chinese EVs is, at its core, due to science and technological advancements. Having learned lessons from the US, China has chosen the challenging path of independent innovation over convenient short cuts such as tech imports and forced technology transfers. For companies like Huawei Technologies that bore the brunt of the US tech war, that determination has hardened. China's success is also thanks to its entrepreneurship. Over a decade ago, the West initiated a ruthless battle against Chinese solar panel imports, levying anti-dumping and anti-subsidy duties. It turned out to be counterproductive, forcing Chinese enterprises to intensify innovation and rise from the ashes, while killing the West's ailing solar panel industry. China's renewable energy sector is dominated by spirited private companies such as Trina Solar, an innovative solar panel manufacturer, Contemporary Amperex Technology (CATL), which makes lithium-ion batteries for EVs, and BYD, a global leader in EVs, hybrid cars and car batteries. Their products help the global decarbonisation movement. When advances in science and technology lead to greater productivity, it produces overcapacity in any market, even if only temporarily. For example, America's rapid technological development in the 1920s led to a market oversupply, depressing goods prices and driving many farmers and enterprises into bankruptcy. In the last several years, China's EV market has also seen fierce competition as a result of rapid innovation, cutting the number of manufacturers from over 400 to around 40, with the number expected to shrink further. The lesson of America's Great Depression is that president Franklin D. Roosevelt chose to intervene robustly in the market with his New Deal, a set of plans that boosted infrastructure investment, employment and consumption, succeeded in driving up domestic demand and led to an economic recovery.

Trump's comeback and Saudi Arabia's Yemen strategy

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Historically, Saudi Arabia has taken a firm stance against the Houthis, viewing them as an extension of Iranian influence in Yemen and a direct threat to its security. The Kingdom has engaged in years of military action to curb Houthi advances and prevent a consolidation of Iran-backed groups along its borders. However, recent diplomatic developments signal a shift in Saudi strategy. Instead of seeking to militarily defeat the Houthis, Riyadh has opted for a muted, more cautious...

THE Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's recent shift towards a more restrained approach to the Houthi rebels in Yemen. The former U.S. President Donald Trump's return to the political stage holds significant implications for regional security and U.S.-Saudi relations. This development matters as it could potentially affect the Kingdom's security posture against Iranian influence in the region, while U.S. support may prove pivotal in shaping the outcomes of this conflict. This essay explores the strategic rationale behind Saudi Arabia's moderated stance, the potential ramifications for regional stability and the influence Trump's return to the political stage might exert on Saudi policies. Historically, Saudi Arabia has taken a firm stance against the Houthis, viewing them as an extension of Iranian influence in Yemen and a direct threat to its security. The Kingdom has engaged in years of military action to curb Houthi advances and prevent a consolidation of Iran-backed groups along its borders. However, recent diplomatic developments signal a shift in Saudi strategy. Instead of seeking to militarily defeat the Houthis, Riyadh has opted for a muted, more cautious approach that focuses on maintaining a controlled stability along its southern border. This reflects a broader trend in Saudi foreign policy, prioritizing short-term stability over an all-out conflict that could result in severe economic and political costs. This strategy is reminiscent of Israel's policy toward Hamas in Gaza, which has often involved managing conflict levels rather than pursuing complete military victory. While this approach might create a temporary quiet, it leaves unresolved tensions and risks a future escalation. The decision to de-escalate also appears to be influenced by the broader Saudi vision of economic reform and diversification under Vision 2030, which depends on a stable

regional environment. Engaging in prolonged military confrontations with the Houthis could compromise these economic goals, especially as Saudi Arabia aims to attract foreign investments and reduce its dependency on oil revenue. While Saudi Arabia's softened approach may allow for short-term stability, it could also inadvertently embolden Iranian influence in the region. Iran's support for the Houthis has allowed it to maintain a foothold on the Arabian Peninsula, enabling the projection of power and influence close to Saudi borders. A less confrontational Saudi approach might be perceived by Tehran as a weakness, potentially encouraging further Iranian support for its allies and proxies throughout the Middle East. Moreover, the Kingdom's de-escalation could undermine its deterrence capabilities, which were largely predicated on its ability to respond assertively to threats along its borders. This softer stance may also complicate U.S.-Saudi relations. The United States has traditionally supported Saudi Arabia's efforts to counter Iranian influence, recognizing the Kingdom as a critical ally in maintaining the balance of power in the Middle East. However, the dynamics of this partnership could be influenced by changes in U.S. leadership. President Trump, who had previously strengthened ties with Saudi Arabia, returns to the political arena with a reputation for favoring assertive foreign policies and could potentially push for a return to a more forceful Saudi posture against the Houthis and Iran. The re-entry of Donald Trump into U.S. politics may introduce a shift in the American approach to Middle Eastern affairs, particularly in relation to Saudi Arabia and Iran. Trump's administration had emphasized "maximum pressure" on Iran, leading to increased sanctions and a more confrontational stance against Iranian allies across the region.

Under Trump's potential return to the White House, there could be renewed U.S. support for a stronger Saudi stance against the Houthis. This approach would signal to Iran and other regional actors that the United States remains committed to countering Iranian influence, bolstering Saudi Arabia's position. Trump's potential influence on U.S.-Saudi relations could also manifest through increased support for Saudi defense initiatives. During his previous term, Trump facilitated significant arms sales to Saudi Arabia, reinforcing the Kingdom's defense capabilities. A renewed alignment of U.S. strategic goals with Saudi interests could shift the current balance of power, encouraging Saudi Arabia to adopt a more assertive stance towards the Houthis, while also containing Iranian influence. This could lead to a resurgence of military engagements in Yemen, altering the regional power dynamics in favor of U.S.-aligned actors.

Given the complex interplay between Saudi Arabia's cautious diplomacy and the potential for heightened U.S. support under Trump, the Kingdom faces a critical juncture. Maintaining a posture of cautious diplomacy may stabilize the immediate situation but is unlikely to resolve the underlying threats posed by Iranian influence. The Kingdom must reassess its approach, balancing its immediate need for stability with the longer-term goal of countering Iranian expansionism. For Saudi Arabia, a robust stance against Iran and its proxies in Yemen is crucial for ensuring its security and maintaining its role as a regional leader. This approach, however, requires external support to be sustainable, particularly in terms of intelligence, military aid and political backing from the United States. Trump's potential influence could provide the Kingdom with a renewed opportunity to realign its strategy with a broader U.S.-led regional policy, countering Iranian influence more effectively.

Role of youth in Pakistani politics

Ayesha Arshad



The participation of youth in Pakistani politics is not merely a matter of representation; it is a prerequisite for the nation's democratic progress and development. By addressing the structural, economic, and cultural barriers that hinder their involvement, Pakistan can unlock the transformative potential of its younger generation. The role of youth in historical and contemporary political movements demonstrates their capacity to drive...

