

13 accords signed

Pakistan, China agree to ramp up cooperation

Chinese PM reaches Pakistan on 4-day visit; opens Gwadar airport along with Shehzad virtually; both leaders hold delegation-level talks; all aspects of cooperation under CPEC discussed; Li Qiang reiterates plan to work hand-in-hand with Pakistani friends; meets COAS Gen Asim; Shehzad hopes airport completion to transform Gwadar as well as country's economy; agreements signed to fortify cooperation in security, education, agriculture, human resource development and science & technology

By Muhammad Anis/
Mehtab Haider

CLOCKWISE: Prime Minister Shehzad Sharif receives Chinese Premier Li Qiang upon his arrival in Rawalpindi, Monday. Deputy PM Senator Ishaq Dar and Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal are also present; Shehzad Sharif and Li Qiang unveiling a plaque to virtually inaugurate the new Gwadar International Airport in Islamabad; the Chinese PM shakes hands with Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir.

All set for SCO summit today

By Mumtaz Alvi, Muhammad Saleh Zaafir/ Agencies
(SCO) here on Tuesday and Wednesday.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is all set to host the meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

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Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	278.35	279.35
Canadian Dollar	202.50	204.50
Pound Sterling UK	361.95	363.95
Australian Dollar	187.00	189.00
Malaysian Ringgit	66.00	67.00
U.A.E Dirham	75.45	75.95
Saudi Riyal	73.60	74.10
Omani Riyal	717.50	721.00
Euro	302.30	304.30
Japanese Yen	1.84	1.88
Kuwaiti Dinar	897.30	902.80
Bahrain Dinar	732.50	736.50

All rates are as per Monday October 14, 2024.



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Chinese company to invest over Rs8bn in Punjab
A delegation meets PBIT chairman

By our correspondent

LAHORE: In a significant development for Pakistan's industrial sector, Modern Ceramics Sanitary Ware (Pvt) Limited, a leading Chinese company, is set to invest over Rs8 billion in Punjab.

The development emerged during a meeting between the company's delegation and Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT) leadership, held at PBIT conference room.

Chairman PBIT, Muntaha Ashraf, and CEO, Suhail Saleem, BoD Member, Ahmad Ali Tariq met with representatives from Modern Ceramics to discuss the company's plan to establish a cutting-edge manufacturing facility in the Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC).

This new facility is poised to not only meet the growing local demand for sanitary ware but also presents Pakistan as an exporter of premium sanitary products to key markets across the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. The investment is expected to generate over 500 jobs, contributing to local economic growth, while playing a vital role in import substitution.

By reducing dependence on imported sanitary ware, Pakistan will also save millions in foreign exchange, strengthening its trade balance.

Chairman PBIT reassured the delegation of comprehensive support, highlighting PBIT's commitment to facilitating the smooth establishment of the production unit through its dedicated facilitation wing. This move marks a significant step towards boosting Punjab's industrial capacity and enhancing Pakistan's standing in global export markets.

Nobody can be allowed to sabotage SCO, CPEC: PMLN MPs

LAHORE: Ruling party MPAs in Punjab Assembly supported action against elements planning to damage CPEC and reach Islamabad to create disturbance during the SCO commencing today (Tuesday).

During the heated PA session chaired by Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan a day before the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit starting from Oct 15 (today) in the federal capital, the ruling party MPAs supported full action against those who were on a mission of sabotaging the summit or damaging Pakistan's interest. Sami Ullah Khan, the PMLN MPA from Lahore while voicing serious concern over the video message of PTI senior leader and former member of Imran Khan's cabinet Hammad Azhar stated if the intent to sabotage SCO was shown, the government was left with no option but to stop the miscreants from performing any subversive act.

Sami Ullah Khan, who hails from Lahore and served as MPA for multiple terms now went on to say that Hammad Azhar had asked the PTI workers to reach Islamabad on October 15, the day when the summit was starting.

He said the law enforcement agencies were left with only one option that unfortunately could also affect politicians with positive intent. Those intending to sabotage peace will not be spared' said the Provincial Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja ur Rehman while speaking on the floor of Punjab Assembly. 'Show the courage and come out, we will not let PTI supporters exit Punjab' said Mian Mujtaba Shuja ur Rehman. He said the elements who wanted to hinder Pakistan's way to progress and prosperity would be dealt with iron hands.

Mujtaba went on to say if these elements were sincere to Pakistan, they should withdraw the October 15 protest call. He said the heads of world nations were coming to Pakistan after 27 years, inflation was coming down, the economic situation was improving, adding PMLN deserved the credit of all this. Mujtaba went on to say that

law would take its course if PTI launched any attack against the state of Pakistan. The minister said that in the tenure of Imran Khan, the CPEC project faced a delay, adding IK pushed the country towards bankruptcy but Shehzad Sharif steered Pakistan out of crisis.

He criticised PTI leadership for their will to block CPEC and Pakistan's way to progress which, he added was not possible while Shehzad Sharif was in power. He said PMLN and allies under the leadership of Shehzad Sharif would take Pakistan on the track of progress.

Mujtaba Shuja ur Rehman, while grilling PTI leadership further, said that on the insistence of their foreign masters, they did not attend the All Parties Conference on Palestine. Only with the help of Gen Fair Hameed and a few judges, PTI was able to win a few seats and in the next polls, the Goldsmith project failed again. Mujtaba also slammed PTI leaders like Arif Ali, Ali Amin Gandapur for provoking people.

Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad on the occasion remarked how could a member's arrest be averted if he was involved in subversive acts. Under Article 17, every citizen has the right to protest but if it is not peaceful, trouble could be invited.

The Speaker stated that protest is the Constitutional right but there must be some limits, adding if these elements were miscreants, they should be stopped.

Opposition MPA Ejaz Shafi while speaking on the occasion stated that this present assembly was a product of Form 47 whereas Prisoner number 804 enjoyed real mandate. He said rather than levelling allegations, the government should tell the name of the political workers who were against the state of Pakistan. He questioned as to why the PTI workers were not allowed to reach Islamabad. He said the PTI welcomed the Shanghai summit but its protest call was totally peaceful and constitutional. He also stated that PMLN would be wiped out in the next elections.

Steps to be taken to ensure quality education: governor

Says govt to resolve issue of shortage of teachers in campuses

By Eisha Asif

LAHORE: It is the responsibility of the government to provide young generation with every educational facility, said Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider during a face-to-face discussion with students held by Mir Khalil-ur-Rahman Memorial Society (MKRMS) of Jang Group of Newspapers.

"We will take important steps. We need to improve the quality of education in schools and we are determined to provide education to every child of the country. We will establish student councils in universities very soon."

The face-to-face discussion programme was organised by senior journalists Wasif Nagi and Raees Ansari. Aimon Bint Shahid, Fatima Ejaz, Fatima Khan, Shamale Nauman, Sidra, Yusra Baig, Dr M Ali, Farah Khan, Asifa Khan, Fiza Khan, Anam Talib, Ayesha Bukhari, Ayesha Siddique, Ms Ayeza, Assistant Director Student Affairs, Zainab Yasin, Hadia Rehman, Anaya Zafar, Miral Zeest, Syeda Momina Aamir, M Saim and Zubia Lodhi participated.

LCWU suspends staffer over misbehaving with student

By our correspondent

LAHORE: Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) has denied the occurrence of any incident like the Punjab College.

A LCWU spokesperson, however, said a committee comprising senior members of the university, had been formed to investigate a harassment complaint lodged by a student against a staff member.

The staff member is allegedly involved in misbehaving and stalking. The staff member has been suspended with immediate effect.

This inquiry is being conducted in accordance with the policies of the Higher Education Commission and the Punjab government on harassment," reads a press release.

The spokesperson further said LCWU remained committed to ensuring a thorough and transparent process and providing a safe, respectful, and empowering environment for all students. "We urge everyone to avoid spreading unverified news and information," the release added.

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ISLAMABAD: Chinese Premier Li Qiang holding an important meeting with the military leadership, including CJCS General Sahr Shamshad Mirza and COAS General Asim Munir, Monday.

Growing lawlessness KP Bar Council announces boycott of courts

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council here on Monday expressed concern over the poor law and order in southern districts of the province and announced that the legal fraternity would boycott the court proceedings today (Tuesday) in protest against the growing lawlessness.

In a statement, KP Bar Council Chairman Sadig Ali Mohmand expressed grief over the killing of people in the Kurram tribal district and extended sympathy to the bereaved families.

He said that it was the failure of the provincial government to tackle the worsening law and order and bring peace to the province.

The bar office-bearer asked the provincial government, particularly the high-ups of the police, to pay heed to the issue of law and order, or else the lawyer community would be compelled to take some extreme step.

US weapons seized at Torkham

By our correspondent

LANDIKOT: The Customs authorities at the Pak-Afghan Torkham border seized foreign-made military weapons, officials said on Monday.

In a media briefing, Customs Superintendent Muhammad Jan said that a team intercepted a coal truck (registration number KBL51828) coming from Afghanistan after receiving credible information.

The team discovered 15 M4 rifles, 170 magazines, and over 5,100 rounds of ammunition hidden in secret compartments of the vehicle.

The value of the seized arms and ammunition was put at 35 million rupees.

The officials stated that the seized arms were of American origin, and used in the Afghan war.

A first information report was lodged and the case was transferred to the Customs House in Peshawar for further investigation.

Oxford faces backlash over Imran's bid for chancellorship: The Times

By Murtaza Ali Shah

LONDON: The chancellorship at Oxford University has been overshadowed by the intricate interplay of Pakistani politics for the first time after Imran Khan submitted his papers and the university most likely did not predict the backlash his candidacy would provoke, The Times reported on Monday.

The contest is so hot that a legal opinion has been sought on whether or not Imran meets the merit and there is considerable concern in Pakistan regarding the election, particularly in light of Khan's imprisonment, with many of his supporters believing that a victory would significantly increase the likelihood of him being released from prison, the paper said.

It said that for centuries, the chancellorship at Oxford University has been held by prominent male figures from the British establishment, typically until their death. However, following Lord Patten of Barnes's announcement of his retirement, fierce competition has erupted to become the figurehead of the world's most renowned university.

For the first time, Oxford will conduct its chancellorship election through an online popular vote, inviting alumni to rank their preferred candidates in order of pref-

erence. The prominent names wanting to become the next Chancellor are: Lord William Hague, Lady Elish Angiolini, Lord Peter Mandelson, Imran Khan, Dr Margaret Casely-Hayford and Dominic Grieve.

Khan, 73, who read philosophy, politics, and economics at Oxford before graduating in 1975, told The Times last month that he applied to run for chancellor to "give back" to the university that shaped his leadership skills.

However, since his interview, The Times said, legal advice regarding his eligibility for the role has been commissioned. "A leading barrister in London was approached by a party unrelated to the University of Oxford to express an opinion about the eligibility of Khan's candidacy," said the paper.

Although the chancellorship might seem largely ceremonial and is not a paid position — except for covering expenses, it has been overshadowed by the intricate interplay of Pakistani politics. "There is considerable concern in Pakistan regarding the election, particularly in light of Khan's imprisonment, with many of his supporters believing that a victory would significantly increase the likelihood of his release from prison," said the paper.

Oxford will announce

its list of approved candidates for the upcoming election this week, which will see participation from more than 26,000 registered alumni out of over 250,000 eligible voters.

Irene Tracey, the vice-chancellor, has confirmed that, due to the high number of candidates, the election will involve multiple rounds of voting, and the new chancellor is expected to be announced by the end of the year.

"Student opinion is sharply divided, with students and alumni split into pro- and anti-Khan camps. While an open letter, signed by hundreds of students, expresses support for the former cricket star, counter-protests oppose his candidacy for the role," said the paper.

The Times said that a letter, signed by about 170 current students and alumni, showed support for Khan's candidacy, focusing on his "lifelong commitment to public service" as well as accomplishments in cricket, philanthropy, and his previous role as chancellor of the University of Bradford. It said that protesters against his candidacy — led by PMLN UK Youth Wing leader Khurram Butt — have delivered several petitions to the university and have allegedly been handing out leaflets promoting their views.

PHC grants transit bail to KP Assembly deputy speaker, others

By Amjad Sali

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Monday granted transit bail to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Deputy Speaker Suriya Bibi and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members of the Punjab Assembly Raja Basharat and Sanam Javed till November 3 with directives to appear before the relevant courts.

A single PHC bench comprising Justice Fahim Wali heard the petitions of the PTI

leaders.

The bench also granted transit bail to PTI leader from Punjab Aalia Hamza till November 8 and directed her to appear before the relevant forums. A lawyer, Alam Khan Adenai Advocate, appeared in the court on behalf of the petitioners.

He told the court that cases had been filed against Aalia Hama, Raja Basharat and Sanam Javed in Mianwali, Taxila and Hassanabad, respectively.

After hearing the arguments, the bench granted transit bail to the petitioners and directed them to appear before the relevant courts, but feared arrest.

He told the court that the cases were politically motivated, adding that his clients intended to appear before the relevant courts, but feared arrest.

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The lawyer said that a case was also registered against KP Assembly Deputy Speaker Suriya Bibi in Hassanabad.

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Fazl

Continued from page 1

The PPP chief said they couldn't backtrack on the promise of the party's late leader Benazir Bhutto of forming a constitutional court if an imprisoned person was in no mood to pass the amendment.

He recalled that Benazir Bhutto had returned to the country with the resolve to implement the Charter of Democracy (CoD).

He said Ms Bhutto embraced martyrdom while striving to fulfil her mission of implementing the CoD.

"Should we forget our leader's promise due to an imprisoned person? The Pakistan People's Party is not ready for any compromise on this matter," he said.

Bilawal said he wanted to ask the people of Sindh whether they were satisfied with the current justice system.

He said the present system would continue unchanged if the people were satisfied with it.

He said the CoD provided a solution to rectify the fractured justice system of Pakistan based on injustice.

The PPP chairman said each province should get equal representation in the judiciary if the dispensation of justice had to be ensured.

He said the proposal to constitute a special court along with the regular apex judiciary was aimed at improving the justice system.

He viewed that the constitutional issues would be sorted out if an equal number of judges from each province heard such cases.

Bilawal opined that the new constitutional court would guarantee the protection of fundamental rights of the people.

He said the proposed new court would also adjudicate contentious issues between the federation and any province.

Bilawal reiterated his demand that the federal constitutional court should be set up, while the mechanism to appoint the judges should also be adopted as per the CoD.

He said the narrative that the timing for adopting the constitutional amendment was not appropriate was meaningless.

"When will it happen if it doesn't happen now?" Bilawal asked.

He recalled that no one was worried when military dictator General Ziaul Haq was authorised to amend the Constitution and constitute the federal constitutional court.

Bilawal said he knew about the present judicial system more than anyone.

He lamented that the apex judiciary in the past instead of protecting the rights of the people and serving justice allowed the military dictators to amend the constitution. He said the judiciary only served justice to the judges instead of serving the masses facing injustices.

Bilawal informed the audience that the constitutional amendment proposed by the PPP was as per Benazir's promise and provisions of the CoD.

"We will collectively make the demand for dispensing justice, adopting judicial reforms, constitutional amendment, and equal representation (of provinces in the judiciary)," he said.

He hoped that a consensus would emerge as a result of his consultations with the political forces to ensure that the parliament passed the proposed constitutional amendment.

Bilawal told the audience that he was again going to meet JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman on this issue on Tuesday (today).

"We will collectively improve the justice system through the 20th Amendment," said the PPP chairman.

Meanwhile, in a statement on his X handle, Bilawal said the political parties and civil society had a unanimous consensus on a specific judicial reform adding that no one should be allowed to undermine the legitimate structural requirements for a Federal Constitutional Court.

The PPP chief said the civil society had called for a Charter of Democracy 2.0 (CoD) in August 2023 to complete the unfinished agenda of CoD signed in 2006 to regain the space lost to the impact of Imran Khan, Gen. Pasha and Gen. Faiz's assault on the democratic consensus.

He said the civil society had given several recommendations including the creation of a Federal Constitutional Court.

He said the long list of endorsements even included a sitting PTI senator.

With his post, Bilawal posted the report of civil society — AwazCDS-Pakistan, Pakistan Development Alliance and Asian Democracy Network that had called for a Charter of Democracy 2.0 to complete the unfinished agenda of CoD signed in 2006.

Meanwhile, JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman said the government should legislate in accordance with the national conditions and needs.

Talking to the reporters here on Monday, he said the government's constitutional draft will undermine judicial freedom and the public interest.

He said negotiations with the coalition government had led to considerable consensus, while the draft crafted by the government had been rejected, as it will end personal freedom.

"It is our responsibility to create a balance among all the institutions. We have almost reached the consensus. It took us nine months to pass the 18th Amendment; we will prioritize the things needing time." Fazl said they had objected to the government's draft adding that judicial freedom and the people's rights would have been rejected by the government's draft. Everything has to be done in the interest of the people and the country, he added.

The JUI-F chief said he will meet the PPP Chair-

man Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Karachi on Tuesday (today) and PMLN chief Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Lahore.

Fazl said he had appealed to the PTI to postpone the protest until the departure of the SCO delegates.

He said there had been protests in the past but no good results came out. Postponing the protest will not create any problem. As long as the guests are on Pakistan's soil, the protest can be postponed, he emphasized.

In a related development, PPP Vice President and parliamentary leader in the Senate Senator Sherry Rehman held consultations with the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan on the proposed constitutional amendments with the special focus on establishment of Federal Constitutional Court and Provincial Constitutional Court.

Dr Asim Hussain accompanied Sherry, while the MQM-P delegation comprised Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori, Dr Farooq Sattar, and Amin ul Haque.

The meeting was held at the Sindh House here.

The meeting is part of a broader consultation process in accordance with Bilawal Bhutto's vision of a dedicated constitutional court to handle constitutional matters efficiently and ensure equal representation for all provinces at the federal level.

This reform is a critical part of the unfinished agenda of 2006 Charter of Democracy. It will ensure that no government can manipulate the judiciary for political gains envisioned by Shahid Mohtama Benazir Bhutto to uphold democratic principles.

During the meeting, both parties reached a consensus on moving forward with constitutional amendments in a transparent and collaborative manner.

The discussions focused on maintaining ongoing communication and fostering cooperation between the two parties.

Both sides exchanged views on their respective priorities, highlighting the importance of continuing a constructive dialogue.

Senator Sherry emphasized the significance of a longstanding relationship between the PPP and MQM, adding, "Our discussions today were fruitful, and we are committed to maintaining this engagement moving forward."

She highlighted that on the instructions of Bilawal Bhutto, the PPP was actively engaging all the stakeholders in the process of constitutional reforms. "Today, we briefed the MQM leadership about the establishment of constitutional courts," she stated.

In a brief talk with the media, MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar reiterated that politics was the way to engage the relevant stakeholders.

In another related development, the sub-committee was Monday asked to finalise recommendations about the constitutional amendments within next two days and furnish them with the Special Committee slated to meet on Thursday.

The Special Committee met here with Syed Khursheed Shah in the chair.

The ANP presented its draft for the constitutional amendment and submitted a proposal for renaming Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as "Pakhtunkhwa".

It also supported the PPP and PMLN's proposal of establishing a Federal Constitutional Court but opposed the provincial constitutional courts, terming it fanciful and absurd idea putting unnecessary fiscal burden on the state kitty.

The PTI has not submitted its draft to the Special Committee so far. However, it has hinted at submitting its proposals or draft after a meeting with the JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman on Wednesday.

In its proposal, the ANP opposed the fixing of tenure of the chief justice for three years arguing that it was discriminatory and against the constitutional norms.

The ANP suggested that in article 1 (2)(a), after comma words the Khyber occurring before Pakhtunkhwa shall be omitted.

In article 172(3) the following shall be added, "Parliament shall by law provide for equal representation of the federal and respective provincial governments in the management, administration and regulation of mineral oil and natural gas."

In article 176, ANP suggested that the following shall be added, "Provided that all provinces shall have equal number of judges in the total strength of the Supreme Court."

The ANP also opposed a proposal for fixing 40 years as the age of a judge for appointment to the High Court arguing that it would compromise the quality and integrity of the High Courts.

In the meeting, all the proposed drafts of the PTI were rejected.

Former prime minister Raja Pervez Ashraf said any further delay was unjustified and now all the parties will have to be serious.

The proposed drafts of all political parties have arrived; this amendment is not for a single individual or a specific party," he said.

During the meeting, ANP chief Aimal Wali Khan and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Owais Ayub Khan exchanged hot words when Aimal accused the PTI of non-serious attitude.

According to the sources, Owais said, "If we are serious then we are sitting here."

Sources said Aimal responded that he was not addressing him but the chairman.

"You should also address the chair," Aimal Wali Khan responded.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui pointed out that all the parties had submitted their drafts but the PTI was the only party that did not submit anything in black and white.

He said if the PTI leaders were serious, then they should have submitted their inputs on the drafts submitted there.

Syed Khursheed Shah convened a meeting of Special Committee on Thursday, (October 17).

The JUI-F chief said he will meet the PPP Chair-

surprise.

Indian High Commission media wing told The News on Monday it had no clue about any schedule of media interaction of its EAM. But sources hinted that since Pakistan would raise the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, occupied by India, in its principal statement, Jaishankar might respond through media before his returning home.

Sources hinted that the Indian minister would have at least two meetings on the margins of the summit with Chinese and Russian foreign ministers.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar Monday termed the protest call of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) a hollow threat, saying that the area from the airport to the red zone was completely safe.

He said it was a matter of pride to hold such a big event in Pakistan after 27 years, noting that after 11 years, Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang had come to Pakistan.

He was holding a news conference after Chinese prime minister's arrival in Pakistan. He said PTI's protest call was a trivial issue as the party leaders were fighting among themselves; Hamid Khan and Ali Muhammad Khan did not want any protest, and some others were saying it was aimed at only recording their protest.

The last Indian EAM to visit Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj in December 2015.

