

Use of communication techs vital for society, says Alvi

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi visited National Defence University Islamabad on Thursday. While addressing the participants of the National Security and War Course (NSWC)-23, the President dilated upon issues concerning national security. The president said that as a nation we should shield our social and cultural values. He advised participants to keep themselves abreast with latest developments particularly advancement in IT, AI and communication field. —APP

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ECP to hear Karachi LG case on 9th

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) observed on Thursday that the case concerning local bodies elections in Karachi will be fixed for hearing on November 9. The statement was released after a meeting took place at the commission under the chairmanship of CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja. The meeting was also joined by members of the commission as well as ECP secretary and special secretary. The attendees were briefed about the Sindh government's report on holding local body elections in Karachi. The provincial government has written in its report that the police force was currently insufficient for holding local elections safely. —APP

Rupee extends losses as dollar rallies worldwide

From Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee Thursday fell by 0.23 percent, extending losses for the second day in the interbank market as the dollar staged a rally against world currencies after the US Reserve's hawkish rate move last night. The rupee lost Re0.52 to close at 221.95. It had ended at 221.43 against the greenback on Wednesday after a loss of Re0.78 or 0.35%.

The country's merchandise trade deficit for the first four months of the ongoing fiscal shrank 26.6% to \$11.47 billion against \$15.62 billion in the same period of last fiscal but not enough to arrest the rupee rout. Another notable development was the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Peoples Bank of China (PBoC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing RMB (Chinese currency) clearing arrangements in Pakistan.

Moreover, Pakistan has signed two financing agreements of \$500m with the World Bank, including the "Punjab Resilient and Inclusive Agriculture Transformation Project" worth \$200m and the "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Accessibility Project" worth \$300 million.

LHC issues notice to NAB on Moonis Elahi's plea

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday issued notices to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and other respondents in a money laundering case against the former federal minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid leader Moonis Elahi.

As per details, a two-member bench of LHC headed by Justice Ali Baqir Najafi heard the case against NAB notice to Moonis Elahi in a money laundering case. The court issued notices to NAB and other respondents on Elahi's plea. The court also barred NAB from harassing the PML-Q stalwart and his family. The LHC has asked the graft-buster body why notices were issued to the company's secretary, shareholder and petitioner's family when the inquiry was already over?

The petition stated that NAB had already cleared the 20-year-old money laundering case in the company. Now according to new NAB law, it cannot start an investigation without a court order. In their response, the deputy prosecutor general of NAB told the court that the matter is not about the company but it's of the assets beyond income instead. To which the court ordered NAB to submit its response.

Earlier, the Lahore High Court Monday quashed the money laundering case filed against the former federal minister and PML-Q leader Moonis Elahi by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). —DNA

US provides seed funding to women entrepreneurs

ISLAMABAD: The United States (US) has provided seed funding to women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses in Pakistan.

According to a statement issued by the US Embassy in Pakistan on Thursday, more than 30 participants from the second Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) programme, sponsored by the United States, competed for seed funding for their business start-ups on October 28. A panel of judges, comprised of Pakistani and American businesswomen, selected the top four proposals after reviewing participants' business plans and hearing their pitches. The four winners of the seed-funding competition, Amna Afridi, Nayab Gohar, Khush Bakhat Hussain, and Asia Umar Khan, will receive \$5,500, \$4,500, \$3,500, and \$2,500, respectively, to launch or grow their business in Pakistan.

Deputy Counselor for Public Diplomacy Jacqueline Deley congratulated the graduates during the closing ceremony, stating: "Your success is Pakistan's success, and we are proud to support you to become Pakistan's dynamic entrepreneurs, business leaders, and economic influencers." It is pertinent to mention here that the AWE is a three-month, rigorous course of online study using the DreamBuilder (https://dreambuilder.org) platform developed by Arizona State University's Thunderbird School of Global Management and the American company Freeport McMoran. —DNA

IHC reserves verdict on PTI petition for NOC

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has reserved judgment on the petition seeking permission and NOC for PTI public meeting after hearing the arguments of lawyers of respondents.

