



# Islamabad POST

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**Abbas calls for immediate end to Israeli terrorism**

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**Borrell says trust between EU, China 'eroded'**

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**Alastair retires from professional cricket**

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## No talks with TTP

# State powerful enough to fight them: PM Kakar

Asked about the fate of Nawaz on his return, the PM said the government would act as per the law

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday ruling out any talks with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), said that state of Pakistan was powerful enough to fight them even for next 100 years. "Don't you see that their people are being killed on daily basis. Our people are also being martyred. So what kind of talks or impediments (you are talking about)? They are killing my children and I am killing them... The state of Pakistan is so powerful to fight TTP, not just one year rather 100 years," the prime minister told the media during his visit to Peshawar. Caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan and Governor Haji Ghulam Ali accompanied the prime minister. Asked what were the impediments in talks with TTP, the prime minister said the biggest obstacle was that no one was

PICTURE ON PAGE 02

willing to talk to them. "We don't want to talk to them. Who told you that we have any intention to talk with TTP," he remarked. Prime Minister Kakar, who earlier offered Fateha and laid wreath at the grave of former FC Commandant Shaheed Sifat Ghayur said, "If you want me to announce the same in North Waziristan or South Waziristan, take me there. Keep in mind, I may die but not Pakistan." Rubbishing the notions of any registered Afghan refugees being expelled from Pakistan, the prime minister said only the foreigners living illegally in Pakistan were being ousted. He said through such measures, Pakistan did not want to undermine its relationship with Afghanistan rather desired to have the ties based on international standards in which the movement of the people would be subject to the visas. He said as the illegal residents had no registration in Pakistan's

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## No compromise after expiry of deadline

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti Friday warned illegal immigrants in Pakistan to leave the country by the November 1 deportation deadline or the state would show "no compromise" in taking action against them. The interim government had earlier this month ordered all illegal immigrants, including 1.73 million Afghan nationals, to leave the country or face expulsion after revealing that 14 of 24 suicide bombings in the country this year were carried out by Afghan nationals. "In the meetings about the expulsion of Afghan refugees, all stakeholders were present. In that meeting, it was decided that a grace period should be given them," the minister said in a statement, claiming that some people also told authorities that some immigrants wished to return voluntarily. The interim security czar reiterated that the policy to expel illegal immigrants was not restricted to Afghan nationals, but all those who do not have the required documentation for residing in Pakistan. "People, no matter which

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ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi conferring the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

## President confers Nishan-e-Imtiaz (M) upon CNS

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday conferred the insignia of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The president decorated the Naval Chief with the Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) award in recognition of his meritorious services at a special ceremony held here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, and Services Chiefs attended the ceremony.

## Solangi: Polls date after delimitation

DNA

LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Friday that the final election date would be announced after completion of the constituencies' delimitation process. He expressed these views while speaking on Radio Pakistan's news and current affairs program "Lahore Insight" on Friday. He anticipated that elections would be held by the end of January 2024, in accordance with the Election Act of 2017, providing a minimum of 54 days for campaigning. Minister Solangi expressed his commitment to revive Radio Pakistan and emphasised the importance of adapting it to modern demands. He clarified that major policy decisions rest with the elected governments, and Radio Pakistan's transition to digital broadcasting would help conserve electricity.

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## Fear of ground offensive

# Israel warns Gaza City to be vacated

Palestinian PM Mohammed Shtayyeh has accused Israel of committing "genocide"

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: More than one million residents of Gaza City Friday were warned by the Israeli military to evacuate and move to the south in the next 24 hours, as it deployed its tanks near the Gaza Strip amid fears of a major ground offensive. As the Israeli warplanes continued attacking Gaza, its Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said: "Now is a time for war." The military has warned about "significantly" operating in Gaza City in the coming days, insisting that the residents will only be able to return when a relevant announcement is made. Earlier, the United Nations had told Reuters about the Israeli military's warning, which, as feared by Palestinians, could result in Israel's planned ground offensive. No comments were immediately issued by the Israeli military regarding the warning. However, it had amassed tanks near the Gaza border and struck the Palestinian enclave with air strikes in the wake of

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistanis hold solidarity rallies

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Hundreds of Pakistanis took to the streets in several parts of the country today to protest Israel's siege and fierce bombing on the Gaza Strip, demanding an end to the oppression of the Palestinian people. Gaza is being bombed by the Israeli military after the Hamas group launched a surprise offensive on Saturday. Israel has put Gaza — home to 2.3 million people — under siege while local authorities said more than 1,500 Palestinians had been killed. It has vowed to annihilate Hamas but a ground invasion of Gaza poses serious risk with Hamas holding scores of hostages kidnapped in the assault.

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## Briefs

### 'This would be my last video'

says Scottish leader's mother-in-law from Gaza

WEB DESK



LONDON: Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf on Friday shared a poignant video from his mother-in-law, Elizabeth El-Nakla, who was visiting Gaza along with her husband when the conflict began between Hamas and Israel. "This would be my last video. Everybody in Gaza is moving towards where we are. One million people, no food, no water and still (the Israeli forces are) bombing them as they leave," El-Nakla said while crying. "Where are we going to put them? But my thought is, all these people in the hospital cannot be evacuated. "Where's humanity, where's people's hearts in the world to let this happen in this date and age. May god help us, goodbye," said Elizabeth El-Nakla in the video message. In a dramatic escalation of Middle East tensions.

## 'Understanding' behind Nawaz's return: Raja

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf also wondered why Nawaz did not return to country earlier

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has stated that there may be an "understanding" in place for the return of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. The statement comes a day after interim Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar dismissed the impression that Nawaz's decision to return to Pakistan was a part of any deal with the caretaker government. In an interview PM Kakar had said: "The caretaker government has no soft corner for PML-N or any other political party... how can a caretaker government strike such a deal?" He pointed out that Nawaz left the country as per the court's decision "under the nose of Imran Khan's government, and not the caretaker setup". However, if Nawaz returns and takes part in politics, he will have to face some legal obstacles, the premier said. "The answers to these legal questions lie in legal remedies," Nawaz, who has been in self-imposed exile since 2019, left for London in the middle of his seven-year jail term on medical grounds. In the four years that transpired, Nawaz was declared a proclaimed offender in the Al Azizia and Avenfield graft cases for his continuous absence from proceedings. Last month, PML-N President Shehbaz

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## Will not leave PTI, says Elahi

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Parvez Elahi, while responding to a question regarding his political future, reaffirmed to stand by the party despite facing prison time. The PTI president was presented in a local court following the completion of his judicial remand in the case, the hearing for which has now been adjourned till October 24. "I will not leave, that is why I am serving prison," Elahi said while responding to a journalist's question about whether the senior politician would leave or stay with the party. The veteran politician's response came during his appearance at the Federal Judicial Complex in Islamabad, where he was produced before duty judge Shahrukh Arjumand, who heard the PTI leader's case in the absence of anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge Abul Hasnat Zulgarnain. When the judge asked about

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## Professional tax levied by CB unconstitutional: SC

CJP had noted that only the federal and provincial governments could impose taxes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) declared on Friday professional tax levied by Cantonment Board Karachi unconstitutional, disposing off the board's plea challenging the Sindh High Court's order. A three-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa was hearing the Cantonment Board's plea. During the hearing, the CJP observed that taxes levied by the Cantonment Board are both unconstitutional and in contradiction with transparency. The land given to the cantonment board was given to the military for a specific purpose, why are shopping malls being built there, asked the CJP, observing that it was not meant for commercial purposes. Institutions are being brought to their constitutional purpose, he remarked, disposing

off the plea challenging the receipt of taxes from restaurants, banks and poultry farms by the board. At the previous hearing, the CJP had noted that only the federal and provincial governments could impose taxes. He had questioned how a cantonment board could impose tax on professionals. The additional attorney general of Pakistan had replied that the local government was also an elected body and authorized to impose taxes. At which the CJP had inquired whether if a tax was imposed on lawyers would it be collected by a local body. Meanwhile, Justice Athar Minallah had pointed out that the objection was that the local government could not impose tax under Article 163 of the Constitution. The CJP had remarked that the court could not ignore the Constitution, and asked how the authority to collect taxes could be given to someone else.

**REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS**

18 DAYS REMAINING

**Holiday Notice**

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.

- Editor

**OCTOBER 2023**

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ISSI Webinar: Palestine's latest developments

Adil Shaheen

ISLAMABAD : The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Middle East Monitor (MEMO), hosted a webinar titled, "Palestine - Latest Developments and Impact on the Region."

are children, women, and the elderly, is unconscionable. They face relentless bombing, with vital supplies such as water, fuel, and electricity cut-off, medical facilities targeted, and UN personnel losing lives in the line of duty.

imperative now is immediate de-escalation, ensuring humanitarian access, implementing a ceasefire, and reviving the peace process. Director CAMEA Amina Khan stated that the recent events in the Gaza Strip have brought a new level of brutality by the Israeli occupation forces.

DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood said that the Israel-Palestine dispute cannot be reduced to security concerns or counterterrorism rhetoric; at its core lies the Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in international law, the UN Charter, and relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.



underscored how Pakistan has called for an urgent global intervention to halt further escalation and loss of life. The two-state solution remains the path towards peace, which is a matter of international concern.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar laying floral wreath at the grave of former President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. — DNA

SMBR reviews tax collection, facilities

LAHORE : Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Nabil Javed, during a meeting held here on Friday, reviewed the tax collection and provision of public facilities in the Board of Revenue. Member Tax briefed the meeting about the progress in Tax Collection Ahiyana.

President urges awareness for children with cleft

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday emphasizing the need to raise awareness about children born with cleft lips and palates, said that treatment for cleft lips and palates could significantly improve the quality of life for children.

Protests against privatisation of schools continue

LAHORE: Punjab police have intensified crackdown on teachers and government employees amid swelling protests across Punjab against amendments in leave encasement and pension rules, besides privatisation policy of public schools, arresting more than 100 public servants including teachers.

CCPO warns against harassment of woman at police stations

LAHORE :Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamayana has directed the police station in-charges to use their powers legally. He directed them to respect women who come to any police station for registration of any complaints.

Lahore Police arrest drug dealer

LAHORE:The Lahore Police and the Punjab Safe Cities Authority arrested a drug-dealer on Friday. A coordinated effort led to the arrest of the suspect, Qasim in the Rang Mehal area, and 1,480-kg hashish was recovered from him.

Information minister visits Radio Pakistan Lahore building

LAHORE : Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi brought a touch of nostalgia and innovation to Radio Pakistan Lahore during his visit on Friday. Welcomed by the station director, Javed Akhtar, and esteemed TV actor Khalid Abbas Dar, Minister Solangi was presented with a bouquet, symbolising the harmony between traditional and modern broadcasting.

Islamabad admin to crackdown on school transport fitness

ISLAMABAD : The Islamabad administration has decided to crackdown on the fitness of school transport, issuing instructions to all private and government schools and colleges to get their vehicles registered and inspected within a month.