The Indian PM has never participated in the annual meeting of the Council of Heads of Government since India became a member in 2017, so

Jaishankar's attendance comes as no

surprise.

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India, Canada

Continued from page 1

withdrawing its six diplomats from Canada, but an Ottawa government source told AFP they had not created any problem. As long as the guests are on Pakistan's soil, the protest can be postponed, he emphasized.

The 2023 murder of Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar crashed the country's diplomatic relations with India after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said there were "credible allegations" linking Indian intelligence services to the crime. New Delhi's foreign ministry said it had told Verna to return home. "We have no faith in the current Canadian Government's commitment to ensure their security," it said in a statement. India on Monday called allegations it was connected to the killing of Nijjar "baseless" and a "strategy of smearing India for political gains".

Last year, the Indian government briefly curbed visas for Canadians and forced Ottawa to withdraw diplomats, and on Monday threatened further action.

India reserves the right to take further steps in response to the Trudeau Government's support for extremism, violence and separatism against India," the foreign ministry said.

The foreign ministry also summoned Canadian envoy Wheeler, who said that Ottawa had given India the evidence it had demanded.

"Canada has provided credible, irrefutable evidence of ties between agents of the Government of India and the murder of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil," Wheeler told reporters after leaving the ministry.

"Now, it is time for India to live up to what it said it would do and look into all those allegations. It is in the interest of both our countries and the peoples of our countries to get to the bottom of this. Canada stands ready to cooperate with India."

India then announced his expulsion. —AFP

Pakistan, China

Continued from page 1

projects in various sectors, including industry, agricultural modernisation, information technology, and science and technology, for mutual benefit and Pakistan's socio-economic development.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif assured Pakistan's unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety of Chinese nationals and projects in Pakistan. "Held most productive talks with Chinese Premier Li Qiang," Shehbaz Sharif said on his X social media site.

He said that they expressed satisfaction at the progress of various important CPEC initiatives and agreed to ensure their timely execution. The PM said that they also discussed ways to further enhance cooperation in multiple areas including trade, investment, economy, agriculture, IT, and defence as well as regional peace and security.

"Our strategic partnership and full understanding on our core issues is cornerstone of regional stability and prosperity," the PM said.

He pointed out that they presided over the completion of new Gwadar airport and witnessed the exchange of important MoUs that will enhance cooperation in various fields. "Long Live Pak-China friendship," Shehbaz Sharif concluded.

Both leaders agreed to continue high-level exchanges, which include strengthening cooperation in all bilateral areas.

The meeting discussed the relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan and also exchanged views on strategies to increase Chinese investment in Pakistan.

It was reiterated during the meeting that Pakistan and China will continue close consultation at multilateral forums as well as on issues of regional and global importance.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Qiang virtually inaugurated the new Gwadar International Airport.

Addressing inaugural ceremony, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said completion of Gwadar International Airport was a gift from China. He said it shows China's commitment and dedication to support Pakistan's economic development agenda and to promote backwards areas of country.

He expressed the confidence that completion of this international Gwadar airport would not only transform Gwadar's economy, but also economy of the country.

Expressing gratitude to Chinese leadership, Shehbaz appreciated untiring efforts of Pakistan and Chinese engineers and workers for their efforts in building a world class airport at Gwadar.

He said a signing ceremony and exchange of MoUs between Pakistan and China in various fields, including industry, agriculture and commerce was witnessed by prime ministers of both countries. The PM expressed confidence that the MoUs would shape into agreements very soon through joint efforts of both countries.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang said his country would continue working with Pakistan to uphold the principle of planning, building, and benefiting together.

He said the New Gwadar International Airport is a critical step in building Gwadar into a regional hub of connectivity. He further said that Chinese and Pakistani workers built this modern and high-standard airport in five years, demonstrating the strength of China-Pakistan cooperation.

The Chinese premier expressed confidence that the inauguration of the New Gwadar International Airport would significantly enhance connectivity in the Gwadar region.

The Chinese prime minister assured that Beijing would continue to work closely with the intimate Pakistani friends in building and benefiting together by pursuing the goals of high standards, sustainability and high quality of Belt and Road Initiative.

Referring to the Pak-China ties, Li Qiang termed those "special relationship and friendship", saying that this all-weather strategic partnership was further deepening. "The unique and unbreakable tested ironclad friendship stood the global changing landscape," he added.

Meanwhile, the military leadership of Pakistan met visiting Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang here on Monday.

The Chinese premier held an important meeting with Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and three services chiefs. The meeting expressed the resolve to further strengthen and widen relations between the two countries. Matters relating to

Nawaz hopes

Continued from page 1

Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is scheduled to attend.

Strategic importance of connectivity emphasised for regional prosperity

Jamila Achakzai

ISLAMABAD: Multilateral collaboration through regional organisations provides a vital and stable framework for enhancing regional cooperation and connectivity.

The organisations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), provide the foundation for effective partnerships, playing a crucial role in fostering peace, security, and stable economic growth.

Coinciding with the 23rd Council of Heads of Government meeting of the SCO in Islamabad, the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) has published 'Bridging Horizons: Unravelling the enigma of connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asia'.

Authored by Dr. Faisal Javaid, Dr. Uzma Siraj, and Polish scholar Prof. Dr. Arkadiusz Zukowski, the study offers a comprehensive analysis of the histori-

cal, geopolitical, and economic dimensions that connect Pakistan and other SCO member states, particularly the Central Asian nations.

As Pakistan and other regional countries deepen their relationships, the book emphasises the strategic importance of connectivity in achieving regional prosperity, echoing the legacy of the ancient Silk Road and modern infrastructure projects like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

While the book highlights numerous opportunities for economic collaboration, including energy projects like the TAPI gas pipeline and CASA-1000, it also addresses critical challenges. Infrastructure deficits, vast distances, difficult terrain, and geopolitical tensions often hinder regional cooperation. The authors argue that the SCO should adopt an integrated approach to overcoming these barriers by engaging external partners, international organizations, and the private sector to boost expertise and resources.

CPI rescues 11 girl students from college hostel after abuse complaints

Myra Imran

ISLAMABAD: Responding to reports of abuse and harassment against the CEO and commandant of a private cadet college in Hummal, the Child Protection Institute (CPI), in collaboration with the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, conducted a raid and recovered 11 female students from the college hostel.

The raid was led by CPI Director General Rabeea Hadi alongside Assistant Deputy Commissioner Mehreen Baloch. During the operation, the team inspected the hostel facilities and found the environment 'unsuitable' for healthy living.

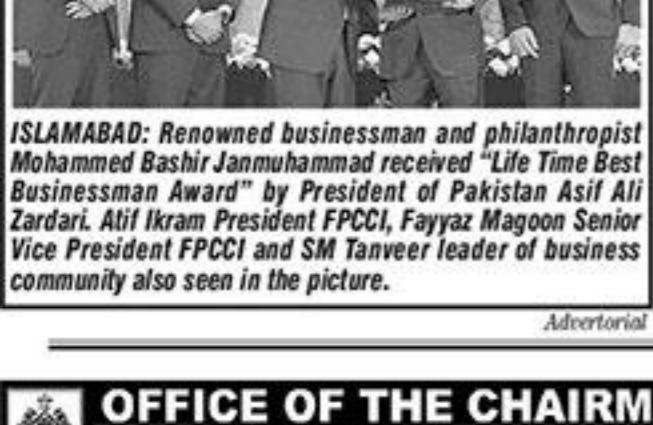
Besides that there is no separation between the boys' and girls' hostels. The team, which also included Area Magistrate Kamran Saghir and CPI Child Protection officers, met with the

hostel's female warden and a young teacher who was only a graduate. "We are currently evaluating the hostel's standards and the rules under which the college is registered. Meanwhile, the girls have been removed from the premises. Medical examinations have been conducted and the reports confirm signs of bruising on the students, even a month after the reported incident," stated DG CPI Rabeea Hadi. She said that the girls registered complaint with CPI through helpline 1121.

According to the statements of girl students, the issue started with a requested of an outing similar to those regularly arranged for male students. The girl students described the hostel conditions as cramped, lacking any space for recreational activities. The outing was scheduled for September 15 but was cancelled at the last moment, causing

frustration among the girls. The girls gathered in a room and started discussing the disappointing attitude of the administration. The junior teachers reported the incident to the male administration, seeking disciplinary measures. Fearing punishment by the male staff, the girls locked the room from inside and insisted on the presence of female warden before engaging with the male staff. Instead, the male staff forcibly broke down the door.

Following this, commandant allegedly assaulted the girls with a stick and forced them to perform approximately 300 repetitions of a sit-up while continuing the physical punishment. The college's CEO, reportedly also punished the girls, using a pipe. The students were then confined to the hostel for 23 days, forbidden from contacting their parents.



ISLAMABAD: Renowned businessman and philanthropist Mohammed Bashir Janmuhammad received "Life Time Best Businessman Award" by President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari. Alif Ikrar President FPCCI, Fayyaz Magoor Senior Vice President FPCCI and SM Tanveer leader of business community also seen in the picture.

Advertisorial

Student leaves for Turkiye on scholarship

Our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: A student of Aghosh Alkhidmat College, Murree, Abdur Rehman has received a scholarship for higher education in Turkiye.

"Abdul Rehman after higher secondary education at Aghosh College, left for Turkiye for further education on scholarship," the college administrator said.

An open letter to Dr S Jaishankar

By Syed Nayyar Uddin Ahmad

Your Excellency Dr. S. Jaishankar, honourable minister of external affairs, Government of India, it is with great respect and anticipation that we, on behalf of the people of Pakistan, welcome you on your maiden visit to our country in connection with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Islamabad.

This visit holds profound significance, not only in the context of the multilateral framework of the SCO but also in the historical narrative of our bilateral relationship. At this pivotal moment, we must seize the opportunity to reflect on our shared history, our present challenges, and, most importantly, the immense potential of a peaceful and prosperous future for both India and Pakistan.

As we welcome you, we extend our warm wishes to all the people of India for a happy, peaceful, and prosperous future. We, the people of Pakistan, would like to communicate to our Indian brothers and sisters that if we are to genuinely pursue friendship, that friendship must be true, devoid of pretension or hypocrisy. Authentic relations can only be built on the foundation of mutual respect, understanding, and a sincere commitment to peace. It is in this spirit that we urge both our nations to move beyond the distrust that has defined much of our shared history and to embark on a new journey of cooperation.

The truth is, neither Pakistan nor India has anything to gain from hostilities. Even if hypothetically, either side harboured ambitions of domination, the reality of today's world, particularly in light of our nuclear capabilities, renders such notions futile. A conflict between our nations

would bring nothing but devastation for both, and indeed, for the broader region. The idea that one can emerge victorious without severe consequences is an illusion. We are intertwined not only by geography but by the shared futures of over a billion people. It is time to recognize that war, in any form, is not an option for either of us.

So why continue to waste precious time, energy, and resources in sustaining policies of enmity that only perpetuate this futile cycle of hatred? Why should we remain prisoners of the past, clinging to historical grievances that offer no solution for the future?

It is time to bury the bitterness of the past and embrace a new era of genuine friendship, akin to the remarkable transformation witnessed in Europe. There, nations that were once bitter enemies - countries that fought two devastating world wars - now live in peace and harmony. Their borders are open, their economies integrated, and their collective energies focused on development and progress rather than conflict. Europe's story is one of reconciliation and renewal, and it serves as an inspiring example for South Asia.

We echo the timeless sentiment: Ring out the old, ring in the new, Ring, happy bells, across the snow:

The year is going, let him go; Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Let us, too, have genuine peace - not the mere absence of war, but the presence of trust, cooperation, and mutual benefit. Let us take the bold step of removing military forces from our borders, not out of weakness or naivety, but out of the confidence that peace is the only path forward. By doing so, we would signal

to the world, and to each other, that we are serious about our commitment to a peaceful subcontinent.

Together, let us wage a war, not against each other, but against the true enemies of our people: poverty, hunger, disease, and illiteracy. Let us transform our region into a bastion of peace and a haven of prosperity, where future generations can live without the shadow of conflict hanging over them.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,

The civic slander and the spite; Ring in the love of truth and right, Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,

Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;

Ring out the thousand wars of old,

Ring in the thousand years of peace.

India and Pakistan, with their rich histories and immense human potential, only need a decade of genuine peace to emerge as global economic and cultural powerhouses. The talent, creativity, and resilience of our peoples, once unburdened by conflict, will propel both nations to unprecedented heights. But this transformation hinges on one critical condition: authentic peace. A peace that mirrors the unity of Europe, a region once riddled with conflict but now thriving as a model of cooperation and collective progress.

Why should India and Pakistan continue on a path that keeps us divided, much like the Koreas? Why not strive instead to emulate the unity of Europe, where former adversaries now work hand-in-hand for the common good? Europe's success was born out of pragmatism, not sentimentalism. It was the realization that

cooperation, not conflict, was the key to a brighter future.

Today, both India and Pakistan possess nuclear arsenals, and the concept of one nation "conquering" the other has been rendered obsolete. A full-scale war between us, especially a nuclear one, would result in mutual destruction, leaving no winners, only desolation. The very idea of a "victory" through war is a dangerous delusion. History has shown us, through figures like Hitler and Mussolini, that such ambitions only lead to catastrophe.

Thus, peace is not just a choice for India and Pakistan - it is the only option. Challenges between our nations will always exist, but we must prioritize peace above all else. It is time to transcend our differences, not by ignoring them, but by managing them in a way that fosters understanding rather than conflict.

One key issue that continues to strain our relationship is Kashmir, the unfinished agenda of the partition. While this issue remains deeply emotional and complex, it must be resolved fairly, with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people at the forefront. The UN resolutions provide a framework, but the best way forward may be to give the people of Kashmir, on both sides of the Line of Control, a ten-year cooling-off period. During this time, unhindered trade and hassle-free travel should be allowed, enabling Kashmiris to build bridges of understanding.

Excellency, let us turn a new page in our history with a simple yet profound slogan: Long live the friendship of the teeming millions of India and Pakistan. Together, we can build a future where both our nations thrive, and our people prosper in peace and harmony.

Best wishes for your visit.

People at risk with immunodeficiency

Muhammad Qasim

ISLAMABAD: The change in weather conditions along with variation in temperature between day and night in this region of the country may put people living with immunodeficiency at greater risk of contracting infections particularly the respiratory tract infections including colds, flu, throat infections, pneumonia and acute bronchitis.

Almost all public sector healthcare facilities in the



CAIRO: The second batch of 61 Palestinian students from Gaza leaving Cairo for Islamabad on Monday to continue their studies in various medical and dental institutes of Pakistan.

Killing of coal mine workers condemned

Our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: President of the National Labour Federation (NLF), Shamsur Rehman Swati has condemned and protested martyrdom of 20 workers in a terrorists' attack on Duki coal mine in Balochistan.

In a statement, the NLF President demanded of the Federal and Provincial Governments to ensure security of workers community particularly those working at coal mines.

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF ANTIQUITIES & ARCHAEOLOGY CULTURE, TOURISM, ANTIQUITIES & ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF SINDH					
BUNGALOW # C-82, BLOCK # 2, CLIFTON, KARACHI Email: dgantiquitiessindh@gmail.com Ph # 021-99332224 DATED: 09-10-2024					
No COM/DG (A&A)/NIT/2024-25/463					
NOTICE INVITING TENDER NIT					
The Directorate General of Antiquities & Archaeology, Culture, Tourism, Antiquities & Archives Department, Government of Sindh, Karachi invites sealed tenders for the year 2024-25, as per single stage two envelope procurement process as under SPPRA Rules 2010 (As Amended up to date) for the following works:					
S. SCOPE OF WORK		COMPLETION PERIOD	TENDER FEE	PEC CATEGORY	CALL DEPOSIT
1. Conservation, Preservation & Rehabilitation of Mohen-jo-Daro	10 Months	5,000	C-5 or Above	5% of Tender cost	
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (MANDATORY):					
a. Valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) valid category and having specialization codes of BC-02 & CE-10, Valid Registration with Income Tax Department (INTN), Valid Sindh Revenue Board certificate (SRB), Valid Tax Payer Registration Certificate (FBR)					
b. Minimum experience in similar nature of work(s) executed during last (05) Five years. The bidder should provide at least three (03) similar nature works each having minimum cost 50% of the estimated cost, with their Satisfactory Completion Certificate duly supported by documentary evidence (Work Orders/Contract Agreements & Satisfactory Project Completion Certificates by concerned Department), the information about experiences of work(s) executed previously can also be verified from SPPRA web site.					
c. Financial Turn-over twice to the estimated cost of work in last (05) Five years as per online annual return submitted to FBR. The bidder should provide following documents i.e.					
1. Bank statement of last (05) five years 2. Annual Tax return of last (05) five years 3. Audited financial statement for last (05) five years from registered Audit Firm. 4. Bank Certificate of Credit line.					
d. The work will be done on important archaeological / heritage sites / monuments and heritage building so in this regard contractor must have experienced staff that has experience and knowledge how to work at Archaeological sites / monuments and heritage buildings:					
1. Archaeological Engineer or Archaeologist or Archaeological Conservator because the Archaeological Conservation Works are special nature of job (having at least 15 Years Experience to work at Archaeological Sites / Monuments).					
2. Site Engineer (01 No.) B.E (Civil) registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) having experience of minimum 04 years on similar (i.e. Conservation, preservation & rehabilitation of Heritage Sites / Monuments) projects.					
3. Senior Architect (01 No.) B. Architecture having minimum experience of 04 years on similar (i.e. Conservation, preservation & rehabilitation of Heritage Sites / Monuments) projects.					
e. List of equipment, machinery and transport owned / leased hired by the bidder (list is mentioned in bidding documents) with documentary evidence.					
2. Bidding/Tender Documents (Issuance, Opening & Submission)					
a. Bidding documents containing relevant information can be accessed / downloaded from the website of SPPRA (https://ppms.prasindh.gov.pk) or can also be purchased from the office address mentioned below with effect from publication date to Tuesday, 29-10-2024 in working hours against pay order / demand draft amounting 10 Rs. 500/- (non-refundable) in favor of DDO Directorate Archaeology, Directorate General of (A&A), CTA&A Department Government of Sindh.					
b. All bids must be submitted in one best option under Rule-4(6)(2) — Single Stage Two Envelope Procedures specified under SPP Rules 2010. Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal comprising a single package containing two separate envelopes each envelope shall contain separately sealed with the marked Financial Proposal and Technical Proposal and both envelopes sealed in another envelope marked the Tender No. Name of Work, Firm Name and Contact No will be received back as per above mentioned schedule.					
c. The Evaluation criteria is based on Marks system. Firm must have to qualify in technical to participate in financial bidding and obtain passing marks. The aggregate qualifying score marks is 75% and every bidder must qualify each section from qualification criteria by taking at least 33% in each section.					
d. The Technical Proposals opened shall be evaluated for technical acceptance as per provided information of bidder. Financial Proposals of the firms whose technical proposals to be accepted will be opened and publicly announced. Date & Time will be communicated in writing to all the qualified firms. Whereas, Financial Proposals of firms whose Technical proposals to be not found as per criteria will be returned to them unopened.					
e. Financial bid must contain original pay order / demand draft / Bank Guarantee i.e. 5% bid security (refundable) of tender cost (which should be debited from firm/bidders own Bank Account & duly mentioning the name & title of the firm) in favor of 'DDO Directorate Archaeology, Directorate General of (A&A), CTA&A Department (Government of Sindh'. Any bid found without bid security or less than 5% of total tender cost shall be rejected. Bid Validity period is 90 days.					
f. All bids along with requisite documents as mentioned in bidding document shall reach on address Bunglow # C-82, Block # 2, Clifton, Karachi not later than Wednesday, 30-10-2024 at 12:00 P.M. Sealed bids will be opened on the same date at 12:30 P.M. by the procuring agency's notified Committees as per SPP Rules, 2010 (Amended up to date).					

Malik Amin Aslam Khan



Pakistan is not only one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change but also amongst the only three that are continuously impacted. It remains perilously caught in the eye of the climate storm.

While being a minimal (less than one per cent) contributor to this global issue, it is unjustly bearing the carbon excesses of the global climate polluters as it distressingly faces up to ravaging floods, unlivable heat-waves, uncontrollable forest fires and expanding droughts.

Climate change also continues to exacerbate the country's spiraling economic meltdown, primarily triggered by the high and continuously rising energy costs of scandalously negotiated power projects, mostly running on imported fuel. The escalating fuel bills are ripping apart the national fabric and playing havoc with the lives of ordinary citizens already overburdened beyond their means.

At the heart of this unforgiving situation, lies the country's 'coal dilemma' which is compelling it to make some stark choices on its energy front.

On the one side, Pakistan has just started to reap the benefits of its large coal reserves in the Thar desert. At 180 Btton they are the world's seventh largest coal reserves and are es-

Between coal and clean energy

timated to be enough to potentially fuel 100,000MW of energy for 200 years. This purely indigenous source remains mostly untapped and promises to be a cheap energy source that can also offset the burgeoning fuel import bill. Moreover, it embeds the benefits of providing a reliable base load necessary for the stability of the energy generation system in the country.

At the global level, despite the large chest-thumping announcements of phasing down coal, it still predominantly fuels the global economy. The ongoing Ukraine war ironically prompted a return to coal in a number of countries that had previously vowed to stop using this fuel. These global trends clearly evidence that immediate national economic interests, as always, continue to override longer-term global climate change benefits.

On the flip side, there is no doubt that climate change is proving to be the real weapon of mass destruction, unleashing its impacts with rising ferocity and increasing frequency across the globe and coal remains the villainous dirty fuel exacerbating the issue. All countries now understand, and accept this, and have been struggling to initially phase down and then eventually, phase out this fuel.

What is becoming clear is that expanding coal-based power generation will increasingly

come with associated costs in the future. These may range from lending banks refusing to finance this expansion to setting up tariff and non-tariff trade barriers such as the recent EU-based Carbon Border Adjustment Tax, to global carbon pricing mechanisms that will aim to curtail this coal expansion.