The court remarked we will issue appropriate order. The case came up for hearing before a single bench of IHC led by Justice Amir Farooq Thursday. The PTI lawyer Babar Awan, advocate general Islamabad, barrister Jahangir Jadoon and deputy commissioner Islamabad appeared in the court. Advocate General Islamabad read out May 25, Supreme Court (SC) decision before the court.

The court inquired is it SC order. Barrister Jahangir Jadoon told the court this is reply of PTI chairman Imran which was filed in SC. Despite providing venue for dharna and public meeting last time, the limits were crossed. This should be asked from them when they



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi exchanges views with Nicos Galea, Ambassador of the France Republic to Pakistan.

Maritime Ministry, Navy to organise three-day exhibition

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Navy is organizing a three-day Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC) from February 10 to 12, in collaboration with Ministry of Maritime to highlight the unexplored potential of maritime economy.

It was revealed by Commodore ACNS (R) M. Imran Afzal while speaking at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. M. Imran Afzal said that the conference will be held under the umbrella of National Institute of Maritime Affairs. Pakistan Navy has adopted maritime awareness campaign plan to sensitize relevant segments of society and policy markets. He said that this maritime exhibition will provide an ideal platform to the exhibitors to showcase various products, systems and services leading to beneficial business partnership at local and international levels.

He said that focus areas of the conference will be Port, Shipping Operations, Logistics, Sea Transportation, Ship Building, Repair, Breaking, Fisheries, Aquaculture, Seabed, Resource Exploration, Maritime Training, Coastal Tourism, Renewable Energy and Environmental Protection while the objectives are promotion of blue economy, maritime diplomacy and stabilization of local maritime industry. He said that the international manufacturers will be encouraged to enter into Pakistan's maritime market. He said that the distributors, insurance companies, deck machinery, vessel equipment, aquaculture, bankers, finan-

cers, boat & yacht building, cabling companies, transportation, seafood companies, clothing, rope manufacturers, storage, pharmaceutical, seafood, rescue and water sports related companies can participate.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar hoped that the exhibition and conference will give the desired results. The Lahore Chamber will encourage and facilitate its members to participate in the exhibition and expo. He said that the exports are very important, not only for the economy, but for the image building of the country and the exhibition will play a crucial role in this regard. Giving a detailed briefing on LCCI role in policy making, LCCI President said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry is playing its due role for promotion of trade and industry in the country. Standing Committees collect private sector feedback, analyze and after a thorough debate it is forwarded to the concerned government departments for consideration at the time of preparation of the Federal Budget.

He said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry monitors the budget, anomalies are identified and these coupled with revised proposals are again communicated to the relevant policy making departments. He said that the LCCI also keeps liaison with the commercial sections of the foreign missions and an exchange of information is ensured.

Kashif Anwar said that the LCCI is also quite conscious of its Corporate Social Responsibility. It has two self-sustaining projects; Shalimar Hospital and LABARD on its credit. The Shalimar Hospital is provid-

ing modern health facilities to the common people while LABARD is not only acting as placement body for the disabled persons of the society but also provides relevant training to the young minds in an effort to rehabilitate them. The Lahore Chamber has signed MoUs with various organizations including hospitals to facilitate its members.

FBR not releasing ST refunds, but serving notices to exporters

The Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) has said the commitment of the government to instantly release exporters' tax refund claims seems to be just an eyewash, as the Federal Board of Revenue, instead of releasing timely refunds, are sending audit notices frequently to the exporters to refrain them from demanding their own payment.

"On average up to 15 audit notices are being served to almost every exporter, who presently needs payment but fed up over the long delays of their refunds," observed PRGMEA Central Chairman Mubashar Naser Butt. "This is very clear that bureaucracy is trying to force the industry to evade taxes and engage in illegal practices, he said and added that the industry, which is already running partially, would completely be shut owing to this attitude of the govt." He said that there were the rumors of refunds' complete suspension before the arrival of Ishaq Dar as a finance minister, spread by the bureaucracy, and it is might possible that a conspiracy is being hatched against this govt through creation of hurdles in the way of exporting industry, he observed.