PUC observes 'Palestine solidarity day' across nation

ISLAMABAD : On the call of Pakistan Ulema Council, Palestine Solidarity Day was observed here on Friday across the country and in Friday congregations in Masjid all over the Pakistan, solidarity was expressed with the oppressed Palestinians and special prayers were made for the people of Palestine.

abjad, Maulana Muhammad Shafi Qasmi, Maulana Hanif Usmani (Sahiwal), Maulana Muhammad Asghar Khosa (Dera Ghazi Khan), Maulana Nauman Hasher, Maulana Tahir Aqeel Awan (Rawalpindi), Maulana Abu Bakr Sabri, (Islamabad), Maulana Anwar-ul-Haq Mujahid, Maulana Abdul Malik Asif (Multan), Maulana Aslam Siddiqui, Maulana Abdul Hakeem Athar, Qari Muhammad Aslam Qadri (Lahore), Maulana Muhammad Khurshid Nomani (Bahawalnagar), Maulana Abdullah Haqqani, Maulana Abdullah Rashidi (Qasor), Maulana Asim Shad, Maulana Abdul Waheed Farooqui (Narawal), Maulana Abu Bakr Hamza (Chakwal), Maulana Habibur Rahman Abid, Maulana Aminul Haq Ashrafi, Maulana Izzatullah Haque Khalid, Sahibzada Hamza Tahir-ul-Hasan (Faisalabad), Maulana Saadullah Ludhianvi (Toba Tek Singh), Maulana Anis-ur-Rehman Baloch (Gujra), Maulana Abdul Rasheed (Hafizabad), Mufti Muhammad Umar

Muslim world have to play their role immediately on the Gaza situation. Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi said that those who used to talk about human rights are silent on the massacre of oppressed Palestinians. He said that the people of Palestine for the last many decades have been facing the barbaric atrocities of the Israeli forces. Israel has usurped the First Qibla of the Muslims and the territories of Palestine. The United Nations, international Forces and leading human rights organizations have turned a blind eye on the blood shed as a result of Zionist terrorism in Palestine. Allah crushed the pride of Israel through the Palestinian freedom fighters, and since then Israel has been burning in retaliation and has launched the worst aggression of this century in Gaza. Israel cares neither about the laws of war nor about the worst situation of the human rights. Israeli bombardment has not spared the civilian popula-

tion, innocent citizens, hospitals, schools, ambulances, aid workers, all are under the fire of its terror. It is also very sorrowful that America, India, Britain and other Western countries stand with the Israel in its worst atrocities and Human rights organizations are silent over Israeli cruelties. Amidst the pre-vailling bombardment in Gaza, there is fear of a major human tragedy in Gaza, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi. The United Nations must take immediate action on the situation and stop Israel from massacre of the Palestinians. Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi said that today the Muslims of the whole world are with the Palestinian brothers. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi praised the efforts and position of the leaderships of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Egypt and Jordan stating that Saudi Arabia as the head of the OIC should play its leadership role for the issue of Palestine and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD : The Ambassador of France HE Nicolas Galey called on Federal Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hasan Fawad. —DNA



## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### OCTOBER

Oct 01/China National Day
Oct 01/Cyprus National Day
Oct 01/Republic of Korea Armed Forces Day
Oct 01/Nigeria Armed Forces Day
Oct 02/Guinea National Day
Oct 03/Germany Unification Day
Oct 03/Republic of Korea National Foundation Day
Oct 05/Indonesia Armed Forces Day
Oct 06/Egypt Armed Forces Day
Oct 09/Uganda Independence Day
Oct 12/Spain National Day
Oct 23/Hungary National Day
October 24/United Nations United Nations Day
Oct 25/Romania Armed Forces Day
Oct 26/Austria National Day
Oct 27/Turkmenistan Independence Day
Oct 28/Czech Republic National Day
Oct 29/Turkey Republic Day

## Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



## Emergency

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& Rescue Services.4451122  
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Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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RGH.....9290301-7  
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PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International 4603666



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Met Office.....9250360-6  
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Cantonment Board 9270151-3

## Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

## DARE-RC Charts Course

# Transforming Research in Education for Informed Policy making in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Education is the cornerstone of progress, and in recognition of its paramount importance, Oxford Policy Management (OPM) Pakistan organized a one-day Research Agenda Co-Creation Workshop under the Data and Research in Education - Research Consortium (DARE-RC) program.

This significant event brought together a diverse array of participants, including public sector representatives at federal and provincial levels, national and international knowledge partners, civil society organizations, development partners, and academia. The workshop aimed at setting the direction for the entire program through chalking out the contours of the research agenda with a focus on learners, learning environment, and the overall education landscape in Pakistan. The research agenda will serve as a roadmap to prioritize and define the areas in which rigorous and impactful research will be conducted as part of the DARE-RC initiative. The discussants included Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT); Abdur Rauf Khan Gandapur, Country Director at OPM Pakistan; Haris Khaliq, Program Director, DARE-RC; Muhammad Zaigham Qadeer, Research Director at Pakistan



Institute of Education (PIE); Kim Bradford Smith, Education Team Lead, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO); Dr Jamila Razaq, Research Director, DARE-RC; Dr Dilshad Ashraf, Deputy Research Director, DARE-RC; and Anza Saqib, Consultant Media and Research Education Parliamentarians' caucus, Senate of Pakistan. The session was addressed as Chief of Guest by Madad Ali Sindhi, Federal Minister, MoFEPT. In his opening remarks, Abdur Rauf Khan highlighted the role DARE-RC is going to play in shaping the education landscape. He was of the view that DARE-RC is committed to promoting data-driven

education policy that is rooted in comprehensive research as the program places a strong emphasis on strengthening the research capacities of local academic institutions and think-tanks, enabling them to actively contribute to the educational transformation of the nation. In his address as the Guest of Honour, Waseem Ajmal emphasized the foundational challenges in the education sector and the crucial role of researchers and relevant expertise in translating learning objectives into effective teaching materials. He also pointed out the pressing need for comprehensive data to address the multifaceted issues being faced in the education sector. He hoped DARE-

RC would be able to connect researchers across Pakistan and work collaboratively with government and policy actors to ensure the research aligns with real-world needs and priorities. The Federal Minister for Education welcomed the efforts of the NGOs and the civils society in raising the pertinent issues related to the sorry state of education affairs in the country. He rued the indifference shown by political parties towards ensuring that children, especially from the marginalized community in the country, have access to quality education. Transparency, accountability, and accessibility were recurring themes during the workshop.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Spain speaking on the occasion of the National Day of Spain. A large number of guest hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. Chief Justice of Pakistan also attended the event.—DNA

## Lenders and friendly countries are pulling back

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that the speed with which Pakistan is dependent on loans is increasing and the ability to bear the burden of debt

is decreasing in the same proportion. Lenders and friendly countries are backing away; therefore, Pakistan must learn to survive on its own, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that currently, our focus is on new investments from Arab countries, for which we are working diligently through SIFC's platform. Speaking to the business communi-

ty, the veteran business leader said that if the SIFC initiative is saved from traditional laziness and incompetence, it may be possible to achieve an investment of 75 billion dollars. If the capital from the Arab countries comes under the new model, then the same model can be used to make other failed institutions of the country viable, he added.

The business leader said that successful foreign investment can attract other countries to Pakistan, for which we should improve our policies for permanent relief instead of temporary relief. Attention must be given to all the sectors of the economy according to their importance, which is imperative for success. Mian Zahid Hussain said

that people do not want political but real economic change, but a few thousand people who benefit from this flawed system do not want change. They know how to take advantage of these economic conditions and political chaos, and they know that once Pakistan becomes self-reliant, their plunder will end forever.—DNA

## ICCI for promoting domestic commerce

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government should focus on promoting domestic commerce that would stimulate economic activities, enhance exports and stabilize the economy. This was said by Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) while addressing a seminar on "The State of Domestic Commerce in Pakistan" organized by ICCI in collaboration with the Policy Institute of Development Economics (PIDE). Faad Waheed said that domestic commerce is an important segment, which provides employment to 40 percent of the non-agricultural workforce, but the development of domestic commerce and domestic markets has been neglected in the policymaking even though it contributes significantly to the GDP. He stressed that the government should improve

the infrastructure for domestic commerce in wholesale and retail sectors and focus on developing a network of business centers, markets and shopping malls to make Pakistan a thriving economy. He lauded the initiative of PIDE for developing a research study on The State of Domestic Commerce in Pakistan and hoped that the government

would take benefit of this study report to bring needed policy reforms for promotion of this sector. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nadeem ul Haq, Vice Chancellor, PIDE highlighted the too many regulations, complicated documentation & registration processes, complexity and multiplicity of taxes, high cost of

compliance, fear of penalties and difficult access to formal finance to businesses as the main hurdles in the growth of domestic commerce and stressed that the government should address these issues to promote this important sector of the economy. He said that there are 120 regulatory authorities in the federal govern-

ment alone and stressed that the government should simplify the regulatory regime with an aim to facilitate the better growth of domestic commerce. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that the government should give better focus to promotion of domestic commerce that will provide Pakistan a strong platform for international trade as it encompasses wide ranging sectors and sub-sectors of the economy including transport, storage, communication, wholesale & retail trade, construction, entertainment, tourism, real estate and domestic marketing etc. He said that strengthening these areas would help bail out Pakistan's declining economy and put it on sustainable growth. Omer Siddique, Senior Research Economic PIDE gave a detailed presentation on The State of Domestic Commerce in Pakistan with necessary remedial measures to make it a vibrant segment of the economy.



## ECP rebuts 13 million ineligible voters allegations

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) strongly refuted a news report that was replete with inaccuracies and false information, incorrectly suggesting that 13 million people won't be able to vote in the next general elections. ECP spokesperson said in a statement that the news report featured in Friday's edition of Dawn is saturated with inaccuracies and misinformation. The spokesperson clarified that voters' registration was based on their permanent or current address as per their computerized National Identity Card (CNIC), and this process has no connection to population statistics. "A census requires a person's physical presence, whereas voter registration is based on the address specified on the CNIC with no connection to population statistics," he said.

Additionally, the Election Commission has lifted the freeze on electoral rolls, effective from September 28, 2023, ensuring the registration of all eligible individuals. This freeze had been in place since July 20, 2017, under the provisions of Section 39 of the Elections Act, 2017. He mentioned that the Election Commission was consistently raising public awareness regarding voter registration, exclusions, and accuracy through daily media campaigns, and this will continue until October 25, 2023.

Additionally, the Election Commission has acquired data for over 800,000 individuals who were issued CNICs by NADRA on October 1, 2023. Data entry is currently underway, guaranteeing that all these eligible citizens can participate in the upcoming general elections and cast their respective votes. Furthermore, the Election Commission has fixed October 25, 2023, as the final date for voter registration, exclusions, and verifications. Consequently, individuals who would obtain their CNICs by October 25, 2023, can be confident about their eligibility to get their respective votes registered.—APP

## Pakistani traders focus to enhance trade in central Asian

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Communications, Railways and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar has said that measures are being taken for economic stability. Efforts are also being made to attract local and foreign investments. On the proposal of establishing tunnel at Wah Khan Corridor, he expressed that it will connect Pakistan with Central Asia and attract large-scale trade that will change the fortune of our country. He visited FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad and he was also accompanied by the Customs Collector Asif Hargan.