THE active participation of youth in the political landscape of Pakistan holds profound implications for the nation's democratic development and socio-economic progress. As a country with over 63% of its population under the age of 30, Pakistan possesses a unique demographic advantage that, if effectively harnessed, can drive transformative changes. The youthful energy, innovation, and perspectives embedded within this demographic make them a critical asset for national growth. However, realizing this potential requires overcoming systemic barriers and creating an environment conducive to meaningful youth engagement in politics. The youth have historically played a significant role in shaping Pakistan's political narrative. During the Pakistan Movement, young individuals were instrumental in the struggle for independence, participating actively in rallies, protests, and campaigns. Their enthusiasm and commitment were pivotal in galvanizing public support for the cause. This pattern of active involvement has persisted in subsequent decades. For instance, the 1968 student uprising against the Ayub Khan regime marked a defining moment in Pakistan's political history. Students organized large-scale protests that contributed significantly to the eventual resignation of Ayub Khan. Similarly, youth participation in the 2014 Azadi March, led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) under Imran Khan's leadership, highlighted their enduring influence. These examples underscore the critical role young people have played in challenging oppressive regimes, advocating for reforms, and pushing for greater accountability in governance. Despite their historical significance, the youth in Pakistan face numerous obstacles that hinder their full participation in the political process. These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing structural, economic, and cultural dimensions. The lack of youth representation in decision-making bodies is a glaring issue. Political parties often prioritize senior leaders, sidelining the voices of younger members. This exclusion perpetuates a cycle where the concerns and aspirations of youth remain unaddressed in policymaking. Widespread unemployment and underemployment among the youth exacerbate their political disillusionment. Economic insecurity limits their ability to actively engage in political activities, attend rallies, or dedicate time to political advocacy. Traditional cultural values often discourage youth from actively participating in politics. The perception of politics as a corrupt and untrustworthy arena further dissuades young individuals from pursuing political

careers. Family pressures and societal expectations also act as deterrents. Many young Pakistanis view the political system as corrupt, ineffective, and disconnected from their realities. This perception breeds cynicism and apathy, further diminishing their motivation to participate. Outdated power structures and an incomplete democratic framework limit opportunities for youth to engage meaningfully in politics. The lack of institutional support for youth-led initiatives and the absence of mentorship programs within political parties further compound this problem. Opportunities for Youth Engagement in Politics While challenges persist, numerous opportunities exist to enhance youth engagement in Pakistani politics. The digital revolution has opened new avenues for political participation, providing platforms for young people to voice their opinions, mobilize support, and influence public discourse. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for political engagement. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allow young individuals to discuss political issues, organize online campaigns, and shape public opinion. Movements like PashtunTahafuz Movement and JusticeForZainab have demonstrated the impact of youth-led online activism in raising awareness and driving change. Several organizations and initiatives are actively working to promote civic engagement and political activity among young Pakistanis. These organizations provide training, capacity-building opportunities, and networking platforms to empower youth as active citizens and leaders. Comprehensive civic education programs can play a crucial role in equipping young people with the knowledge and skills needed for effective political participation. By fostering a deeper understanding of democratic processes and rights, such programs can cultivate a generation of informed and engaged citizens. Introducing youth quotas in political parties and legislative bodies can ensure better representation and visibility. Such reforms can help dismantle the barriers that prevent young people from entering the political sphere. The participation of youth in recent political movements highlights their potential to drive change. A prominent example is their involvement in Imran Khan's "final call" protest on November 24, where students and young supporters played a central role in mobilizing support for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Khan's direct appeal to students to stand up for their rights exemplifies the growing recognition of youth as a key demographic in shaping political outcomes. These movements not only

amplify the voices of young people but also underscore their ability to influence the democratic process. The energetic participation of youth in such protests reflects their commitment to addressing systemic issues and advocating for a more equitable political framework. To utilize the potential of Pakistani youth, it is imperative to create an environment that encourages and facilitates their involvement in politics. This requires a multi-pronged approach involving government, civil society, and political parties. Educational institutions should integrate civic education into their curricula to promote political awareness and active citizenship among students. Providing platforms for youth to interact with policymakers, participate in debates, and contribute to policy discussions can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility. Economic reforms aimed at reducing unemployment and poverty among the youth can enhance their capacity to engage in politics. Scholarships, internships, and mentorship programs can further support their development. Political parties should adopt inclusive policies that prioritize youth representation. Establishing youth wings within parties and encouraging young candidates to contest elections can bridge the generational gap in politics. Harnessing the power of digital platforms can enhance youth participation by providing accessible and inclusive spaces for political discourse. The participation of youth in Pakistani politics is not merely a matter of representation; it is a prerequisite for the nation's democratic progress and development. By addressing the structural, economic, and cultural barriers that hinder their involvement, Pakistan can unlock the transformative potential of its younger generation. The role of youth in historical and contemporary political movements demonstrates their capacity to drive change and shape the nation's future. However, realizing this potential requires concerted efforts to create an inclusive and participatory political framework. Collaborative efforts among government, civil society, and political organizations are essential in this regard. As Pakistan navigates the complexities of the 21st century, the energy, creativity, and ideals of its youth will be instrumental in building a brighter and more prosperous future. By empowering young people to actively participate in politics, Pakistan can not only strengthen its democratic institutions but also ensure sustainable development and social cohesion. Indeed, as the saying goes, "The youth are the future of the nation." It is time to harness their potential for the greater good of society.

— BS English University of Sahiwal

Briefs

'Trained miscreants, illegal Afghans...

FROM PAGE 01
KP. Alarmingly, the PTI's protest included violent and trained miscreant elements including many illegal Afghan nationals who spearheaded the riots and violent activities throughout the march," it was alleged in the ministry's statement. The miscreants, it added, employed as the violent vanguard, comprised of about 1,500 hardcore fighters working directly under absconder and proclaimed offender Murad Saeed — the senior PTI leader and former minister. "This vanguard group, using militant tactics violently attacked the LEAs and breached the blocks with the help of government machinery paving the way for the second wave of vehicles and protestors to cross. It must be noted that LEAs personnel, despite sustaining grievous injuries, exhibited a high degree of restraint against these violent protesters led by trained miscreants," it further said. During this, the ministry said, a vehicle also ran over Rangers personnel performing duty at a check post in Islamabad, resulting in shahadat (martyrdom) of three Rangers soldiers and critical injuries to five others.

Murad Saeed hiding in...

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neither was it deployed to prevent the violence," the spokesman said. The spokesman clarified that armed guards with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership and armed miscreants among protesters opened indiscriminate fire. "The military troops were deployed to ensure the security of key installations," the ministry stated. As per the Interior Ministry spokesperson, PTI leadership instead of tackling the situation, opted to escape from the scene. "The PTI has initiated an organized propaganda on social media. A despicable effort being made to hold the law enforcement agencies responsible for alleged deaths in protest," the ministry stated.

Two soldiers martyred...

FROM PAGE 01
forces for conducting two successful operations against "Fitna-al-Khawarij" in KP. In their separate messages, they praised the bravery of security forces for killing eight terrorists. They also paid rich tribute to Captain Zohaib and Sepoy Iftikhar who embraced martyrdom in the operations against militants. President Zardari said the sacrifices of martyrs for the security of motherland will not go waste. He reiterated his commitment to continue the actions against the menace of terrorism till its complete elimination. PM Shehbaz said terrorists and anti-state elements will not succeed in their nefarious designs of spreading chaos in the country. He said the nation will not forget the sacrifices of martyrs.

Kurram death toll...

