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Asks PTI to withdraw protest call amid SCO moot Pakistan ready to warmly host CHG-SCO meeting; matters within SCO framework to be discussed: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday said that Pakistan was ready to host Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting on October 15-16 in Islamabad in which different significant issues would be discussed under the SCO framework.

Talking to media after his visit to review arrangements for the upcoming CHG-SCO meeting, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that

certain countries had requested for bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the CHG-SCO which were finalized.

Replying to a query, he said that India had not requested for such bilateral meeting and only the matters related to SCO framework would be discussed by the SCO member states at the multilateral forum.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar also accompanied the deputy prime minister and foreign minister during a walk with the mediapersons to provide

them first-hand information about the preparations of SCO summit.

About invitation to Afghanistan, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that since 2021, the Observers Status of that country had been virtually suspended as Afghanistan had neither been invited to nor participated in SCO meetings.

Therefore, he said, Pakistan could not take decision alone in this regard as the decisions were taken on the SCO forum by the member states.

Dar, to another ques-

tion, said Pakistan is a host to CHG-SCO and would fully meet the responsibility.

About the North-South and South-South connectivity, he said the discussions with the relevant countries were in progress and continuing on the bilateral and multilateral levels.

But within the SCO framework and protocol, certain matters would be discussed under specific scope of discussions and within its contours, he fur-

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ISLAMABAD: Pak Army soldiers and police personals checking a motorcyclist in front of Parliament House at Constitution Avenue, during security high alert at "red zone" area ahead of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar along with Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar talking with media men after visit to review arrangements for the upcoming CHG-SCO meeting

Tarar lauds China for helping Pakistan overcome energy crisis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday extended deep gratitude to China for helping Pakistan to overcome worst energy crisis faced by the country in the early years of previous decade.

Delivering his speech at the China Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan ceremony here, he said the friendship between Pakistan and China spanned over decades and many generations.

"The friendship between Pakistan and China is being passed down from generation to generation," the minister said adding that the people of Pakistan and China had emotional attachment to each other.

Tarar remarked that Beijing had supported Islamabad in all circum-

stances and this friendship had gone through storms and difficult times successfully and proved unbreakable. He said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was the manifestation of closeness and ideal friendship between the two countries.

"CPEC is not only a project for the prosperity of Pakistan and China, but also for the entire region," the minister opined.

Energy projects including Sahiwal Coal power project, Thar Coal Project, Karachi Port Energy project were launched by China under CPEC. He said in 2013, when Pakistan was facing worst energy crisis and 8 to 19 hours load shedding was a matter of routine, several energy projects were launched under CPEC and these projects helped Pakistan overcome energy shortage.

PTI to delay Oct 15 protest if meeting with Imran granted

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced that it will hold 'massive' protests on October 15 at Islamabad's D-Chowk, if the party is not allowed to meet party founder Imran Khan.

While speaking to a private TV Channel, PTI Central Secretary Information Sheikh Waqas Akram set a condition for the government to withdraw from the announced protest. "Allow party founder Imran Khan's meeting with his family and lawyers or face massive protests on October 15," Sheikh Waqas Akram said.

He said that the government has banned meetings with Imran Khan for the last five or six weeks, adding that even lawyers and family members are not allowed to meet him. We have no contact with our leader (Imran Khan) and reports of mistreatment in jail are concerning.

Pakistan Army secures gold medal in Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2024

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Army's team has been awarded the gold medal in Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2024, which concluded today in Wales, United Kingdom.

According to a press release issued here, the event, held from the 4th to the 13th of this month, marked the sixty-fifth anniversary of the exercise, which upholds demanding professional standards.

Patrols from around the globe had to move tactically across inhospitable terrain, covering a distance of sixty kilometers within forty-eight hours while completing specialized tasks in a contested environment.

This year, one hundred and twenty-eight teams from forty-two countries participated in the exercise, and the Pakistan Army's team demonstrated exceptional performance and secured the gold medal.

This year, Exercise Cambrian Patrol celebrated its 65th year and has retained its demanding professional standards; patrols all across from the globe had to move tactically across inhospitable terrain, covering a distance of 60 kilometers (kms) within 48 hours, completing specialist tasks in a contested environment, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.



WALES: Pakistan Army Team participate in Exercise Cambrian Patrol-2024, held in Wales. This year, 128 teams from 42 Countries participated in the Exercise and out of all these teams, Pakistan Army's Team showed Exceptional Performance in the exercise and has been awarded with the Gold Medal.