The Minister further said that steps are also being taken to improve the performance of Commercial Consulars in Pakistani missions abroad. Federal Minister Shahid Ashraf Tarar said that the caretaker government is working on the IT sector, which has great potential to provide opportunities to a large number of youths to work and earn. In order to save the time of people of KP, it was proposed that a separate connectivity on motorway may be constructed for KP people to enable them direct access to Islamabad airport, the Federal Minister assured that this proposal is under consideration of his ministry. The views were exchanged by Vice President FPCCI and Chairman Capital Office Aminullah Baig, Vice President FPCCI Umar Masoodur Rehman. On this occasion, Convener FPCCI Capital Office Syed Asad Haider Mashhadi, Former Vice President FPCCI Sohail Altaf, Founder President Haripur Chamber Sadfar Zaman Shah, President Rawalpindi Chamber Saqib Rafiq along with members of Haripur Chamber Aun Ali Syed, Saqib Imran and others, were present.—APP

## Infrastructure, deregulation key to ICT future in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani ICT entrepreneurs have recently called for infrastructure upgrade, regulation easing and education uplift to fully unleash the potential of Pakistan's ICT industry and sectors closely related to it. This revelation came from a panel discussion on Pakistan's ICT industry at the Belt and Road (BRI) Report Publishing Event held here, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN). At the event, a group of four panelists elaborated on the vital role of enhanced infrastructure, a healthy dose of regulation, and education in ICT in powering e-commerce, smartphones and music industry. Kamran Pervaiz, director of corporate affairs of Daraz.pk, a Pakistani e-commerce giant, said while 2% of the Pakistani retail sector has gone online, this lags far behind India and China, which reaches 50% and 53% respectively. "We need common infrastructure... and the Internet to enable e-commerce," Kamran noted, adding that infrastructure upgrade is more needed in rural areas. This view was echoed by Sufian Ahmad Ch, head of marketing of Xiaomi Pak. "The technology is not accessible for everyone, even now more than 50% of the population doesn't have access to 4G or doesn't have smartphones."—APP



## Briefs

## CPO pays surprise visits to different police stations

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani has paid surprise visits to the City, Gungmandi, Rattaamral and Pirwadhai Police Stations and inspected front desks, records, lock-ups, and buildings of the police stations. The CPO instructed the Police officers to perform their duties diligently and make all-out efforts to net the criminals. "Prime responsibility of police is to control crime," he said and directed the Station House Officers to formulate effective strategy to make police patrolling more effective. The CPO directed the police officers to improve service delivery at the police station level. Ongoing operations against proclaimed offenders, court absconders, drug peddlers and other lawbreakers should be accelerated. He ordered the officials to take effective measures to facilitate the public besides taking all possible steps to provide relief to the citizens. The CPO said that negligence on the part of the police officials in public service delivery would not be tolerated, adding that all-out efforts should be made to resolve complaints of the citizens at the police station level. He directed the police officers to protect the lives and property of the citizens and accelerate ongoing operations against criminals. He said, delay in registration of FIRs would not be tolerated.—APP

## Police drive to register household employees

ISLAMABAD: The campaign of Islamabad police "Knock the Door" is underway to ensure the comprehensive registration of employees and tenants. The campaign, according to a spokesperson, has gained significant momentum in recent days and teams from the Islamabad Capital Police have taken to the streets and embarked on door-to-door visits, emphasizing the need for the registration of both tenants and domestic workers. Moreover, these teams have been actively engaging with citizens to understand and address their concerns. Notably, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has already recorded data pertaining to 171 house servants from 340 households falling within the jurisdiction of the Bhara Kahu Police Station as part of this initiative. The primary objective of this campaign is to proactively prevent any potential untoward incidents by maintaining a robust law and order situation within the federal capital. The registration of tenants and household employees serves the dual purpose of facilitating effective surveillance of potential wrongdoers and deterring individuals engaged in suspicious activities of any kind. Citizens have been urged to exercise caution and verify the identity of any individual, especially when someone in civilian attire visits.—APP

## HR Ministry, DG SE celebrate White Cane Safety Day

The walk commenced at China Chowk and proceeded towards D Chowk in the heart of Islamabad. It brought together an enthusiastic and diverse group of participants, including visually impaired students, their dedicated teachers, supportive parents, and members of the general community

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate General of Special Education, Ministry of Human Rights marked White Cane Safety Day with an inspiring and inclusive walk, held on October 13, 2023. The event was organized to raise awareness about the significance of white canes in the lives of visually impaired individuals and to promote safety and inclusion in our society. The walk commenced at China Chowk and proceeded towards D Chowk in the heart of Islamabad. It brought together an enthusiastic and diverse group of participants, including visually impaired students, their dedicated teachers, supportive parents, and members of the general community. The event emphasized the importance of unity and understanding among all citizens, regardless of their abilities. At the culmination of the walk, the Federal Minister for Human Rights, Mr. Khalil George, and the Director General of Special Education, Sheikh Azhar Sajjad delivered inspiring speeches. These speeches highlighted the importance of promoting an inclusive society, where the rights and potential of visually impaired individuals are acknowledged and respected. Mr. Khalil George, the Federal Minister for Human Rights, expressed his deep appreciation for the event and emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring the rights and well-being of individuals with disabilities particularly the persons with visual impairment. He stated, "White Cane Safety Day serves as a reminder that we must work tirelessly to create a society where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can participate fully in all aspects of life. The purpose of this day is to raise public awareness of the rights of the visually impaired and to mobilize the general public in support of their cause. It is an honor to stand with the Director



General of Special Education in celebrating this occasion." Sheikh Azhar Sajjad, the Director General of Special Education, echoed these sentiments, saying, "Our visually impaired students,

their dedicated teachers, and supportive parents are a testament to the strength and resilience of our community. We are committed to providing them with the support

and resources they need to thrive." The Director General of Special Education extends his appreciation to all those who joined in this meaningful walk and those who support

the cause of inclusion and accessibility for visually impaired individuals. As a society, it is imperative that we continue to work together to ensure that no one is left behind.

## Ethiopian ambassador meet Education minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jemal Beker called on the Federal Education Minister Mr. Madad Ali Sindhvi today on 12th October, 2023. Madad Ali Sindhvi welcomed the Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jemal Beker and said that the two countries have religious, cultural and historic people to people love for each other. Madad Ali Sindhvi discussed the exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding Vocational and Technical Training. He said that the two countries can benefit from the experience of each other. Madad Ali Sindhvi welcomed the exchange of teachers and students to further mutual cooperation especially for Skilled Vocational Training. He said that there is significant potential in cooperation between the two countries. Minister said that a Joint working Group will be formulated which can pave way for the signing of an MoU between the two countries. Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jemal Beker said that People of Ethiopia have deep affiliation with Pakistan. He said that University to University cooperation and Technical Institution to Technical Institution collaboration is the way forward. He said that Ethiopian doctors who have studied in Pakistan volunteered to provide free service to Pakistan during the floods of 2022. He further invited the minister to visit Ethiopia and sign the planned MoU there. Madad Ali Sindhvi said that the future is in Vocational Training of the population of Pakistan. He said that it provides the best opportunity to the people to find jobs. Federal Minister thanked the Ambassador and highlighted the cordial and friendly relations between the two countries. Minister said that the two countries have shared history. He said that there is a bonhomie between the two people. He stated that the two countries should further enhance their mutual relation.

## Productivity, sustainability next 2 hot topics for agri

ISLAMABAD: To mark the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative, a series of events were held on October 12 with the support of KASB KTrade Securities. This included an agriculture roundtable seminar that brought together experts and practitioners from the industry, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. The experts highlighted various subjects such as the Green Pakistan Initiative, Chinese investments in agri-sectors, and the potential of the dairy industry. The discussion also touched on food security and sustainable agricultural development. Syed Nasir Mahmood, former Inspector General of Forestry at the Ministry of Agriculture, stressed the significance of conserving natural ecosystems and adopting sustainable farming methods. He pointed out that carbon credits, which allow countries to emit a specified amount of carbon dioxide, hold economic potential. Mahmood also touched on the vital roles of biodiversity and forest therapy, proposing that preserving nature could not only provide health advantages but also foster a more robust ecosystem. Furthermore, he called for broad awareness among industries, policy makers, and the general public, emphasizing the alignment of environmental prosperity with financial and economic well-being. Peter Huang, Commercial Head at LITEC International Agriculture Development Co., Ltd., believes that Chinese companies are expected to bring much-needed capital and technological know-how to the Pakistani farming sector. He particularly emphasized the chili industry, discussing their plans to improve farming practices and productivity. "Our goal is to assist Pakistan in exporting high-quality chili, with a value of more than \$300 million by 2026," Huang revealed that currently, he and his company are focusing on providing better seeds, introducing advanced farming practices, and offering necessary training to local farmers. These efforts are expected to boost the yield and quality of the chilis, making them more competitive in the international market. Maj Gen Tahir Aslam, Managing Director and CEO of FonGrow, noted that Pakistan's farming practices are currently inefficient, particularly in terms of water and fertilizer usage. He emphasized the need to improve the quality of seeds, introduce efficient farming practices, and leverage technology and data to enhance productivity. Furthermore, he underscored the necessity for a comprehensive modernization drive within Pakistan's agricultural landscape. This extends beyond the realm of mere tractorization to encompass the implementation of technology-driven farming models, akin to those successfully employed in countries like the U.S., Canada, and Australia.—DNA

## Meeting between Chairman Senate and Rear Admiral Pakistan Navy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rear Admiral Javed Iqbal (HI), distinguished with the Hilal Imtiaz Military award, led the 53rd staff course delegation comprising faculty and administrative personnel from Naval War College Lahore during their visit to the Parliament House today. The meeting took place at the Parliament House where Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani engaged with Rear Admiral Javed Iqbal in productive discussions concerning professional matters concerning the Pakistan Navy and topics of mutual interest. Chairman Senate, acknowledging the exemplary professionalism exhibited by the officers and personnel of the Pakistan Navy, commended their valour in creating enduring stories of bravery that resonate with the nation. He emphasized their immense value as vital assets to the nation. Highlighting the



steadfastness and resolve of the Pakistan Navy akin to the Army and Air Force, Chairman Senate underscored their historical response to enemy aggression, fortifying our maritime borders. The

discussion also encompassed contemporary challenges and technological advancements occurring on a global scale. Furthermore, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani

emphasized that the indelible contributions of the Pakistan Navy in safeguarding our maritime boundaries would be etched in golden letters in the annals of our nation's history.

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## Targeting Chinese firms won't help India

Raids by India's anti-money laundering agency and income tax officials on Chinese companies are becoming more common and systemic. By using the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, which allows criminal cases to be filed for what previously were general foreign exchange violations, generally considered civil offenses, the Indian authorities are making it obvious that they are targeting Chinese companies. It was under the PML Act that India's anti-money laundering agency arrested a Chinese employee of smartphone maker Vivo from his office near New Delhi on Tuesday, according to Reuters. That the Indian officials didn't bother to provide any evidence to prove their charge makes the arrest even more intriguing. The anti-money laundering agency, called Enforcement Directorate, raided Vivo's office in Greater Noida in the central province of Uttar Pradesh, accusing it of illegally remitting funds from India to China. The Enforcement Directorate has also accused Vivo of evading customs duty. The second-biggest smartphone brand in India, after Samsung, Vivo is owned by China's BBK Electronics, headquartered in Dongguan, Guangdong province, which also manufactures brands such as Oppo and Realme in India. In the past 18 months, the Indian authorities have targeted other Chinese mobile phone companies too. They froze Xiaomi's assets worth \$676 million in April last year, again without presenting any substantial evidence to back their charges. On Sept 28 this year, income tax officials raided ("visited" according to some media outlets) and searched the offices of laptop-maker Lenovo in Mumbai, Bengaluru and two other cities, and launched an investigation into the Chinese company. These crackdowns on Chinese tech companies, ostensibly to promote Indian smartphones, as well as banning Chinese apps, including TikTok, started after the border skirmish between India and China in 2020. Not to mention New Delhi denied visa to Chinese correspondents, almost all of whom had to leave India. That India under the Narendra Modi government has taken a de facto pro-United States stance hasn't made matters any better for dissenting voices in India or countries the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party doesn't like. India has also joined the Quad – which comprises the US, Japan and Australia and whose aim is to contain China. In contrast, China has exercised exemplary restraint despite India targeting Chinese companies and individuals. Beijing still welcomes Indian companies, and investments from Indian investors, and it remains committed to resolving border disputes with India through peaceful talks. New Delhi should know that the border disputes, a colonial legacy, should never be allowed to sway overall Sino-Indian relations by hijacking the otherwise smooth win-win economic and trade cooperation.