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tribes have been removed from the fronts with police and armed forces being deployed there. Separately District administration official Wajid Hussain told mediathat 133 people had been killed in the attacks in the last week and a half. "The district administration and other relevant authorities have initiated efforts to stop fighting between the two communities but there is no breakthrough yet," he said. Efforts are being made to stop the clashes between Muqbal Kunj Alizai in Kurram District on November 21 in the Ucht Mandori area of Lower Kurram. Armed clashes started in the district last week when a convoy of passenger vehicles came under attack in Lower Kurram, killing more than 40 people. Several people were seriously injured, after which a series of clashes started in the areas of Alizai Bagan, Balsh Khel Khar, Piwar Teri Mangal and Muqbal Kunj Alizai.

Junior Hockey Asia Cup

Pakistan get resounding 4-1 victory over Malaysia

The win places Pakistan in a strong position in the tournament standings, reinforcing their status as one of the leading contenders for the coveted title



SPORTS DESK

MUSCAT: In a nail-biting match at the Men's Junior Asia Cup 2024, Pakistan emerged victorious over Malaysia in a thrilling face-off that kept fans on the edge of their seats. The game, held in OMAN, showcased the best of junior hockey talent from both nations. From the very start, both teams displayed exceptional skills, with Pakistan taking an aggressive ap-

proach while Malaysia relied on their structured gameplay. The match saw an intense exchange of attacks and counterattacks, with the crowd roaring at every move. Pakistan's Sufyan Khan scored in the third, 35th and 58th minutes. Their other scorer was Abdul Qayyum (51st minute). Malaysia's solitary goal was scored by Adam Ashraf Johari in the 23rd minute. Pakistan's coach expressed immense pride in the team, stating, "This win is a testament to the hard work and dedi-

ication of our players. We are focused on maintaining this momentum as we progress in the tournament." The win places Pakistan in a strong position in the tournament standings, reinforcing their status as one of the leading contenders for the coveted title. Despite the loss, Malaysia qualified for the semi-finals as runners-up in their group with two wins, one draw and one loss. Malaysia will play defending champions India for a place in the final. Pakistan will meet Japan in the last four.

This is Pakistan's fourth consecutive victory in the tournament, following their opening 7-2 triumph over China, a 6-0 routing of Bangladesh, and a resounding 7-0 victory over Oman. **Pakistan's squad for the Junior Asia Cup**
Goalkeepers: Ali Raza, Faizan Janjua
Players: Sufiyan Khan, Aqeel Ahmed, Bilal Aslam, Nadeem Khan, Mohammad Zain, Wasim, Sami, Zakariya Hayat, Mohammad Imad, Hanan Shahid (Captain), Mughira, Rana Waleed, Hamza Fayaz, Basharat, Qayyum Dogar, and Saifullah.

100 people arrested for growing poppy...

FROM PAGE 01
Badakhshan province along with their files so that a legal trial could be held against them." In 2022, the Taliban government, on the orders of its Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, banned opium poppy production across Afghanistan, which at the time was the world's top-producing country. The ban caused a shift in the centre of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, from the southern strongholds of the Taliban authorities to northeastern provinces, including Badakhshan. In May, clashes between farmers and brigades sent to destroy their poppy fields resulted in several deaths in the province.

CM rejects Centre's claims of...

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He further detailed that the provincial government will disburse an additional Rs1 billion to the CTD. Special cells have been prepared for the department to keep the arrested suspects, he added. The KP CM went on to say that his administration was also purchasing 20 bulletproof vehicles besides announcing to hand over funds to the CTD personnel for 300 kits and drones. He added that the quota for martyred officials has been increased from 5% to 12%, as well as, awarding plots to the heirs of the martyrs. Gandapur also highlighted that the performance of the province's prosecution has also improved during his tenure and more people would be inducted into the prosecution's team next week. The federal government was creating "confusions" among the KP people, said the chief minister said, adding that the Centre has not disbursed a single penny to the province for counterterrorism.

PTI demands access to...

FROM PAGE 01
legal team, and party officials to ensure transparency and accountability. The statement urged the federal and Punjab governments, as well as jail authorities, to provide clear and regular updates on Imran Khan's health. The committee also appealed to the judiciary to safeguard Imran Khan's fundamental rights and ensure robust security measures. The committee issued a stern warning, holding the Prime Minister, Punjab Chief Minister, and state institutions fully accountable for any lapse compromising the safety of the PTI founder Imran Khan.

Dar thanks diplomats...

FROM PAGE 01
full support for PFOWA bazaar. Dar emphasized on the importance of cultural diplomacy for bilateral ties among states saying charity bazaar was a part of diplomacy. He added that the charity bazaar was pivotal to bring various cultures closer. Ishaq Dar stated that every culture had a distinct identity therefore a charity bazaar would provide an opportunity to showcase various cultures to people. Cultural stalls from various foreign embassies were displayed at the event held at the Foreign Office.

FBR fails to attain tax...

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overall 343 billion rupees shortfall in tax collection, sources said. The taxation authority has collected Rs 852 billion during November 2024 against the monthly target of Rs1,003 billion, leaving a gap of Rs151 billion. Sources said that the tax collection shortfall of last four months was Rs 192 billion. The FBR has collected Rs4,292 billion during first five months of 2024-25 against the assigned target of Rs 4,639 billion set for July-November of the current fiscal year, reflecting a shortfall of Rs344 billion. The taxation authority has collected Rs851 billion in November 2024 against Rs736 billion collection in November 2023, an increase of Rs 115 billion.

ICC mulls 'partnership formula' to end deadlock

Green, Blue Shirts will play all their ICC matches, supposed to be played in each other's countries, in Dubai, say sources

WEB DESK

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has started mulling over the "partnership formula" in a bid to end the deadlock over the hosting of the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy. As per the new formula, India will play all their ICC matches, supposed to be played in Pakistan, in Dubai and Pakistan will also play their matches, scheduled to be played in India, in Dubai, the sources said. The formula will be applicable for the next three years from the Champions Trophy 2025, they said, adding that it was expected to put the issue of CT's scheduling and venue to rest. So, the sources said, India and Pakistan would not be playing any tournament in each other's countries during this period. It has been proposed to add this formula in the host agreement of both the teams, they said. The tournament, scheduled to take place in Pakistan next year, has become a bone of con-

tenion between Pakistan and India, with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) refusing to send its team to Pakistan, citing security concerns despite assurances.

An online meeting convened by the ICC on November 29 aimed at resolving the issue lasted just 15 minutes without concrete results. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has categorically rejected the hybrid model proposed during the virtual meeting, under which all of India's matches would be played outside Pakistan. The sources had told Geo News that the Indian cricket governing body had sought more time after Pakistan's firm stance. Meanwhile, the ICC has reportedly advised the BCCI to accept the formula, which would protect the board from legal proceedings from Pakistan. "The cricket governing body is trying its best to resolve the matter without voting, which could take place if the PCB, ICC and BCCI do not reach a consensus," an informer said.

According to the sources, there were fair chances of the matter's resolution before reaching the phase of voting in a couple of days.