Pakistan has always endeavoured to be a part of the solution

urgent low-cost energy needs using the cheap local indigenous coal or put this on a low priority owing to global climate concerns. There is no easy way out of this predicament.

Within this contradictory context, Pakistan announced its INDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) at COP26 in 2021 which gave a clear roadmap for its future development pathway.

With these shifts in place, Pakistan could offset all of its carbon emissions of around 500 MT and even go 'carbon negative'.

Alongside this vision was the big and bold announcement of halting all future expansion of coal power, based on imported coal, and to only employ the best available technologies including underground coal gasification, for local coal utilization.

Pakistan has always endeavoured to be a part of the solution to climate change, and not add to the problem. While facing its dilemma on coal, it is also fortunate to have the luxury of possessing cleaner fuel options available in the country, including abundant solar, wind channels and a huge untapped hydel energy potential along the Indus cascade

tion to climate change, and not add to the problem. While facing its dilemma on coal, it is also fortunate to have the luxury of possessing cleaner fuel options available in the country, including abundant solar, wind channels and a huge untapped hydel energy potential along the Indus cascade.

Pakistan's existing coal generation is 14 per cent of the energy mix – still much lower than the global utilisation average, but this could rise very quickly in the future. The quandary it faces is whether to address its

It was globally acclaimed as being one of the most unambiguous visions as, by 2030, it targeted a shift to 60 per cent renewable energy, which included large hydro projects, as well as a transport shift to 30 per cent electric vehicles.

In addition, it announced a massive carbon sequestration vision, backed by nature-based solutions including the '10 Billion Tree Tsunami' (now termed 'Green Pakistan') and expansion of its protected areas network under the 'Protected Areas Initiative'. It was estimated that

The INDC also laid out two emission reduction pathways. Pakistan would shift its emissions pathway 15 per cent below BAU (Business as Usual) using its own resources and could also make the much larger shift of taking this 50% below BAU contingent to attaining associated climate finance – to the tune of \$100 billion till 2030. In doing so, Pakistan has tried to address the coal dilemma. The country has signaled a willingness to shift towards a lower carbon growth trajectory but made it conditional to climate finance.

An even bigger green jump can be made by deploying carbon capture and storage which drops the carbon emissions to 'net zero' but escalates the incremental cost almost 18 times (Rs178/kWh). The message is very clear. Pakistan's clean energy transition out of coal comes with an incremental cost. This transition becomes equitable and just – only if this extra cost is matched with additional and concessional climate financing.

The good news is that innovative financing mechanisms for such a transition are now fast evolving, and becoming available, for countries willing to think and act out of the box. The Asian Development Bank announced the ETM (Energy Transition Mechanism) in 2021 intending to shift country projects out of coal towards renewable and ensure revenue neutrality for the investors through concessional financing.

Pakistan came forward and became one of the initial five

countries chosen to pilot this innovative climate financing instrument. However, since then, we have failed to fully capitalise on this opportunity towards a green shift while others, including Indonesia, have worked towards early retirement of their carbon-emitting projects.

Similarly, the JETM (Joint Energy Transition Mechanism) is an instrument where many countries jointly pool to financially facilitate a clean energy transition. South Africa ventured to lead this by announcing its transition out of coal while managing to raise \$8.5 billion through JETM for that shift. The coming COP29 will provide a forum to shape many such opportunities.

Pakistan has laid out its green vision and a well-researched pathway to make a just and equitable energy transition, which would include early retirement of polluting plants, a shift towards renewables and the deployment of lowest-emission coal technologies.

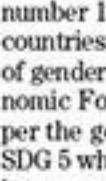
Financing is available and the instruments are in the market. What is lacking is a commitment to action backed by accessible finance, which can translate this vision into a reality. A green energy transition will be good for the fight against climate change, good for Pakistan, and good for the world.

The writer is a former minister of climate change and former vice president of the IUCN. He tweets/posts @aminattock and can be reached at: amin.attcock@gmail.com

Gender, justice, and Pakistan

Part - I

Zainab Durrani



Pakistan is a country known for many virtues and far more than many vices. Our rankings in global indices remarking on the state of our human rights read as a consistently downwards sloping graph over the years, ranging from terrible to truly inexcusable.

To boot, we stand loud and proud at number 145 out of a grand total of 146 countries that were reviewed in terms of gender parity, as per the World Economic Forum's recent report. Even as per the government's own admission, SDG 5 which relates to gender equality has remained stagnant in terms of progress since 2017.

This spiraling trend is keeping in line with the average daily headlines we read as a nation, coupled with the Pakistan Health and Demographic Survey 2017-18 finding that states that a staggering 28 per cent of Pakistani women aged 15-49 have faced some form of gender-based violence in their lives.

This in itself should be eye-opening, given that under-reporting is a key concern in this demographic, as the act of speaking up on its own is laced with shame, to say nothing of what follows the minute a GBV (gender-based violence) survivor chooses to voice their pain.

Factors such as this imposition of societal stigma, internal psychological barriers, fear of retaliation, and a dearth of faith in the judicial system widen the gap between harm and justice. Given this, the actual numbers, even at a modest estimate, are scary to just ponder over.

Our women are largely absent from both ends of the spectrum, as those approaching the justice system and those responsible for upholding it

In a country where interaction with the police bears greater resemblance to a threat rather than providing any semblance of safety, it is more than understandable why we see the low numbers that are reported when just anecdotal evidence would suggest we have a GBV epidemic on our hands.

These elements, coupled with the dismal rates of women's representation in the law and order sector of the country act as a compounded cause for our regression as a society. It is not a mere coincidence that our women are largely absent from both ends of the spectrum, as those approaching the justice system and those responsible for upholding it.

One of the key and obvious ways to combat this, and promote public confidence in the system, is the inclusion

of women in these spaces that have been created to dispense justice.

Just as with any public policymaking endeavour, if those who are affected by the policy in question are not consulted or involved in its making and shaping, it will all but certainly make for an impotent strategy, at best.

A participatory approach is key to providing impactful remedies and if women are not a significant part of the workforce involved in dispensing order and justice, we will continue to repeat mistakes that have brought us to the penultimate ranking status we currently enjoy. Not only that, the avenues of access to justice can repeatedly be remade and tweaked, widened and highlighted but till we can assure our girls and women of a genuine shift in prevailing attitudes that we all have grown up witnessing, no actual change can be expected to come of it.

For us to move forward hand-in-hand with all of our people on equal footing, and for us to progress past antiquated gender roles, we need a multilateral approach to fill in the lacunae glaring at us. One that targets the core issue from all angles. Not only do we need laws implemented equitably but for those implementing them to be representative of and sympathetic to our population's reality.

This, in practical terms, could look like progressive recruitment drives in key sectors to offset real-time barriers to entry. Gender sensitivity programmes inspire empathy and neutralise the knee-jerk reaction of victim shaming. We need to actively commit to wanting better for our women, as well as for society at large.

To be continued

The writer is a lawyer by education and a digital rights activist by profession.



TABOO

One year on...

Ramzy Baroud

The last year of a relentless Israeli war on Gaza, and bloody raids and violence in the West Bank, have been largely viewed in terms of their horrific humanitarian outcomes: the unequalled killing of tens of thousands, the obliteration of Gaza, and the destruction in the West Bank.

While humanitarian urgency must indeed be a priority, other factors are also deserving of consideration, especially as we mark the one-year anniversary of the ongoing war.

Even though the mass killing is yet to end, there are several conclusions that can already be drawn about the long-term consequences of the war. One, Palestinians, despite the military occupation, the siege, and the numerous failures of their leadership, remain political actors, with powerful agency.

This agency does not stem from any superficial achievements of their autocratic leadership or the still symbolic recognition of the state of Palestine, but the collective resilience and power of ordinary Palestinians in Gaza and throughout Occupied Palestine.

The war in Gaza would have looked different if Palestinian society broke down in the face of the war machine, fragmented into fighting factions or grew desperate in the face of impossible pressures – war, unprecedented destruction, acute famine, etc.

This fact alone reassures us that the Palestinian people's destiny will not be that of erasure or even margin-

alization, but of continuity and even future prosperity.

Two, that Arab societies, however consumed with their own struggles and social and political challenges, remain united in perceiving the Palestinian cause as a top Arab priority. This has allowed many Arab governments to reiterate their position regarding the centrality of the Palestinian cause.

Though current circumstances may, for now, prevent some Arab societies from being direct participants in turning their devotion to Palestine into tangible and practical support, the future shall prove that the renewed centrality of Palestine in Arab political and popular discourses will have its own weight and value.

The same logic applies to the Muslim Ummah, which has never been so united around a cause in decades as it is now united around Palestine. This can be felt in all Muslim countries, and among Muslim communities around the world, especially in the West.

The future shall reveal more regarding the meaning of the return of Palestine to the embrace of Arabs and Muslims. However, one can already conclude that the resilience of the Palestinian people has, once more, refocused the attention on Palestine as the leading cause of all Arabs and Muslims.

While some Arab states are desperately trying to find a safe distance, and to play no part in the Gaza-centered regional conflict, non-state actors in Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, and elsewhere are challenging the traditional rules of Middle East politics.

Arab masses are no longer beseeching Arab armies to save the Palestinians as has been the case in previous wars, conflicts, and massacres.

The roles being played by Ansarullah in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon seem to have filled the roles that should have, in theory, been played by traditional armies.

This is no longer expected, or frankly, even required. Official Arab armies have historically proven ineffective and corrupt. Now, they are mere spectators as powerful armed groups have moved in to fill in the gaps, showing solidarity with Palestinians in word and deed.

Historically, this is unprecedented. This change shall further undercut whatever legitimacy was still possessed by Arab governments, especially those with immediate proximity to Palestine.

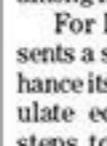
Three, though international law remains as ineffective as ever, the bloody war in Palestine is creating rifts between the Global South and the Global North. The latter, with a few exceptions, remains adamant in repeating old mantras about Israel's "right to defend itself," while disregarding all Palestinian rights.

However, many countries in Africa, the Middle East, South America, and elsewhere are becoming louder and bolder in their demands for justice for Palestinians, and for the equal application of international law.

Excerpted: '5 Things a Year of Israeli Genocide in Gaza Has Taught Us About Palestine and the World'.

Courtesy: Commondreams.org

Dr Nasir Iqbal



The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit is a vital platform for addressing key regional issues such as trade, investment, security, and economic cooperation among member states.

For Pakistan, the summit represents a significant opportunity to enhance its geopolitical relevance, stimulate economic growth, and take steps toward sustainable development.

It also offers Pakistan a chance to present its vision for regional prosperity, focusing not only on growth but also on the well-being of its population and neighboring countries.

The SCO comprises a diverse group of nations, including China, Russia, India, and the Central Asian states. The inclusion of Pakistan and India as full members has further amplified the geopolitical importance of the organisation.

For Pakistan, regional peace is of paramount importance, particularly in light of challenges posed by instability in Afghanistan, cross-border terrorism, and evolving threats such as cyber warfare. The summit provides an opportunity for Pakistan to engage in meaningful dialogues with its regional partners on security cooperation and intelligence-sharing. These discussions can help strengthen Pakistan's security posture while contributing to regional stability. Emerging threats such as cybersecurity, the rise of extremism, and climate-related risks, should also be central to the security agenda during this summit.

The organisation provides Pakistan access to a vast market with substantial trade potential. The summit serves as a platform to strengthen economic cooperation with key partners like China and Russia, while also leveraging the benefits of initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Pakistan's trade ties with SCO member states have been steadily growing, but the potential remains largely untapped, particularly in the services sector.

Pakistan should focus on promoting trade in services, where it has significant potential. The country's burgeoning IT sector, for instance, has seen rapid growth in recent years, with IT exports crossing \$3 billion annually. The sector holds immense potential for expansion, and Pakistan can propose agreements that facilitate IT services, banking, and financial consulting across SCO countries.

To enhance its position, Pakistan should actively showcase its talent in information technology, finance, education, and tourism as valuable service exports that can contribute to the

region's economic growth.

Building bridges

region's economic diversification.

Pakistan's services sector is a crucial pillar of its economy, contributing nearly 60 per cent to its GDP. However, much of the sector's potential remains untapped in international trade, particularly within the SCO framework.

Pakistan can propose an agenda focused on enhancing trade in services, specifically in areas where it has competitive advantages such as IT, education, and healthcare.

By presenting specific initiatives to streamline the export of services to SCO nations, Pakistan can push for regional agreements on easier cross-border digital trade, skill exchange programs, and improved regulatory alignment. These measures would help integrate Pakistan's services sector more deeply into regional markets and attract foreign direct investment (FDI) into its high-potential industries.

CPEC continues to be a key driver of economic growth and infrastructure development in Pakistan. However, its significance goes beyond merely economic.

Pakistan has a growing IT sector and digital economy that could play a transformative role in the region. At the summit, the country should advocate for the creation of an inclusive digital economy within SCO countries.

Pakistan can help create a more connected and inclusive region. This approach would benefit rural and underdeveloped areas, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship while reducing economic inequality.

Lastly, Pakistan could champion the development of sustainable regional value chains, focusing on agriculture, renewable energy, and manufacturing. By working together, SCO countries can build a regional economy that supports each other's industries, reduces external dependencies, and promotes mutual growth.

Pakistan's fertile lands, untapped natural resources, and large domestic market of over 250 million people make it an attractive destination for investment in agriculture and corporate farming. With an increasingly educated labour force, Pakistan can offer SCO countries a skilled workforce, making it a valuable partner in regional development.

As Pakistan continues its participation in the SCO, the role of its leadership will be crucial. Building on past initiatives, the leadership must work toward aligning Pakistan's economic and strategic interests with the changing dynamics of the region.

A proactive approach is needed to attract foreign investment, create jobs, and ensure that Pakistan remains an integral part of the region's future prosperity. By pushing for comprehensive economic reforms, green technology integration, and regional collaboration, Pakistan can position itself as a leader in the SCO and play a pivotal role in shaping the region's economic future.

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THE NEWS

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Vol. 34 No. 242

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Tuesday, October 15, 2024

SCO meet

A big day for Pakistan, given its past challenges, today's 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Islamabad brings together top leaders from member states to address critical regional issues. Established by China and Russia, the SCO has evolved into a significant intergovernmental platform, focusing on political, economic, defense, and security matters in Eurasia. For Pakistan, this summit represents more than a rotational obligation – it is a crucial moment for strengthening regional ties, enhancing economic cooperation, and demonstrating its capacity to host high-profile multilateral events. The summit will also see the rare visit of Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar to Pakistan, making this the first such high-level diplomatic engagement between the two countries in nearly a decade. Given the persistent tensions between Pakistan and India, particularly over security concerns and allegations of cross-border terrorism, this visit alone adds a layer of geopolitical importance to the summit. How both nations engage, even indirectly, will be closely watched by observers, as it could set the tone for future bilateral interactions, including the upcoming Champions Trophy, which Pakistan is slated to host next year.

Pakistan has gone to great lengths to ensure the security of Islamabad during the summit, implementing lockdown measures and a heightened military presence to prevent any untoward incidents. This is not only to protect the integrity of the SCO's motto but also to send a strong message: Pakistan can guarantee the safety of such events, despite the challenges posed by ongoing security concerns, including recent terrorist incidents. The focus on China is unavoidable. Pakistan's relationship with China has deepened significantly in recent years, primarily due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which has been a linchpin of Pakistan's economic recovery. The visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who arrived in Rawalpindi for a four-day visit, underscores the importance of Sino-Pak relations. China's presence at the SCO Summit also reflects its growing influence in the region, and for Pakistan, this relationship is critical, especially as it seeks to pivot from traditional Western alliances toward a more multipolar global stance. However, while this shift may raise eyebrows in the West – especially in Washington – Pakistan has reiterated its commitment to maintaining balanced diplomatic relations, striving not to side exclusively with any global power bloc.

The economic agenda of the SCO Summit is equally significant for Pakistan. After years of economic instability, the country has seen the first signs of recovery, and bolstering trade and investment ties with SCO nations, particularly China and Russia, is essential to sustaining this momentum. The summit offers an opportunity for Pakistan to promote CPEC's success and advocate for greater regional economic cooperation, positioning itself as a key player in connecting Eurasia's markets through its strategic geography. While the summit's outcomes will be measured by its discussions on trade, security, and economic cooperation, its success will also be judged by Pakistan's ability to host a seamless, incident-free event. Observers have noted that if Pakistan successfully navigates the logistical and security challenges posed by the summit, it will be seen as a significant diplomatic win, especially given the country's long hiatus from hosting such high-profile multilateral conferences. This could also neutralize India's perennial claims of security risks in Pakistan, which are often cited as pretexts for avoiding bilateral engagements.

However, political distractions loom on the horizon. The PTI has called for a protest today, coinciding with the summit – viewed by many as a reckless and poorly timed attempt to disrupt the government's efforts to showcase Pakistan's diplomatic capabilities. While protests are a legitimate form of political expression, the timing raises concerns about undermining the country's international standing at a moment when national unity and a cohesive front are most needed. With the world watching, Pakistan has a unique opportunity to prove itself as a capable host, a pivotal regional player, and a country committed to fostering peace, security, and economic cooperation in Eurasia.

Karachi protests

Being a progressive in Pakistan is not easy. One is often engaged in an uphill battle to prove that they are not some kind of spy or subversive agent of the West, withstand threats of violence and actual violence from regressive elements and, all the while, deal with a state that is more interested in finding ways to shut you down than protect your rights. The nature of this struggle was on full display this past Sunday (October 13, 2024) in Karachi when protesters part of the 'Sindh Rawadari March' clashed with police outside the press club while resisting arrests for violating Section 144, which was imposed the previous day by the Karachi commissioner. The march was held in protest of the killing of Dr Shah Nawaz Kunbhar who was gunned down by the Mirpurkhas police in a reportedly staged encounter on September 19 after being accused of blasphemy. According to social media posts, the police apparently ended up rough-handling the Rawadari March protesters, an act that has rightly been condemned across a spectrum of civil society actors. Meanwhile, a counter-protest held by the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) also led to clashes with the police. Section 144 was imposed in the context of the Shanghai Cooperation Summit in Islamabad, which kicks off today.

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has found that Dr Kunbhar was wrongfully identified as a blasphemy suspect likely due to "systemic flaws in the FIR registration process", leading to his death. One can understand why many would want to protest such blatant injustice. Section 144 can only be applied in urgent cases where there is a clear threat of danger. In this case, the threat of violence appears to have emanated from the potential of clashes between those protesting against Dr Kunbhar's killing and the counter-protesters and the overall need to avoid such incidents given the SCO Summit.

Pakistan needs to show that it is capable of hosting large international events and cannot be held hostage by political instability. However, it often appears as though there is never a right moment for progressive voices to be heard in the country. They can be silenced in the name of avoiding violence and instability when it is other elements causing said violence and instability. Meanwhile, the country is no stranger to regressive elements simply ignoring any directions from the state when it comes to holding protests and getting off with a slap on the wrist. They also seem to enjoy a free hand when it comes to threatening others and leveling false accusations against them. All of this leads to an environment where those marching for rights and justice can be the most likely to be deprived of them. And as important as maintaining stability is, Pakistan is unlikely to make much progress if the state continues to take this lopsided approach.

What does the SCO Summit offer us?

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri



The writer heads the Sustainable Development Policy Institute. He tweets/posts @abidsuleri

given the ongoing US pressure on its oil exports. Iran is also negotiating a strategic partnership with Russia, especially Su-35 fighter jets, to strengthen its defence against Israel.

Western tariffs on Chinese products and sanctions on Russia and Iran have opened up opportunities for the SCO to develop its own economic mechanisms, including exploring the options to gradually de-dollarise its economies.

Against this backdrop, the SCO's potential as an indigenous forum for discussing this region's issues and challenges becomes even more important. Pakistan can position itself as a key transit hub for trade between these major economies, further boosting its role as a bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, and beyond. For

To capitalise upon the recent rise in trade among SCO members, Pakistan could push for reduced tariffs, simplified customs procedures, and enhanced connectivity

example, Russian energy resources and Chinese investments in infrastructure, especially through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and CPEC, can play a critical role in stabilising Pakistan's energy sector and boosting its economic growth.

The previous SCO summit, held in India in 2023, addressed key areas such as counterterrorism, economic cooperation, and climate change. A major outcome was the enhancement of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS), which facilitates intelligence sharing and coordinated efforts to combat terrorism, extremism, and separatism. For Pakistan, this aligns with its own security concerns, particularly with ongoing threats from groups like the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

On the economic front, the India summit discussed reducing trade barriers and boosting investment among member states, but India's 'Make in India' initiative and cautious approach to SCO integration limited progress. Geopolitical tensions, particularly between India and China, and India and Pakistan overshadowed efforts to enhance regional cooperation and undercut the summit's effectiveness.

In Islamabad, Pakistan will have an opportunity to build on these discussions, particularly in areas where progress stalled. Counterterrorism will remain a priority, with RATS likely to be further strengthened. As a frontline state in the fight against terrorism, Pakistan is expected to push for deeper cooperation in intelligence sharing against militancy. Economically, Pakistan can use the summit to advocate for trade liberalisation and investment promotion within the SCO. Infrastructure projects, partici-

ularly those linked to CPEC, will likely dominate the agenda.

To capitalise upon the recent rise in trade among SCO members, Pakistan could push for reduced tariffs, simplified customs procedures, and enhanced connectivity through joint infrastructure financing. Joint ventures in renewable energy could also be on the table, particularly in light of global concerns over climate change.

Despite the opportunities, one must remain realistic about the summit's potential outcomes. While collaboration is possible, the SCO has often struggled to implement its decisions, largely due to competing interests among its member states. The rivalry between China and India, and India and Pakistan, may once again limit progress.