## The two candidates for house speaker

In an afternoon vote by the Republican caucus, Representative Steve Scalise of Louisiana emerged as the choice of most members to be speaker. But it's not clear whether he will win enough votes on the House floor to get the job. That floor vote may take place in the coming days. The crisis of terror in Israel has made it even more urgent that the House of Representatives move past its schoolyard infighting, elect itself a speaker and demonstrate that the United States still has a functional government, one that can play a significant role in supporting democratic allies around the globe. So far, however, the Republican House majority has shown no indication it is up to the job. Only two candidates, Representatives Steve Scalise of Louisiana and Jim Jordan of Ohio, are officially running for speaker. Neither seems to have a majority of Republicans locked up yet, and both are trying to appeal to the party's worst instincts – making it clear they would perpetuate the chaos that was unleashed during the reign of Kevin McCarthy, who was overthrown by a group of far-right rebels on Oct. 3. In several ways, Mr. Scalise and Mr. Jordan would probably be worse. Both express opposition to the Biden administration's request for additional military aid to Ukraine. Like Mr. McCarthy, both have cast doubt on the outcome of the 2020 presidential race, and voted against certifying the election results, a permanent stain on their reputations. But for anyone who cares about basic governmental function, the most worrisome part is that they also seem to be repudiating the two moments when Mr. McCarthy defused a fiscal crisis in recent months – over the debt ceiling and the threatened government shutdown. They want the House to use more "leverage" in its battles against President Biden. "Leverage," in case you missed the constant reference in the battle over Mr. McCarthy, is a Washington euphemism for blackmail. By holding the country's credit hostage, or shutting down government functions, a small band of wrecking-ball ideologues can try to get a win on some unrelated matter. The anti-McCarthyites said he failed to use his speakership to rewrite the rules of government in Washington. "Many of us had begged the speaker, pleaded with the speaker repeatedly, to utilize the debt ceiling to leverage spending cuts and reforms," Bob Good, Republican of Virginia, told the House before the big vote. "Instead, he negotiated an unlimited increase to the debt ceiling." Of the two ways to achieve political success in a divided government, leverage is the poisoned choice. The more effective path, the one that used to be employed regularly in Washington, is to cut deals and make compromises with your opponents, even if they are occasionally painful and at odds with your principles. That's how Lincoln operated, that's how Lyndon Johnson pushed through his Great Society and civil rights bills, and it's how Obamacare was created. But ever since Newt Gingrich's era, the idea of compromising with the Democratic Party, of putting bills on the House floor that both sides can support, has been anathema to Republicans. Speakers from that party who do so tend to lose their jobs or quit under pressure, as John Boehner and Mr. McCarthy learned.

## Middle Eastern history repeats itself or maybe it doesn't?

James Dorsey

That was true for Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization and Israeli leaders before the PLO's 1988 recognition of Israel and the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Oslo accords. Palestinian airline hijackings and attacks on Israeli towns, Israeli retaliatory military actions, and the assassinations by renegade Palestinian commander Abu Nidal in the 1980s of senior PLO officials engaged in unofficial talks with Israeli activists served hardliner purposes. So did tacit Israeli support for Hamas, born under Israeli occupation in opposition to the occupation of Palestinian lands, as an imaginary anti-dote to Palestinian nationalism. If anything, the reinforcement of hardline positions reinforced by

If there is a lesson to be drawn from the Gaza war, it is that history repeats itself: hardliners on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide reinforce each other. That was true for Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization and Israeli leaders before the PLO's 1988 recognition of Israel and the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian Oslo accords. Palestinian airline hijackings and attacks on Israeli towns, Israeli retaliatory military actions, and the assassinations by renegade Palestinian commander Abu Nidal in the 1980s of senior PLO officials engaged in unofficial talks with Israeli activists served hardliner purposes. So did tacit Israeli support for Hamas, born under Israeli occupation in opposition to the occupation of Palestinian lands, as an imaginary anti-dote to Palestinian nationalism. If anything, the reinforcement of hardline positions reinforced by the latest war, together with the unnecessary brutality and harshness of the occupation, has produced a conflict with an unprecedented disregard for the lives of the other. Mounting resistance to the Israeli occupation was inevitable without any possibility of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but Hamas and Israel had choices in how to conduct hostilities. Hamas did itself no favours with the wanton and random killing of Israeli civilians in its unprecedented October 7 attack on Israel that shattered perceptions of Israeli military and intelligence superiority, demonstrated the unsustainability of the occupation, and rallied degrees of support for Israel, not only from its traditional US and European allies but also influential Global South countries like Kenya and India. Instead of embarking on an Islamic State-style killing spree, Hamas could have achieved its objectives by restricting its offensive to targeting Israeli military installations and personnel. The presence of an unknown number of Israeli soldiers among the more than 100 hostages kidnapped by Hamas proves the point. By the same token, rather than bombing Gaza back to the Stone Age, Israel could have opted for targeted killings of the Hamas senior and mid-level leadership. With a different government, it could have coupled its retaliation with a credible proposal to solve the conflict. Granted, past targeted killings didn't produce the desired outcome and Israel is in no mood to talk about peace. But similarly, the current sledgehammer violence by both parties in violation of international law, too, will not achieve preferred results, at least in the short term, and likely only harden positions, much like the second Intifada or Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation in the late 1980s and early 1990s failed to prevent escalating violence.

A lone Israeli military voice, retired Major General Itzhak Brik warned that "should a regional war break out and we are not prepared for it, the catastrophe will be hundreds of times greater... A military operation in Gaza can degenerate into an all-out war on five fronts." In Mr. Brik's counting it would be a multi-front war involving not just Hezbollah and Lebanon, the West Bank, Syria, and Iran but also Israeli cities and towns. "The next war will feature both very difficult battles on land and very difficult attacks from the air. The Israeli home front will be hit by thousands of missiles every day, and along the border, we will be facing thousands of fighters who want to come across." Mr. Brik said. "But we'll face the biggest catastrophe inside the country, as tens of thousands of armed Arab rioters will run throughout the country, and we hadn't prepared for this," the former military officer added. To be sure, neither Hamas nor Israel are what they were in the 1980s. Now gone are the days when the Israeli military told then-Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin during the Intifada: "We can resolve this but not at a price that either you or we find morally acceptable. You solve this." What may not be lost and will likely regain prominence are attitudes underlying ceasefire talks in 2014 to end that year's military conflagration between Israel and Hamas. Senior Hamas official Mousa Abu Marzouk noted at the time that "the charter is not the Quran. It can be amended." Mr. Abu Marzouk was referring to Hamas' charter that calls for the destruction of Israel. His words echoed the words of the late Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman who in the 1980s stood in front of his Likud Party emblem that showed Jordan as part of Israel and said concerning the Palestine Liberation Organization charter that at the time called for Israel's demise: "We can dream, so can they." For now, the Hamas attack and Israel's response leave hardly any flexibility. Overall, the Israeli carpet bombing of Gaza and the cutoff of food, fuel, and medical supplies to the Strip has stiffened Arab public opinion's rejection of relations with Israel without a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The silver lining is that a minority of voices on both sides of the divide are distancing themselves from the atrocities committed in the fighting and the bombings. That was always true for Israel, even if moderate voices have been pushed to the margins over the years. What is new is that moderate voices elsewhere in the Middle East have emerged at a time of heightened emotions and rallying around the flag. In some cases, like Iran, Israel, rather than being the punching bag and boogeyman, has become a sword wielded against an unpopular and re-

pressive regime. Over the weekend as Hamas invaded Israel, Iranian soccer fans denounced the presence of a Palestinian flag at a match in Tehran's Azadi Stadium between Persepolis and Gohar. "The Palestinian flag – shove it up your ass!" the fans chanted. By the same token, an "IraniansStandWithIsrael" trended on Twitter, seemingly dominated by the Iranian Diaspora rather than Iranians in Iran. It was not clear whether this represented a demographic divide or increased caution among segments of society in the Islamic republic. Similarly, breaking taboos, Arab voices on social media are taking Hamas to task for its unwarranted brutality and sparking a rare discussion in the Arab world. "I am a Kuwaiti and I stand with Israel. Any Kuwaiti who has forgotten the treachery of the Palestinian leadership is ignorant. My solidarity is with the Palestinian and Israeli people. We want to uproot Hamas and the PLO. These people have lost their competence to manage the interests of the Palestinians," tweeted prominent Kuwaiti journalist Jassem Aljuraid with 86,000 followers on Twitter. Opposed to autocratic rule, Mr. Aljuraid has left his native Kuwait but remains a voice in social media discussion. His tweet sparked thousands of contradictory and mixed responses, including more than 2,000 likes. "They killed an Israeli woman, took off her clothes, smashed her, and marched her around in victory...but victory for what? Are these the principles of Islam? Mr. Aljuraid asked in a separate tweet featuring the Israeli flag. London-based Kuwaiti Shiite Muslim religious scholar Yasser al-Habib with 22,000 followers tweeted: "Who among us does not enjoy retaliation from the Zionist enemy? We were all excited by this news when it first arrived. But as the hours passed, my feelings deteriorated after these atrocities committed by the Hamas group, including mutilation, rape of women, random killing, and similar atrocities. Where did the ethics of war go in Islam?!" To be fair there is no independent confirmation of reports that Hamas captives have been raped. Adding his voice, Bahraini activist Shaheen Aljenaid charged, "This is a terrorist act and a distortion of the image of Islam and Muslims... Watch how they trade in photographing a dead woman without clothing, without morals or humanity. This is clear evidence that they have no connection to Arabism and religion." The importance of voices like Messrs. Aljuraid, Al-Habib and Aljenaid is less their denunciation of Hamas and more the suggestion that the historic Pavlov reflex to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, long challenged by Israeli doves, even if they currently threaten to be drowned out in the cacophony of anger, shock, and a desire for revenge among Israelis, is for the first time being questioned in other parts of the Middle East.

## Unity key to tackling global rise in forced displacement

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

The uptick in the number of migrants and asylum seekers has led to deep divisions among political parties and political spheres in some European nations. For example, the Dutch government collapsed in July after failing to reach a deal on immigration. Prime Minister Mark Rutte, whose conservative People's Party for Freedom and Democracy had attempted to restrict the flow of asylum seekers into the Netherlands, pointed out in a televised news