Stringent security plan adopted for SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal authorities were preparing on Sunday to shut down the capital ahead of a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit — an event of international importance.

In a statement, Islamabad Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Nasir Ali Rizvi said that a 'comprehensive' security plan had been chalked out ahead of the all-important summit in the federal capital.

"Security personnel will be deployed at funnel areas, hotels and places where foreign delegations are staying," he said, adding that they ensured the security of foreign leaders, delegations and guests.

Furthermore, Rizvi said search and information-based operations were underway, with personnel of the Pakistan Army, intelligence agencies, Frontier Corps (FC) and Rangers performing their duties.

The police chief pointed out that more than 9,000 personnel of the police force have been deployed for security. "An integrated traffic plan has also been issued for the convenience of citizens."

Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar and Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin will be among the senior regional government officials attending the two-day conference on Tuesday and Wednesday (October 15-16).

In the weeks leading up to the summit, the government has introduced new laws that restrict protest in the federal capital.

PM reiterates Pakistan's commitment to achievement of highest global standards on 'World Standards Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has reiterated the commitment of the Government of Pakistan to support their relevant organizations achieving adherence to highest global standards and in accelerating Pakistan's journey toward sustainable economic development.

In a message on the World Standards Day being observed on October 14, the prime minister said that Pakistan joined the international community to commemorate the World Standards Day.

The Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), a National Standards Body, was

actively engaging with the global community and making efforts to inspire their domestic manufacturers to adopt standardization and quality-focused practices, thereby fostering a culture of excellence throughout the country, he added.

The prime minister said the theme for this year as set by International Organization for Standardization (ISO), "Shared Vision for a Better World," underscored the essential role of reliability and trust in driving the success of both the manufacturing and service sectors.

"Standards are indeed the foundation that makes everyday life functions seamless.

This theme invites us to reassess the competitiveness of our products in the international market," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying.

In line with the commitment to public safety, health and environment, the prime minister said that he was proud to highlight that the PSQCA had developed rigorous safety standards for automotive vehicles to protect the lives of our citizens.

"Noteworthy achievement is that it has set a limit of 2% on industrially produced Trans Fatty Acids (TFA) in food products, a critical step towards reducing cardiovascular diseases in Pakistan.



KARACHI: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) delegation, led by Secretary General Ahsan Iqbal, Advisor to PM Rana Sanaullah, and Federal Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, meets with MQM-Pakistan leadership, including Chairman Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, at Pakistan House.

'No democratic person can go against constitutional package': Ahsan Iqbal

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives professor Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry on Sunday said that no democratic person could disagree with the Constitutional Amendment Package of Pakistan.

He said that the coalition government had been successful to turn around the economy of the country.

He expressed these views after a meeting with MQM-Pakistan leadership including its Chairman and Federal for Education and Professional Training Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui at MQM-Pakistan's Pakistan House.

Advisor to PM on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah and Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar were also present on the occasion.

Ahsan Iqbal said that they provided amount of time to some parties wished to review and consider constitutional amendment. "We built a consensus, which was a democratic process", he added.

He said that the leadership of MQM-Pakistan had continuously assisted with its suggestions on different issues including IPPs and along with them they successfully resolved IPPs issue.

Minister said that they worked very hard to save Pakistan from economic default. It's coalition partners including MQM-Pakistan also played role in the formation of government after general elections.

Recalling the events of past, he said that the democratic process of the country was derailed in the past through Article 58-2B and later a political consensus was developed and constitutional 58-2B was revoked but another way of 58-2B was paved way through courts and a series of disqualifying elected Prime Minister continued.

Chinese premier Li due in Islamabad today for a four-day visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Premier Li Qiang will lead their respective delegations to comprehensively discuss all aspects of Pakistan-China relations including economic and trade ties and cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The two sides will also discuss regional and global developments.

The Chinese premier will call on President Asif Ali Zardari and hold meetings with parliamentary leaders and senior military leadership of Pakistan. He will also attend the Meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization being held in Islamabad on October 15-16.

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KARACHI: Police clash with Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) activists for violating Section 144 when they demonstrated against the killing of blasphemy suspect Dr Shahnawaz Kunbhar and "extremism in Karachi.

Over 100 arrested in Karachi as protesters defy Section 144, clash with police

Monitoring Desk

KARACHI: Clashes between protesters and police erupted in parts of Karachi with the law enforcers arresting hundreds, including women, for violating Section 144 imposed a day earlier.