"It is quite possible that the need for a board meeting does not arise, if the three parties reach an agreement over a formula. The other board members would likely be informed of the formula afterwards. The formula's name will not be hybrid though," they said. This should be noted that Pakistan has already dismissed the offer of extra money, stressing the need to resolve the issue with respect and equality. A day ago, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi had expressed optimism that a "long-term" formula, which would be beneficial for both the countries and cricket, would be chalked out that will apply to all future events of the ICC. "We will not allow one-sided decisions [...] decisions should be made based on equality," Naqvi, who is also the interior minister, had said while speaking to journalists in Dubai on Saturday.

Lahore Qalandars edge past Hampshire Hawks

GUYANA: Lahore Qalandars edge past Hampshire Hawks in a thrilling encounter to register their first victory in the ongoing inaugural edition of Global Super League (GSL) here at Providence Stadium on Saturday. Lahore Qalandars opted to bat first after winning the toss but the decision backfired as they lost two early wickets with only six runs on the board. Adam Rossington (30) and Mohammad Faizan (19) then knitted a cautious 31-run stand from 28 balls to help their team recover before Benny Howell castled the former. Tom Abell scored a scratchy 21 off 27 before Luke Wells and Muhammad Akhlaq's sixth-wicket partnership of 44 runs took Lahore Qalandars to the respectable total of 135-5 in 20 overs. Wells scored an unbeaten 35 off 24 with one boundary and two sixes while Akhlaq struck 23 off 12 with three sixes. In response, Hampshire Hawks managed to score 131-8, courtesy of a disciplines bowling performance by Lahore Qalandars. Opening batter Tom Prest top-scored with 30 off 22, while Benny Howell and James Fuller played quick cameos of 25 and 26 but could not take their team across the line. They needed 21 runs in the last over bowled by Lahore Qalandars' captain Carlos Brathwaite and Fuller struck two sixes to take his team close to the victory. However, they needed five runs off the final ball but Fuller could only manage a single, losing the match by a close four-run margin. Tabraiz Shamsi took three wickets for Qalandars, while Brathwaite, Wells and Asif Afridi bagged one wicket each. For the unversed, apart from Lahore Qalandars and Hampshire Hawks, the inaugural season of GSL features Caribbean Premier League (CPL) team Guyana Amazon Warriors, Rangpur Riders of Bangladesh and Victoria from Australia. Currently, Victoria are placed at the top having defeated Guyana Amazon Warriors in their solitary match. Meanwhile, Rangpur Riders after losing to Hampshire Hawks in the Super Over are lying at the bottom.

Djokovic eager to beat Sinner, Carlos Alcaraz

'I feel I can still play at the highest level,' says Djokovic

LONDON: Novak Djokovic is ready to challenge Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz at the Grand Slam stage when he returns to action at the Australian Open after an underwhelming campaign this year, the 24-times champion said. After winning three of the four Grand Slams last year, the 37-year-old has endured a dry spell in 2024, failing to win any majors for the first time since his injury-plagued 2017 campaign. World No. 1 Sinner dethroned Djokovic at Melbourne Park en route to his maiden Grand Slam win and the 23-year-old Italian also beat the Serb in the Shanghai Masters final in October. Reigning U.S. Open champion Sinner added the ATP Finals title to his tally, while Djokovic pulled out from the season-ending event with injury. Djokovic withdrew from the French Open quarter-finals due to a knee injury, while 14-times champion Rafa Nadal lost to Alexander Zverev in the first round, allowing Alcaraz to dominate Roland Garros. The 21-year-old Spaniard Alcaraz also retained his Wimbledon title. However, Djokovic clinched his maiden Olympic gold in Paris, defeating Alcaraz three weeks after their Wimbledon final—proving his resilience. "I feel I can still play at the highest level. Sinner and Alcaraz have established themselves as the two best players in the world, not to forget (Alexander) Zverev," Djokovic said in an interview with Gazzettadello Sport on Saturday. "All of them will be the main candidates to win the Slams and other titles. However, physically and mentally I am ready to play my tennis again and I have the feeling that I can challenge these guys, my experience can come in handy." — Agencies

Kane out 'for time being' with hamstring strain

LONDON: Harry Kane will be out "for the time being" according to Bayern Munich after the striker suffered a minor hamstring strain in the club's draw with Borussia Dortmund on Saturday. The England captain was substituted after 33 minutes with his side trailing, although Jamal Musiala rescued a late point for Bayern. On Sunday the club said a scan had confirmed a "minor muscle strain" to Kane's right hamstring. Kane, 31, has enjoyed another strong start to the season, scoring 20 goals in 19 games in all competitions. Bayern have five more games before a break over Christmas, with Tuesday's DFB-Pokal match with Bayer Leverkusen followed by league games against Heidenheim, Mainz and RB Leipzig and a Champions League meeting with Shakhtar Donetsk. — Agencies

Tayyab, bowlers give Pak victory over Zimbabwe

Abrar and Sufiyan take three wickets each

SPORTS DESK

BULAWAYO: Tayyab Tahir's unbeaten 39-run knock, followed by a combined bowling effort, steered Pakistan to a commanding 57-run victory over Zimbabwe in the first T20I of the three-match series here at Queens Sports Club on Sunday. Chasing a daunting total, Zimbabwe's batting unit unfolded on a meagre 108 in the 15.3 overs despite brisk knocks by skipper Sikandar Raza and opener Tadiwanashe Marumani. The home side had a shaky start to the pursuit as they lost two wickets inside three overs with just 18 runs on the board. But, a quickfire knock by Marumani had kept Zimbabwe on track until his agonizing dismissal in the ninth over. He scored 33 off 20 balls, laced with four fours and a six. His dismissal opened the floodgates as the home side slipped from 77/2 to 108 all out despite a gutsy 39-run knock by Raza during the collapse. For Pakistan, Abrar Ahmed and Sufiyan Mugeem claimed three wickets each, followed by Haris Rauf with two, while Jahandad Khan chipped in with one scalp. Opting to bat first, Pakistan got off to an unwanted start to their innings as they lost young opener Omair Bin Yousuf, who showed signs of command before falling victim to Richard Ngarava in the third over after scoring 16 off 13 deliveries with the help of two boundaries including a six. Walking out to bat in number three, Usman Khan took the reins of Pakistan's batting expedition with a defiant knock.



England beat New Zealand in first Test

Carse was adjudged the player of the match

CHRISTCHURCH: Harry Brook's 171-run knock, coupled by Brydon Carse's 10-wicket haul propelled England to a convincing eight-wicket victory over New Zealand in the first Test of the three-match series here at Hagley Oval on Sunday. Set to chase a modest 104, the touring side comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just two wickets, thanks to a quickfire half-century by debutant Jacob Bethell. The left-handed batter smashed nine boundaries including a six on his way to an unbeaten 50 off 37 deliveries. He was supported by brisk cameos from Ben Duckett (27) and Joe Root (23 not out) as England amassed the total in just 12.4 overs. Earlier, New Zealand, fresh from their historic clean sweep victory over India, were booked on a modest total of 254 runs in their second innings despite gutsy half-centuries from Kane Williamson and Daryl Mitchell. The home side resumed their second innings from 155/6 through Mitchell and Nathan Smith, unbeaten on 31 and one respectively.