The verbal duel between India and Pakistan's foreign ministers at the 2023 SCO summit significantly impacted the event's overall atmosphere, and effectively dashed hopes for any thaw in India-Pakistan relations. In Islamabad, expectations remain similarly low for any breakthrough, as the SCO is a multilateral forum not focused on bilateral disputes between member states. However, it remains to be seen whether the encounter between the two foreign ministers this time will further strain their relationship or simply maintain the status quo.

Western countries, particularly the US, view the SCO with caution. Deepening partnership among Russia, China, and Iran further intensifies their concerns about the organisation's geopolitical influence and direction. Nonetheless, Western opposition is not absolute. The US and its allies monitor the SCO, particularly in areas of military cooperation and regional security.

Pakistan will need to carefully balance its SCO membership with its relationships with Western powers, particularly the US, which remains an important economic and security partner. However, beyond external dynamics, internal political tensions could also undermine Pakistan's ability to fully capitalise on the summit's opportunities.

At this crucial moment, both the government and opposition parties should recognise the significance of hosting key regional powers and refrain from actions or rhetoric that could cast a negative light on Pakistan in front of visiting dignitaries. This is a time for unity and responsibility, not for political point-scoring, to ensure that Pakistan's standing on the global stage is enhanced rather than tarnished.

Although many decisions from previous SCO summits have yet to be fully implemented, the forum plays a vital role in ensuring the world remains multipolar. Its presence may not always deliver immediate or tangible results, but its absence would significantly undermine efforts to maintain a balance of power on the global stage.

The SCO's role in fostering cooperation among major regional powers is crucial in countering unilateral dominance and promoting a more balanced international order.

Let us cherish and celebrate the SCO summit in this context, as it offers a rare platform for collective wisdom from the leadership of 40 per cent of the world's population. The question now is: can this collective wisdom turn into a shared vision to steer the future of global cooperation and balance of power?

THE HOLY QURAN

But if they are averse, then say: I have warned you all alike, although I know not whether nigh or far is that which ye are promised.

Surah Al-Anbiya - 21, Verse - 109

Forgotten terror

Derek Leebaert

The martial law imposed on the Arab population in Israel since the founding of the state was lifted in 1966, but Jimmy Carter described the conditions imposed on Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory after the beginning of illegal Israeli settlement there as "apartheid".

With nothing resolved by 1982, Prime Minister Begin, a former Irgun terrorist against British authorities, vowed to "destroy" the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He oversaw then-Defence Minister Ariel Sharon's killing of some 18,000 Palestinians and Lebanese, overwhelmingly civilians, in Beirut. Belatedly, Reagan stopped the slaughter with a phone call, given Israel's dependence. It was then that he described the Israeli onslaught as a "holocaust".

Despite using a word with such weight, however, the White House did not demand the UN censure Israel. The US had not attempted to sanction Israel even over its illegal settlements which spawned from the 1967 war. Israeli Ambassador to the US Michael Oren explained why in his 2007 book, Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present.

In the mid-1970s, he wrote, Israel's supporters began to achieve "the financial and political clout necessary to sway congressional opinion" – meaning that they had acquired enough power to impede US official opposition to Israel at the UN or elsewhere. Ever since, Israel has taken US backing for granted, no matter the record of wildly disproportionate atrocities.

In 1991, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who had approved the murder of UN negotiator Folke Bernadotte, tried to explain why terrorism was "acceptable" for Jews, but not Arabs: Palestinians are "fighting for land that is not theirs. This is the land of the people of Israel."

Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel was distinct. It was the only time that Palestinian resistance groups were able to react to decades of Israeli terror on a similar scale. In response to the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu simply doubled down on Israel's recurring massacre-making, now backed by starvation and disease. The US administration took no meaningful action to stop "plausible genocide."

At this time, Israel has also become the only entity in the world that Washington allows to kill US citizens with impunity. The ever-growing list from the West Bank includes Aysenur Ezgi Egzi, Mohammad Khodour, and Shireen Abu Aleh – each killed with a shot to the head. No sanctions or renditions followed their deaths. The White House simply suggested the sniper killings were "not acceptable" and asked Israel to "investigate" itself. The issue was swiftly dismissed.

As Gaza's torment enters its second year, Israel's killing has reached unprecedented levels in the West Bank, and Lebanon once again becomes a target of Israel's self-described retaliation. More is needed from Israel's patron than mutterings to perhaps halt some arms shipments. Washington should not only stop upholding Israeli brutality, which includes apartheid but, like the UK, it can support the pending International Criminal Court indictments which are to, finally, include an Israeli prime minister.

Past US presidents had tried to reign in Israeli behaviour of the sort that statesman Abba Eban came to describe, during Israel's previous bombing of Beirut, as "wantonly inflicting every possible measure of death and anguish on civilian populations." Time is overdue for Washington's decisionmakers to follow those presidents' examples, and to rescind diplomatic protection as well as weapons exports for Israel.

Excerpted: 'How the US became blind to Israeli terror'. Courtesy: Aljazeera.com

News Post

Email: news.post@thenews.com.pk

Educational catastrophe

All are aware of the MDCAT 2024 controversy. It is a shame to see such a prestigious examination being surrounded by allegations of cheating and corruption. Now and then we face issues ranging from problems within curriculums to a lack of management in the education sector at the national level.

Medicine, engineering, and IT are some of the most reputed fields of study in the country, producing hundreds of amazing doctors, engineers, and computer scientists every year. If such allegations keep on being made without any actions taken by the government and authorities, it won't be long before Pakistan stops producing these professionals altogether.

Midhat Meenahil

Rawalpindi

In need of counselling

A significant number of students are navigating through an education system that often leaves them feeling directionless. Many find themselves changing fields multiple times without a clear understanding of their interests and strengths, leading to confusion and wasted resources. This trend

underscores an urgent need for effective career counselling to be integrated into the educational framework from an early stage. Implementing career counselling programs within schools can provide students with the necessary tools to make informed decisions about their future.

These programmes should focus on assessing individual strengths, interests, and potential career paths that align with the skills they develop throughout their education. By introducing career counselling early in the academic journey, we can empower students to explore various fields and make educated choices about their futures. Moreover, collaboration between educational institutions and industry professionals can create a more robust counselling framework. Workshops, internships, and mentorship opportunities can bridge the gap between education and real-world experiences, giving students a clearer picture of potential careers.

Imtiaz Dhakan

Larkana

No farewell

Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa has reportedly refused to accept a farewell party before his official retirement on October 25. This is a highly commendable

and wise decision on the part of the CJP as such farewells involve a significant expense.

It is better to spend this amount on welfare organisations providing free medical care and education to the people. Hats off to the CJP for setting this example.

Engr Asim Nawab

Islamabad

SCO agenda

The upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Islamabad is a matter of pride for all Pakistanis. There are discussions taking place among intellectuals and policymakers regarding the outcomes of the efforts made so far since its inception. One of the issues is India's apparent waning interest in pursuing the SCO's main objective of promoting regional connectivity, which warrants resolution of territorial and border disputes.

Consequently, the Indo-Pak and Indo-China territorial/border disputes linger on, frustrating regional connectivity. Security challenges emanating from Afghanistan also present major barriers. Hopefully, these issues will be given serious consideration in the upcoming summit.

Tipo Sultan

Rawalpindi

No more non-filers

This letter refers to the news report 'FBR to abolish non-filer category, tightens curbs on tax dodgers' (September 25, 2024). This move is part of a broader strategy to enforce stricter rules on those who don't file tax returns. The non-filer category was introduced as an attempt to incentivize individuals to become tax filers by imposing higher taxes on non-filers for certain transactions, but it badly failed to achieve its objectives. It is important to understand the reasons why people would rather pay higher tax instead of filing tax returns. The complex procedures, fear of being harassed by tax officials, audits and inspections, perception of government corruption and misuse of funds, and lack of tangible benefits discourage people from becoming tax filers. An easier and user-friendly tax filing system such as through mobile apps or ATM-style submission centres would help. Flat tax rates or unified tax brackets for certain income levels could eliminate complicated calculations and deductions. Tax officials must also be subject to scrutiny from independent bodies, minimizing opportunities for bribes or misconduct.

Sajid Awan

Dubai

Crushing defeat

This letter refers to the news story 'England crush Pakistan by innings, 47 runs in commanding Test victory' (October 11, 2024).

It is baffling how a test match that saw over 500 runs scored in the first innings and over 800 runs in the second innings still delivered a result on the fifth day.

The Pakistan team made a mess of a game that should have ended in a draw and their ability to close games out appears to be declining. Test cricket requires temperament, resilience and, above all, patience. It

seems our players lose their patience and are in some kind of hurry. This has to change.

Anas A Khan

Edmonton

Canada

The gurus of cricket are now sharing their expert opinions on the causes of the dismal performance of the Pakistani cricket team in the recent past. In my opinion, it is as if they are behind in every aspect of the game.

Dr Majeeb A Khan

Islamabad

THE NEWS

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Court
Notices

In the Court of 14th Family Judge Karachi Central Family Suit No. 1911 of 2024. Fatima Ishrat D/o Syed Ishrat. (Plaintiff). Versus. Syed Bahadur Ali S/o Syed Dildar Ali presently residing in USA, WhatsApp +12484449109. (Defendant). Whereas the Plaintiff has instituted a suit against you for Dissolution of Marriage by Way of Khula. You are hereby summoned to appear in this court in person, or by a pleader duly instructed on the 15-10-2024 at 8:30 am to give answers relating to the above suit. Given under my hand and seal of Court this 12-10-2024. By Order. Serishtedar, 14th Family Judge Karachi Central. (SE-NK-2410-0074-A)

In the Court of VIII Senior Civil Judge Karachi East. Civil Suit No. 88/2024. Naeem Muzaffar. (Plaintiff). Versus. 3) Ayesha Muzaffar D/o Syed Muzaffar Hussain R/o 9248, Cardinal Forest Lane, Unit 101, Lorton, Virginia, 22079, United States. (Defendant). Whereas the plaintiff has instituted a Suit for Recovery of Arrears of Rent of PKR 7,245,638/- together with a Mark-up @ Kibor+3%. You are hereby summoned to appear in this court in person or by a pleader in this instructed on the day of 28-10-2024 at 8:30 am to give relating to the above suit. Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before mention the suit will be heard and determined ex parte in your absence. By Order. (SE-NK-2410-0074-B)

Public
Notices

OUR respected client Maj. (R) Rehan Khan S/o Rana Zulfiqar Ali Naro, CNIC 42501-3123390-5 have interested into an agreement with (1) Masood ur Rehman S/o Muhammad Abdur Rehman Qureshi, CNIC 42101-5087142-1, (2) Nadiid Shakeel W/o Shafeek Akhtar, CNIC 42101-7915280-2, (3) Anis ur Rehman S/o Muhammad Abdur Rehman Qureshi, CNIC 42101-2581496-4, (5) Muhammad Ejaz S/o Muhammad Abdur Rehman Qureshi, CNIC 42101-2841113-3, (6) Areef Muhammad S/o Muhammad Abdur Rehman Qureshi, CNIC 42101-8718341-3 for purchase of Plot No. 160-A, measuring 589 sq. yards, Phase 1, Malir Cantt, Karachi. If any person, bank have objection on it submit in writing with documentary evidence to Cantonment Board Malir / MEO / Sub Registrar Shah Faisal Town, Malir Halt and CITY ESTATE Malir Cantt, Maj. (R) Muhammad Rana Rehan Khan 021-34902507, 021-34490277, 0301-8220266 within 07 days of the publishing of this notice, failing which the contract will be finalized. (SE-NK-2410-0075)

I, Khalid Mahmood S/o Muhammad Akram CNIC 42101-1563683-0 has Contracted to Purchase Plot No. 606 Block "A" Category "A" measuring 200 Sq.Yards Situated at Gulshan-e-Benazir Township Scheme Karachi from Muhammad Asim Soomro S/o Muhammad Uddin Soomro CNIC 42501-1867047-1, If

classads

anybody institution having any claim/objection to the said Sale, Should Submit their objection with Documentary Evidence to the Director Administration/Secretary Gulshan-e-Benazir Township Scheme, Port Qasim Authority Karachi within (7) days of this publication after that no claim whatsoever shall not be accepted and transfer transaction of said plot will be completed. (SE-NK-2410-0077)

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THE NEWS
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SAY NO TO CORRUPTION INF-KRY-3245/2024

Bilawal launches Benazir Hari Card

Continued from page 1

Speaking at the Chief Minister House here, he said the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) introduced by the previous PPP government was now

government had become a global example of financial assistance for women.

He said the PPP Sindh

government was now

deregulating the agriculture sector.

that it was the vision of Benazir Bhutto to see the farmers becoming main beneficiaries of mafias, large business groups, industrialists, and international forces.

Bilawal condemned the conspiracy being hatched within a year and the farmers prospered, and the entire economy stood on its own feet.

He noted that proposing deregulation of the farming sector was a non-sense idea at present when climate change had endangered human lives.

He demanded that government withdraw billions of rupees worth of subsidies being given to the fertilizer manufacturers and give it directly to the growers to help them fight and facing hardships," he said, adding, "As elected representatives, it is our responsibility to solve your problems, and that is why the people have cho-

ETPB head post vacant for 17 months

Continued from page 1 Hamman Gilani and Secretary (retd) Ijaz Ahmed. The head has been vacant since May 5, 2023. The post fell vacant after the resignation of Habib ul-Hamman Gilani.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs advertised the post. After shortlisting, the selection board conducted interviews of 23 applicants on April 23, 2024, under the leadership of Federal Religious Affairs Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain.

The selection board sent a panel of three candidates to the federal cabinet for approval. The panel consisted of Brigadier (retd) Mumtaz Iqbal, Federal Secretary (retd) Habib ul-

A summary was sent to the cabinet on July 20, 2024, but the report was returned by the Cabinet Division on the basis that according to intelligence reports, none of the three candidates is suitable for the post. The federal cabinet rejected the panel sent by the selection board for the appointment and directed to start a new process. However, it has not started yet.

FBR extends returns filing deadline to 31st

Continued from page 1 tax bar association and in the wake of the banking holidays announced in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, it added.

It is pertinent to mention here that a three-day public holiday was announced in Islamabad and Rawalpindi ahead of the much-anticipated Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) Council of Heads of Government meeting, slated to be held on October 15 and 16.

Government of Pakistan CIVIL SERVICES ACADEMY, LAHORE TENDER NOTICE NO. 005 INVITATION TO BID

FOR PROCUREMENT OF HIRING OF CARS (1300 CC) FOR CIVIL SERVICES ACADEMY FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-2025

Civil Services Academy, Lahore invites sealed bids on open competitive basis, from the authorized distributors/suppliers/dealers who are registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments and are on Active Taxpayers List of the Federal Board of Revenue, for "Hiring of Cars (1300 CC) for Civil Services Academy, Lahore".

2. Pre-bid meeting will be held on 23.10.2024 at 11:00 a.m. in the Conference Room, DG Block, Civil Services Academy, Lahore which is strongly advised to be attended by all the interested bidders.

3. e-bidding documents as per regulations, containing detailed terms and conditions, specifications and requirements etc. are available for the registered bidders on EPADS at (www.eprocure.gov.pk)

4. The electronic bids, must be submitted by using EPADS on or before 01.11.2024 at 11:00 a.m. Manual bids, shall not be accepted. Electronic Bids will be opened on the same day at 11:30 am. This advertisement is also available on PPRA website <http://www.ppra.org.pk>

Additional Director (Admin)
Civil Services Academy
Lahore
Dated: 11.10.2024

DAWOOD UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY (DUET)

M.A. Jinnah Road, Karachi-74800(PAKISTAN)

PHONE: 021-99231195-98, 99230307 Fax: 021-99230710

No DUET/VC/Final Show Cause/MB/2024-492

Dated: 11th October 2024

Arch. Muskh Bughio
Lecturer (BPS-18)
H No. 2/3, Block-B, Memon Nagar, Qasimabad, Hyderabad

FINAL SHOW CAUSE NOTICE

WHEREAS, you Ar. Muskh Bughio, Lecturer (BPS-18), Department of Architecture and Planning, Dawood University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, is alleged to have committed the following acts of misconduct as have been found from the record on following facts:

(i) You were granted study leave initially for one year (extendable) from 01-04-2018 and then extended from time-to-time upto 31-03-2023 (total five years). Their 15th Syndicate vide Resolution No. 15.7 decided for process of disciplinary proceedings under E&D Rules. Then Disciplinary proceedings were initiated, and you were issued three explanation calls. In response to the Explanation Call wherein you have admitted that you are in the process of completing administrative procedure of degree which will take 4-6 months; vide your email dated 19-06-2023.

(ii) The 16th Syndicate vide Resolution No. 16.4 decided to extend leave period for six (6) months with effect from the date of expiry of your Study leave (01-04-2023 to 30-09-2023), and you were directed to report for duty within 14 days vide letter No.DUET/RegLeave-Ext/MB/2023-239 dated 21-12-2023. But you did not join duty at DUET within specified time-period in compliance of the Syndicate decision.

(iii) It is reminded that you also signed Surety Bond of Study Leave with DUET prior to proceeding on Study Leave in March 2018 but you have breached the terms and conditions of the Surety Bond para No.5 which comes under misdeeds as per rules/laws. Since you are absconder and failed to join your duties at DUET which tantamount to misconduct under the DUET Statutes/rules.

(iv) In compliance with the Syndicate decision, you were served Show-Cause Notice dated 11-06-2024 but you have not joined back at DUET with PhD degree within stipulated time period.

2. In compliance of the decision of 16th Syndicate vide Resolution No. 16.4, Vice Chancellor, Dawood University of Engineering and Technology as an Authorized Officer,

a) am of the opinion that the above factual position prima facie reveals that you are found guilty of gross negligence in attending to your duties and ignoring official orders which is tantamount to serious misconduct in terms of the Employees Efficiency & Disciplinary Statutes-2021 of DUET and calls for imposition of major penalty of termination / dismissal from service.

b) have decided for recovery as per terms and conditions of Surety Bond Para No.5; and

c) have decided that it is not necessary to have an inquiry conducted through an Inquiry Officer or an Inquiry Committee in terms of Section-6(3) of E&D Statutes.

3. I, being an authorized officer, call upon you through this Final Show Cause Notice to report for duty immediately with PhD Degree at DUET. You are accordingly directed to explain your position in writing within 14(fourteen) days of the date of receipt of this notice as to why a penalty, including the major penalty of termination / dismissal from service as provided in Section-4 of Employees Efficiency & Disciplinary Statutes-2021 may not be imposed upon you, failing which an Ex- parte decision will be taken against you.

4. You may also intimate whether you would like to be heard in person.

Vice Chancellor / Chairperson Syndicate

PID (K) 1163/24

GOVERNMENT OF SINDH SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY DEPARTMENT ADB ASSISTED (LOAN NO. 4409-PAK) ADDITIONAL FINANCING SINDH SECONDARY EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

17/1, Saba Avenue, DHA V Ext, Karachi, Ph. # 021-99332182 PROJECT (SSEIP) (ADB - ASSISTED)

Date: 14th October, 2024

Subject: CORRIGENDUM NO. 01 FOR THE PACKAGE - 03

SELD/SSEIP-AF/CW-03: RECONSTRUCTION OF

141 SCHOOLS USING LIGHT GAUGE STEEL

FRAME STRUCTURES WITH SOLAR PANELS

INSTALLATION ON DESIGN-BUILD BASIS IN

DISTRICT NAUSHERO FEROZE 102-LOTS1

HAVING INF-KRY: 2968/24.

EXTENSION OF DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF BID

With reference to the subject procurement package and the invitation for bid (IFB) published in the local newspapers, with information key INF-KRY: 2968/24, the IFB is also hoisted on the project website <https://www.sseip.gov.pk> and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) website <https://www.adb.org/projects/tenders>.

All interested bidders are requested to note the following changes into submission deadline.

S. PROCUREMENT PACKAGE ORIGINAL DATE & TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS REVISED DATE & TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS

1. SELD/SSEIP-AF/CW-03: Reconstruction of 141 Schools using Light Gauge Steel Frame Structures with Solar Panels Installation on Design-Build Basis in District Naushero Feroze [02-Lots1]

21st Oct 2024 [11:00 AM] 5th Nov. 2024 [11:00 AM]

Please note that the bid(s) shall be submitted to the PIU address on the revised date mentioned in the table above.

Technical Bids will be opened on the same day, at 11:05 (Pakistan Standard Time) in the presence of bidders' representative who choose to attend, whereas the Financial Bids shall remain sealed and unopened and shall be placed locked.

Attack on Bannu Police Lines foiled

All 5 terrorists killed; 4 cops martyred in operation

By Javed Aziz Khan

PESHAWAR: A major attack on the police headquarters in Bannu was foiled on Monday and all five assailants were killed during a four-hour operation.

Four policemen were also martyred in the attack on the Bannu Police Lines which also houses offices of senior cops.

"Five attackers have been killed by the brave cops. Four policemen were also martyred," Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan told The News.

The terrorists were said to

be clad in bungs and made their way into the Police Lines by hurling hand grenades. Two of the terrorists were killed at the main gate by the alert cops.

Police officials said three others continued firing from different places for around four hours.

"All the attackers were gunned down by around 4 pm. The last one was firing shots from an office," Superintendent of Police Wagar Ahmad told The News.

Another official said three policemen and a cook of the police force were martyred in the attack.

Pakistan, Russia launch joint tactical drills

ISLAMABAD: Russia and Pakistan have launched joint tactical exercises "Friendship-2024."

Joint Russian-Pakistani tactical exercises "Friendship-2024" have started in Pakistan. The opening ceremony was held at the national anti-terrorist center "Pabbi". The Russian side is represented at the exercises by servicemen of the motorised rifle unit of the Southern Mil-

tary District from the Volgograd Region, the defense department noted.

From September 20 to October 10, border guards from Russia and China conducted their first joint patrol in the northern part of the Pacific Ocean. Border guards carried out joint actions to identify and suppress threats to maritime security, and also conducted a series of training

Environment watchdog fails to classify industrial units

Audit report recommends classification of industrial units, preparation of environmental database

By Sajid Chaudhry

ISLAMABAD: It has been revealed that the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) has not done classification of industrial units.