ICCI signs MoU with TME for industry-academia linkages

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding MoU with The Millennium Education (TME) Pakistan to get discounts for its members and promote industry-academia linkages.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI and Dr. Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq, Founder and Chief Executive TME Group signed the MoU in a ceremony held at ICCI. The key objective of the MoU is to promote industry-academia linkages, corporate collaboration and professional development of students. Both organisations mutually agreed to enhance cooperation in many areas including offering privileged discounts, arranging internships, orientations on entrepreneurship, training and giving practical exposure of theoretical knowledge.

Through this MoU, TME Group has offered customised 'privileged' charges for the members and employees of ICCI for all

their brands, including Roots Millennium Schools (RMS), The Millennium Colleges, Future World Schools and Colleges (FWS&C), The Little Millennium and The Millennium Universal Colleges (TMUC), Pakistan. Moreover, ICCI will collaborate with TME Group for planning and executing joint events, symposiums, knowledge and research sessions, workshops and seminars, job fairs, career counselling, mentorship sessions, inspirational talks and Internship opportunities for the high achievers of The Millennium Education at ICCI.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the TME's initiative of Corporate Employee Education Benefit Programme.

He said that ICCI collaboration with TME Group will add value to the Chamber's services and create beneficial opportunities for both the parties. He was hopeful that through this MoU, both parties will en-

deavour to strengthen, promote and develop academic, community and corporate engagement and education benefits.

Dr. Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq Chief Executive Officer The Millennium Education Group shared TME's 35 years legacy of academic excellence and holistic learning. He explained his vision of where he sees TME in the future and how this collaboration will open new doors of beneficial outcomes for both the parties. He further elaborated on how TME has gained recognition for providing quality education at the national and international level.

Faad Waheed Senior Vice President, Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Ms. Sabina Zakir Director Communications, Community and Outreach TME, Zafar Bakhtawari, Ch. Javed Iqbal, Sheikh M. Ejaz, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Maqsood Tabish, Faizan Shehzad, Rizwan Chheena, Shaikat Hayat and others were also present at the occasion. —DNA

NAB decides to arrest Buzdar in assets case

LAHORE: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lahore has decided to nab former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Usman Buzdar in the illegal license and accumulation of assets beyond known sources of income cases.

According to NAB sources NAB headquarters has given 15 days to NAB Lahore to arrest former CM Punjab. NAB headquarters has directed to complete the material related to arrest of Usman Buzdar. The NAB investigation team gave briefing that no such evidences have been found so far that Usman Buzdar could be arrested. NAB headquarters directed that the evidences be collected within 15 days and arrest of Usman Buzdar be ensured.

The NAB Lahore has written letters to Lahore Development Authority (LDA) and other societies seeking details of property in the name of Usman Buzdar. According to NAB Lahore investigations are underway against Usman Buzdar in assets case. It has written a letter to LDA on Oct 17 and sought details of the assets. Buzdar is also charged with issuing illegal license to a private hotel by through his influence. Buzdar was earlier summoned by NAB Lahore for investigation.

According to NAB sources former chief minister Punjab will again be summoned within a few days. —Online

Talks process with Taliban has stalled: Ali Saif

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister KP Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif has said talks process with the Taliban has stalled.

"There is no haste in reaching Islamabad. We are enjoying long march", he said this while talking to media men here Thursday.

Two formal meetings have taken place with the Taliban, he underlined. A headway will be made in Nov in talks process with Taliban. For the time being the talks process has halted with Taliban. He went on to say the provincial govt is facing financial problems. If dues are paid soon then the problems will stand resolved. Federation has stopped dues amounting to Rs 25b. Under the orders of Imran we will sit for 10 years, he held. —Online

PTI supplicating army, court to interfere: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister Senator Sherry Rehman has said PTI leaders are now asking institutions and court for interference after becoming entrenched in blind alley.