The duo could add 25 runs to their overnight seventh-wicket partnership as Carse trapped Smith lbw in



just the eighth over of the final day. Smith scored 21 off 44 deliveries with the help of two fours. New Zealand then lost two more wickets — Matt Henry (one) and Tim Southee (12) — in quick succession and consequently slipped to 209/9, leading by a mere 58 runs. Mitchell, however, displayed remarkable grit as he knitted a one-sided 45-run partnership for the last wicket with William O'Rourke to push New Zealand's lead past the 100-run barrier. Brydon Carse broke the frustrating 10th-wicket stand as he got Mitchell caught at long-off to return brilliant match figures of 10/106. For his brilliant bowling performance, Carse was adjudged the player of the match. Besides him, Chris Woakes picked up three wickets in the second innings, while Gus Atkinson chipped in with one. Mitchell remained the top-scorer for New Zealand with a fighting 84 off 167 balls, studded with 12 fours and a six. The eight-wicket victory gave England a 1-0 lead in the three-match, with the second Test scheduled to be played in Wellington from December 6 to 10. — Agencies

Briefs

Russia backs Assad with airstrikes

AMMAN: The Syrian army reported that dozens of its soldiers were killed during a significant offensive by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) rebels, who captured parts of Aleppo. This marks the most severe challenge to President Bashar Al-Assad's rule in years. In response, Russia's Defence Ministry stated that its air force had conducted strikes against the rebels to support Syrian government forces. This attack is considered one of the most daring by rebels in recent years, as front lines have largely remained static since 2020. HTS, formerly known as the Nusra Front, is classified as a terrorist organisation by several countries, including the United States, Russia, and Turkey. Assad, a close ally of Moscow, has faced a prolonged civil war that has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and displaced millions since its inception in 2011. Despite major fighting subsiding in recent years, the conflict remains unresolved. Aleppo had been under government control since 2016, following a pivotal victory when Russian-backed Syrian forces recaptured rebel-held areas of the city. Rebel fighters have now seized significant parts of Aleppo, including its airport, according to their statements and military sources. Footage showed rebel forces celebrating in key locations, including Saadallah Al-Jabiri Square and Aleppo's historic citadel.—APP

Cyclone Fengal causes devastation across S India, Sri Lanka

COLOMBO: Cyclone Fengal killed at least 19 people in India and Sri Lanka and caused flooding in Tamil Nadu state and the Puducherry region after crossing India's southern coast from the Bay of Bengal. Puducherry had been hit by the heaviest 24-hour rainfall in 30 years, India's weather office said on social media. The cyclone left parts of the southern city of Chennai inundated. Flights from the city were temporarily suspended on Saturday, but had resumed as of early Sunday morning, India's airport authority said. Visuals on local media showed gusty winds and heavy rainfall with roads submerged and boats being used to rescue people. The Indian army was running relief operations in Puducherry for people in the eye of the storm, while rainfall eased in Chennai. In Sri Lanka, 16 people were killed, with heavy rains affecting a total of 138,944 families, the latest data from the Disaster Management Centre in Colombo showed. Cyclone Fengal, which originated from the Bay of Bengal, made landfall in Tamil Nadu and the Puducherry region, bringing intense rainfall, strong winds, and significant flooding. This marks the latest severe weather event to impact southern India, as authorities continue to prepare for the storm's aftermath.—APP

Dynamic lighting brings new life to Burj Khalifa's visual identity

DUBAI: Emaar Properties has announced the completion of a revolutionary facade lighting upgrade for Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world. This dynamic Red, Green, Blue, White (RGBW) lighting system, integrating cutting-edge technology with the building's architectural artistry, will debut during the UAE's Eid Al Etihad celebrations on Sunday (December 1, 2024), and set the stage for the 15th anniversary of the world's tallest building on January 4, 2025, said a press release received here. The upgrade transforms the iconic facade into a stunning visual spectacle, offering a wide spectrum of vibrant colours and effects, enhancing the guest experience while reinforcing Dubai's status as a global leader in innovation and design excellence.—APP

Hashmi unveils collection of Pak's photographs at Beijing

He highlighted how these images narrate stories of mutual respect and understanding while underscoring the historical ties between the two nations, dating back to the Gandhara civilization

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, and Dr. Li Ruohong, founder of the World Peace Foundation—an official partner of UNESCO—jointly unveiled a captivating collection of photographs showcasing Pakistan's natural beauty and cultural heritage at the Peace Garden Museum. The photographs, contributed by the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing, were captured by Chinese tour operators who explored Pakistan during the Year of China-Pakistan Tourism Exchanges in 2023. This collection has now become a permanent feature of the museum's display, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. In his remarks, Ambassador Hashmi emphasized that the photographs reflect the profound connections fostered through travel, culture, and shared experiences. He highlighted how these images narrate stories of mutual respect and understanding while underscoring the historical ties between the two nations, dating back to the Gandhara civilization. "This display serves as a powerful symbol of the enduring people-to-people bonds that form the cornerstone of the Pakistan-China relationship," he



remarked. Ambassador Hashmi also lauded Dr. Li Ruohong for his dedication to strengthening bilateral ties and expressed gratitude for making the permanent display of these photographs possible at the Peace Garden Museum. He noted that the exhibit offers a unique opportunity for visitors to appreciate Pakistan's beauty and the shared legacy of friendship between the two countries.

Israeli attacks kill nearly 100 Palestinians

Gaza: Israeli air strikes on Gaza have killed nearly 100 Palestinians during the past 24 hours, with 75 of those deaths occurring in air raids on two homes in Beit Lahiya, in northern Gaza. These attacks come as the humanitarian crisis in the region deepens, with hunger levels reaching catastrophic proportions, according to the Gaza Government Media Office. The death toll from Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza since October 7, 2023, has risen to at least 44,363 Palestinians, with over 105,000 others wounded. Meanwhile, the humanitarian response in Gaza remains severely hampered by Israeli blockades, shortages of medical supplies, and the displacement of thousands. Among the dead was Ahmed al-Kahlout, head of the ICU at Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya, who was killed by an Israeli drone strike. Medical facilities in northern Gaza are struggling to function due to ongoing violence and limited resources. Despite these dire conditions, Gaza's suffering is compounded by issues in securing aid. Many Muslim-led organisations providing humanitarian relief to Palestinians have faced significant obstacles, including the closure of bank accounts and suspension of services by financial platforms, due to increased scrutiny over their work. Amany Killawi, co-founder of the crowdfunding platform Launch-Good, noted that such challenges are often a result of media pressure linked to the Israel-Palestine conflict, rather than any legal violations. Meanwhile, Hezbollah's leader, Naim Qassem, declared a "divine victory" for the group in its ongoing war with Israel, calling the recent truce a major achievement. Despite claims of a ceasefire, tensions remain high along the Lebanon-Israel border, with Israeli forces conducting airstrikes in southern Lebanon, targeting Hezbollah positions. The Lebanese Health Ministry reports that at least 3,961 people have been killed and 16,520 injured since the fighting began in October 2023. Hezbollah has emphasized its ongoing support for Palestinians in Gaza, as Israeli forces continue their aerial bombardment and ground operations. Meanwhile, Israeli military sources claim they have struck over 12,500 Hezbollah targets and inflicted heavy losses on the group. The ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel, brokered by the US and France, remains fragile as both sides accuse each other of violations.—DNA