Participants of the 'Sindh Rawadari March' clashed with the police outside the press club when they violated Section 144 — banning demonstrations and assemblies of more than five persons across the metropolis.

The police officials noted that over 100 protesters, affiliated with separate

groups, were taken into custody from different parts of the metropolis, including outside Karachi Press Club, Metropole Hotel and Jinnah Hospital.

Moreover, sources said that four policemen sustained injuries amid the clashes and have been shifted to hospital.

Speaking to journalists, South Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Asad Raza said that "at least 20 people have been detained so far, including women."

More police personnel have been deployed on all the roads leading to the press club.

APC rejects elections as India's ploy to divert attention from rights abuses in IIOJK

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): All Parties Conference has rejected the recent elections in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, labeling them a diversion by the Modi-led Indian regime from the severe human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Chaired by the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the APC issued a declaration emphasizing that these elections cannot substitute the Kashmiris' right to self-determination and demanded India allow Kashmiris to freely decide their future.

The conference paid tribute to the resilient people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir who continue to

resist oppression and uphold their freedom struggle. The leaders also saluted the unwavering spirit of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference and the Kashmiri youth, who persist despite facing severe Indian repression.

Expressing solidarity with Palestine, the conference condemned Israeli aggression and urged the United Nations and the OIC to intervene and stop the genocide of Palestinians. The leaders expressed full solidarity with the Palestinian people. The conference strongly condemned India's attempts to create unity in Azad Kashmir and praised the sacrifices of the Pakistani armed forces defending the Line of Control.

Shah Farman resigns as senior advisor to KP CM

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Farman has resigned from the cabinet due to his responsibilities as a member of the accountability committee formed to monitor the performance of the provincial government.

According to the resignation, Shah Farman maintained that as a member of the accountability committee his role as an advisor would be affected therefore he had resigned as an advisor. It is pertinent to mention here that Shah Farman had been selected as a member of committee to monitor the performance of the provincial government and cabinet members besides corrupt practices.

Governor urges PTI to defer protest call in national interest

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) should stop pursuing selfish political goals and call off the October 15 protest at D-Chowk, Islamabad in the larger national interest.

In an interview with APP here on Sunday, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that prime ministers of nine countries would arrive in Pakistan to attend the SCO summit on October 15 and matter of pride for political forces present a positive instead of taking to "I understand force but when it national prestige, politics, avoid put Pakistan adding that fall if PTI called off week or so. On the Governor Punjab said PTI leadership needed to understand that politics of obstinacy had brought them to the verge where one wrong step could be fatal for their firebrand politics, adding that there was no room for stubbornness in politics. He urged the PTI leadership to take the path of dialogue and play productive role in taking the country ahead rather than leading it to anarchy.



Public cooperation crucial for effective disaster management: PDMA

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab Director General Irfan Ali Kathia has reaffirmed the authority's commitment to utilizing all available resources to address natural disasters. In a message on International Disaster Reduction Day, observed globally on Sunday, Kathia highlighted the

Illegal bird dealers fined

SARGODHA (APP): A grand operation of the Wildlife Department against illegal bird dealers is underway. During the operation, eight illegal bird dealers were arrested and fined for violations and 30 protected wild birds were recovered from their shops and sealed. Deputy Director Wildlife Sargodha Region, Arooj Zaheer, along with her team including inspector Ali Raza Abbas, Mudasir Abbas and Ansar Riaz raided Kotmomin, Bhalwal.



MUZAFFARABAD: Chief Justice High Court Sadaqat Hussain Raja addressing the swearing in ceremony of the newly elected officials of the Central Bar.

Practical steps underway to check inflation: Minister

SARGODHA (APP): Provincial Minister of Zakat & Usher and Secretary General Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz Sargodha division, Rana Munawar Ghous Khan, on Sunday said that the government is committed to checking inflation and increasing trade to provide relief to poor people.

Talking to APP, he said that the federal government and all provincial governments were seriously working to address all the current issues under the leadership of Prime Minister

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. He said that federal and provincial governments would have to resolve the challenges of inflation. "The country is passing through a difficult situation. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has set conditions for the government to restrict subsidies.

The government will have to make efforts for balancing supply and demand chain to provide relief to the common man. Improvement in the trade sector is a big challenge for us," he added.

Health minister inquires after girl at Children's Hospital

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Raffique on Sunday inquired after four-year-old Dua Fatima of Bahawalnagar at the Children's Hospital Lahore. Acting on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the minister reviewed the medical care being provided to the patient. During the visit, Professor Tipu Sultan, Medical Director of the hospital, briefed the minister on treatment and facilities available for Dua Fatima.