According to the audit report, according to Rule 4 of the National Environment Quality Standards (Self-Monitoring and Reporting by Industry) Rules 2001, the director general will classify any unit as A, B or C based on the pollution level of the industrial unit.

According to Rule 3, all industrial units will be responsible for submitting accurate and timely environmental monitoring reports to the federal agency. Rule 12 states that the federal agency shall compile, analyse and manage the data contained in environmental monitoring reports with the purpose of implementing national quality standards and developing an environmental database.

The Pak-EPA had been established for the protection, maintenance and improvement of the

environment and prevention of pollution; however, during the audit of the financial year 2021-22 to 2022-23, it was revealed that the Pak-EPA did not classify industrial units into category A, B or C for liquid emissions and A or B for gaseous emissions, while on the other hand, industrial units were not submitting monthly, quarterly and annual environmental monitoring reports.

The audit termed the initiative of not classifying the industrial units as a serious lapse on the part of the management and said that as a result the compilation, analysis and development of the environmental database of the Islamabad Capital Territory was not carried out. The audit issued a preliminary observation in this regard on 25 August 2023, to which the management replied that the industrial units are classified as per the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997 which differentiates between liquid and gaseous emissions.

Industrial facilities within the Islamabad Capital Territory are located in three different zones

out of five, some industries submit approved environmental compliance reports to the Pak-EPA. Notices will be issued to ensure that industries submit comprehensive environmental compliance reports, including management and data analysis. The audit described the administration's response as unsatisfactory, saying that details of all classified units operating under the territorial jurisdiction of the Pak-EPA were not provided. The administration admitted that all the industrial units were not submitting monitoring reports due to which the environmental database was not prepared. The audit wrote three letters from the PAO to convene a meeting of the Departmental Accounts Committee, but the meeting was not called until the finalisation of the report. The audit recommended that the industrial units should be classified and a mechanism should be devised for reporting these units on a monthly, quarterly and yearly basis, in addition to the preparation of an environmental database.

Industrial facilities within the Islamabad Capital Territory are located in three different zones

Remote surgery done in China through robot

Surgeon says patients in remote areas can access top-tier medical services without travelling to big cities

News Report

SHANGHAI: A groundbreaking remote robot-assisted lung cancer surgery spanning over 5,000 kilometers was successfully completed at the Second People's Hospital at the Xinzhou region in collaboration with the Shanghai Chest Hospital the other day, foreign media reported.

This surgery marks a significant milestone in the advancement of domestic robotic thoracic surgery technology, breaking through spatial and geographical limitations and allowing more patients to benefit from China's "smart" advantages, according to Kashgar local media.

The surgery was led by Professor Luo Qingquan, a renowned expert in robotic thoracic surgery from the Shanghai Chest Hospital, with a team of assistants led by Chen Tianxiang, vice president of Second People's Hospital of Kashgar, who is also on staff at the Shanghai Chest Hospital to support Xinjiang.

Utilising the high-speed and low-latency characteristics of the 5G network, the expert team from the Shanghai Chest Hospital remotely controlled a domestic 5G remote surgical robot in Kash-

gar, successfully removing a lung tumor from a local patient.

"The success of the operation demonstrates that our domestic robotic surgery technology in thoracic surgery has further overcome spatial limitations," said Luo Qingquan, the lead surgeon.

"With this technology, patients in remote areas can access top-tier medical services without traveling to big cities." The surgical robots were developed by Shanghai MicroPort MedBot (Group) Co. The patient, a middle-aged woman, had a growing lump in her right lung that was identified three years ago. Luo and his team deemed her a suitable candidate for remote robotic surgery after reviewing her medical records.

A preoperative consultation via video linkup between Shanghai Chest Hospital and Kashgar Prefecture No 2 People's Hospital, where the woman was admitted, allowed doctors to discuss the preparations and the surgical plan in detail. The surgery lasted an hour and proceeded smoothly.

Luo manipulated the robotic arms in Shanghai, transmitting real-time instructions to the robotic arms in Kashgar, which precisely mirrored his movements to dissect, separate, cut and suture. "I felt as though I was literally operating the robotic arms on-site in Kashgar. It was perfectly simultaneous," Luo said.

Chen Tianxiang, a chest surgeon from Shanghai Chest Hospital currently assisting at the Kashgar hospital, led a team in the operating room for real-time discussion and coordination with the Shanghai team. "Robotic surgery is one of the most advanced minimally invasive technologies, offering patients higher accuracy, smaller wounds and faster recovery," Luo said. Robots enhance the surgeon's field of vision 10 to 15 times with three-dimensional, high-definition images, and their arms filter out human hand tremors for improved precision. During the surgery, Professor Luo operated the robot from the surgical console at the Shanghai hospital, using a 3D display screen and a master controller to see real-time images of the patient's chest cavity and precisely manipulate the robot arm for the operation. Shanghai Chest Hospital was the first medical institution on the Chinese mainland to carry out robot-assisted chest surgeries. It was also the first hospital in the country to perform more than 1,000 chest surgeries assisted by surgical robots a year.

Woking, Surrey, on August 10 last year. The discovery came, said the prosecution, after her father called police at 2:47 am crying so much that the operator told him to "take a deep breath and tell me what's happened".

Sharif told the operator: "I've killed my daughter. I legally punished her, and she died. She was naughty. I beat her up, it wasn't my intention to kill her, but I beat her up too much."

The call last for around nine minutes.

When the police reached the family home in Woking, just out of London, they found the property was quiet and clean.

An examination of Sara's body

revealed that Sharif played down in his call how much the child was tortured.

The prosecutor, Emlyn Jones, said: "In an upstairs bedroom, on a bottom bunk bed, the police found the body of a little girl, lying in bed,

under the cover, as if asleep. But she was not asleep. She was dead. Next to her body was an Urfa Sharif's handwriting. It echoed what he had said in that 999 call."

The note stated: "It's me Urfa Sharif who killed my daughter by beating. I swear to God that my intention was not to kill her. But I lost it."

"I am running away because I am scared. Sara died last August 8, two days before she was found."

Addressing the jury, Emlyn Jones said: "Ask yourselves, how could just one person have carried out so much abuse, so many assaults, without the others knowing about it and witnessing it with their own eyes? If any one of them was not part of it, but had seen it, why then was nothing done to stop it, or report it? Each of them denies that they were the ones responsible."

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WORLD

AROUND THE WORLD



MUMBAI: Bollywood actress Kajol Devgan attends the trailer launch of her Netflix Indian Hindi-language thriller film 'Do Patti' here on Monday. —AFP wirephoto

Sri Lanka carrier grounds captain after mid-air argument

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's national airline grounded a captain after he locked out his female copilot when she took a toilet break during a flight from Sydney to Colombo, officials said.

Sri Lanka's aviation regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), had initiated an investigation. "The airline is fully cooperating with the relevant authorities, and the captain has been grounded pending the outcome of the investigation," SriLankan Airlines said in a statement.

The captain clashed with the female copilot over her stepping out without arranging another crew member to accompany him in the cockpit, in line with standard operating procedures, an airline source said.

Cabin crew had to persuade the captain to let the first officer back into her seat on the Airbus A330. The two-pilot aircraft landed without incident. —AFP

Three dead in Russian attacks on south Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine: Russian shelling and drone attacks killed three people and wounded eight others in southern Ukraine on Monday, officials said, as Kyiv warned Moscow was pounding civilian infrastructure ahead of winter.

Two women were killed when a Russian drone struck a car in the southern Kherson region, while Russian shelling on the port of Odessa left one dead and eight wounded, authorities said.

The Odessa attack also damaged two civilian ships, including a Palau-flagged cargo vessel that was struck "for the second time" in two weeks, Ukrainian deputy prime minister Oleksiy Kubela wrote on Telegram.

The attack damaged port infrastructure, including a grain warehouse, he added. —AFP

Man arrested near Trump rally in California faces gun charges

WASHINGTON: A man arrested at a security checkpoint near Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's California rally on Saturday faces gun charges after he was found in possession of loaded firearms, multiple passports and a fake license plate, the local sheriff said on Monday.

Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco said he believed his department halted an assassination attempt, though he acknowledged that was "speculation." The suspect was released on bail on Saturday, jail records showed. A federal official said on Sunday that a federal investigation was underway.

"What we do know is he showed up with multiple passports with different names, an unregistered vehicle with a fake license plate and loaded firearms," the sheriff said at a news conference on Sunday afternoon. —Reuters

Ex-Stasi officer jailed over 1974 Berlin border killing

BERLIN: A former East German secret police officer was sentenced to 10 years in jail in a landmark ruling on Monday for shooting dead a Polish man trying to flee to the West 50 years ago.

The sentence, almost 35 years after the Berlin Wall fell, marks the first time a former Stasi officer has been convicted of a homicide committed on duty, according to historians.

The Berlin court found Martin Manfred Naumann, 80, guilty of murder for shooting Czeslaw Kukuczka in the back at close range as he sought to flee through Berlin's Friedrichstrasse border point in 1974. —AFP

Prague bans organised night-time pub crawls

PRAGUE: Prague city councillors said on Monday they had banned night-time pub crawls organised by travel agencies because the city wanted to target "more cultured" tourists.

The Czech capital of 1.3 million people has for a long time been a popular destination for noisy stag parties and pub crawlers, largely from Britain.

Prague deputy mayor Zdenek Hrib told reporters on Monday that organised night-time pub crawls would now be banned. —AFP

Russia jails French researcher for three years

MOSCOW: A Russian court on Monday sentenced a French researcher to three years in a penal colony after finding him guilty of breaching a "foreign agent" law.

The trial of Laurent Vinatier, who works for a Swiss conflict mediation NGO, comes amid tensions between Russia and the West over the Ukraine war.

The 48-year-old was arrested in Moscow in June and charged with gathering information on Russia's military without being registered as a "foreign agent".

Judge Natalya Cheprasova at Moscow's Zamoskvoretsky district court ruled that Vinatier was guilty and sentenced him to three years in a penal colony, two years less than the maximum possible sentence, an AFP journalist in the courtroom heard. —AFP

At least 12 killed in bus accident in Egypt

CAIRO: At least 12 people were killed and 33 injured in Egypt on Monday after a bus overturned on a highway connecting Cairo to the Red Sea coast, the Egyptian health ministry said.

It said in a statement that 28 ambulances were sent to the scene of the accident which took place on Al-Galala highway connecting Cairo to Red Sea coastal towns including Ain Sokhna. —Reuters

Nasa probe Europa Clipper lifts off for Jupiter's icy moon

KENNEDY SPACE CENTRE, United States: Nasa probe Europa Clipper lifted off from the US Kennedy Space Centre on Monday, bound for an icy moon of Jupiter to discover whether it has the ingredients to support life.

Lift-off took place aboard SpaceX's powerful Falcon Heavy rocket. The probe is set to reach Europa, one of Jupiter's many moons, in five and a half years.

The mission will allow the US space agency to uncover new details about Europa, which scientists believe could hold an ocean beneath its ice-covered surface.

"With Europa Clipper, we're not searching for life on Europa, but we're trying to see if this ocean world is habitable, and that means we're looking for the water," said Nasa official Gina DiBraccio, ahead of the launch.

"We're looking for energy sources, and we're really looking for the chemistry there, so that we can understand what habitable environments might be throughout our whole universe," she added.

If life's ingredients are found, another mission would then have to make the journey to try and detect it.

"It's a chance for us to explore not a world that might have been habitable billions of years ago" like Mars, Europa Clipper program scientist Curt Niebur told reporters, "but a world that might be habitable today, right now."

The probe is the largest ever designed by Nasa for interplanetary exploration.

Europa Clipper is 30 meters wide when its immense solar panels -- designed to capture the weak light that reaches Jupiter -- are fully extended. —AFP

We're looking for energy

BBC boss says Russia, China taking 'advantage' of World Service cuts

LONDON: The head of the BBC warned on Monday that Russia and China were exploiting funding cuts that have forced Britain's public service broadcaster to scale back its much-lauded World Service network.

Dave Davie said in a speech that financial constraints affecting the BBC World Service were allowing Moscow, Beijing and other actors to "fill the gaps", including with "unchallenged propaganda".

"We can now see clear evidence of the fact that when the World Service retreats, state-funded media operators move in to take advantage," the director-general said.

The BBC World Service delivers output in 42 languages, and reaches around 320 million people worldwide every week.

For years it was funded through grants by the British government's foreign ministry. But since 2014, it has been predominantly funded by the television licence fee paid by

British households.

In 2022 the BBC announced the closure of its Arabic and Persian radio services and hundreds of job cuts, and has increasingly moved language services to digital platforms.

Davie said that while the World Service's budget was nearly \$400 million (\$522 million), Russia and China were spending an estimated \$6 billion to \$8 billion on "expanding their global media activities" in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

"Russia and China are outspending our investment by a multiple of thousands," he told the Future Resilience Forum, a non-partisan meeting attended by international political figures.

"Across Africa in particular, Russian media is incredibly active in promoting its narratives -- with social media influencers amplifying propaganda and so-called 'activists' live-streaming pro-Russia rallies. —AFP

EU sanctions Iran over ballistic missiles for Russia

LUXEMBOURG: The European Union imposed sanctions on Monday against prominent Iranian officials and entities, including airlines, accused of taking part in the transfer of missiles and drones for Russia to use against Ukraine.

EU foreign ministers approved the sanctions on seven entities, including Iran Air, and seven individuals, including deputy defence minister Seyed Hamzeh Ghalandari and senior officials of the Revolutionary Guards' Quds Force, the bloc said.

Leading European powers Britain, France and Germany adopted similar sanctions last month over Iranian missile transfers to Russia, as did the United States.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen welcomed the adoption of the sanctions by the entire bloc, while adding: "More is needed."

"The Iranian regime's support to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is unacceptable and must stop," she posted on X.

Israel also lauded the move, with Foreign Minister Israel Katz posting on X that "These sanctions send a clear message that the international community will not tolerate Iran's dangerous actions, its support for terrorism, and its destabilization of the region." —AFP

EU sanctions Iran over ballistic missiles for Russia

PARIS: The hosts of the coming UN climate summit said on Monday that a hard-fought finance pact for poorer countries must include "hundreds of billions" of dollars from wealthy governments.

COP29 hosts Azerbaijan held a series of meetings last week with diplomats to try to make headway ahead of the main summit starting on November 11.

Yalchin Rafiyev, Azerbaijan's lead climate negotiator, said "common messages" had started to emerge from the parties, including in terms of the overall size of the finance target.

"It needs to be ambitious, and that needs are in the space of trillions, with a realistic provision and mobilisation needed to be in the hundreds of billions," he told reporters during a conference call. —AFP

But little progress has been achieved so far in the negotiations, with disagreements over who should pay, how much, and the scope and structure of the pact.

It said in a statement that 28 ambulances were sent to the scene of the accident which took place on Al-Galala highway connecting Cairo to Red Sea coastal towns including Ain Sokhna. —Reuters

Climate pact needs 'hundreds of billions' in state money: COP29 hosts

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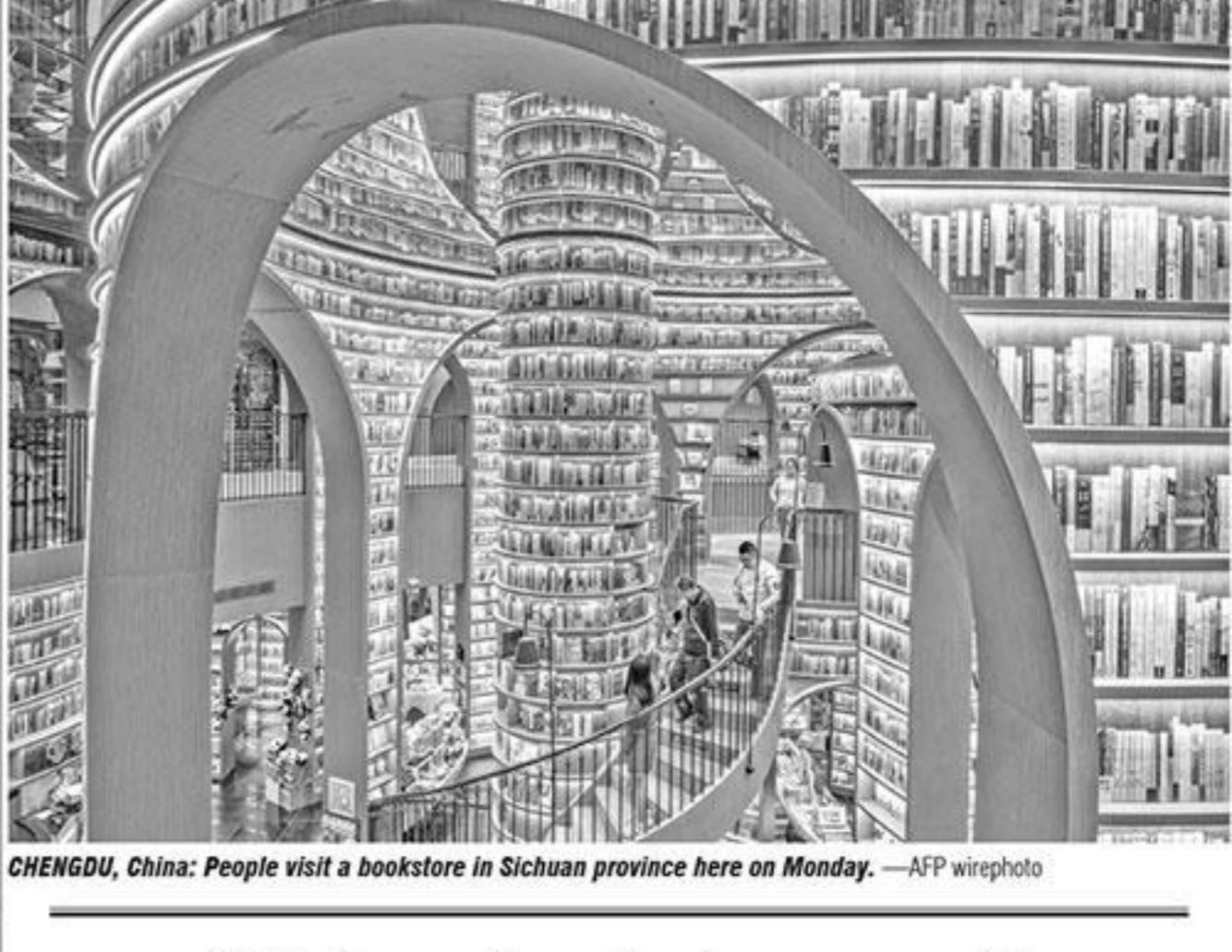
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CHENGDU, China: People visit a bookstore in Sichuan province here on Monday. —AFP wirephoto

China insists won't renounce 'use of force' to take Taiwan as drills end

TAIPEI: China insisted on Monday it would never renounce the "use of force" to take control of Taiwan, after ending a day of military drills around the self-ruled island that Beijing said was a "stem warning" to "separatist" forces.

Beijing, which claims Taiwan as part of its own territory, deployed fighter jets, drones, warships and coast guard vessels to encircle the island in its fourth round of large-scale war games in just over two years.

The United States said China's actions were "unwarranted" and risked "escalation" as it called on Beijing to act with restraint.

China declared the drills over at around 6:00 pm (1000 GMT), about 13 hours after they had begun.

"We sincerely strive for the prospect of peaceful reunification, but we will never promise to renounce the use of force and will not leave any space for Taiwan independence," Ministry of National Defence spokesman Wu Qian said soon after.

The exercises, dubbed Joint Sword-2024B, "fully tested the integrated joint operation capabilities of its troops", military spokesman Li said earlier. Their aim was to focus on "heightened alert", Taiwan's defense ministry said.

Beijing said its exercises served as a "stem warning to the separatist acts of Taiwan Independence forces".

The drills took place in areas to the north, south and east of Taiwan Island", Wu Qian said soon after.

The exercises, dubbed Joint Sword-2024B, "fully tested the integrated joint operation capabilities of its troops", military spokesman Li said earlier. Their aim was to focus on "heightened alert", Taiwan's defense ministry said.

"In the face of enemy threats, all officers and soldiers of the country are in full readiness," Taiwan's defense ministry said on Monday.

The previous large-scale drills held in May, three days after Lai's inauguration, were called "Joint Sword-2024A" and lasted two days.

China's coast guard was also sent to conduct "inspections", with a diagram released by the coast guard which calls him a "separatist".

Lai vowed on Monday to "protect democratic Taiwan and safeguard national security", while the defense ministry said it had dispatched "appropriate forces" in response to the drills.

Taiwan detected 125 Chinese aircraft, including fighter jets and drones from early morning to late afternoon, a defense ministry official said, describing it as a record for a single day. Seventeen warships were also spotted.

Taiwan's coast guard had patrolled the island and briefly entered its restricted waters, but not its prohibited waters.

China has ramped up military activity around Taiwan in recent years, sending warplanes and other military aircraft while its ships maintain a near-constant presence around the island's waters.

Taiwan's coast guard said on Monday it had detained a Chinese man on one of its outlying islands after a possible "grey zone intrusion", referring to tactics that fall short of a direct act of war. —AFP

Lai convened a high-level security meeting over the drills, said Joseph Wu, secretary-general of the National Security Council, who described the exercises as "inconsistent with international law".

He vowed in his National Day speech on Thursday to "resist annexation" and insisted that Beijing and Taiwan were "not subordinate to each other". Lai's Democratic Progressive Party has long defended the sovereignty of Taiwan, which has its own government, military and currency.

Lieutenant Colonel Fu Zhengnan, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Military Sciences, said in a video shared by state media that the drills could "switch from training to combat at any time".

"If Taiwan separatists provoke once, the PLA's operation around the island will make their first move," Fu said, referring to China's People's Liberation Army.