Iran's top diplomat heads to Damascus to show support amid rebel advances

TEHRAN: Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday he will leave Tehran for Damascus to deliver a message of support for Syria's government and armed forces, state media said, after a lightning advance by rebels. Tehran has been a staunch ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad during the civil war that broke out in 2011. Iran maintains it does not have combat troops in Syria, only officers who provide military advice and training. "I am going to Damascus to convey the message of the Islamic Republic to the Syrian government," Araghchi said, emphasising Tehran will "firmly support the Syrian government and army," the IRNA state news agency reported. Islamist-led rebels on Saturday seized Aleppo's airport and dozens of nearby towns after overrunning most of Syria's second city Aleppo, a war monitor said. Syria's army confirmed that the rebels had entered "large parts" of the city of around two million people and said "dozens of men from our armed forces were killed." Araghchi again called the surprise rebel offensive a plot by the United States and Israel. "The Syrian army will once again win over these terrorist groups as in the past," the foreign minister added. An Iranian news agency reported earlier that a general in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was killed in Syria on Thursday during the fighting. On Saturday, Iran's foreign ministry said its consulate in Aleppo had come under attack, but staff members were safe. Foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Araghchi will visit Ankara for consultations with Turkish officials after his stop in Damascus. Since 2020, the rebel enclave in Syria's northwestern Idlib region has been subject to a Turkish- and Russian-brokered truce that had largely been holding despite repeated violations.—APP

Turmoil overshadows Romania vote as far right hopes to gain ground

BUCHAREST: Still reeling from this week's shock developments, Romanians return to the polls to elect their parliament on Sunday, with the far right tipped to win, potentially heralding a shift in the NATO country's foreign policy. Romania was thrown into turmoil after a top court ordered a recount of the first round of last week's presidential election won by Calin Georgescu, a little-known far-right admirer of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Despite accusations of Russian influence and alleged interference via TikTok, Sunday's parliamentary elections were going ahead as planned. While the recounting of more than nine million ballots appeared to proceed quickly, people on the streets of Bucharest expressed worries about the recent twists and turns. "What's going on now doesn't seem very democratic," Gina Visan told AFP at a Christmas market in Bucharest. "They should respect our vote. We're disappointed, but we're used to this kind of behaviour," said the 40-year-old nurse, echoing voter's distrust in traditional parties. Polling stations open at 7:00 am (0500 GMT) and close at 9:00 pm, with an exit poll due to be published shortly afterwards. The first official results are expected later in the evening. Amid allegations of irregularities and possible interference in the election, concerns over the transparency of the electoral process have emerged, with independent observers being denied access to the recount. According to Septimius Parvu of the Expert Forum think-tank, the recount order by Romania's Constitutional Court had "many negative effects", including undermining confidence in institutions. "We've already recounted votes in Romania in the past, but not millions of votes, with parliamentary elections in the middle of it all," said Parvu. "No decision made during this crucial period should limit the right of Romanians to vote freely nor further put at risk the credibility of the election process," the US embassy in Romania stressed. But the top court's decision is likely to boost the far right, Parvu said. The NATO member of 19 million people has so far resisted rising nationalism in the region, but experts say it faces an unprecedented situation as anger over soaring inflation and fears of being dragged into Russia's war in neighbouring Ukraine have mounted. George Sorin in Bucharest said he hopes the far right will score well, claiming the current parliament had mostly served the interests of "Brussels and Ukraine" instead of "national interests". Outgoing President Klaus Iohannis said Sunday's vote would determine Romania's future — whether it will "remain a country of freedom and openness or collapse into toxic isolation and a dark past". Romania's political landscape has been shaped by two major parties for the past three decades, but analysts predict a fragmented parliament to emerge from Sunday's vote, influencing the chances of forming a future government. Polls show that three far-right parties are predicted to claim more than 30 percent of the vote share combined. Among them is the AUR party, whose leader George Simion won nearly 14 percent of the presidential vote, which actually topped the latest polls on more than 22 percent. "We are here, standing, alive, more numerous than ever, and with a huge opportunity ahead of us," Simion — a fan of US President-elect Donald Trump — recently told his supporters. The Party of Young People (POT), which was founded in 2023 and has meanwhile thrown its support behind Georgescu, could reach the five-percentage threshold to enter parliament and there is also the extreme-right SOS Romania party, led by firebrand Diana Sosocoa. In recent years, around 30 percent of Romanians have embraced far-right views, even if they have not always voted for them in elections. Elena Lasconi's pro-European SR party has warned that the country faces "a historic confrontation" between those who wish to "preserve Romania's young democracy" and those who want to "return to the Russian sphere of influence".—Agencies

Uzbekistan: A historic gem of Islamic heritage, a growing partner for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan, nestled in the heart of Central Asia, stands as a beacon of Islamic heritage, showcasing a rich history which spans centuries. With its ancient cities, grand mosques and enduring cultural traditions, the country remains an indispensable destination for the Islamic world. Recently, its ties with Pakistan have reached new heights, emphasizing shared history, faith and growing bilateral cooperation. The inauguration of a direct flight between Tashkent and Lahore stands as a testament to the flourishing relationship between the two nations. Pakistan's cuisine Uzbekistan: A historic gem of Islamic heritage, a growing partner for Pakistan This initiative is expected to not only boost trade and economic ties but also foster greater people-to-people connections, enabling both nations to explore their rich historical and religious

heritage together. Uzbekistan is home to some of the world's most iconic Islamic landmarks. Cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva are treasure troves of Islamic architecture, culture and scholarship. The jewel of Central Asia known as the "Crossroads of Cultures," Samarkand is a UNESCO world heritage site. The city's

Registan Square, flanked by three majestic madrasas, stands as a testament to the golden age of Islamic learning and it is also home to the Gure-Amir Mausoleum, the resting place of the great conqueror Amir Timur (Tamerlane), and the Bibi-Khanyan Mosque, a masterpiece of Timurid architecture. Uzbekistan: A historic gem



of Islamic heritage, a growing partner for Pakistan A spiritual epicenter Bukhara, a city over 2,000 years old, has been a center of Islamic spirituality and learning. The Kalon Mosque and Minaret, the Ark Fortress, and the Lyabi-Hauz complex are must-visit sites. Bukhara's role as a hub for Islamic scholars, including Imam Bukhari, has cemented its place in the annals of Islamic history. A living museum, the ancient walled city of Itchan Kala in Khiva preserves the essence of medieval Islamic life. Its labyrinth of mosques, madrasas, and caravanserais transports visitors back in time. For Muslims worldwide Uzbekistan offers a unique spiritual journey. The Imam Bukhari Complex, near Samarkand, draws scholars and pilgrims to honor the legacy of the compiler of Sahih al-Bukhari, one of the most authentic collections of Hadith in Islam. Other significant

sites include the tomb of Imam Termez and the memorial of Sheikh Naqshband in Bukhara. In recent years, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have fostered a robust partnership, rooted in shared faith, cultural heritage, and mutual economic interests. Pakistan's cuisine Pakistani hold Uzbekistan's Islamic heritage in high regard, with scholars and historians often highlighting the historical connections between the two regions. Uzbek leaders have also acknowledged the role of Pakistani scholars in preserving Islamic traditions. Uzbekistan: A historic gem of Islamic heritage, a growing partner for Pakistan The two nations are enhancing trade and connectivity, particularly through initiatives like the Trans-Afghan Railway Project, which aims to link Uzbekistan with Pakistani ports.