12 dead, 1585 injured in 1482 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least twelve persons were killed and 1585 injured in 1482 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 677 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 908 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed those 874 drivers, 78 underage drivers,

Azma Bukhari says: Governor should refrain from interfering in administrative affairs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said that the Punjab Governor should refrain from interfering in administrative affairs and avoid playing the role of the opposition, like Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf. Bukhari pointed out that in Sindh, schools are often found with animals tied up, and there is a rampant culture of cheating and selling entire examination centres. She noted that in the province where the PPP has been in the government for 16 years, a 19th-century education system still prevails. She highlighted



MULTAN: Members of Civil Society are holding protest demonstration against killing of Sani-e-Zahra and demanding justice for her, held in Multan.

Shazia Rizwan leads dengue awareness dengue walk

RAWALPINDI (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Information Punjab, Shazia Rizwan on Sunday visited Pir Wadhai Station various bus terminals to examine implementation of dengue SOPs. Talking on the occasion Shazia intimated stern actions against violations of SOPs devised by the health authority to prevent the dengue fever. She visited the workshops and washrooms of the bus terminals and expressed her satisfaction regarding



GUJRAT: Punjab Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhary Shafay Hussain inaugurates 54th camp at Aisha Bashir Hospital.

PCP & MiracleFeet join hands to set free Clubfoot Clinic in AJK

PESHAWAR (APP): In a groundbreaking healthcare initiative, Paraplegic Center Peshawar (PCP) has partnered with MiracleFeet, a leading US-based NGO, to make life-changing clubfoot treatment possible for the children of Azad Kashmir as well.

Muzaffarabad. This clinic is set to transform the lives of children suffering from clubfoot by providing high-quality, 100% free treatment in AJK as well. Dr. Syed Muhammad Ilyas, CEO of PCP, played a pioneer role in substantiating the idea wherein he made MiracleFeet's Regional Program Officer, Dr. Faisal Intiaz, to collaborate with the senior management of Helping Hand in Islamabad.

International News

Palestinian officials say 22 killed in Israeli airstrikes

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: The Israeli military renewed its orders for Palestinians in the northern Gaza Strip to leave their homes and shelters as troops continue a weeklong offensive against militants. Most of the fighting has centered in and around Jabaliya, which has been pounded by Israeli war jets and artillery. Residents said they have been trapped inside their homes and shelters.

Israel also has been escalating its campaign against Hezbollah with waves of heavy airstrikes across Lebanon and a ground invasion at the border after a year of exchanges of fire. Israel is now at war with Hamas in Gaza and Hamas' ally Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not say how many were fighters but say women and children make up more than half of the fatalities. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced

Lebanon's Health Ministry says Israeli strikes kill more than a dozen

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Israeli airstrikes hit multiple areas in southern and eastern Lebanon, killing more than a dozen people and causing damage to hospitals, the Lebanese Health Ministry said, as fighting with the Hezbollah militant group continued.

Nine people were killed in Maisra village in the northeast, with 15 wounded, the ministry said. Four people were killed and 18 wounded in an apartment building on the edge of Barja south of Beirut.

The ministry said Rayak and Tal Chihia hospitals in the Bekaa Valley were damaged, while seven people were wounded in strikes on Brial and Temnine in Baalbek-Hermel province. In Nabatieh, eight people were wounded.

Beirut's southern suburbs, which have previously faced heavy bombardment, have not been struck in the past 48 hours. Hezbollah functions as a state within a state there.

Sister of North Korean leader lashes out at South Korean drones

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea's Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of leader Kim Jong Un, on Saturday warned Seoul of a "horrible disaster" if South Korean drones are found flying over Pyongyang.

She also criticised the South Korean military over its response to the North's claim that South Korean drones entered the sky of the capital city in a statement carried by state media KCNA.

On Friday, North Korea's foreign ministry accused South Korea of sending drones into Pyongyang at night this week and last and that the intrusion demanded retaliatory action.

In response, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it could not confirm the North's accusa-

Poland to suspend right to asylum after border tensions

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Poland plans to temporarily suspend the right to asylum as part of a strategy to limit illegal migration amidst tensions with Belarus, which Warsaw accuses of channelling migrants across its border.