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Half million still without power in Sao Paulo from storm

SAO PAULO: Half a million consumers in Latin America's largest city are still without electricity three days after a violent gale knocked down power lines and caused a blackout, the distributor owned by Enel said on Monday.

The delay in resumption of power supplies has led to criticism of the distributor from politicians and authorities, with calls to cancel the concession.

Enel São Paulo said it would need time to restore parts of the electricity network that was damaged on Friday night by winds of more than 100 km/h. At least five people died in the storm that knocked over trees in the city's streets.

Regulatory agencies Aneel and Arsesp said the company's response to the storm was "much below expectations" and warned that they could recommend allowing Enel's contract to expire.

Enel is facing similar criticism in Chile, whose government said in August it will study whether the Italian electricity distributor's local unit meets the terms of its concession to operate in the country after thousands of customers were left without power following a storm.

According to Enel São Paulo, 537,000 consumers were still without electricity as of midday on Monday. —Reuters

Half million still without power in Sao Paulo from storm

Trump pledges 10,000 extra border agents in fight with Harris over immigration

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump pledged on Monday to hire an extra 10,000 border patrol agents if he is reelected as president, as he intensified his attacks on Kamala Harris on the issue of immigration.

The Republican presidential candidate said he would meet the goal by asking the US Congress to fund a 10 percent pay rise for border patrol agents and a \$10,000 retention and signing bonus, at a rally in the border state of Arizona, an election battleground.

Flanked on stage by leaders of the Border Patrol union, who have endorsed Trump, the former president said: "This will ensure that we can hire and keep the Border Patrol agents that we need."

Trump is locked in a

Trump pledges 10,000 extra border agents in fight

A LITTLE PRECAUTION GET RID OF DENGUE

PREVENT BREEDING OF DENGUE MOSQUITOES
AND BE SAFE FROM THIS DEADLY DISEASE.

The confirmation of this virus in the body can only be testified in laboratory through examination of blood; While some Specific symptoms of this disease beside fever are as:

- ★ Fever, cold and flu
- ★ Pain in back, body and joints
- ★ Deficiency of white cells in blood
- ★ Bleeding from nose and mouth
- ★ Presence of red spots on the body

NOTE:-
Dengue fever prevention spray campaign has been started by the Health Department in collaboration with the local bodies administration.



PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT DENGUE:

- Wear full sleeve cloths and use mosquito quail /mosquito nets while sleeping.
- Dispose of garbage, old tyres immediately from home.
- To protect your homes and offices from mosquitoes, Fix nets on doors and windows and spray mosquito repellent.
- Do not allow standing water in the yard or lawn, flower beds and pots inside the house.
- Keep water tanks, buckets, drum canisters and other water containers well covered.



HEALTH DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH



**Whether it's Foreign Policy or the Economic Sphere
Constructive Thinking is the Voice of a Bright Tomorrow**



The convening of the 23rd Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

It's an honour for the entire nation, bringing a message of development, prosperity, and a bright future for the whole region, including Pakistan.

The Chief Minister of Punjab and the people of the province extend a heartfelt **Welcome** to the esteemed leaders of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization**



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB

CITYNEWS

Nine cops suspended over excessive use of force at protest outside KPC

Two FIRs registered against 12 Sindh Rawadari March participants, 55 TLP members; committee formed to investigate police actions, ensure transparency

By Faraz Khan

In the aftermath of Sunday's violent protests by the Sindh Rawadari March (SRM) and the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in Karachi's Red Zone, police have registered two cases against multiple individuals involved in the unrest.

Nine police officials, including six women constables, have also been suspended following allegations of misconduct and excessive use of force during the protest outside the Karachi Press Club (KPC).

Sindh Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar summoned the provincial police chief and directed the forming of a high-level committee to ensure a transparent and impartial investigation into the matter.

The cases filed at the Artillery Maidan police station on the complaint of SHO Zahid Hussain include charges of violation of Section 144, rioting, armed confrontation, firing resulting in injuries, murder, interference in government duties, damage to public property, kidnapping and violations under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).

A total of 12 individuals from the SRM and 55 members of the TLP, including several senior leaders, have been named in the FIRs.

FIR No. 179/24 was lodged under sections 144, 145 and 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code for defying the ban on public gatherings.

Twelve individuals associ-

Sherry, Bakhtawar condemn brutal action against Rawadari March participants

HRCP says arrested civil society activists must be released unconditionally, SHRC seeks explanation from DIG for use of police force, arrests in three days

By our correspondent

The use of police force to disperse protesters during Sunday's gathering outside the Karachi Press Club has been condemned by several Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) politicians, including senior leader Senator Sherry Rehman, who apologised for the violence on behalf of the party.

"We are a democratic party and rights of citizens have to be protected and respected even if they were in violation of today's [Section] 144. I have spoken on the phone from Islamabad to many who were mistreated, and apologised, and appreciate their understanding," she wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Bakhtawar Bhutto Zardari, the younger sister of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, has also con-

demned the brutal and arbitrary police action against the participants of the Rawadari March from the civil society organisations in the vicinity of the press club.

"We all condemn and we are all disgusted and ashamed of the violent treatment against peaceful protesters. The home minister has ensured a probe (into the police action) and action will be taken against all those involved in such unprovoked, inexcusable, and unjustifiable brutality."

HRCP's demands

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has demanded that the Sindh Rawadari March be allowed to continue assembly at the Karachi Press Club.

In a tweet on X, the HRCP said that it is greatly concerned to learn that at

ated with the SRM — Panhal Sario, Saif Samjeo, Hamza Ali Chandio, Nasir Mansoor, Ali Mustaqeem, Muhammad Parel Marri, Ghulam Sagheer, Ali, Ahmed Shabbir, Idrees, Bilawal and Bakshali Thallu — have been implicated.

The SHO mentioned in the FIR that 90 to 100 individuals had gathered outside the KPC to engage in the shouting of provocative slogans.

Despite the imposition of Section 144, which prohibits gathering of five or more

people, the crowd continued to assemble. Using a loudspeaker, police urged the protesters to disperse, but they refused to comply.

FIR No. 180/24 includes a wider array of charges, from attempted murder and property damage to violations under the ATA. This FIR names the provincial leadership of the TLP, including Muhammad Qasim Fakhru, Arif Sultan Puri and Sultan Madani, alongside 52 workers.

According to the FIR, a rally of 500 to 600 participants from the TLP was proceeding near Metropole on Shareef Faisal. Despite being warned about the ban on rallies, the crowd grew increasingly agitated, leading to stone-pelting, firing in the air and attacks on law enforcers.

Armed individuals allegedly fired at police and Rangers with the intent to kill, and set fire to a Gizzri police station vehicle, destroying weapons and equipment.

In the ensuing chaos, one civilian, identified as 55-year-old Muhammad Majid Aziz, was fatally shot, while two police officers, Faiz Muhammad and Faraz Shah, suffered injuries.

Separately, in view of the alleged police brutality outside the KPC, the South Zone police chief has suspended nine police officials, including Eidga SHO Zaheer Ahmed Khan.

The other suspended officials are Head Constable

least 37 protesters (including women) associated with the Sindh Rawadari March have been arrested by the Karachi police while attempting to hold a peaceful assembly to demand justice for the murder of Dr Shah Nawaz Kunhar.

It said police have also attempted to arrest HRCP chairperson Asad Iqbal Butt and warned him not to speak to the press. "We fear further arrests through the day," they said.

The HRCP said the Sindh Rawadari March includes progressive voices from across the province of Sindh, including human rights defenders, trade unions and feminist movements, whose right to protest is protected by the constitution.

Those arrested must be released

Continued on page 14

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gathering of five or more

Sindh signs agreement to provide digital education tools to varsities

By Salis bin Porwaiz

The Tech Valley Pakistan, a Google partner, will collaborate with the Sindh Higher Education Commission (SHEC) and the provincial information science and technology department (ISTD) to equip universities with the essential digital tools needed to thrive in today's modern workforce.

Officials said that this collaborative effort aims to transform education in Sindh and prepare students for future success.

The collaboration agreement was signed in the presence of vice chancellors of 32 universities of Sindh in the presence of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah who endorsed the initiative and emphasised the im-

portance of adopting globally recognised tools to elevate the quality of education in government universities.

The CM expressed his delight to witness the partnership between the Tech Valley Pakistan, Sindh education department and SHEC. "This initiative aligns perfectly with our government's vision of transforming education in Sindh. By equipping our students with the latest digital tools, we are empowering them to compete on a global scale and contribute to the development of our province," he said.

This partnership empowers universities to leverage the jurisdiction of the SHEC to use Google for Education tools, a suite widely used by 75 per cent of the global workforce. Through Google Workspace for Edu-

cation, students, faculty, and staff will gain access to powerful communication and collaboration tools like Gmail, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides and more.

"This collaboration is a significant step towards equipping our students with the digital skills they need to thrive in the 21st-century workplace," said Noor Ahmed Sammo, Sindh IT secretary.

"By providing access to Google for Education tools, we are not only enhancing the learning experience but also opening doors to global opportunities."

SHEC Chairman Dr Tariq Rafi said he was excited to partner with the Tech Valley Pakistan and Google for Education to transform education in

Sindh's universities. "Google Workspace for Education offers a comprehensive suite of tools that will empower our faculty to deliver engaging lessons and prepare our students for success," he remarked.

"We are thrilled to be a part of this initiative," said Paul Hutchings, regional head of Google for Education for Greater Asia, who was present during the signing ceremony. "Google for Education tools have the potential to revolutionise education by fostering collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking."

This partnership with Tech Valley Pakistan and the Sindh government is a testament to their commitment to providing students with the best possible learning experience."

WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL

Peerzada Salman explores personal reflections in 'Hamlet Ki Khudkalami'

Journalist draws parallels between his life and Hamlet's in unique stage production; shares memories of friend's tragic death, struggle with suicidal thoughts; critiques societal issues such as declining language standards

By Bilal Ahmed

Journalist and art critic Peerzada Salman is certainly not a Hamlet. Unlike the sad figure described by TS Eliot, Salman is not an artistic failure; his successful career and reputation as an excellent journalist suggest that his life is far from the tragic and pitiful existence of the Danish prince.

Therefore, it was both intriguing and somewhat shocking to see Salman draw parallels between Hamlet and his own life in the stage production 'Hamlet Ki Khudkalami', which was performed at the Arts Council of Pakistan on Monday as part of the ongoing World Culture Festival.

The production, written and directed by Salman, featured two characters: the journalist himself, who served as the narrator, and Hamlet, impressively portrayed by young actor Zohair Zubair.

The production delivered all seven of Hamlet's soliloquies in Urdu, each preceded by a brief narration from Salman, who informed the audience

about the context of each soliloquy within the play, as well as moments in his own life when he experienced feelings similar to those expressed by Hamlet or when people around him reflected the ideas conveyed in the soliloquies.

Some connections between the narrator's life and Hamlet's soliloquies were successfully established, while others felt somewhat forced.

It also appeared that Salman was describing the seven stages of his life, not through the poem from 'As You Like It', but through Hamlet's monologues.

Salman was describing the seven stages of his life, not through the poem from 'As You Like It', but through Hamlet's monologues.

However, rather than starting with his birth or infancy, Salman began his narrative at the point when he enrolled in an English literature degree programme, where he studied 'Hamlet' in his very first semester.

At this stage, the narrator may have viewed himself as a blank slate, surprised by the appearance of the ghost, much like Hamlet. The first soliloquy captures that shock, as Hamlet struggles to believe that his father was murdered by his uncle Claudius, with his mother Gertrude complicit in the crime.

Perhaps the most compelling part of the production came before the famous

soliloquy, when the policeman survived, but the other friend became paralysed, and died after a year and a half.

The third soliloquy in 'Hamlet' addresses the art of acting, as the Danish prince contemplates staging a play to expose his uncle's crime. Salman mentioned that he once aspired to be an actor, but unfortunately, there were no drama academies in the city at that time.

Salman interpreted the second soliloquy as a reflection of the inability to suppress painful thoughts. He noted that just as Hamlet cannot suppress the distressing thought of his mother's involvement in his father's murder, he too cannot suppress a painful memory of the death of a friend. He recalled the lawlessness of Karachi in the 1990s, when one of his friends was shot in the neck as collateral damage during an attempt on another friend, a policeman. The policeman survived, but the other friend became paralysed, and died after a year and a half.

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NAMAZ TIMINGS

FOR KARACHI ONLY	
Fajr	05:14 am
Zohr	12:18 pm
Asr	04:28 pm
Maghrib	06:06 pm
Isha	07:22 pm



CITY PULSE



World Culture Festival

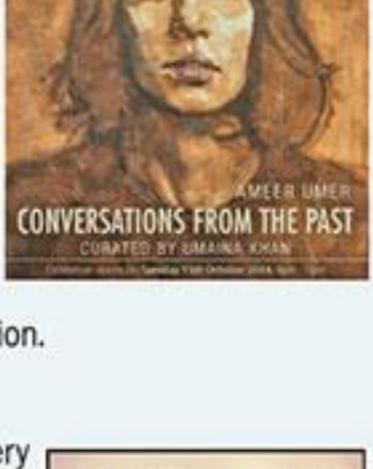
The Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, is hosting 'World Culture Festival Karachi' until November.



2. The event brings together more than 250 artistes from over 35 countries across all continents to showcase the best talent in music, theatre, dance and fine arts through 100 plus performances. Contact 0300-0802391 for more information.

Conversations from the Past

ArtChowk the Gallery is hosting an art exhibition featuring works by Ameer Umer. Titled 'Conversations from the Past', the show will be held from October 15 to October 24. Contact 0345-2245690 for more information.



Hamra Abbas

The Canvas Gallery is hosting an art exhibition featuring works by Hamra Abbas. The show will be held until October 17. Contact 021-35861523 for more information.



SHC dismisses plea...

Continued from page 13

councils and the bar associations or with the public so that fair comments could be made.

The court further observed that representatives of the public are sitting in the National Assembly and Senate. It said the legislative procedure is provided in article 70 to 77 of the constitution and submissions are devoid of such frame.

The SHC said courts have been restrained from interfer-

ing in such matters and in particular in respect of the issue of legislation (competence of which otherwise is not denied) unless it is seen to be demonstrably unconstitutional.

The court observed that since it has not yet surfaced as an Act of the parliament, the process of adjudicating it either constitutional or unconstitutional cannot be triggered. It said the petition merits no consideration and dismissed the same.

IGP orders improvement in women and child protection centres

By Salis bin Perwaiz

Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ghulam Nabi Memon chaired a meeting on performance and reforms of the women and child protection centres in Sindh.

Moreover, in a meeting held at the Central Police Office Karachi, proposals were sought for the establishment of a special unit in the investigation department related to organised crimes against women and children, and serious cases.

Officials said the committee comprising the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee chief, DIG crime and investigations and others would prepare proposals for setting up a special unit in the investigation department and devise a standard operating procedure for the working of police women protection centres.

The meeting was attended by the DIGs of crime and investigations, headquarters, Criminal Investigation Agency, establishment, IT and finance, and other police officers.

The participants of the meeting were given a detailed briefing by the IGP for gender-based violence and human rights about the performance and cases of the women and child protection centres.

The IGP informed the meeting that there were 40 women and child protection centres functioning in SSP and DIG offices across the province. Since January, the department has received 2,550 complaints against 40 different types of domestic violence and a total of 2,252 complaints were resolved while FIRs were registered on 200 complaints.

IGP Memon said there was a need for improving the reporting mechanism in women and child protection centres, and maximum public access should be ensured by activating the complaint number 1715 round the clock.

He added that with the increase in the number of operators at the complaint centres, awareness materials and instructions should also be provided to the staff. Moreover, a comprehensive SOP should be set up for cognisable and non-cognisable complaints and cases of organised crimes related to women and children should be investigated by an expert and experienced officer.

The police chief said arrangements should also be made for special training of investigation staff.

Earlier on Sunday, the Sindh police chief being a chief guest at the Police Darbar thanked the National Po-

Sindh police hint at taking action after cop manhandled in Islamabad

By Salis bin Perwaiz

DIG Faizullah Karejo, chief of the Police Training Branch in Sindh, on Monday issued notices after a video went viral showing a Sindh police constable being manhandled in Islamabad.

Officials stated that the constable had travelled to Islamabad to attend the Eagle Course, which he had successfully completed.

DIG Karejo emphasised that no one was permitted to raise their hands against another individual, highlighting the importance of adhering to the code of conduct.

"The police force is a disciplined uniformed body, and following rules and regulations is our top priority," Karejo noted. He condemned the act of insulting and disrespecting police officers, stating that such behavior — including slapping and ridicule — couldn't be tolerated.

DIG Karejo confirmed that the Sindh Police deserved the right to investigate and take departmental action regarding the incident. A thorough investigation was currently underway, led by the relevant commandant in Islamabad, and instructions had been issued for a show-cause notice.

Sharjeel...

Continued from page 13

emphasised that efforts should be accelerated to finish the public project before the deadline.

The Red Line BRT is aimed at reducing traffic congestion and providing a sustainable, reliable transport solution for millions of Karachiites, he said while chairing a high-level meeting of the transport department and relevant stakeholders on the Red Line BRT project was held in Karachi.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, CEO Trans Karachi Shumaila Mohsin, international consultants, contractors, and other officials.

During the meeting, representatives from TransKarachi, along with contractors and consultants, provided a briefing on the ongoing work. The progress of the development work on Lot 1 and Lot 2 of the Red Line BRT project was also reviewed.

The senior minister emphasised that all stakeholders must make concerted efforts to accelerate the construction work and fully utilise all available resources.

Sindh minister, BISP chairperson to work together on skill development of out-of-school children

Sardar Shah and Senator Rubina Khalid agree to especially reach out to children supporting their families

News Desk

Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)

Senator Rubina Khalid and

Sindh Education Minister

Syed Sardar Ali Shah have

presented at the meeting,

which discussed the promotion

of technical and vocational

education in Sindh, mutual

cooperation, and the available

resources.

Senator Rubina Khalid

said that, besides financial assistance, the BISP is working on various programmes related to skill development and technical education, and under the flagship programme, the BISP and the Sindh government can work together to provide vocational training.

She added that the BISP is making serious efforts not only to provide financial as-

sistance but also to make families self-reliant. She also mentioned that the federal government intends to initiate various programmes in Sindh to fulfil the objectives of the programme.

Sindh Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah appreciated the BISP chairperson's offer of cooperation and praised her efforts. He said that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's vision for the economic stability and self-reliance of Pakistani women has always been clear. Even today, we are carrying forward Shaheed Bibi's mission for women's empowerment.

He added that there are various challenges regarding girls' education in Sindh, yet the provincial government has taken numerous steps to address them. He mentioned that Sindh is the first province to introduce the syllabus of an accelerated learning programme, under which three thousand centres will be opened where children will receive both academic and vocational education.

He further stressed the need to focus on children who are unable to complete their education due to family responsibilities, and said that

by providing both education and technical skills, the youth can be made economically stable.

Shah expressed the provincial government's readiness to provide all possible support. It was agreed in the meeting that the non-functional, vacant, or non-viable buildings of the School Education Department will be utilized in collaboration with the BISP to establish vocational training centres, and a working paper will soon be prepared for the next steps and final recommendations regarding skill education.

Sherry, Bakhtawar condemn...

Continued from page 13

unconditionally, and the Sindh Rawadari March must be allowed to continue its assembly at the Karachi Press Club uninhabited.

SHRC takes cognisance

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has

taken a suo motu notice of the brutal and arbitrary police action against the participants of a peaceful rally held by civil society organisations near Karachi Press Club on Sunday.

The SHRC under the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act-2011 is authorised to take cognisance of the instances of human rights violations in the province.

A peaceful assembly of civil society protesters outside the Karachi Press Club on 13th October, 2024 was met with violent assaults and arrests by the police. The protesters were reportedly gathered to demand justice for the extra-judicial killing of Dr. Shahnawaz Kumbhar," said the suo motu notice sent by the SHRC to the DIG South.

The notice said that the reported incident raised concerns about potential violations of the fundamental right of peaceful assembly guaranteed under articles 15, 16 and 19 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In view of Section 4(i)(ii) Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011, the Commission directs you to file detailed comments mentioning the circumstances leading to the use of force against the peaceful protesters, the legal basis for the arrests made during the protest and measures taken to ensure the protection of fundamental human rights, including the right to peaceful assembly. The detailed

comments may be filed within three days of the receipt of this notice," said the notice sent by SHRC Member Judicial-I Arshad Noor Khan.

The copies of the notice were also sent to the additional chief secretary of the Sindh Home Department, the IGP, and the secretary of the Sindh government's Human Rights Department.

Qureshi demands action

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former MPA Shahzad Qureshi has expressed regret over the baton charge, tear gassing and the death of a worker during a protest of a religious party near the Karachi Press Club on Sunday and demanded legal action against those involved in it.

He said on Monday the brutal violence by rulers on protesting men and women cannot be tolerated in any way. The women of organisations working for the protection of human rights were also subjected to extreme violence, which is unacceptable for all of us.

Qureshi further said that as a democratic party we should respect the rights of our citizens. The administration immediately apologized for the mistreatment of journalists and women, he said, adding that protest is a fundamental right and no one can stop it.

SHC takes exception to NAB...

Continued from page 13

department to ensure that the NAB officer is repatriated to his parent department within 10 days, without fail. The court directed that the vacant post be filled by an officer of impeccable integrity, specifically a CSS officer, being well acquainted with the education sector, and that the officer should possess a thorough understanding of the unique challenges faced by Sindh's Education Sector, including but not limited to regional disparities in educational access, literacy rates and infrastructure development.

The SHC said a compliance report shall be submitted before the next date of hearing through the Additional MIT-II without fail, else the delinquents will expose themselves to the proceedings against them for the willful defiance of court's order, as per the relevant contempt of court laws.

The court also inquired the secretary, schools education & literacy department, about the provisions and availability of e-books and e-exams, as it

has also come on record that the province of Sindh had signed a certain MoU with a foreign donor agency/bank, agreeing thereby to receive \$2 million dollars to launch this project in 2020 up to 2024.