Pakistani agricultural by-products showcased at China fair

GUANGZHOU: Pakistani Agricultural By-Products were showcased at the 21st China International Agricultural Trade Fair (CATF) held here. The fair took place at China Import and Export Fair Complex (Canton Fair Complex) in the recent week. Pakistani agricultural by-products emerged as a highlight of the event, capturing the attention of visitors and buyers alike. Pakistani products ranging from biscuits and pastries to Himalayan pink salt, dried mangoes, and almond oil are making a strong impression at the fair. "We are thrilled to see the enthusiastic response to these Pakistani agricultural by-products," said Cindy Chen, Director of the Pakistani market service platform "Zhitong Batic" for the China region, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. "Our platform has always been committed to showcasing the best of Pakistani products to a global audience, and this year's trade fair has been no exception. Chen highlighted the unique advantages of Pakistani agricultural products, adding their authenticity, freshness and Pakistan's efforts to promote and develop the agricultural sector. Pakistan's merchandise exports for the fiscal year 2023-2024 have reached \$30.64 billion, representing a 10.54 percent increase over the previous year, according to figures released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Notably, agricultural exports showed remarkable performance, reaching a record high of \$8 billion, up 37 percent year-on-year. Radio Pakistan reported that the country's agricultural sector is on track to achieve an export target of \$10 billion for this fiscal year.—Agencies

UNHCR warns of spike in gender-based violence for women & girls forced to flee

UNITED NATIONS: More than 60 million women and girls worldwide who are forcibly displaced or stateless face high risks of gender-based violence (GBV), but funding for lifesaving services to support them is woefully lacking, the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, said on the other day. UN data reveals that reports of conflict-related sexual violence increased shockingly by 50 per cent last year compared to 2023, and women and girls accounted for 95 per cent of verified cases. These numbers, however, "represent a small fraction of the reality" as many cases go unreported, the agency warned. "In many remote locations, humanitarian access is cut off or resources and assistance are scarce. Access to justice also remains limited, and survivors fear retaliation and social marginalization," UNHCR spokesperson Shabina Mantoo told journalists in Geneva.—APP

Pet cat 'claws' owner to death in Russia

MOSCOW: In a surprising incident, a 55-year-old man in Russia died in his home after his pet cat fatally clawed him. According to foreign media, Dmitry Ukhnin went out to search the streets for his runaway ginger pet cat who was missing from home for two days. Luckily but unfortunately for him, Ukhnin was able to track down his cat on November 22 and brought it back home. The ginger feline named Stypoka tried to run away again and scratched his leg after he tried to stop him from escaping again. His wound started to bleed furiously and he couldn't stop the bleeding due to a medical condition that keeps the body from forming blood clots. Ukhnin had reportedly called his neighbour for help — as he was home alone at the time — who in turn contacted emergency responders but the scratches were so severe that Ukhnin had died before the paramedics arrived at his home. "Around 11pm, a man called 112 to report that his friend was bleeding from his leg due to a torn vein," a police source told local media.—Agencies

Briefs

Trump threatens 100% tariffs on BRICS nations

WASHINGTON: President-elect Donald Trump issued a stark warning on Saturday, threatening to impose 100% tariffs on a bloc of nine nations if they take steps to undermine the US dollar's dominance. The threat was aimed at countries within the BRIC alliance—Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Malaysia have also applied for membership, with several other nations expressing interest in joining. Despite the US dollar's continued status as the world's leading currency, withstanding numerous challenges to its global preeminence, members of the BRICS group and other developing nations have voiced frustration with America's control over the international financial system. In a post on Truth Social, Trump wrote: "We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty US Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful US Economy." Trump's remarks come after a summit in October where Russian President Vladimir Putin criticized the US for "weaponizing" the dollar, calling it a "big mistake." "It's not us who refuse to use the dollar," Putin stated. "But if they don't let us work, what can we do? We are forced to search for alternatives." — Agencies

Former MNA dies in road accident

DN
AHMEDPUR SHARQIA: Former Member National Assembly (MNA) Makhdoom Syed Ali Hassan Gillani and other two persons died in a road accident in Ahmedpur Sharqia. According to Rescue officials, Gillani's vehicle collided with a mini truck standing on the Nabipur Ahmedpur Road due to over-speeding as a result Syed Ali Hassan died and three injured. Officials stated that dead bodies and injured shifted to THQ Hospital Ahmedpur Sharqia. The dead body of Ali Hassan Gillani has been handed over to his family. Former MNA's funeral prayers would be offered at Uch Sharif at 4pm evening. It is pertinent to note that Makhdoom Gillani was elected as MNA on the party ticket of PML-N during the 2018 election. Later on, he joined PPP and participated in the 2024 general elections on the ticket of PPP.

Journalist Shakir Awan returns home

DN
LAHORE: Journalist Shakir Mehmood Awan, who was allegedly abducted from his home by law enforcement personnel earlier this week, was released in the wee hours of Sunday and returned home. A plea was filed with the Lahore High Court (LHC) by Awan's mother to recover and produce him immediately. The petition was fixed for hearing at 9:00am on Friday by Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh. The LHC on Friday summoned the inspector general of police (IGP) on a petition for the recovery of the "abducted" journalist and YouTube but Punjab Additional IG Shahzada Sultan appeared in his stead. Justice Sheikh also directed the Punjab Safe City Authority to present the CCTV footage of the journalist's abduction from his residence. Awan's lawyer, Muhammad Azhar Siddique, remarked that by registering a first information report (FIR), the police had "relieved themselves of their burden". Meanwhile, the public prosecutor said they were making all efforts to comply with the court order.

CHINESE EMBASSY'S DONATION FOR PFOWA PFOWA Charity Bazaar 2024 attracts huge audiences

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA)

DN
ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA), aimed to support underprivileged communities. The event featured a diverse range of cultural stalls, representing various foreign embassies, and was held at the Foreign Office. One of the key attractions of the Bazaar was the wide variety of delicacies from different countries, with Central Asian and Arabian cuisines being particularly popular among visitors. These offerings provided guests with the opportunity to experience and appreciate the diverse culinary traditions from around the world. The Bazaar also showcased the cultural heritage of numerous countries, creating an environment of multicultural exchange and celebration. However, it was noted that many of the European missions did not participate this year, which could have affected the overall diversity of the event. Additionally, a 'Parade of Nations' was held, featuring children of diplomatic staff. These children, dressed in the traditional attire of their respective countries, presented lively tableaux and proudly waved their national flags, further adding to the festive and cultural atmosphere of the event. Through this initiative, the PFOWA Bazaar not only provided a platform for cultural exchange but also played an important role in raising funds for the support of underprivileged communities in Pakistan.