There has been a dramatic rise in forced displacements and migration around the world, which has led to major debates in some countries and regions, particularly the EU and the US. As of last month, more than 127,000 migrants had arrived in Italy by sea in 2023, nearly double the number for the same period last year. The uptick in the number of migrants and asylum seekers has led to deep divisions among political parties and political spheres in some European nations. For example, the Dutch government collapsed in July after failing to reach a deal on immigration. Prime Minister Mark Rutte, whose conservative People's Party for Freedom and Democracy had attempted to restrict the flow of asylum seekers into the Netherlands, pointed out in a televised news conference: "It's no secret that the coalition partners have differing opinions about immigration policy. Today, we unfortunately have to conclude that those differences have become insurmountable. Therefore, I will tender the resignation of the entire Cabinet to the king." When it comes to immigration policy, if the divisions in the political stances of European leaders continues to grow, the situation may become similar to that of the US, where the gap between the political parties on this critical issue is too deep to bridge. This will make it extremely difficult to pass bills, introduce informed policies or oversee substantial reforms in order to adequately address the crisis. In other words, it will lead to total stalemate. EU member states can work in unity within the bloc's framework in order to more efficiently tackle the rise in migration. The most important step to take in order to address this global and humanitarian issue is to be united. Concerning the EU, the member states can work in unity within the bloc's

framework in order to more efficiently tackle the rise in migration. This huge task ought to be shared between EU members so that certain countries do not bear the brunt of the rise in migration. This will also facilitate the process of registering and integrating arrivals and make it easier for those nations that receive large numbers of migrants in comparison to others. A huge influx of people can have a significant impact on the social, economic, political and even environmental landscapes of host countries. This is due to the fact that, if the hosts are not prepared for the situation, they tend to face political and economic strains. Even if migrants are successfully resettled in a new country, they then face other significant challenges, including language barriers and difficulties accessing medicine and healthcare services, finding suitable housing, adjusting to new cultures, rules and norms, and finding work, as well as prejudice and racism. In other words, problems arise when host countries do not have the resources or are not economically and socially prepared to deal with a large influx of people. Nevertheless, it was a step in the right direction that the EU last week reached a deal on immigration. Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gomez, the acting Spanish minister for home affairs, said: "We have achieved a huge step forward on a critical issue for the future of the EU. With today's agreement, we are now in a better position to reach an agreement on the entire asylum and migration pact with the European Parliament by the end of this semester." And German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock posted on X: "It is a common step forward that solidarity between member states is mandatory in the event of a crisis." Another issue is to raise awareness in society about the situation of those who are forcefully displaced. It is key to point out the courage and strength that it takes to flee one's home and attempt to find a safe

and secure place for one's family, particularly with children and the elderly. Even if migrants are successfully resettled in a new country, they then face other significant challenges being forced to abandon the place where one has lived, studied and grown up, being forced to leave friends and relatives behind and to start a new life in a foreign place is traumatic. To survive and thrive in a new home needs extraordinary courage, faith and strength. There are several underlying reasons people decide to flee their homes. The most important factors are violence, conflict, war and the fear of persecution. Although the EU and the US have witnessed a rise in migration this year, it is important to point out that the vast majority of people who flee their homes to find shelter in other countries (about 85 percent) are hosted by developing countries. This is why it is critical for wealthier nations to offer assistance. With effective investments and integration, migrants can be an asset that stimulates the host country's economy and promotes productivity. As Amnesty International has stated: "Wealthier countries aren't doing nearly enough to share the cost of protecting people who have left everything behind. Appeals for humanitarian assistance for refugees are consistently – and often severely – underfunded. In short, the world urgently needs a new, global plan based on genuine international cooperation and a meaningful and fair sharing of responsibilities." In a nutshell, forced displacement and migration has become a global crisis. This is why it is necessary for the international community to work in unity and solidarity in order to address the increase in forced displacement and migration and to ensure that the basic humanitarian needs of everyone, particularly women and children, are met.

—Sourced by Arab News.



## Briefs

## State powerful enough...

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database, the state was unable to distinguish between those playing a productive role in the society and the criminals. He clarified that the expulsion of illegal residents was not out of any vengeance rather the state wanted to rid the country of those causing social ills as well as the becoming a challenge of terrorism and crimes. To a question, he said no reports have so far been received about burning of houses in North Waziristan, Bajaur or Orakzai. However, he asked the IG Police, Chief Secretary and intelligence agencies to provide a reality-based report on the matter. Asked about the fate of PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif on his return, the prime minister said the government would act as per the law.

## No compromise after...

FROM PAGE 01  
nationality they belong to, will not be troubled if they have a valid visa and other required documentation. We're just [planning to] expel illegal immigrants," he added. Thousands of Afghan nationals have started leaving Pakistan after the government announced the deadline, with some citing economic conditions behind their decision to leave. The decision to ask illegal immigrants to leave is closely tied to the escalating violence in the country, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces, and the growing tension between the Pakistani government and the Taliban administration in Kabul, according to experts and officials.

## 'Under-standing' behind...

FROM PAGE 01  
Sharif had confirmed that his elder brother was returning to the country on October 21. Subsequently, the PML-N had declared that Nawaz was ready to face "all kinds of circumstances" upon his return from London. Last week, Nawaz's legal team submitted his medical reports to the Lahore High Court, which said the PML-N supremo had "some residual anginal symptoms". Separately, Shehbaz said the party's legal team had cleared Nawaz's arrival. In an informal conversation with Dawn.com, the NA speaker said, "Obviously, there must be an understanding which is why he's coming back." Ashraf also wondered why Nawaz did not return to the country earlier. "Now his health should also stay good," he remarked.

## Will not leave PTI, says Elahi

FROM PAGE 01  
the submission of a court challan for Elahi, the ATC staff said only Elahi's judicial remand has to be extended. The investigation officer said a challan and notice had been received for the senior politician. "Let's also schedule Parvez Elahi's next [hearing] date along with the co-accused," the judge said. Elahi walked to the rostrum and objected to October 24 as the next date for the hearing, while his lawyer also requested more days. "Parvez Elahi also has to appear in a Lahore court," the counsel added. But the judge fixed October 24, as the date for the next hearing. During the course of the hearing, the police attempted to stop Elahi from speaking on the telephone in the courtroom. "I have taken permission from the judge to speak on the telephone," the politician said. A journalist asked Elahi about an exchange of a message between him and PTI Chairman Imran Khan in the Adiala jail.

ICC World Cup 2023  
PAK vs IND clash to kick off with star-studded ceremony

PAK vs IND clash of the ICC World Cup 2023 between two fierce rivals Pakistan and India will kick off with a star-studded glittering ceremony at Narendra Modi Stadium

## SPORTS DESK

AHMEDABAD: The most anticipated PAK vs IND clash of the ICC World Cup 2023 between two fierce rivals Pakistan and India will kick off with a star-studded glittering ceremony at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on October 14. According to the BCCI, renowned celebrities Arijit Singh, Sukhwinder Singh and Shankar Mahadevan will be performing in the show. Cricket fever has gripped Ahmedabad ahead of Saturday's World Cup 2023 group-stage PAK vs IND clash between arch-rivals India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan head into the showdown having both won their opening two matches at the tournament. The first batch of tickets for the PAK vs IND clash were sold out within an hour of going on sale in August, prompting the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to release another



14,000 earlier this month. The 134,000-capacity Narendra Modi Stadium, which hosted former US President Donald Trump in 2020 and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese earlier

this year, looks like a perfect arena for the PAK vs IND clash. The city has been declared a 'no-drone zone' on Saturday, and 11,000 security personnel will be deployed for the high-profile

match, Ahmedabad police commissioner GS Malik said. This will be the 8th meeting between the two arch-rivals in World Cup history. India have a perfect 7-0 record against Pakistan at ODI

World Cups and while the rivalry assumes the Orwellian concept of serious sport – "war minus the shooting" – players from both sides share good relations. During the Sri Lanka leg of the Asia Cup last month, Pakistan fast bowler Shaheen Afridi gave Jasprit Bumrah a gift for the Indian's newborn baby and the video went viral. Pakistan squad for ICC World Cup 2023: Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha.

**India's Squad for ICC World Cup 2023:** Rohit Sharma (capt), Hardik Pandya, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav.

## Bezzecchi cleared for Indonesia MotoGP

LOMBOK: Marco Bezzecchi was cleared for the Indonesian MotoGP on Friday, organisers and his team said, despite crashing in the first practice session a week after undergoing surgery on a broken collarbone. The Italian, third in the rider standings and 54 points behind leader Francesco Bagnaia, landed in the Indonesian resort island of Lombok on Friday morning before medical checks gave him the green light to drive. But after 18 practice laps he crashed at full speed on turn 11 of the Mandalika circuit, coming off his bike and tumbling across the gravel, though he managed to walk back to the paddock without assistance. The Ducati-VR46 rider was fifth fastest in the practice session before the crash. He was later checked and cleared to ride in the second practice session on Friday afternoon. "Marco Bezzecchi has been declared FIT," MotoGP tweeted on its official account.

His VR46 team shared the tweet, adding: "Marco Bezzecchi has been declared fit for the whole GP."



Before the session, Moto

GP had shared footage of Bezzecchi zipping up his leathers over a bandage for his collarbone. "Just five days on from surgery on his

collarbone, Bez is here and ready to give it a go!" MotoGP tweeted. He suffered the injury during a practice ride at team owner Valentino Rossi's ranch.

"Immediately after the operation, I saw the possibility of trying to take part in the Grand Prix," he said on Wednesday. Bezzecchi was the only doubt for Sunday's race, with all other riders declared fit on Thursday. Spaniard Alex Rins, of Honda satellite team LCR, broke the tibia and fibula of his right leg in Mugello at the beginning of June and gave up on the first day of testing in Japan two weeks ago because "the pain was too much". Also cleared is Bezzecchi's teammate and compatriot Luca Marini, who fractured his right clavicle during the Indian MotoGP three weeks ago. Spaniard Alex Marquez of Ducati-Gresini, who broke three ribs in a heavy crash in India, will also return after sitting out the last race in Japan. – Agencies

## Tommy rues 'circus' ahead of KSI bout

MANCHESTER: Tommy Fury said his boxing fight with YouTuber KSI has become a "circus" after the pair traded insults while separated by perspex glass inside a cage on Thursday. Fury, the half-brother of WBC heavyweight champion Tyson Fury, will take on KSI in a six-round cruiserweight contest at the Manchester Arena on Saturday. The buildup to the bout was marred at a press conference on Thursday when bottles were thrown and insults traded. Animosity has steadily been building between Fury and KSI, who may be relative novices in boxing but have quickly adapted to the sport's habit of pre-fight controversy. Fury's outspoken father John stepped into a metal cage and threw punches at the transparent partition separating him from KSI, who earlier dodged a bottle thrown from a side of the stage. WWE star Logan Paul, set to compete in the co-main event bout in Manchester, was left with a cut on his face after a brief brawl with his opponent Dillon Danis before the rivals were separated by security. "I'm in the crossover world of boxing, it's a circus act," Tommy Fury said. "We know what we're in for. I'm here to fight. Cut all the other stuff, we're fighting in two days, the talking is done." The ugly scenes hardly improved the image of YouTube boxing, with this weekend's event not sanctioned by the British Boxing Board of Control (BBBoC) but instead by the Professional Boxing Association (PBA). However, Tommy Fury is adamant his relative experience in the sport in contrast to his rival will become clear when they settle their differences in the ring. "We all know what's going to happen. There's no way this man can live with me. Who's he fought? He's fought a rapper and the rest are YouTubers. What is going on?" he said. "In this boxing world, he is a bum. I'm not interested in him. I'm levels above these guys. I've got every single advantage: bigger, stronger, reach, weight. This will be an early night, I promise you. "I've trained like a demon for 10 weeks for this man and I've sparred everybody, I've been sparring Tyson, been sparring the whole lot of them." – Agencies

## Israel warns Gaza City to be vacated

FROM PAGE 01  
Hamas's fight to free Gaza from Israel's decades-long occupation. "The United Nations considers it impossible for such a movement to take place without devastating humanitarian consequences," Stéphane Dujarric, a UN spokesperson, said in a statement. She added that the UN strongly appeals for any such order, if confirmed, to be rescinded avoiding what could transform what is already a tragedy into a calamitous situation. Dujarric said the order by the Israeli military also applied to all UN staff and those sheltered in UN facilities, including schools, health centres and clinics. But appearing to confirm a warning took place, Israel's ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, said: "The UN's response to Israel's early warning to the residents of Gaza is shameful." Erdan said the UN should focus on condemning Hamas and supporting Israel's right to self-defence. Salama Marouf, head of the Hamas government media office, said the relocation warning was an attempt by Israel "to broadcast and pass on fake propaganda, aiming to sow confusion among citizens and harm our internal cohesion."

## Pakistanis hold...

FROM PAGE 01  
Public broadcaster Kan said the Israeli death toll had risen to more than 1,300. After Israel's military called for all civilians of Gaza City – more than one million people – to relocate south within 24 hours on Friday, the UN urged Tel Aviv to call off the order, warning of the "devastating humanitarian consequences". Israeli attacks on Gaza have prompted protests in Paris, New York, Jordan, Morocco, Iraq and Iran among others. After Friday prayers, Pakistanis from all walks of life held rallies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and parts of Punjab. The demonstrators raised Palestinian flags and held posters that said "From land to the sea, Palestine will be free" and "Stand in solidarity with Palestine". They also burned Israeli flags. In Lahore, a huge rally was held at Mall Road by the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, with scores of women and children in attendance. The protesters carried a giant flag of Palestine.