"One of the elements of the migration strategy will be the temporary territorial suspension of the right to asylum," Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on Saturday. "I will demand this, I will demand recognition in Europe for this decision," he told a congress held by his liberal Civic Coalition (KO) grouping, the largest member of Poland's coalition government. Tusk said the right to asylum was being used by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, Russian President Vladimir Putin and by people smugglers in a way that goes against the essence of the right to asylum.



BEIRUT: Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf waves during his visit to the site of an Israeli air strike in the Basta neighbourhood.

Fifth UN staffer hit, as Israel threatens to target ambulances

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: The Israeli army on Saturday threatened to target ambulances in southern Lebanon, claiming they are being used by Hezbollah to "transport fighters and weapons".

The warning came on a day when a fifth staffer of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was wounded in yet another strike, after Israel admitted that its forces fired a "threat" near a UN peacekeeping position and

that a "hit" was responsible for wounding two Blue Helmets. The incidents of shooting at UN peacekeepers in past few days have sparked a fierce diplomatic backlash. The Israeli military on Saturday threatened the people of Lebanon not to return to their homes.

"For your own protection, do not return to your homes until further notice. Do not go south; anyone who goes south may put his life at risk," the military warned.

Nicaragua breaks diplomatic relations with Israel

Monitoring Desk
MANAGUA: Nicaragua is breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel, the Central American nation said on Friday, calling the Israeli government "fascist" and "genocidal." Nicaragua's government, in a statement, said the break in relations was due to Israel's attacks on Palestinian territories.

The nation's congress had, earlier in the day, passed a resolution requesting Nicaragua take action to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the Gaza conflict. The conflict, the Nicaraguan government said, now also "extends against Lebanon and gravely threatens Syria, Yemen and Iran."

Iran has no red line in defending itself, foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran said on Sunday that it has "no red lines" in defending itself, as the Middle East anxiously braced for Israel's response to missile attacks from its arch-foe two weeks ago.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi's comments appeared intended to dispel suggestions that Iran would absorb an Israeli strike without a further response, as Tehran did earlier this year when Israel last struck Iran after a volley of Iranian missiles.

"While we have made tremendous efforts in recent days to contain an all-out war in our region, I say it clearly that we have no red lines in defending our people and interests," Araqchi said in a post on X.

Iran fired more than 180 ballistic missiles at Israel on Oct. 1 amid an escalation in fighting between Israel and its proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah. Many were intercepted in flight but some penetrated missile defences.

Italy's Meloni tells Israel's Netanyahu attacks on UN peacekeepers are unacceptable

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has told her Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu that attacks on U.N. peacekeepers in Lebanon are unacceptable, her office said on Sunday.

"Prime Minister Meloni reiterated the unacceptability of UNIFIL being attacked by Israeli armed forces."

ASEAN urges early accord on South China Sea code, end to Myanmar violence

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Southeast Asian leaders called on Sunday for swift agreement on a code of conduct for the South China Sea based on international law, while demanding an immediate halt to fighting in Myanmar and inclusive peace talks to end its civil war.

The ASEAN chairman's statement represents the consensus from meetings ended on Friday of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Laos, which included diplomats from the United States, Russia, China, Japan, India and South Korea.

Confrontations have been rising in disputed waters of the South China Sea, which claims sovereignty over almost all the vital waterway, and ASEAN members including the Philippines and more recently Vietnam.

The rows have raised risks of an escalation that could eventually involve the United States, which is bound by treaty to defend the Philippines if it is attacked.

The sea, where \$3 trillion worth of trade passes annually, was been a major point of contention at the ASEAN meetings, particularly with Russia and China objecting to a reference to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, a US official said.

As Hezbollah and Israel battle on the border, Lebanon's army watches from the sidelines

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Since Israel launched its ground invasion of Lebanon, Israeli forces and Hezbollah militants have clashed along the border while the Lebanese army has largely stood on the sidelines.

It's not the first time the national army has found itself watching war at home from the discomfiting position of bystander.

Lebanon's widely beloved army is one of the few institutions that bridge the country's sectarian and political divides.

Several army commanders have become president, and the current commander, Gen. Joseph Aoun, is widely regarded as one of the front-runners to step in when the deadlocked parliament fills a two-year vacuum and names a president.

But with an aging arsenal and no air defenses, and battered by five years of economic crisis, the national army is ill-prepared to defend Lebanon against either aerial bombardment or a ground offensive by a well-equipped modern army like Israel's.

The army is militarily overshadowed by Hezbollah. The Lebanese army has about 80,000 troops, with around 5,000 of them deployed in the south.