The court was informed that they have received 20 million dollars, out of which 12 million dollars have been utilised.

It further observed that to circumvent the law, rules and the available reports reflected variations in respect of supply and availability of relevant curriculum textbooks, which shows a different amount of percentage in respect of supply and availability of books regarding various districts for the students studying in the public (government) schools across Sindh.

The court ordered that complete record of the last eight years be audited by the auditor general of Pakistan within one month from the date of this order.

The court also directed chief secretary of Sindh to refer the matter to CMIT-I.

headed by Dr. Shireen Narejo, who shall examine the illegalities and irregularities committed, in the said projects, in accordance with law and shall refer the matter to the concerned authority as per the mandate of the CMIT.

The MIT-II submitted reports of district judges with regard to distribution of textbooks and the available

records or develop any computer applications.

It further observed that to circumvent the law, rules and the available reports reflected variations in respect of supply and availability of relevant curriculum textbooks, which shows a different amount of percentage in respect of supply and availability of books regarding various districts for the students studying in the public (government) schools across Sindh.

The court observed that there is a separate wing of the Education Works Department in which all JICA projects have been assigned to one contractor Maqbool. The court directed that the record be placed before it with regard to the tendering process of the subject works awarded to the contractor for the buildings under the JICA scheme and the participation of Con-

tractor Maqbool within the SPPRA Rules.

The court observed that the soft project is meant for digitization and monitoring, and despite receiving millions of dollars and Euros, the Education Department is unable to compile a computerized record or develop any computer applications.

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Cameroon seal Cup of Nations finals place

YAOUNDE: Five-time winners Cameroon have qualified for next year's Africa Cup of Nations finals with a 1-0 victory over Kenya on Monday where Boris Eto'o scored the only goal of the game in neutral Kampala.

Eto'o scored with a low free kick from just outside the box as Cameroon dominated the contest and did enough to win in the absence of their federation president Samuel Eto'o, who is serving a six-month stadium ban by world governing body FIFA.

The victory moves Cameroon to 10 points from four games in the pool and ensured they cannot finish outside of the top two, which is enough to secure a place at the finals in Morocco. They join the hosts and Burkina Faso as confirmed in the 24-team field.

Algeria could also qualify later on Monday when they play Togo in Lome. Victory will guarantee Algeria a place at the finals but a draw could be enough too depending on the result between Liberia and Equatorial Guinea in Lome.

Nigeria boycott AFCON qualifier in Libya after 'inhumane treatment'

The Nigeria Football Federation said it will fly the national team back home Monday after alleged "inhumane treatment" in Libya ahead of a 2025 Africa

Cup of Nations qualifier.

"Players have resolved not to play the match any longer as NFF (the Nigerian National Football Team) officials are making plans to fly the team back home," said NFF director of communications, Ademola Olajire. A formal complaint by Nigeria has been sent to the Confederation of African football (CAF) whose disciplinary board is now investigating the incident.

The Nigerian team have been held at an abandoned airport in Libya for more than 15 hours since their chartered flight landed Sunday.

The Nigerian embassy in Libya reportedly cannot intervene as they would need permission to do so from the Libyan government.

Captain William Troost-Ekong said the team will not play the game and they will not make a three-hour bus ride from Al-Abraq to Benina, where the qualifier was scheduled to be played on Tuesday, for safety reasons.

"As the team captain together with the team we have decided that we will NOT play this game," he posted on social media.

"Let them have the points. "We will not accept to travel anywhere by road here even with security it's not safe. We can only imagine what the hotel or food would be like given to us if we continued." CAF said they

viewed "the disturbing and unacceptable experiences of the Nigerian National Football Team at an airport in Libya in a very serious light". The statement added that CAF had been in contact with both the Libyan and Nigerian authorities.

"Appropriate action will be taken against those who violated the CAF Statutes and Regulations" the statement concluded. The Libyan football federation denied any impropriety, saying in a statement it had the "utmost respect" for Nigeria.

"There are no grounds to accuse the Libyan security teams or the Libyan Football Federation of deliberately orchestrating this incident," it said.

"Such actions are inconsistent with our values and principles."

"We firmly reject any claims that suggest foul play or sabotage in this situation."

Former African footballer of the year Victor Ikpeba, who accompanied the Nigeria team to Libya, has urged for stiff sanctions against Libya and supported the decision to boycott the match.

"If CAF know their job, Libya ought to be banned from international football," he told AFP. "This is a high-risk country and one really wonders who approved for Libya to be playing their games at home." —AFP

Weak domestic structure major cause for Pakistan cricket's decline

By Sarfraz Ahmed

Pakistan cricket's recurring struggles on the international stage, from the Asia Cup to the recent Test defeat against England, continue to draw nationwide frustration. Yet, after the initial outcry, little seems to change as the same problems surface time and again.

In the wake of Pakistan's crushing defeat in the first Test against England, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced plans to restructure the national selection committee—an action that appears more about pacifying fans than addressing the deeper issues plaguing Pakistan cricket.

The real cause of the decline lies in Pakistan's weak domestic structure, exacerbated by politically motivated decisions rather than cricket-focused reforms.

The recent trend of preparing flat pitches, as seen in Multan, reflects a defensive mindset. Instead of opting for sporting tracks that would benefit Pakistan's pace attack, the management has often chosen safer, less effective strategies.

Pakistan cricket urgently needs strong cricketers at the helm, not political minds, to steer the team in the right direction.

A key factor behind the current crisis is the poor domestic system that stems from non-independent associations shaped by frequent, self-serving amendments to the PCB constitution.

The ban on departmental cricket during

Ehsan Mani's tenure as PCB chairman dealt a severe blow to Pakistan cricket. Thousands of players, young and old, were left jobless when the system was dismantled under the directives of then-Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Unlike such countries as Australia and England, where social security systems provide for the unemployed, Pakistan lacks such economic support. This makes it crucial to maintain a system that offers both employment and competitive cricket opportunities. While departmental cricket has been partially restored with recent government changes, the damage done by its closure remains significant.

For Pakistan cricket to regain its former glory, the PCB must establish a reliable, independent, and democratic domestic structure. Countries like Australia, England, and India have independent cricket boards and associations that operate fairly, which is why their domestic competitions are near international standards.

In contrast, Pakistan's domestic tournaments like the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy and Patron's Trophy fall far behind due to political interference in the selection process. To rectify this, the PCB must conduct fair elections for cricket associations, ensuring that only genuine, functioning clubs participate.

Reforming the domestic system is vital for raising the standard of Pakistan cricket and nurturing a world-class team.



AUCKLAND: New Zealand's Elijah Just (right) celebrates his goal during their friendly match against Malaysia at North Harbour Stadium in the Auckland suburb here on Monday —AFP wirephoto

Leagues, unions file EU complaint against FIFA in calendar row

BRUSSELS: Major bodies representing footballers and football clubs in Europe on Monday filed a complaint to the European Commission accusing FIFA of abusing its position over changes to the international match calendar and tournament expansions.

Football's world governing body "holds conflicting roles as governing body and competition organiser, which give rise to a conflict of interest," FIFPro Europe, the European Leagues body and Spain's La Liga said in a statement.

The bodies presented their complaint at a press conference in Brussels, saying that FIFA's "imposition of decisions on the interna-

tional calendar is an abuse of dominance and violates EU law".

FIFPro is the global players' union while European Leagues brings together more than one thousand clubs from 33 countries around Europe.

Its member leagues include the English Premier League, as well as the leagues in Italy, Germany and France, but not La Liga, which joined the complaint separately.

Citing recent European court rulings related to the breakaway Super League and the Lassana Diarra case, the bodies said FIFA's rules and conduct "harm the economic interests of

national leagues, and the health and safety of players in European football".

"A legal challenge before the European Commission has become a necessary course of action to safeguard the European football sector," they added.

A recent FIFPro report accused a failure to consult over recent changes to the calendar, such as the introduction of a 32-team Club World Cup.

The first edition of the expanded Club World Cup will take place in the United States in June and July next year and 12 European clubs are due to feature.

Many of the continent's leading players will therefore be obliged to participate at a time when they would otherwise have been afforded a long close-season break, a year ahead of the expanded 48-team World Cup in North America.

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The first edition of the expanded Club World Cup will take place in the United States in June and July next year and 12 European clubs are due to feature.

Representatives of domestic leagues, meanwhile, have voiced concerns that their competi-



ANTWERP: Spain's Roberto Carballés Baena hits a return to Germany's Dominik Koepfer during their round of 32 match at the ATP European Open Tennis tournament here on Monday —AFP wirephoto

Rizwan's ton steers SNGPL to President's Cup final

By our correspondent

LAHORE: Sui Northern Gas Pipelines' (SNGPL) 20-year-old batter Rizwan Mehmood struck his maiden List-A century to help his team beat Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) by 74 runs in the first semifinal of the President's Cup One-Day tournament at the Jinnah Stadium Gujranwala on Sunday evening.

WAPDA were bundled out for 259 in 45.3 overs in pursuit of the 334-run target following fighting half-centuries for Khalid Usman and Mohammad Arif.

Earlier, defending champions SNGPL were put into bat and were reduced to 35-3 before Rizwan, batting at No. 5, took his team out of trouble with an unbeaten 116-ball 136 that included 14 fours and a six. He stitched 111-run fifth-wicket stand with Hasan Rizwan (55).

The 19-year-old debutant Saad Masood's quick-fire 44 not out off 27 balls with three fours and as many sixes provided impetus to the SNGPL innings as the unbroken 89-run seventh-wicket stand with Rizwan led them to 333-6.

Ali Raza picked up two wickets while Khalid Usman, Naqeebulah and Khushdil Shah dismissed one batter each.

WAPDA lost regular wickets in their reply and lost half their side for 88 runs in 21.1 overs. Opening batter Mohammad Arif was then dismissed for a 72-ball 61 with the help of nine fours to make it 122-6 in 26 overs.

Khalid Usman, batting at No. 8, rekindled WAPDA's hopes with his 73 off 67 balls that saw him hit six fours and four sixes. He was involved in a 57-run seventh-wicket stand with Ayaz Tasawar (30) and an eighth-wicket stand of 43 runs with Mohammad Zeeshan (30).

SNGPL wrapped up WAPDA's innings in the 46th over as Hasan Rizwan dismissed Khalid, backing up his half-century with two wickets.

Hasan Nawaz (2-20) and Bilal Bhatti (2-45) bagged two wickets apiece while Yasir Shah, Saad Masood and Kashif Ali picked up one wicket each.

Pakistan Television (PTV) will lock horns with State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in the second semi-final on Monday.

Forbes will suffer the most as top players will inevitably miss more domestic matches in order to rest, damaging their brands.

FIFA has previously hit back at criticism and accused leagues of acting with "commercial self-interest (and) hypocrisy".

Those leagues apparently prefer a calendar filled with friendlies and involving tournaments, often resulting in extensive global travel," the body said in July after it first emerged that legal action was planned.

Major bodies representing footballers and clubs in Europe on Monday filed a complaint to the European Commission accusing FIFA's rules and conduct "harm the economic interests of

Smith experiment as Test opener over, Green out of India series

SYDNEY: Steve Smith's short-lived stint as a Test opener came to an end Monday with confirmation he will drop down the Australian batting order against India next month, while all-rounder Cameron Green was ruled out of the series.

The 35-year-old veteran Smith moved up to open alongside Usman Khawaja after David Warner's retirement in January.

But after an encouraging start he struggled and will revert to the middle order, likely his preferred number four slot, in the five Tests against India starting in Perth on November 22.

"Pat (Cummins), Andrew McDonald and Steve Smith had been having ongoing con-

versations, separate to the untimely injury to Cameron," chief selector George Bailey said.

"Steve had expressed a desire to move back down from that opening position,

and Pat and Andrew have confirmed that he will be dropping back down the order for the summer."

Green had successfully shifted up to number four when Smith opened, but he will play no part in the series after opting to undergo surgery on his spine this week.

The 25-year-old, who has a history of stress fractures, complained of back pain during Australia's one-day tour of England in September and was immediately sent home.

"Whilst spine stress frac-

tures are not unusual in pace bowlers, Cam has a unique defect in an adjacent area to the fracture that is believed to be contributing to the injury," Cricket Australia said.

"After thorough consulta-

tion it was determined Cam

would benefit from the surgery to stabilise the defect and reduce the risk of future recurrence."

The governing body said his recovery time was anticipated to be around six months.

"The decision to proceed to surgery is with Cameron's long-term future as an all-rounder in mind," it added.

The surgery will also rule him out of February's Test tour of Sri Lanka and the ICC Champions Trophy tournament.

With Smith set to move

back to number four, Australia need to decide who will open with Khawaja.

Once again, Marcus Harris, Cameron Bancroft and Matt Renshaw are seen as in contention, as is teenage sensation Sam Kortstas.

The 19-year-old surged into the picture after twin centurions in the Sheffield Shield this month.

Harris, Bancroft and Kortstas were all included in an Australia A squad Monday for two red-ball games against India A next month.

"We have another three-and-a-half or four weeks until that Test squad is announced and who is in it and in what order," said Bailey. "How they line up will be determined."

—AFP

'I still plan to compete and play next season,' says Djokovic

SHANGHAI: Novak Djokovic insisted Sunday that he plans "to compete and play next season" despite suffering another loss at the hands of world number one Jannik Sinner.

The 37-year-old Serb, the holder of a men's record 24 Grand Slam titles, went down 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 to the Italian in the final of the Shanghai Masters.

It was Djokovic's third defeat in his last four clashes against the Australian Open and US Open champion.

However, Djokovic said he has no intention of following career-long rival Rafael Nadal into retirement

even though he endured by his own admission "one of the worst-performing seasons in terms of results".

"I don't know what the future brings, I'll just try to kind of go with the flow to see how I feel in a given moment but I still plan to compete and play next season," he told reporters.

Djokovic failed to add to his Grand Slam haul in 2024 as Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz, who claimed the French Open and Wimbledon titles, took possession of the sport's major honours.

However, Djokovic was crowned Olympic champion in Shanghai and was his seventh of the year. —AFP

roller-coaster of a final against Alcaraz in Paris in August. That was his 99th career title.

Sunday's loss left him frustratingly short of becoming just the third man after Jimmy Connors and Roger Federer to win 100 titles.

"It's not a live-or-die type of goal for me, I think I've achieved all of my biggest goals in my career," he said.

"Right now it's really about Slams and about still seeing how far I can kind of push the bar for myself."

Djokovic hailed Sinner who at 23 is 14 years his junior. His title in Shanghai was his seventh of the year. —AFP

Pakistan team in Indonesia for Asian Open Taekwondo

By our correspondent

LAHORE: A 16-member taekwondo squad of Pakistan has reached Indonesia to participate in the 6th Asian Open Kyorugi Taekwondo Championship in Tangerang, Indonesia.

The event will be played from October 15 to 18 at the Indore Stadium Sports Center. More than 275 athletes from other Asian countries including India, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal and the host Indonesia will be in action.

Among the male players of the Pakistan national squad are Haroon Khan (-58kg), Numan Khan (-63kg), Saud Alam (-63kg), Muhammad Arbaz Khan (-68 kg), Mazhar Abbas (-80kg), Ikhsham-ul-Haq (-87 kg) and Hamza Omar Saeed (+87kg) while the female members are Noor Rahman (-57kg), Maleeha Ali (-73kg) and Manisha Ali (+73kg).

Dan Bradbury wins French Open after birdie blitz

PARIS: Briton Dan Bradbury conjured up three straight birdies to claim a one-shot win in the French Open at Le Golf National on Sunday.

Bradbury emerged from a group of over a dozen players in contention for the title on a tense final day to shoot a bogey-free 66.

Playing in the penultimate group he then watched from the clubhouse as Thor

SPORTSNEWS



MULTAN: Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan (third right) attends a practice session with teammates here on Monday on the eve of their second Test against England at the Multan Cricket Stadium — AFP wirephoto

England captain Stokes back from injury for second Pakistan Test

MULTAN: Captain Ben Stokes was named in the England team for the second Test against Pakistan starting in Multan on Tuesday after recovering from a hamstring injury.

Stokes suffered the injury two months ago and missed the three-match home series against Sri Lanka and last week's first Test, which the visitors won by an innings.

Durham seamer Matthew Potts also returns to the side for the first time since the Lord's Test against Sri Lanka at the end of August. Seammers Gus Atkinson and Chris Woakes are rested.

"Look, it's obviously got to be sensible," said talismanic all-rounder Stokes on Monday after he was declared fit, having been bowling in the nets since before the first Test.

"I'm available to bowl and obviously when I sense the time is right for me to maybe come on and make an impact there won't be any doubts in my mind that I can come on and bowl."

Asked if he could have played as a batsman only, the 33-year-old skipper added: "Those were the sort of thoughts that went through my head at home before we came out."

"I'd written a few teams down with me not bowling, and it just didn't work."

England won the first Test, also in Multan, by an innings and 47 runs on Friday, with Ollie Pope leading the side in Stokes's absence.

The spin bowling will be

handled by left-arm Noman Ali, leg-break bowler Zahid Mahmood and off-spinner Sajid Khan.

Pakistan became the first team in Test cricket's 147-year history to lose by an innings after posting a 550-plus total in their first knock.

Under-pressure Pakistan,

who have gone 11 Tests without a win at home, named

three frontline spinners in their team as they chase a series-leveling win.

They have made four changes, including bringing in batsman Kamran Ghulam for his debut. The 20-year-old has performed well in domestic cricket, having set a national record of 1,249 runs in the 2020-21 season.

The spin bowling will be

NZ into semis after Pakistan all out for 56

DUBAI: New Zealand booked their place in the semi-finals of the Women's T20 World Cup with a comprehensive 54-run win over Pakistan in Dubai.

Pakistan needed to chase their target of 111 within 10.4 overs to keep themselves in knockout contention via net run-rate, but paid the price

for their aggressive intent by slumping to 56 all out in 11.4 overs. Despite collapsing to 28-5 after the six-over powerplay, the Pakistan batters kept attacking to keep their hopes alive rather than simply settle for a comfortable chase of less than a run-a-ball.

New Zealand's batters had earlier struggled against Pakistan's spin attack, who expertly stifled the run-rate in the middle overs but were let down in the field with eight catches put down.

Suzie Bates was dropped twice in her 28, the innings top score, and then crucially three were put down in the final over which allowed Maddy Green and Izzy Gaze to scamper nine extra runs.

But while their 110-6 fell below-par, New Zealand were rewarded for a disciplined all-round bowling effort with some assistance from Pakistan's chaotic but understandable approach.

Leg-spinner Melie Kerr started with 3-14 while fellow spinner Eden Carson took 2-7.

It is New Zealand's first semi-final in either white-ball format since 2016, and they

join six-time winners Australia from Group A with India eliminated.

They will face the winner of Group B which will be either South Africa, England or West Indies, with the latter two teams playing tomorrow. —Agencies

PCB chief visits Gaddafi Stadium to inspect upgradation work

By our correspondent

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman, Mohsin Naqvi, paid an early morning visit to Gaddafi Stadium on Monday to review the progress of the upgradation project, aimed at completing the necessary renovations before the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

During the visit, Naqvi expressed satisfaction with the ongoing work, as the basement construction is now finished, and work on the floors is well underway.

New Zealand's Ravindra excited for India Tests with father in crowd

BENGALURU: New Zealand batter Rachin Ravindra said Monday facing India in Bengaluru in the birth city of his father will be "special" moment with his family cheering in the stands.

The Black Caps begin the three Test match series on Wednesday, but the Wellington-born Ravindra — who called himself "a Kiwi all the way through" — said facing India will be an emotional moment.

"I am very proud of my Indian origin," the 24-year-old told reporters. "To be able to play where a lot of my family is based is something special."

Ravindra has played nine Tests since his debut in Kan-

pur in 2021 and has become a regular in the national team with his swashbuckling batting. The left-hander enjoyed a prolific ODI World Cup in India last year, and then made an impression in his debut Indian Premier League T20 tournament for Chennai Super Kings.

He called them both "two pretty cool experiences to have", but said playing a Test was "something different".

"Test cricket is the pinnacle," he said, and so it "makes it extra significant because of the family connection" to play in Bengaluru.

"Dad will be here watching," he said. "Those moments, you pinch yourself

on the journey".

Ravindra, who plays spin well on turning sub-continent pitches, amassed 578 runs including three centuries 10

World Cup matches in 2023.

In the IPL, he scored 222

runs for five-time winners Chennai, at a strike-rate of

over 160.

Having experienced cricket in India, he said he was eager for the challenge ahead.

"We know how passionate the Indian people are about cricket," he said, praising the "hype and the buzz" around the game — and that he was "excited to have a fully fledged three-match series" to play. —Agencies

Cummins back, Marsh and Head out of Pakistan ODI series

SYDNEY: Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head were Monday ruled out of Australia's home one-day series against Pakistan next month, but Pat Cummins returns as captain after missing their recent England tour.

Marsh and Head have both been granted paternity leave, opening the door for Jake Fraser-McGurk and Matt Short to open the batting together.

Cameron Green was also absent from the 14-man squad, with the all-rounder to undergo back surgery this week that will sideline him for six months.

Cummins missed the white-ball tour of England and Scotland to rest, but is back to captain the ODI team for the first time since winning the 2023 World Cup.

Invincibles 88-7 in 20 overs (Manahil Rafiq 19; Samiya Afasir 32, Fatima Khan 23 not out, Aqsa Habib 20; Syeda Batool Fatima 4-27).

Conquerors, Challengers victorious in Women's T20

By our correspondent

LAHORE: Samiya Afasir delivered an outstanding all-round performance to lead the Conquerors to a 31-run win over Invincibles in the opening match of the U-19 Women's T20 Tournament at the LCCA Ground here on Monday.

Scores in brief: Conquerors 119-7 in 20 overs (Samiya Afasir 32, Fatima Khan 23 not out, Aqsa Habib 20; Syeda Batool Fatima 4-27).