Israeli strikes kill 15, as Cairo holds fresh talks with Hamas

The strike in the Muwasi area is a sprawling tent camp housing hundreds of thousands of displaced people

FOREIGN DESK
CAIRO: Israeli military strikes killed at least 15 Palestinians in Gaza on Sunday, medics said, as Israeli forces kept up bombardments across the enclave and blew up houses on its northern edge. In the central Gaza camp of Nuseirat, an Israeli airstrike killed six people in a house, and another attack killed three in a home in Gaza City, medics said. Two children were killed when a missile hit a tent encampment in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, while four other people were killed in an airstrike in Rafah, near the border with Egypt, medics told Reuters. Residents said the military blew up clusters of houses in the northern Gaza areas of Jabalia, Beit Lahiyah and Beit Hanoun, where Israeli forces have operated since October this year. Palestinians say Israel's operations on the northern edge of the enclave are part of a plan to clear people out through forced evacuations and bombardments to create a buffer zone — an allegation the army denies.

Slow internet speed limits access in several cities

Downdetector shows WhatsApp, Gmail, Instagram outages in Pakistan along with Gmail services

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Users across various cities in Pakistan woke up to internet hindrances due to slow speeds, resulting in difficulties with browsing, as well as downloading and sharing media. In Karachi, users in North Nazimabad, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, and Karsaz reported slow internet speeds, with netizens complaining of disrupted Wi-Fi services and issues with the popular messaging platform WhatsApp. Meanwhile, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's capital, Peshawar, people complained of problems with internet browsing, as well as uploading and downloading images, videos, and voice notes. Similar issues were also reported across Balochistan including the capital Quetta where WhatsApp services have been affected. The disrupted internet access also adversely affected those engaged in online businesses. The internet issues were confirmed by Downdetector

which showed Gmail, WhatsApp, Instagram and TikTok outages spiking at around 11am today. Internet disruptions are not unusual in Pakistan, as the country has been facing sporadic outages and access hindrances for months, now for various reasons. Last week, internet and mobile services were disrupted in the wake of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) "do-or-die" protest in Islamabad. Furthermore, the incumbent government has carried out multiple tests of its internet firewall, with the first and second trials conducted in July and August, respectively. On both occasions, the trials slowed down internet speeds and disrupted digital platforms. However, it is pertinent to mention that no specific reason has come to light for today's slowed internet speed. Speaking to media regarding the prevailing issues internet, Minister for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressed the issue of restrictions on X, formerly Twitter,

which has been restricted in the country for months owing to security concerns raised by the government regarding the content propagated on the platform. "X is used by less than 2% of the people in Pakistan. If the government's intention was to restrict the freedom of expression then other platforms would've faced restrictions such as Facebook and TikTok which are widely used by the masses," she said. When asked about why government officials such as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and others were using the platform when it was restricted for the common man, the minister underscored diplomatic obligations which initially arose when the Chinese president, Saudi Arabia and other countries congratulated PM Shehbaz on X on becoming the country's premier. "A diplomatic situation was created and it was deliberated upon how to make sure that the prime minister's message

is [duly] conveyed," she added. Responding to a question regarding the internet firewall and resulting internet issues, Khawaja said that the country faces millions of cyberattacks on a daily basis and lamented that the whole firewall issue has "been blown out of proportions". "We have a web management system which has been operational for the past 10 years [...] The government of Pakistan needs improved and better cybersecurity [mechanism]. "There is nothing controversial if a country takes measures for [improving] its cybersecurity," remarked the IT minister. When pressed on the government censorship, Khawaja maintained that the freedom of expression was not hindered as all digital media platforms were operational and were not restricted. Highlighting the terrorism issue, she said that several law enforcement agencies (LEAs) personnel were martyred in nearly one month.

Afghanistan must participate in future climate talks: Taliban

DN

KABUL: An Afghan environment official on Sunday said the country must be allowed to participate in future global climate talks, after returning from COP29 in Baku where Taliban officials attended for the first time. The Afghan delegation was invited as "guests" of the Azerbaijani hosts, not as a party directly involved in the negotiations. It was the first time that an Afghan delegation had attended since the Taliban swept to power in August 2021, having failed to get an invite to the past two COPs (Conference of the Parties) held in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. "Afghanistan must participate in such conferences in the future," said Matul Haq Khalis, the director general of Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency, at a press conference on Sunday. He described Afghanistan's attendance last month at the talks as a "big achievement".

Government eager to seek Russian financing

Will hold talks next week to deepen economic ties, fund infrastructure projects

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will hold discussions with Russia next week to deepen economic ties and invite investment for financing infrastructure projects, including the three schemes that were earlier pitched for Chinese funding. The three-day-long discussions will be held at the platform of Pakistan-Russia Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) amid persistent challenges to find a legal way to avoid the international financial sanctions against Moscow for doing business with it. Pakistan has not yet been able to come up with an alternative payment method after Russia exited SIWFT — an international payment system used to settle financial transactions. Power Minister Sardar Awais Leghari will lead the delegation for three-day discussions in place

of Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, who is the IGC co-chairman. It is the ninth IGC meeting, which is taking place after almost two years. Government sources said that there was heavy economic, commercial and trade agenda that both sides would take up to deepen ties. Meetings are taking place a week after the president of Belarus, an ally and friend of Moscow, visited Islamabad and signed a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs). Sources said that during the preparatory meetings it emerged that Pakistan did not have a viable alternative plan to do business with Russia in the presence of US and European Union sanctions. However, India is doing business with Moscow despite the embargo. Pakistan's stated policy is that it is not part of any western or Asian bloc and wants to do business with all countries, except for India and Israel. Pakistan will discuss the possibility of establishing correspondent banking relationship with Moscow amid reluctance of local banks due to the fear of western sanctions. There will be discussion on a payment mechanism for the settlement of financial transactions.

Syrian rebels expand offensive after taking Aleppo

Syria's President Bashar Assad says will defeat militants no matter how much their attacks intensify

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Thousands of Syrian militants took over most of Aleppo on Saturday, establishing positions in the country's largest city and controlling its airport before expanding their shock offensive to a nearby province. They faced little to no resistance from government troops, according to fighters and activists. A war monitor, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the insurgents led by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham seized control of Aleppo International airport, the first international airport to be controlled by insurgents. The fighters claimed they seized the airport and posted pictures from there. Thousands of fighters also moved on, facing almost no opposition from government forces, to seize towns and villages in northern Hama, a province where they had a presence before being expelled by government troops in 2016. They claimed Saturday evening to have entered the city of Hama.

Islamic nations should not let US, Israel exploit Syrian crisis

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has called on the Muslim countries to intervene in the Syrian crisis regarding the resurgence of Takfiri terrorists and not allow the United States and Israel to exploit the internal conflict in the Islamic Arab country. Pezeshkian made the statement in an address at a plenary session of Iran's Parliament on Sunday as he pointed to the latest developments in Syria and the ongoing clashes between the country's military forces and foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists in and around the northwestern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib. "We hope that Muslim countries intervene and will not allow America and Israel to exploit this domestic conflict within this Islamic country," the Iranian president said. Stressing that the aggression by Takfiri terrorists on Syrian soil is supported by the United States and European countries, Pezeshkian said. — Agencies



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