Hezbollah has more than 100,000 fighters, according to the militant group's late leader, Hassan Nasrallah. Its arsenal — built with support from Iran — is also more advanced.

Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters have been clashing since Oct. 8, 2023, when the Lebanese militant group began firing rockets over the border in support of its ally Hamas in Gaza.

In recent weeks, Israel has conducted a major aerial bombardment of Lebanon and a ground invasion that it says aims to push Hezbollah back from the border and allow displaced residents of northern Israel to return.

Government committed to implementing comprehensive strategies to mitigate risks associated with natural disasters: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani reaffirmed the government's commitment to implementing comprehensive strategies to mitigate the risks associated with natural disasters.

"We are working to strengthen early warning systems, enhance disaster preparedness at the community level, and invest in resilient infrastructure capable of withstanding the challenges posed by climate change," he said in a message on the International

of climate change," the chairman highlighted.

He said, "Pakistan has witnessed the tragic consequences of natural disasters, from floods displacing millions and destroying livelihoods, to earthquakes that have shattered communities and infrastructure."

"Each disaster has not only caused untold human suffering but has also strained our economy and resources, underscoring the urgent need for effective disaster risk management and climate resilience," Gilani said.

He further said, "The increasing frequency and intensity of floods, particularly the catastrophic floods of recent years, have highlighted the critical importance of preparedness and adaptation measures."

"I urge all Pakistanis to take active steps to learn about disaster risks and contribute to disaster reduction efforts. By educating ourselves and others, we can save lives and protect our communities from the worst impacts of natural disasters," he said.



ISLAMABAD: View of Rawal Dam Chowk Flyover decorated with flags of various countries in connection with SCO Summit in the Federal Capital.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chairs 99th Governing Body meeting of Punjab Housing and Town Planning Agency.

Chairs PHATA governing body CM Punjab approves surplus budget of Rs 34.73 billion

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over the 99th meeting of the Punjab Housing and Town Planning Agency (PHATA) governing body, where a surplus budget of Rs 34.73 billion for the current financial year was approved.

The meeting highlighted significant initiatives aimed at enhancing housing accessibility and operational efficiency within PHATA. During the meeting, the Chief Minister directed PHATA to develop a plan for completing housing projects through private partnerships. She also announced the approval of the "Apni Chhat Apna

Ghar" program, aimed at providing affordable housing. It was reported in the briefing that 544,000 individuals have registered on the program's portal, with 280,000 applications received for housing construction and over 76,000 draft applications submitted.

The governing body authorized PHATA to sign contracts and instructed timely verification of applicants' documents. Additionally, it approved the upgrading of data entry operators' scales and the recruitment of civil sub-engineers under the PHATA Services Regulation 2004.

A key decision was made to condition budget approvals on the

governing body's authorization, rather than requiring cabinet approval. The meeting also permitted refunds to applicants from previous housing schemes who were not selected in the lottery.

PHATA was authorized to conduct staff hiring for the Project Management Unit (PMU) through a job portal and was instructed to review pending housing schemes on a case-by-case basis.

During the meeting, revenue was projected at Rs 17 billion, while expenditures were estimated at Rs 13.55 billion.

Senator Pervez Rashid, Senior Minister Maryam Aurangzeb, Minister for Information and Culture Azma Zahid Bukhari, MPA Sania Ashiq, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, and housing officials were present.

Report on power sector "Glorious years in Pakistan" launched

ISLAMABAD (APP): A work report of the "Glorious 11-Years - How Chinese Companies Reshaped the Power Sector in Pakistan" and "Business Climate Index of Chinese Companies in Pakistan" as success stories was launched here on Sunday.

The launching ceremony was arranged by the China Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan (CCCPC).

Those who attended the event included Liu Yanggang, Vice General Manager of Three Gorges South Asia Investment Company in Pakistan.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Information Atta Tarar and others were present on the occasion.

The participants highlighted the performance and achievements of Chinese companies in the energy sector in Pakistan.

During the forum, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) presented visual display in which it outlined investment opportunities and incentives offered to investors in those zones.

The forum also touched on opportunities available in Pakistan.

The participants engaged in a discussion

panel that elaborated on business prospects and the legal setup supporting investment. In addition, an exhibition was organized to showcase Pakistani products.

Faisal Abdullah Al Rawas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), stressed the importance of enhancing joint projects, commercial exchange and investments between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Pakistan. He laid emphasis on projects that support economic diversification.