## Israel must allow aid...

FROM PAGE 01  
sustained and forceful military campaign against Gaza, a response to a military offensive by the Palestinian resistance group Hamas in Israeli territories. The conflict began last Saturday when Hamas initiated Operation Al Aqsa Flood against Israel, a multi-pronged surprise attack including a barrage of rocket launches and infiltrations into Israel via land, sea, and air. Hamas said the operation was in retaliation for the storming of the Al Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem and Israeli settlers' growing violence against Palestinians. The Israeli military then launched Operation Swords of Iron against Hamas within Gaza. Israel's response has extended into cutting water and electricity supplies to Gaza, further worsening the living conditions in an area that has reeled under a crippling siege since 2007.

## Solangi: Polls...

FROM PAGE 01  
Minister Solangi also addressed financial issues faced by Radio Pakistan, particularly the review of past government decisions on radio licensing fees. Furthermore, he highlighted his efforts in expanding Radio Pakistan's online presence and the significant progress in connecting all Radio Pakistan centers via satellite during his tenure. He expressed hope that the incoming elected government would continue revitalization of Radio Pakistan and other national broadcasting institutions.

## Alastair Cook retires from professional cricket

LONDON: Former England captain and legendary batter Alastair Cook retired from all forms of cricket after the conclusion of the 2023 County Championship. Alastair Cook retired from international cricket in 2018, however, he continued to play county cricket for Essex, from where he started his first-class career back in 2003. The 38-year-old southpaw has accumulated 26643 runs in first-class cricket so far in 352 matches, with the help of 74 hundreds and 125 half-centuries. He scored 836 runs in the ongoing County Championship from 26 innings at an average of 36.72 with one century and three half-centuries. "It is not easy to say goodbye. For more than two decades, cricket has been so much more than my job," said Alastair Cook in a statement released by his boyhood club Essex. "It has allowed me to experience places I never dreamed I would go, be part of teams that have achieved things I would never have thought possible and, most importantly, created deep friendships that will last a lifetime. "From the eight-year-old boy who first played for Wickham Bishops Under-11s to now, I end with a strange feeling of sadness mixed with pride. Although above all, I am incredibly happy. – Agencies

## Spalletti seeks striker solution ahead of euro 2024 qualifiers

MILAN: Luciano Spalletti is looking for a solution to Italy's long-standing striker problem as the Azzurri gear up for two crucial Euro 2024 qualifiers with Malta and England. The European champions have scored six times in their four Group C matches, 10 fewer than runaway leaders England who are six points ahead of second-placed Italy, Ukraine and North Macedonia. They will also be without Sandro Tonali and Nicolò Zaniolo after the pair were sent home after criminal prosecutors launched an investigation into alleged gambling offences. Veteran Lazio striker Ciro Immobile and Argentina-born Mateo Retegui, who has had a positive start to life in Italy with Genoa, are both injured, leaving Spalletti with few and uninspiring options up front. Gianluca Scamacca has scored twice in six appearances for new club Atalanta, although he has been hampered by an early season hamstring injury, but is yet to net for the Azzurri

after 11 international caps. Meanwhile Moise Kean has been called up for the first time in two years despite being a bit-part player at Juventus and yet to score this campaign. One of those two are likely however to lead the line against bottom side Malta in Bari on Saturday also in the absence of Kean's Juve teammate Federico Chiesa, who is hopeful of returning on Tuesday at Wembley, the site of Italy's thrilling Euro 2020 triumph against England. Chiesa has shown in the opening weeks of the season that he can play centre-forward, with four goals in seven matches since being moved into a more central attacking position this season. Giacomo Raspadori seems like an ideal Spalletti player and performed well in last month's 2-1 win over Ukraine but on Monday the former Napoli coach suggested that he wanted more of a physical presence from his front man. "A striker needs to have the right physique, the right frame. Scamacca and

Kean have it," he said before adding that Raspadori was more suited to playing off a centre-forward or on the wing. Over 50,000 tickets have been sold for Italy's first match at the Stadio San Nicola since losing a friendly with France in 2016, hinting at a renewed enthusiasm for the national team after an intriguing start to life under Spalletti. Four points from his first two matches with North Macedonia and Ukraine last month have Italy with the advantage for second place and the group's other automatic spot in Germany next summer. They lead third-placed Ukraine and North Macedonia on head-to-head record and have a game in hand on every other team in the group, with Italy's two main rivals facing off in Prague on Saturday afternoon. However, looming on the horizon is the England clash, a fixture which has special significance for Italy after their thrilling win at the last Euro and which could be key to their hopes of reaching next year's tournament. – Agencies

## Zaka meets Pakistan team ahead of India clash

PCB head met the Babar Azam-led Pakistan contingent and encouraged the players before the big match against fierce rival India, scheduled on October 14

## OUR CORRESPONDENTS

AHMEDABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) management committee chairman Zaka Ashraf on Friday, met the national team ahead of their high-octane ICC World Cup 2023 fixture against hosts India. According to the details, the PCB head met the Babar Azam-led Pakistan contingent and encouraged the players before the big match against fierce rival India, scheduled on October 14. Zaka Ashraf further instructed the Pakistan players to take on the field without feeling any pressure. "The whole nation is praying for their success," said Ashraf on the eve of the much-anticipated Pakistan-India clash. "All the players should take the fear of defeat out of their minds and enter the field," he added. Follow us on our Official WhatsApp channel For the unversed, the PCB chair took off from Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore on Thursday evening for Ahmedabad. During his stay in India, Zaka Ashraf will



meet the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the government officials to propose the restoration of cricketing ties between the two countries. Zaka Ashraf made the decision to travel to India after it was confirmed that the media personnel were given the go-ahead to submit their passports for an Indian visa to cover the ICC World Cup 2023. "I have delayed my travel to India, and I am travelling tomorrow after receiving

confirmation that Pakistan's journalists have been asked to submit their passports to obtain visas to cover the mega event. "I am happy that my conversation with the foreign office helped in achieving a positive development regarding the visa delay. "I am extremely pleased with the way the players have performed so far in the World Cup, winning both matches. The PCB management committee and the entire nation stand firmly behind the players for a successful campaign in the ongoing World Cup. "I am travelling to India to motivate the team, and my message to them before the India contest will be to play fearlessly as they have been playing throughout the event." Acknowledging Zaka Ashraf's decision to travel to India, BCCI Honorary Secretary, Jay Shah, extended a warm welcome to the PCB head. The two counterparts had a telephonic conversation, where Shah expressed his delight to have Zaka Ashraf in India. Shah further extended his hospitality by offering to facilitate him by arranging his meetings with other high-ranking officials during his stay in India.



## Briefs

## Borrell says trust between EU, China 'eroded'

DNA

BEIJING :EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell warned Friday that trust between the bloc and China had been eroded, blaming the trade imbalance between the two on "difficulties" faced by European companies in the world's second-largest economy.

Borrell arrived in China on Thursday, looking to manage the bloc's "de-risking" strategy with its largest trading partner while laying the foundations for a planned summit this year. "Trust is at the core of any human relationship, and... common trust has been eroded," Borrell told an audience at Peking University in the Chinese capital Friday.

"We have to work to rebuild this trust," he said. "It will not come back miraculously," he added. "It has to be restored."

He stressed that the trade imbalance between the bloc and China - 400 billion euros (\$423 billion) - "is not only quantitative, but also qualitative".

"It affects sectors in which we enjoy a comparative advantage... we believe that the problem is not rooted in a simple difference in productivity," he said.

"To my mind, to our mind, the cause is the result of persistent difficulties experienced by European companies when they want to gain access to the Chinese market," he said.

Borrell's trip, which was postponed twice this year and is expected to last until Saturday, started in Shanghai with a meeting with European companies on economic and business challenges, described by Borrell as an "inspiring exchange".

## Magnitude 5.2 earthquake hit Philippines

MANILA :A magnitude 5.2 earthquake hit the Philippines on Friday, the US Geological Survey said, shaking buildings in the capital, but there were no reports of casualties or damage. The shallow quake struck about 100 kilometres (62 miles) south of Manila at 8:24 am (0024 GMT) and sent students and office workers fleeing from their buildings. "So far everything's okay. No casualties although this is the epicentre," said Rafael Cuevas, a disaster agency official in Calaca city in Batangas province. "We felt a strong shake... for less than 10 seconds." Mabini municipality disaster chief Arnold Panopio said: "At first it was just a slight jolt then it became strong then stopped immediately." Panopio said no casualties or damage had been reported, but a local high school with around 2,000 students had suspended classes as a precaution. — Agencies

## S. Korea's forex trading falls in Q3

SEOUL : South Korea's foreign exchange trading fell in the third quarter owing to lower demand for some foreign currencies, South Korea's central bank data showed Friday.

The daily average transaction of foreign currencies and foreign currency derivatives in the local inter-bank market came to 30.9 billion U.S. dollars in the July-September quarter, down 4.03 billion dollars from the previous quarter, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK).

It was caused by weaker demand for some foreign currencies. Demand for FX swaps dipped 0.89 billion dollars to 14.26 billion dollars in the third quarter.

Foreign capital worth 1.33 billion dollars flowed out of the South Korean stock market in September, while the local bond market posted a net foreign fund outflow of 100 million dollars.

The daily average volatility in the won/dollar exchange rate slipped to 0.26 percent in September from 0.41 percent in the previous month. Premium on credit default swap, which measures credit risk for the five-year government bonds. — APP

## Russia pummels east Ukrainian town of Avdiivka in heavy fighting

Geolocated footage indicated that Russian forces had likely lost at least a battalion tactical group's worth of armoured vehicles in the Avdiivka offensive, it said

## NEWS DESK

MOSCOW : Russian forces pummelled the eastern Ukrainian town of Avdiivka from the ground and air on Friday, the fourth day of intense fighting in the biggest offensive by Russian forces in months. Ukraine said its forces were holding their ground but Vitaliy Barabash, the head of Avdiivka's military administration, said the town was under constant attack from air, artillery and large numbers of troops. "The battles have been going on for four days now. Fierce and really non-stop ... They are firing from everything they have available," Barabash said

in televised comments. "It was a very hot night in Avdiivka. There were several air strikes on the city itself ... the attacks do not stop day or night." The attack on Avdiivka is one of the few big assaults Russia has mounted since Ukrainian forces launched a counteroffensive in early June to try to drive out Russian troops occupying large swathes of territory in the east and south. In the last few months, Russia has focused on holding back Ukrainian forces who have made slow progress through Russian minefields and heavily fortified trenches, and on carrying out air strikes on port and grain infrastructure. Advertisement

But Kyiv says Moscow has massed troops around Avdiivka and sent in heavy equipment, enabling it to hit back hard. It says Moscow aims to encircle and capture the town, just northwest of the Russian-occupied city of Donetsk, and draw in Ukrainian troops from other fronts. Reuters was unable to verify the battlefield reports. Avdiivka is home to a big coking plant and has become a symbol of resistance as it has prevented Russia taking full control of the Donetsk region, which Russia says it has annexed. The town has not only held out against Russia's forces since its full-scale invasion in February 2022 but

has resisted capture since 2014, when Russian-backed militants seized territory in east Ukraine after Russian forces captured Crimea. "The Russians threw a lot of forces in this direction. They are betting on quantity. Our army is holding positions in heavy fighting," Andriy Yermak, the head of the presidential office, wrote on the X social media platform, formerly known as Twitter. "Avdiivka. A Ukrainian city. Our land," he wrote. Russia's Defence Ministry said on Thursday its forces had inflicted damage on Ukrainian troops in areas including Avdiivka but gave few details. Russian military bloggers have hailed limited Russian ad-

vances near Avdiivka this week. The General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces said their troops had in the past 24 hours repelled more than 20 Russian attacks in the area around Avdiivka and nearby villages. Barabash said that one person had been confirmed killed, and that two civilians who were trapped under rubble were also likely to be dead. He said the delivery of humanitarian aid and food had been halted during the intense fighting but the town was well stocked and had reserves for a few months. He estimated on Thursday that some 1,600 residents remained in Avdiivka, which had a pre-war population of

32,000. The Institute for the Study of War (ISW), an American non-profit research group, said that as of Thursday, Russian forces had not secured any major breakthroughs near Avdiivka and were unlikely to immediately cut off Ukrainian forces in the town. It estimated that Russian forces have captured 4.52 square kilometres (1.75 square miles) of territory around Avdiivka since the beginning of their offensive on Tuesday. Geolocated footage indicated that Russian forces had likely lost at least a battalion tactical group's worth of armoured vehicles in the Avdiivka offensive, it said.