"Neither people are coming out for short cut march nor it is yielding any result. Now PTI leaders are supplicating army and the court to end the prevailing political crisis, she said this in a statement here Thursday.

She remarked "when Imran Khan has not succeeded in making any deal and his un-constitutional demands have not been accepted then he says while standing on container he will not talk to anyone. She underlined what PTI leader is calling political crisis is not a political crisis and instead it is pattern of Imran Khan politics. Had he given importance to parliament then he would not have to make rescue appeal on Thursday. The PTI is in the phase of learning democratic and constitutional politics. —Online

'Imran announces polls will be held after 10 months'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has said it is good news for the people Imran ears have opened and he himself has announced general election will take place after 10 months.

"Foreign funded fitna Imran Khan is responsible for inflation. Imran Khan had signed on what conditions of IMF it was imperative for us to implement them. We made difficult decisions. We saved the country from becoming default. Imran does not want stability comes in the country. Dollar is depreciated and jobs are given to youths. Foreign investment should come. Diplomatic relations are improved. Imran Niazi ruined the country during his four years term. His agenda is incomplete. How he can tolerate that country makes progress, she said this while addressing a press

Imran, others wounded in firing at PTI's container

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Another report adds: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was shifted to Shaikat Khanum hospital in Lahore after an assassination attempt was made on the former prime minister during his long march in Wazirabad, Gujranwala on Thursday. Imran was wounded when shots were fired at his long march container in Wazirabad, Gujranwala.

The firing also resulted in injuries to PTI leader Faisal Javed Khan, reported media. Faisal Javed was also shifted to a hospital, while one culprit has been arrested.

AFP reported that a man suspected of attacking the former premier Imran Khan during the political rally has been shot dead, an aide said. "A second man was taken into police custody," Raouf Hasan, a senior Khan aide told AFP, adding that it was unclear who shot the first attacker.

Reuters reported that Imran was shot in the shin in what his aides said was a clear assassination attempt. Several others in the convoy were wounded. One party member said there were reports one person had been killed. "It was a clear assassination attempt. Imran Khan was hit but he's stable. There was a lot of bleeding," Fawad Chaudhry, a PTI leader, told Reuters.

"If the shooter had not been stopped by people there, the entire PTI leadership would have been wiped out." PTI leader Asad Umar also said that a man opened fire with an automatic weapon. "Several people are wounded. Imran Khan is also injured," Asad Umar told Reuters.

In a brief conversation with media immediately after the incident, PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry confirmed that Imran Khan was "shot in the leg in a targeted attack during the long march". He said that three people were injured in the attack, in-

cluding Senator Faisal Javed and Ahmad Chattha.

PM Shehbaz condemns incident

Shortly after the incident, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the firing in Allahwala Chowk, Gujranwala and called for an immediate report on the incident. According to a tweet shared by PML-N President's account, the prime minister also directed Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah to seek an immediate report from IG Police and Chief Secretary Punjab.

PTI leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the "assassination attempt on Imran Khan is a cowardly act meant to derail the long march". "A probe should be carried out of the incident, and those involved in it should be investigated. However, nothing can be said until clarity is achieved," he said. "Our first priority is to protect the lives of people," he added. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) condemned the "firing in-

cident" during PTI long march near Gujranwala and wished a speedy recovery to Imran Khan and all those injured.

"Firing incident during Long March near Gujranwala is highly condemnable," the military's media wing said. "Sincere prayers for precious life lost and speedy recovery and well-being of Chairman PTI Imran Khan and all those injured in this unfortunate incident," the press release reads.

Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb called on the Punjab govt to make public the initial investigation details into the assassination attempt on Imran.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Marriyum said the attack on Imran Khan happened within the jurisdiction of Punjab, and the provincial government is due to release further details on the matter.

The incident comes as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) long march entered its seventh day. Imran had planned to