63 dangerous criminals killed in Kacha area

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab police's intelligence-based operations are ongoing in Kacha area of Rahim Yar Khan in which 63 dangerous criminals were killed and 45 injured so far. A Punjab police spokesperson briefed that Rahim Yar Khan police had established permanent posts in Kacha area with a consistent deployment of police personnel. The Punjab police are present in the region with full force and extensive resources.

Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar said that all necessary resources, including long-range weapons, vehicles and bulletproof vehicles, were being utilized against criminal elements.

He said that the Government is taking action by law to radically increase women's representation in all administrative leadership positions (including departmental head offices and key field offices).

Dr. Jahanzeb Khan also said that the media should play a vital role in this regard, adding that for the support and protection of victims, the media should maintain the code of ethics.

Pakistan's pavilion at COP29 to host vibrant activities convening int'l experts: Bilal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO), National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), Bilal Anwar on Sunday said Pakistan's pavilion at COP29 to host vibrant activities convening international experts for a healthy discourse on multifaceted topics around climate resilience. The Fund is assisting the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in formulation of the National Climate Finance Strategy that would be launched at the COP29.

Caste system remains deep-rooted issue in India: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Everyday life for many in India is marked by caste-based oppression and societal violence as decades after independence, the caste system remains a deep-rooted issue in the country.

A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said women from lower castes face a disproportionate risk of violence and harassment but caste-related crimes often escape justice in the Indian legal system.

It said Hindu caste system represents one of

the oldest forms of social hierarchy which still exists and low-caste individuals are relegated to the most degrading and labor-intensive jobs across the country.

The report lamented that India's democratic framework had not only failed to dismantle the caste system but had, in some ways, reinforced its structures.

Within this hierarchy, Dalits are still viewed as 'untouchables,' facing systemic exclusion, it added.



MUSCAT: HH Sayyida Hujaija Bint Jaifar Al Said, International Ambassador for Social Responsibility, H.E. Faisal Bin Abdullah Al Rawas, Chairman of Oman Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Imran Ali, Ambassador of Pakistan to Oman inaugurating the First Pakistan Oman Business Forum.

Oman-Pak Business Forum discusses joint investment opportunities

MUSCAT (INP): The Omani-Pakistani Business Forum setup discussed opportunities for joint cooperation between the two sides in various economic, health and entrepreneurship fields.

During the forum, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) presented visual display in which it outlined investment opportunities and incentives offered to investors in those zones.

The forum also touched on opportunities available in Pakistan.

The participants engaged in a discussion

25-year-old woman falls prey to honor killing in Swat

Independent Report SWAT: A devastating incident has shaken the Swat valley, where a 25-year-old woman was brutally murdered in the name of honor. The victim, who was married to Iqbal, had been seeking refuge with her father due to domestic unrest. Tragically, her own husband and brothers allegedly committed the heinous crime, disposing of her body in a deep cave in Alagay village, Banjoot area, under the cover of midnight.

Human rights activists and organizations are urging the public to condemn this practice and advocate for change. The persistence of honor killings underscores the need for sustained efforts to protect women's rights and promote a culture of tolerance and understanding.

ings in Swat, with a staggering 263 documented cases over the past twelve years.

Honor killings, known locally as karo-kari, remain a pressing concern in Pakistan. Despite recent legal reforms, this practice continues to claim numerous lives. In 2021 alone, over 470 cases of honor killings were reported, with estimates suggesting that around 1,000 women fall victim to this practice annually.

Tirmizi underlines significance of Pakistan's participation in GITEX

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Sunday emphasized the importance of Pakistan's participation in GITEX Global.

He said that Pakistan was proud to be recognized as the 'Tech Destination of the Year 2024' by GITEX Global, which was a testament to the country's progress in the IT and tech industries. Ambassador Tirmizi said that this recognition reinforced Pakistan's status as an emerging hub for digital innovation and entrepreneurship. As GITEX Global 2024, the world's largest technology exhibition,

Gas cylinder blast injures two in Athara Hazari

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least two persons were critically injured when a gas cylinder exploded in the Basic Health Unit of the Uch Gul Imam area of Athara Hazari on early Sunday morning.

According to details, rescue 1122 said that a cylinder exploded inside a basic health unit, and due to the intensity of the blast, two people were injured, a private news channel reported. Rescue teams swiftly responded to the incident and shifted injured persons to nearby hospitals.

approaches its opening from October 14 to 18, Pakistan will be significantly represented at this prestigious event, a press release said.