Invincibles 88-7 in 20 overs (Manahil Rafiq 19; Samiya Afasir 2-9. Player of the match — Samiya Afasir (Conquerors).

In the day's second encounter Challengers edged past Strikers by one wicket in a nail-biting finish.

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Challengers 61-9 in 16.4 overs (Malaiqa Suhani 11, Sana Talib 10 not out; Rozina Akram 3-16, Amina Abid 2-10). Player of the match — Aleesa Mukhtiar (Challengers).

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Tuesday

October 15, 2024

BUSINESS NEWS

French President Emmanuel Macron shakes hands with CEO of Ligier group Francois Ligier, as he visits the Paris Motor Show at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles in Paris, France

October 14, 2024. Chinese and European automakers went head-to-head at the Paris car show on Monday, with tensions running high as the EU gears up to impose hefty import tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles and the industry struggles with weak demand. This year's event – the largest car show in Europe – comes at a pivotal time. Struggling European automakers need to prove they are still in the game, while Chinese rivals are aiming to get a foothold in a competitive market. There was some common ground, though, with executives from both regions warning about the dangers of EU tariffs. —Reuters



Oil sector rejects Ogra's proposed margin revisions, calls for higher adjustments

By Tanveer Malik

KARACHI: The oil sector has rejected the proposed revised margins by the Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) for oil marketing companies (OMCs) and petroleum dealers.

The representative bodies of petroleum dealers and OMCs, namely the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) and the Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC), have opposed the proposed margins on petroleum products.

"We do not accept the proposed margin calculation without consultation," the PPDA said in a letter to Ogra's chairman. They argued that their demands and expectations were significantly higher than the calculations made by Ogra a few days ago.

The association urged

Ogra to consider reasonable margins that account for the cost of doing business, including electricity, salaries, utilities and the high costs of construction and maintenance, which need to be recovered over time from the margins.

They pointed out that digitization and automation were not part of their demands and expressed confusion over how these costs were included without discussion. The PPDA added that the margin revision has already been delayed despite prior communications.

The association demanded an immediate revision of the margin to 7.0 per cent of the fuel price, which equates to Rs17 per litre at current rates, to ensure the viability of their businesses. "If the margin is insufficient to operate, it could drive dealers toward unethical

business practices, which we do not support," the association stated.

In rejecting the proposed margin, the PPDA insisted that dealers require a net margin of Rs17 per litre, excluding the costs of digitization. "If digitalization costs are included in this margin, we will not accept it," they warned.

Recently, Ogra recommended an increase in margins for OMCs and petroleum dealers, proposing to the Petroleum Division that the margin on high-speed diesel (HSD) and petrol be raised to Rs9.88 per litre from the current Rs7.87 per litre, representing an increase of Rs1.35 per litre for OMCs. For petroleum dealers, Ogra suggested a Rs1.4 per litre increase, raising the margin to Rs10.01 per litre from the existing Rs8.64 per litre.

Ogra said that the proposed margin adjustment includes an additional Rs0.5 per litre for OMCs and Rs0.25 per litre for dealers. This increase is intended to cover costs associated with the digitization and automation of fuel pumps over the next three years, based on data provided by Pakistan State Oil (PSO).

The OCAC also opposed the proposed margin for OMCs, stating that it would not adequately address the cost of business.

"Ogra has proposed an increase of only Rs1.35 per litre in OMC margins. This increase supposedly includes Rs0.5 per litre for facilitating the digitalization and automation of fuel pumps over the next three years, based on data provided by Pakistan State Oil (PSO). The OCAC also opposed the proposed margin for OMCs, stating that it would not adequately address the cost of business.

"The increase of Rs0.85 per litre translates to an 11 per cent increase, which does not even cover the impact of inflation," the oil body stated.

It emphasized that the industry is severely constrained by factors such as smuggling, high financing costs, sales tax exemptions, high turnover tax, insufficient margins, and several other unresolved issues that have been repeatedly communicated to the relevant authorities.

Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson win 2024 Nobel economics prize

STOCKHOLM: Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James Robinson won the 2024 Nobel economics prize

"for studies of how institutions are formed and affect prosperity", the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said on Monday.

The prestigious award, formally known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, is the final prize to be given out this year and is worth 11 million Swedish crowns (\$1.1 million).

"Reducing the vast differences in income between countries is one of our time's greatest challenges.

The laureates have demonstrated the importance of societal institutions for achieving this," said Jakob Svensson, Chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences.

The economics award is not one of the original prizes for science, literature and peace created in the will of dynamite inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel and first awarded in 1901, but a later addition established and funded by Sweden's central bank in 1968.

Past winners include a host of influential thinkers such as Milton Friedman, John Nash – played by actor Russell Crowe in the 2001 film 'A Beautiful Mind' – and, more recently, former US Federal Reserve Chair

man Ben Bernanke.

Last year, Harvard economic historian Claudia Goldin won the prize for her work highlighting the causes of wage and labour market inequality between men and women.

The economics prize has been dominated by US academics since its inception, while US-based researchers also tend to account for a large portion of winners in the scientific fields for which 2024 laureates were announced last week. —News Desk

PPL expands oil and gas production with Adhi South-9 well

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), a key player in the oil and gas exploration sector, has announced the commencement of hydrocarbon production from its newly developed well, Adhi South-9, located in Punjab's Pothwar region.

This significant development was reported in a notice submitted to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday.

The notice detailed the company's ongoing efforts to enhance its production capacity in a region that has been pivotal for its operations. PPL said, "We are pleased to disclose that as part of our continuous efforts towards increasing production of oil and gas, production has commenced from Adhi South-9, a new development well drilled in the Adhi Mining Lease, which is operated by the company with a 39 per cent working interest. Our joint venture partners, Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) and Pakistan Oilfields Limited (POL), hold 50 per cent and 11 per cent working interests, respectively."

The Adhi South-9 well was successfully drilled to a depth of 3,430 metres and has been completed as a producer based on encouraging log results. Following the successful tie-in of the well with the processing plant, PPL reported that production has commenced at an impressive rate of 530 barrels per day (bpd) of oil and 0.6 million standard cubic feet per day (MMScfd) of gas.

Located approximately 70 kilometres south of Islamabad, the Adhi field has a long history of exploration, beginning in 1956. Over the course of a decade, four wells were drilled in the area, and crude oil production commenced in the early 1980s from the Sakesar reservoir. The Adhi field has since become a significant contributor to Pakistan's energy supply, with major clients including Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) for gas, Attock Refinery Limited for LNG and crude oil, and various LPG marketing companies.

In recent months, PPL has shown a proactive approach to increasing its hydrocarbon output. Earlier in July, the company announced the commencement of hydrocarbon production from the Adhi South-8 well. Last year, PPL began production from the Adhi South-6 well. This series of developments highlights PPL's commitment to meeting the growing energy demands of Pakistan while maximizing its operational efficiency. Industry analysts suggest that the successful production from Adhi South-9 could bolster PPL's position in the market, allowing the company to contribute more significantly to the country's energy needs amid ongoing challenges in the sector.

FPCCI, GREF host round-table conference on SCO and Pak's economic interests

By our correspondent

President of the FPCCI Atif Ikrak Sheikh highlighted the importance of collective commitment to enhancing Pakistan's role within the SCO. He talked about the significance of the SCO, which includes major countries like China, India and Russia, representing a substantial share of the global population and natural resources.

These member states collectively embody a vast market and play pivotal roles in regional trade, energy supply and geopolitical stability," Sheikh remarked. The conference underscored the importance of regional integration through enhanced trade, investment, and cultural exchange, especially given the strategic positioning of Pakistan amidst neighbouring SCO countries.

Regional Chairman and Vice President of the FPCCI Zaki Ajiaz stressed the need for constructive dialogue to leverage the opportunities

Continued on page II

SBP opens account for Prime Minister Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan has opened an account to receive donations for the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon, a circular said on Monday.

The government has established the relief fund to extend maximum humanitarian support to the people of Gaza and Lebanon. The fund will accept donations from both domestic and international sources. It will be administered by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) while the Accountant General Pakistan Revenue will maintain the fund's accounts.

"All the commercial and microfinance banks shall receive donations in cash,

through cheques, pay orders,

demand drafts and banker's

cheques, etc., at all their

branches across the country

for onward credit to the

above mentioned account," it added.

The donors may make their donations to the fund by dropping crossed cheques in the name of the fund in their respective bank's drop box. The central added that "all banks shall make available a drop-box facility at their selected branches for donors where they may drop their crossed cheques in favour of the fund". The banks will debit the customer's account and transfer the donation through Raast.

Banks will mandatorily provide the option for collecting donations through Raast ID via their internet banking, mobile banking and mobile wallet apps, and mobile wallet apps.

Siemens Pakistan sells energy portfolio to Siemens Gamesa for Rs17.82bn

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The board of directors of Siemens (Pakistan) Engineering Co Ltd (SIEM) has approved the sale of the company's energy portfolio to Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy (Pvt) Limited for approximately Rs17.82 billion as of March 31, 2024.

Siemens Pakistan, primarily engaged in the execution of projects and the manufacturing, installation, and sale of electronic and electrical capital goods, reported that the net book value of its energy business as of the valuation date was approximately Rs17.61 billion (about \$63.5 million).

In a notice issued to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday, the listed engineering conglomerate announced the decision made during its board meeting on October 11, 2024.

The notice stated, "The board has approved with a majority the sale and transfer of the company's energy business segment on a going concern basis to a going concern basis to a non-affiliated Siemens En-

ergy Group entity, Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy (Private) Limited (the buyer), for an aggregate consideration of approximately Rs17.82 billion as of the valuation date, March 31, 2024."

Siemens Pakistan, primarily engaged in the execution of projects and the manufacturing, installation, and sale of electronic and electrical capital goods, reported that the net book value of its energy business as of the valuation date was approximately Rs17.61 billion (about \$63.5 million).

The company clarified that the final cash received from the buyer and any potential gain or loss from the transaction would depend on the net book value as of the effective date (transac-

tion closure date) and other contractual events, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the forthcoming agreement with the buyer.

The transaction's closure is contingent upon receiving necessary approvals from shareholders and other regulatory bodies.

Established in 1953 as a public limited company, Siemens Pakistan operates across several business segments, including power and gas, power generation services, energy management, digital factory, process industries and drives, and mobility. The sale marks a significant move for the company as it continues to streamline its operations in the evolving energy market.

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tion closure date) and other contractual events, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the forthcoming agreement with the buyer.

Ageing Uruguay's vote to drop pension age is rattling investors

MONTEVIDEO: Uruguay heads to the polls to vote for a new president this month, but investors have a wary eye on another ballot: a referendum to lower the retirement age in the fast-aging nation that some fear may cripple the country's finances.

The small but relatively affluent South American country of 3.4 million people has long been seen as a bastion of free markets and private enterprise in the region, which has attracted tech and finance firms, and fast development along its Rivera coastline.

But if approved, the reform would uproot a private pension system in place since 1996 and drop the retirement age by five years to 60, landing the government and the taxpayer with a large bill.

The move echoes popular anger with smaller pension pots elsewhere but would mark a rare instance of a country lowering its retirement age, with nations including France, Britain, Japan and China all recently going in the other direction.

The reform has been promoted by left-wing unions, who argue that it would preserve workers' dignity in retirement by al-

lowing them more money for a longer period. Despite the opposition of most political parties, the unions secured enough support on a petition in April to force the referendum, which is binding.

Opinion polls show around half of Uruguayans in favor of the reform, and about 40 per cent against, although that number has been rising. The Oct 27 vote needs a simple majority to pass.

The reform would "make any current economic or social security policy untenable," said Uruguayan economist Maria Dolores Benavente, adding it would mean the country going back to the "unsustainable system" that had been changed in the 1990s.

The rising possibility of a pension reform has led the Uruguayan peso to weaken over 10 per cent against the dollar since April.

"If approved, (it) would compromise medium-term fiscal sustainability," JP Morgan wrote in a recent note, adding that the retirement age drop would widen a pension deficit, while raising lower-end pensions would cost an extra \$1 billion per year.

URUGUAY'S 'BREXIT MOMENT'

The reform proposes scrapping private pension schemes and shifting to a public model, which analysts say would put a bigger debt burden on the state, create legal complexities around transferring pension funds, and put Uruguay's investment-grade credit rating at risk.

Uruguay has one of the region's oldest populations, with a median age around 36 years old, compared to 32 around South America. That creates a potential time-bomb for the economy down the road as a large wave of people retire.

Conservative President Luis Lacalle Pou has called the reform "dangerous and harmful", and says it would put public finances on an unsustainable path, "crushing" confidence. His coalition faces a battle to stay in power against a center-left coalition.

Many voters in capital Montevideo, however, said the 'yes' campaign was winning them over, with the hope it would bring them more money.

"We have meager pensions in Uruguay. Retirees in this country are poor," said 68-year-old educator Jose Luis Correa,

adding that he had to keep working out of necessity to cover his costs.

"That's why I support the end to private pension funds," he added. "If they can cut out private pension fund managers, there'll be more for us and future retirees."

Another Montevideo resident in his mid-50s, who asked not to be named but said he was planning to vote against the reform, said he was worried about his private savings and thought the "no" camp was not doing enough to convince people.

Nicolas Saldias, Uruguayan analyst at the Economist Intelligence Unit, said the political classes were largely optimistic the referendum would fail, but may be misreading the mood among voters and could get a shock.

"This could be Uruguay's Brexit moment," said Saldias, referring to the 2016 referendum in the United Kingdom to pull out of the European Union, when the government underestimated the level of public support for leaving.

"The population may vote in favor of it, despite what the establishment is saying." —News Desk

BRIEFS

Gold prices up Rs200 per tola

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Gold prices increased by Rs200 per tola on Monday in the local market following an increase in the international market.

The All Sindhi Saraf Jewellers Association said that gold rates reached Rs275,700 per tola.

Similarly, the price of 10-gram gold rose by Rs171 to Rs236,368.

Gold rates increased by \$3 to \$2,659 per ounce in the international market.

Silver rates remained unchanged at Rs3,050 per tola. Similarly, 10-gram silver rates also stood the same at Rs2,614.88.

Prices in the local market are adjusted by a premium of \$20 against rates in the international market.

Engro Fertilizers' third-quarter profit down 12pc

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Engro Fertilizers on Monday reported a 12 per cent decrease in its third-quarter profit, due to a decrease in sales.

In a consolidated condensed statement to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), the company reported a net profit of Rs8.554 billion for the quarter that ended September 30, down 12 per cent from Rs9.58 billion during the same period the previous year.

The company also announced an interim cash dividend of Rs2.5 per share.

Earnings per share came in at Rs6.41 a share, compared with Rs7.17 a share last year.

The company said its net sales for the quarter dropped to Rs58.64 billion, compared with Rs66.164 billion for the same period a year earlier.

The company said its cost of sales remained at Rs40.33 billion during the period against Rs45.175 billion.

For the nine-month period, the company posted a net profit of Rs17.98 billion, up from Rs15.04 billion.

EPS for this period was recorded at Rs13.47 against Rs11.27.

According to analysts, the company posted earnings below market expectations.

Shanghai stocks gain after stimulus briefing as markets rally

HONG KONG: Shanghai stocks rose on Monday as traders digested a pledge by China's finance minister to provide more help for the country's struggling economy, while most other markets tracked another record day on Wall Street.

While a much-anticipated briefing on Saturday failed to deliver a hoped-for overall figure on stimulus, Lan Fan did set out plans to boost the beleaguered property sector, ramp up borrowing and work to get banks lending more.

Lan said the government would issue special bonds and that it had \$325 billion in funds raised that it could deploy in the next three months to achieve its goals.

The announcement came at the end of a volatile week for traders, who were left disappointed by a news conference on Tuesday that lacked any new support and barely any detail on a raft of measures unveiled in late September.

The news out of Beijing came a day before data showed Chinese inflation

slowed more than expected in September, highlighting the uphill task leaders have in getting the world's number two economy back on track.

Authorities have come under increasing pressure this year to deploy a 'bazooka' stimulus as a crisis in the real estate sector shows no signs of easing and consumption remains torpid.

Traders elsewhere in Asia also welcomed another record for the Dow and S&P 500 in New York, cheered by healthy earnings from banking titan JPMorgan Chase, which said the US economy would likely avoid tipping into recession.

Significant measures for resolving local government debt and supporting the struggling property sector were mentioned, analysts at HSBC Global Research said in a note.

These are much needed for sustainable growth. We expect more details and the crucial fiscal number to be unveiled later this month at the State Council and/or the NPC Standing Committee meeting. —News Desk

FPCCI, GREF host...

Continued from page I

presented by the SCO. He pointed out the significance of trade routes and economic collaboration, particularly in light of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

As the global economic landscape shifts, the conference attendees agreed that regional cooperation is essential. The discussions revealed vast opportunities for trade, energy partnerships and infrastructure development. In contrast, Pakistan's inconsistent policies have resulted in weaker economic performance, leaving it among the nations with low growth rates.

Consistent economic policies and political stability have been key drivers of growth in India, China and Bangladesh, placing them among global leaders in economic development. In contrast, Pakistan's inconsistent policies have resulted in weaker economic performance, leaving it among the nations with low growth rates.

China, governed by a one-party system under the Communist Party, has had stable leadership over the past 50 years. Notable leaders include Mao Zedong (1949-1976), Deng Xiaoping (1976-1981), Deng Xi-

oping (de facto leader, 1981-1989), Jiang Zemin (1989-2002), Hu Jintao (2002-2012), and Xi Jinping (2012-present).

In contrast, Pakistan has seen greater political instability. In the last 50 years, it has had 18 prime ministers. These include Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1973-1977), Muhammad Khan Junejo (1985-1988), Benazir Bhutto (1988-1990 and 1993-1996), Nawaz Sharif (1990-1993, 1997-1999, and 2013-2017), Zafarullah Khan Jamali (2002-2004), Shaukat Aziz (2004-2007), Yousaf Raza Gillani (2008-2012), Raja Pervez Ashraf (2012-2013), Imran Khan (2018-2022), Shehbaz Sharif (2022-2023) Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar (2024-as caretaker), Shehbaz Sharif (2024-present). Pakistan's history of coup and the frequent dismissal of elected governments have been significant contributors to its political instability.

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For Europe's economy, US election risks outweigh upside

For Europe's economy, the Nov 5 US election offers a 'least bad' outcome as challenging Kamala Harris presidency or a second encounter with Donald Trump which threatens to be yet more bruising than the first.

On two key areas – trade policy and the sharing of rising security costs among Nato allies – Europe expects few favours from a Harris presidency which it sees as "Biden continuity".

Trump 2.0, on the other hand, presents multiple dangers: if he were to pull US support for Ukraine, European governments would need to ramp up defence spending fast; and if he triggered a global trade war, Europe fears it would be the big loser.

Anti-China measures are a rare area of bipartisan agreement in the US election campaign. For Europe's export-driven economy, that raises the question as to

whether it can continue to juggle trade ties with both the United States and China.

"Whoever the winner of the US election is, it is unclear whether Europe can continue to benefit from US growth without reducing trade with China itself," said Zach Meyers of the Centre for European Reform (CER) think tank.

"Both US candidates have the same direction of travel – Trump less predictable and perhaps willing to be more confrontational with the European Union."

For ASML, a Dutch supplier of hi-tech microchip manufacturing equipment, the risk of collateral damage from US efforts to "contain" China is all too real – it already faces export bans on half its products to China after a US-led campaign.

"There's a strong will in the US to see more restrictions – I think it's very clear and it's something

that's bipartisan," ASML CEO Christophe Fouquet told a conference last month. "And so I think whatever happens in November, this will stay."

Half of Europe's output comes from trade, double the rate in the United States, while the region's 30 million manufacturing jobs – compared to only 13 million in the United States – mean it is highly vulnerable to anything that restricts commerce.

MORE TARIFFS?

Support for free trade in Washington has evaporated in the past decade. Joe Biden chose not to scrap outright tariffs levied in Trump's first presidency and has added his own focus on US jobs with the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) subsidies.

While Biden is seen pursuing a path similar to Biden, Trump has threatened to go further with

across-the-board tariffs of 10-20 per cent on all imports – including those of Europe, with whom America still has annual trade worth over one trillion euros.

Spanish olive producers have seen their exports to United States, once their main foreign market, slump by 70 per cent after Trump in 2018 imposed tariffs which remain in place despite World Trade Organization (WTO) rulings against them.

"If Trump wins, this could get worse and we think it will be difficult to resolve this without pressure from Europe," Antonio de Mora, head of ASEMSA, the body which represents Spain's olive exporters, told Reuters.

For those European companies with US presences, the added uncertainty is whether Trump will follow through on promises to scrap Biden's IRA green energy subsidies.

"In our view, a Trump presidency increases the risk that

German machinery firm Trumpf, which employs 2,000 US staff and supplies equipment for electric vehicle batteries and solar, told Reuters it was not expanding

those activities in the United States due to uncertainty about the election outcome.

GROWTH DAMPENER

The US election could also have major implications for the defence budgets of European governments struggling with debt levels inflated by post-pandemic recovery spending.

Again, the question is more one of timing than destination: Biden is expected to pursue US pressure on Europe to pick up more of the tab for regional security while the lack of clarity around Trump's commitment to Ukraine hugely ups the ante.

"In our view, a Trump presidency increases the risk that

the resulting geopolitical risk, they noted.

The European Commission has a closed-door team of officials to study how the EU will be affected by the election outcome.

But any policy conclusions they draw will need to secure an EU consensus – which, as shown by the bloc's divisions over how to deal with Chinese electric vehicle imports, can be elusive.

Pro-European optimists suggest the US election – especially in the event of a Trump victory – could have a salutary shock effect of finally spurring the region to adopt the type of deep reforms proposed by former ECB chief Mario Draghi last month.

"The prospect of more tense transatlantic relations should encourage the EU to address the reasons why its economic size has been shrinking relative to the US economy," noted CER. —Reuters