## Poland's far-right seeks kingmaker role

WARSAW :Poland is gearing up for close-fought elections on Sunday that could ramp up tensions with the EU and neighbouring Ukraine, as the ruling populists bid for a third consecutive term in power against the liberal opposition led by former EU chief Donald Tusk.

While all the polls put the ruling populist Law and Justice (PiS) in first place, they show the party is highly unlikely to win an overall majority. Its most likely partner would be the far-right Confederation party, which has called for an end to aid to Ukraine. A poll this week by the Ibris Foundation conducted on October 9-10 showed PiS and Confederation together scoring a narrow majority in Poland's 460-seat parliament. But another poll by the same organisation also conducted this week showed the two parties falling just short of a majority. Instead it showed the second-placed Civic Coalition, the liberal opposition led by former EU chief and ex-premier Donald Tusk, able to form a majority with two smaller parties - Third Road and Left. "PiS is not going to form the next government in Poland," said Wojciech Przybylski, a political analyst from the Visegrad Insight group, pointing out that a PiS-Confederation alliance was unlikely. "The opposition is more likely now to form a next coalition government." — APP

## NASA shows off its first asteroid

FLORIDA : NASA early on Thursday showed off its first asteroid samples delivered last month by a spacecraft - a jumble of black dust and rubble that's the most ever returned to Earth. Scientists anticipated getting a cupful but are still unsure how much was grabbed from the carbon-rich asteroid named Bennu, almost 97 million km away. That's because the main sample chamber has yet to be opened, officials said during an event at Johnson Space Center in Houston. "It's been going slow and meticulous, but the science is already starting," said the mission's lead scientist, Dante Lauretta of the University of Arizona. NASA's Osiris-Rex spacecraft collected the samples three years ago from the surface of Bennu and then dropped them off sealed in a capsule during a flyby of Earth last month. The expected cupful was far more than the teaspoon or so that Japan brought back from a pair of missions. Black dust and particles were scattered around the outside edge of the internal sample chamber, according to Lauretta. He said there's still "a whole treasure chest of extraterrestrial material" to be studied. The samples are priceless, the preserved building blocks from the dawn of the solar system. No one at Wednesday's celebration at Johnson got to see any of the samples firsthand - just photos and video. — DNA

## Tokyo markets end lower

TOKYO : Tokyo stocks closed lower on Friday, extending falls on Wall Street as US inflation data renewed concerns over higher interest rates. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was down 0.55 percent, or 178.67 points, to end at 32,315.99, while the broader Topix index lost 1.44 percent, or 33.74 points, to 2,308.75. The dollar stood at 149.70 yen, against 149.79 yen in New York late Thursday. A forecast-topping US inflation report revived fears the Federal Reserve will hike interest rates again before the end of the year. The reading showed the consumer prices index rose slightly more than expected in September, highlighting the tough work still to do in the battle against inflation. While not disastrous, the CPI update "did imply that markets might have been too quick to dismiss the possibility of a November rate hike after this week's dovish Fed nudge," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said. Led by Wall Street falls, Japan's Nikkei dropped as well, but not as sharply as it should have, IwaiCosmo Securities said. — APP

## SL looks for Saudi support in development process

COLOMBO : Sri Lanka is looking forward to Saudi assistance in its development process, Foreign Minister Ali Sabry said on Thursday after talks with the Kingdom's deputy foreign minister on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Rim Association meeting in Colombo. Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed Abdulkarim Al-Khuraji was on an official trip to Sri Lanka this week, representing Riyadh at the IORA Council of Ministers meeting. Saudi Arabia joined the regional organization this year as a dialogue partner. "We discussed the bilateral relationship and how to strengthen that relationship. Saudi (Arabia) thanks Sri Lanka for unwavering and continuous support for its bid for the 2030 Expo and pledged to strengthen further engagement in Sri Lanka's development process, particularly by providing further employment opportunities as well as further investment," Sabry told Arab News. Sri Lanka was one of the first countries to support



Saudi Arabia's bid to host World Expo 2030 in Riyadh, which the Kingdom officially submitted in September 2022.

The Saudi Embassy in Colombo said after the meeting that the ministers had also "reviewed bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka and opportunities

to develop them in all fields to achieve the common interests." The island nation expanded cooperation with the Kingdom in May, following the first session of the Saudi-Sri Lankan Joint Committee in Riyadh. The two countries also marked a new step in bilateral relations then, as they signed a memorandum

on political consultations. This development was followed by Sri Lanka reorienting its diplomacy to prioritize the Middle East in August, as Colombo hopes to increase people-to-people relations and boost arrangements to facilitate sustainable commerce ties with the region. — DNA

## Burp tax riles New Zealand farmers

WELLINGTON :New Zealand has a plan to tax farmers for their livestock's burps and farts - and it's causing a stink ahead of Saturday's general elections. The economy is driven by agriculture with around 10 million cattle and 25 million sheep roaming the nation's pastures. So in the fight against climate change, New Zealand's government has targeted livestock as it drives towards a target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Just under half of New Zealand's emissions come from agriculture, and cattle are the main culprits. Their belches and farts contain methane, which is far less abundant in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide, but is responsible for around 30 percent of the global rise in temperatures to date. To help combat global warming, New Zealand was one of the first countries to announce it will start pricing agricultural emissions - in effect taxing burps and farts from livestock. Farmers will be taxed according to farm area, livestock numbers, production and their use of nitrogen fertiliser, in an effort to cut agricultural emissions by between 24 and 47 percent by 2050. Amid fears the pricing will hurt profits and threaten livelihoods, farmers held nationwide protests last October in New Zealand's main cities. A year later and with general elections looming Saturday, emissions pricing is still weighing on the minds of New Zealand's farmers. "I think it will impact on how agricultural rural communities vote this election," Kate Wyeth, a sheep and beef farmer near the capital Wellington on the North Island, told AFP. "Particularly whichever party - or group of parties - is looking at giving the agricultural industry time to adapt new technologies that aren't even available to us yet." To give farmers more time to get ready, the Labour government, which lags nationwide in opinion polls, has pushed the start of the emissions pricing back from the first to the fourth quarter of 2025. Opposition centre-right party National has said it will push it back further to 2030 if elected. Wyeth said that until technologies are developed - for example, feeds given to livestock that reduce methane emissions - farmers feel their only choice is to reduce livestock numbers. — APP



BRUSSELS : Ambassador Anna Baloch called on the Iulia Matei, Permanent Representative of Romania to the European Union. Exchanged views on areas of mutual interest incl. latest regional and Int'l developments. — DNA

## US readiness for simultaneous China-Russia conflicts

## FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON : The United States must prepare for possible simultaneous wars with Russia and China by expanding its conventional forces, strengthening alliances and enhancing its nuclear weapons modernization program, a congressionally appointed bipartisan panel said on Thursday. The report from the Strategic Posture Commission comes amid tensions with China over Taiwan and other issues and worsening frictions with Russia over its invasion of Ukraine. A senior official involved in the report declined to say if the panel's intelligence briefings showed any Chinese and Russian nuclear weapons cooperation. "We worry ... there may be ultimate coordination between

them in some way, which gets us to this two-war construct," the official said on condition of anonymity.

The findings would spend current US national security strategy calling for winning one conflict while deterring another and require huge defense spending increases with uncertain congressional support. "We do recognize budget realities, but we also believe the nation must make these investments," the Democratic chair, Madelyn Crendon, a former deputy head of the agency that oversees US nuclear weapons, and the vice chair, Jon Kyl, a retired Republican senator, said in the report's preface. Addressing a briefing held to release the report, Kyl said the president and Congress must "take the case to the Amer-

ican people" that higher defense spending is a small price to pay "to hopefully preclude" a possible nuclear war involving the United States, China and Russia. The report contrasts with US President Joe Biden's position that the current US nuclear arsenal is sufficient to deter the combined forces of Russia and China. The arsenal's make-up "still exceeds what is necessary to hold a sufficient number of adversary targets at risk so as to deter enemy nuclear attack," the Arms Control Association advocacy group said in response to the report. "The United States and its allies must be ready to deter and defeat both adversaries simultaneously," the Strategic Posture Commission said. "The US-led international order and the val-

ues it upholds are at risk from the Chinese and Russian authoritarian regimes." Congress in 2022 created the panel of six Democrats and six Republicans to assess long-term threats to the United States and recommend changes in US conventional and nuclear forces. The panel accepted a Pentagon forecast that China's rapid nuclear arsenal expansion likely will give it 1,500 nuclear warheads by 2035, confronting the United States with a second major nuclear-armed rival for the first time. The Chinese and Russian threats will become acute in the 2027-2035 timeframe so "decisions need to be made now in order for the nation to be prepared," said the 145-page report. The report said the 30-year US nuclear arms

modernization program, which began in 2010 and was estimated in 2017 to cost around \$400 billion by 2046, must be fully funded to upgrade all warheads, delivery systems and infrastructure on schedule. Other recommendations included deploying more tactical nuclear weapons in Asia and Europe, developing plans to deploy some or all reserve US nuclear warheads, and production of more B-21 stealth bombers and new Columbia-class nuclear submarines beyond the numbers now planned. The panel also called for boosting the "size, type, and posture" of US and allied conventional forces. If such measures are not taken, the United States "will likely" have to increase its reliance on nuclear weapons, the report said.