With a contingent of 24 leading exhibitors from the country, Pakistan aims to showcase its growing capabilities in the IT sector.

Tirmizi emphasized that GITEX Global offered an ideal platform for companies to connect with global tech leaders, investors, and potential partners.

He further said that it was a unique opportunity for their exhibitors to showcase their capabilities and explore collaborations.



ISLAMABAD: Weekly Margallah Bazaar H-9 closed on Sunday, in connection with SCO Summit in the Federal Capital.

ICT police finalize security measures for SCO Summit, deploying 93% of force

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police, under the supervision of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, is preparing for the upcoming SCO Summit 2024, with a comprehensive security plan now in place.

Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi stated on Sunday that the ICT Police have developed an integrated security strategy to ensure safety during the event.

IG Rizvi said that security duties have been finalized at various venues, airports, routes, funnel areas, hotels, and residences of delegations, including the Noor Khan Air Base.

ICT's public parks in dilapidated state due to poor maintenance

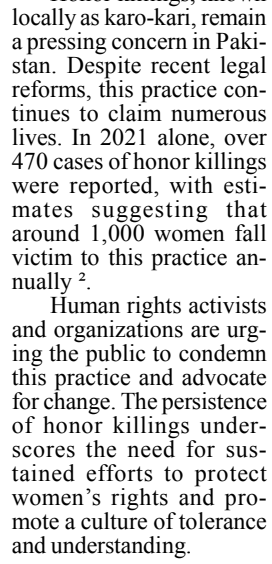
ISLAMABAD (APP): Most of the public parks and playgrounds in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) are in shambles, need civic authorities' attention to make them attractive places for visitors. The city is renowned for its abundance of resorts and public green spaces.

However, these green spaces are now highlighting the necessity for regular maintenance by the relevant authorities.

According to a senior official of Capital Development Authority (CDA), there are more than 300 public parks and playgrounds in Islamabad

whereas over 820 staff is deployed for keeping these parks clean and green.

A resident of Sector G11/2, Haq Nawaz said, public parks in majority of areas including G-10, G-9, G-8, G-13 and G-7 were in poor condition with broken benches, broken lamps, overgrown grass, uneven walking tracks, trash strewn all over. Touqeer Ahmed, a regular visitor of playground in G-9 lamented the appalling condition of most parks and playgrounds, stating, "The lush greenery is overshadowed by the neglect, reflecting a lack of interest from CDA officials."



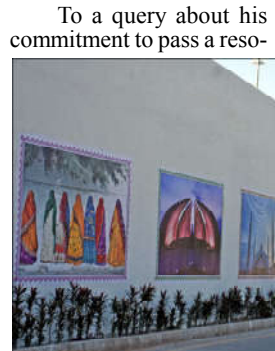
ISLAMABAD: Electric bus service closed in the red zone of the Federal Capital, in connection with SCO Summit.

Election result rejection of what BJP has done to IIOJK: Omar Abdullah

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Conference vice President Omar Abdullah has said that the election result of the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is a rejection of what Bharatiya Janata Party has done to the people of the territory.

According to Kashmir Media Service, Omar Abdullah in a media interview in Srinagar said it is a rejection of what was done to the territory on August 5, 2019. "And I am also including all the seats outside the BJP's kitty-whether bagged by independents, the Peoples Democratic Party, or the alliance. This is a rejection of what the BJP did."

To a query about his commitment to pass a reso-



ISLAMABAD: A view of Rawal Dam Chowk Flyover decorated in connection with SCO Summit in the Federal Capital.

Govt plans to integrate MoHR helpline for coordination b/w police, media & victims

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government is planning to integrate the HRD Ministry's helpline 1099 to strengthen coordination between the police, media, and victims at the grassroots level.

Talking to APP, Director General Ministry of Human Rights Dr. Jahanzeb Khan said that there is a dire need to create awareness about the helpline quarterly year.

He said that the integration of helplines would help the people and 15 different officials' helplines integrate each other's and SOP would be completed that would facilitate the people. He said that the purpose of awareness

should be protection from abuse, and exploitation, used for exploitation, without parental care, or used for child trafficking, abduction, and sale of children and rescue the women and marginalized segments of society.

He said that the Government is taking action by law to radically increase women's representation in all administrative leadership positions (including departmental head offices and key field offices).

Dr. Jahanzeb Khan also said that the media should play a vital role in this regard, adding that for the support and protection of victims, the media should maintain the code of ethics.