## Briefs

### China deported 'large number' of N Koreans

PYONGYANG: South Korea says China has forcibly repatriated a "large number" of North Korean defectors. This follows recent reports from human rights groups claiming that as many as 600 North Koreans have been sent back. Seoul said on Friday that the reports appear to be true, but did not confirm the exact number who were repatriated. Human Rights Watch (HRW) said the defectors, mostly women, could face imprisonment, sexual violence or even death once back in the North. Sources in China have reported that hundreds were put on trucks and sent from their detention centres to North Korea on Monday night. "The government's position is that under no circumstances should North Koreans living abroad be forcibly repatriated against their will. Forced repatriation against one's will is a violation of the international norm of non-refoulement," said Koo Byoung-sam, a spokesman for the South's Unification Ministry. Non-refoulement means refugees and asylum seekers should not be made to return to countries where they could face persecution. Mr Koo said South Korea has protested to China and reiterated its position. He declined to give further details. UN special rapporteur on human rights in North Korea Elizabeth Salmon estimates that some 2,000 North Koreans are being held in China for crossing the border without permission. China does not recognise North Korean defectors as refugees. - Agencies

### Iran holds rallies in support of Palestinians

TEHRAN: State-organized rallies were held across Iran on Friday in support of Tehran's Palestinian Islamist ally Hamas and against the ongoing Israeli bombardment of the blockaded Gaza Strip, state TV reported. Israel's military on Friday called for all civilians of Gaza City - more than 1 million people - to relocate south within 24 hours, as it amassed tanks for an expected ground offensive in response to a devastating attack by Hamas militants. "Death to Israel. Death to Zionism!" shouted Iranian demonstrators, many carrying Palestinian flags and those of the powerful Iranian-backed Lebanese armed group Hezbollah. Tens of thousands of protesters demonstrated in countries around the Middle East and beyond on Friday in support of Palestinians and condemnation of Israel as it intensified its siege of the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

# Abbas calls for immediate end to Israeli terrorism in Gaza

He also said that humanitarian corridors must be allowed in the blockaded coastal enclave immediately to prevent a humanitarian disaster

## NEWS DESK

AMMAN: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has told US Secretary of State Antony Blinken that he "rejects the forced displacement" of Palestinians from Gaza, following Israel's order for all of the enclave's civilians to move to the south. Abbas said at Friday's meeting in Jordan's capital Amman that such an event would constitute a "second Nakba", referring to the mass displacement of Palestinians in the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. He also said that humanitarian corridors must be allowed in the blockaded coastal enclave immediately to prevent a humanitarian disaster, the report said. Al Jazeera's diplomatic editor James Bays said Blinken was in Jordan to negotiate, not to ask for the cessation of hostilities. "Blinken is expected to also travel to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt to make progress on the release of American captives held by Hamas and negotiate the safe exit of 500 to 600 US citizens or dual nationals currently in Gaza," he said. "The diplomatic trip is also aiming to avoid



a regional escalation of the war. But not the cessation of hostilities. He is not saying Israel should stop the aggression on Gaza," Bays added. Earlier on Friday, Blinken met Jordan's King Abdullah II who also called for "opening humanitarian corridors to allow for the entry of urgent medical and re-

lief aid to Gaza, and protecting civilians and stopping the escalation and war on Gaza", a statement from the royal court said. Meanwhile, thousands of people gathered in Amman on Friday for a demonstration in support of Palestinians. More than 10,000 people massed in the centre of

the city near the Grand Hussein Mosque. They held banners, reading: "The victory march will continue, solidarity with Palestine" and "Stand with Palestine, Liberated Palestine". There was a heavy police presence in the area, according to the AFP news agency. Witnesses said police fired tear gas to halt about 500 demonstrators who had reached a security checkpoint outside Amman on a highway leading to a main border crossing with Israel. Jordan is worried that a regional widening of violence arising from the Israel-Hamas war could have repercussions for itself given that a large percentage of its population is Palestinian. Israel is in the middle of a war to "destroy" Hamas, an armed group that rules the Gaza Strip, after the Palestinian fighters stormed its southern border over the weekend and killed more than 1,300 people. Israel has since been pounding Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip, where 1,537 people have been killed. The Israeli military said it has dropped 6,000 bombs on the Gaza Strip since October 7, nearly matching the number of bombs the US used in Afghanistan in one year. Afghanistan is almost 1,800 times bigger than the besieged enclave.

## MQM-P fires fresh salvo at PPP

### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) senior leader Mustafa Kamal fired a fresh broadside at the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Friday. Expressing his thoughts in Karachi, Kamal said, "Our party is stronger than ever. The MQM-P's time is coming. Now one could dictate to us through phones." He took a swipe at the PPP, saying, "The PPP has delivered nothing for the people of Karachi." Few days back, the MQM-P and GDA on Tuesday called for the transparent polls. Addressing a press conference in Karachi flanked by GDA general secretary Dr Safdar Abbasi, MQM-P bigwig Farooq Sattar said: "There is a dire need to provide level playing field to all the political parties to ensure transparent general elections." "Despite the fact that the Sindh chief minister has been changed, corruption still prevails in the province. If the situation remains the same, the corrupt mafia will continue to dominate across the province," he rued.

## Protests against privatisation of schools spread across Punjab

LAHORE: Punjab police have intensified crackdown on teachers and government employees amid swelling protests across Punjab against amendments in leave encashment and pension rules, besides privatisation policy of public schools, arresting more than 100 public servants including teachers. In Lahore, the police conducted a crackdown on government employees including teachers protesting outside the Civil Secretariat to press the provincial government for accepting their demands and arrested over 100 people. In Faisalabad, protesters pelted stones on police party. The law enforcers resorted to teargas shelling. Protests were also held in Gujranwala, Gujrat, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Mian Channu by teachers. In Hafizabad, students also participated along with teachers to give vent to their anger against arrests of teachers' representatives. After protest demonstrations, police booked 125 students, two headmasters and several teachers for blocking motorway. In Arifwala, teachers took out rallies in favour of their demands. In this regard, there is no class work in the educational institutions for the last three days. Teachers locked their classrooms in Pattokki to show their displeasure and concern over amendments in leave encashment and gratuity rules. They also demanded of the government to release the teachers representatives. In Gujranwala, teaching staff after locking the classrooms boycotted the curricular activities. Male and female teachers gathered outside the deputy commissioner office and held protest demonstration. Thousands of male and female teachers from across the district are taking part in the protest. Teachers representatives have demanded of the government to withdraw amendments in the leave encashment and pension rules (service rules), stop privatisation of government schools and give them the group insurance on retirement. They threatened to start holding protests on daily basis if their demands were not met by the government. Lahore police have conducted a crackdown on government employees including teachers protesting outside Civil Secretariat for demands and arrested 91 people. - DNA

## Germany migrants: Seven dead in car crash

BERLIN: Seven people have died after a crowded minivan driven by a suspected people-smuggler overturned, say German police. More than 20 migrants, including some children, are thought to have been in the van. The driver attempted to evade police at a road check before losing control near Ampfing in Bavaria, authorities say. The accident happened amid a rise in people-smuggling which has led several Central and Eastern European countries to impose border checks. Police say they tried to intercept the Mercedes Vito van at around 03:00 (01:00 GMT) on Friday. The driver of the vehicle, which had an Austrian licence plate, accelerated before rolling over several times at a junction on the A94 motorway, between the Austrian border and Munich. - DNA

## Punjab IGP sees 'evil country' behind Sialkot murders

### DNA

LAHORE: Punjab IGP Dr Usman Anwar Friday held an "evil country" responsible for the terror attack in Sialkot that took place earlier this week. The provincial police chief's statement comes two days after three assailants shot dead two people and injured an imam in a mosque within the limits of Sadder Police Station in Daska, one of the four tehsils in Sialkot. "A terrorist attack took place in Pakistan, which was planned in another country," Dr Anwar said, speaking during a presser in Lahore. He, however, didn't mention the country. The police official maintained that the involvement of external elements in the attack

was confirmed from the crime scene, while the "accused were arrested" and will be produced in a court of law soon. According to a report by a Pakistani newspaper the assailants in Wednesday's attack had entered Masjid Al Noor at Mundayke during Fajr prayers and opened fire at people praying. As a result, the mosque in charge Shahid Mehmood and security guard Hashim were martyred, while Imam Abdul Waheed received bullet injuries. Soon after the incident, District Police Officer Sialkot Hassain Iqbal reached the spot and ordered investigations. Giving an update on the probe today, the Punjab police chief said that the culprits behind the terror activity were traced within 24 hours, while the allegations against Pakistan were proven false.

## Williamson, Mitchell power New Zealand to win

### SPORTS DESK

CHENNAI: New Zealand carried on to their fantastic form and recorded the third consecutive win in the ongoing ICC World Cup 2023 against Bangladesh at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai, India on Friday. Captain Kane Williamson - who marked his return to ODI cricket after a long time following knee surgery - scored an unbeaten 78-run knock and helped his side record a crucial eight-wicket win that saw them going all the way to the top of the points table. However, in the 39th over, Williamson retired hurt as the ball hit his thumb while he was crossing the wicket in the previous over. Chasing the target of 246 runs, the Kiwis had their fair share of struggle at the start as they had not just lost the opener Rachin Ravindra, but were also finding it difficult to score runs as they were 37-1 in the first 10 overs. However, Williamson and Devon Conway held forces together and accelerated the innings but the latter fell prey to

Shakib Al Hasan for 45 runs as he was trying to play a reverse sweep. Despite losing his counterpart, Kane kept going and built an astounding 108-run stand with Daryl Mitchell, who top-scored for New Zealand scoring 89 runs at an impressive 132.83 strike rate. Mitchell played the winning shot for his side as he sealed a significant win for the Black Caps with 43 balls to spare. Batting first, Bangladesh met with early blows, losing their four batters for just 56 runs in 12.1 overs and were on their way to an early collapse. However, a 96-run partnership between the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim and Shakib provided the much-needed stability with the former scoring 66, while the latter contributed to 40 runs. After the two experienced batters departed, another veteran, Mahmudullah provided some late runs to his side and took his team to a competitive 245-run total on the tricky wicket of Chennai. Lockie Ferguson picked three wickets to his name, Matt Henry and Trent Boult got two each while Mitchell Santner and Glenn Phillips took one each.

## Pakistan 'very comfortably' placed to meet IMF targets

### DNA

MARRAKECH: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor Jameel Ahmad on Friday assured investors that the country is "very comfortably placed to meet" International Monetary Fund's (IMF) targets for end-September, net international reserves (NIR) and net domestic assets (NDA). The governor made the assurance during his meeting with key international investors during events organised by global banks, including Barclays, JP Morgan, Standard Bank, and Jefferies on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank meetings in Marrakech, Morocco. As per a State Bank press release, the investors were briefed about the recent macroeconomic developments, policy responses to current challenges, and the outlook of Pakistan's economy, and also answered their questions. The governor informed the investors that the "current policy mix is geared" to achieve stabilisation by addressing the "macroeconomic imbalances". He stated that the SBP was among the first central banks that began to tighten monetary policy in the wake of the rising inflation globally. However, certain domestic challenges such

as the 2022 floods had "complicated SBP's efforts to bring down inflation". "Stabilisation measures have started yielding results. Inflation has come down to 31.4% in September 2023 after peaking at 38.0% in May 2023 and is expected to continue its downward trajectory over the coming months, whereas the external account has improved considerably and foreign exchange buffers are being built up," the governor was quoted. He added that the central bank expects inflation to "come down significantly during the second half of this fiscal year". "Going forward, the Stand-By arrangement with the IMF is expected to support the ongoing policy efforts to stabilise the economy," said the governor. He stated that the "foreign exchange buffers are improving with both build-up in reserves and reduction in forward foreign exchange liabilities". He explained that since January 2023, SBP's foreign exchange reserves improved from a low of \$3.1 billion to \$7.6 billion as of the end of September 2023. The reserve build-up was largely supported by non-debt-creating inflows amid favourable market conditions. "At the same time, SBP's forward foreign exchange liabilities have

declined and the forward book target of \$4.2 billion for end-September 2023 agreed with the IMF has already been met by a wide margin. Similarly, SBP is also very comfortably placed to meet the other end-September IMF targets, including Net International Reserves (NIR) and Net Domestic Assets (NDA)," said the governor. The governor also informed the investors that Pakistan is "on-track to address the longstanding structural weaknesses", adding that with the support from multilateral and bilateral partners the country "would be able to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth" in the medium term. Last week, a brokerage firm report had stated that Pakistan was likely to receive the next tranche of the \$3 billion stand-by arrangement with the IMF even though it may miss a few deadlines. Topline Securities said the country had met the targets for net international reserves, net domestic assets, and foreign currency swap/forward position as of the end of June 2023 but highlighted that Islamabad had missed the targets of the primary deficit, which measures the fiscal balance excluding interest payments, and for external public debt disbursements.

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