

Fazl calls Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (INP): A JUI-F delegation led by its Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Friday. During the meeting, views were exchanged on overall political situation in the country. Minister for Communication Maulana Asad Mehmood was also present on the occasion.



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Police Head Constable martyred, eight injured in suicide blast

ISLAMABAD (APP): One police official embraced martyrdom and eight others including four civilians, received injuries after a suicide bomber reportedly blew himself up in the I-10/4 Sector on Friday.

Bomb Disposal Squad and other rescue teams rushed to the spot, cordoned off the area and initiated the probe into the incident. A police spokesman said ICT personnel stopped a suspicious vehicle during checking near Street 31 of I-10/4 Sector. "As the vehicle stopped, the suicide bomber exploded himself," he added. He said the police were on alert as it had a tip-off that some anti-state elements could carry out subversive activities to achieve their nefarious designs.

Talking to the media, Deputy Inspector General (Operations) of Islamabad Police Sohail Zafar Chattha said the timely and effective action of police officials did avert the federal capital from an eventual disaster. He said the Eagle Squad intercepted the suspicious vehicle that was exploded by an alleged bomber, who died on the spot. The DIG said as per the initial reports, two persons including a woman were seated in the vehicle.

He said all the injured had been shifted to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) for medical care. According to the hospital sources, the martyred police official had been identified as Head Constable Adeel Hussain, while injured included Muhammad Yusuf, Mehboob, Naveed, Hanif, Inaam, Raza Hussain, Muhammad Ashir and Usman. Body parts of the suicide bomber and other evidences had been collected from the incident place to advance the probe.

Interior Minister announces Tamgha-e-Shujaat for martyred

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has announced to award Tamgha-e-Shujaat to Shaheed Head Constable Adeel Hussain of Islamabad Police for exhibiting extraordinary courage and bravery to thwart suicide attack in

Islamabad on Friday. In a statement, he said Adeel Hussain was martyred in an attempt to save the federal capital from a major terrorist attack. The Minister said this award is recognition of Adeel's sacrifice at state level. He said Shaheed Adeel Hussain's widow will be recruited in Islamabad Police. The Minister also announced the government will pay Rs16.5 million in cash to Adeel's widow under the Shuhada package. He said apart from this a plot is also being given to his family.

Following the incident, the police have stepped up security arrangements across the Federal Capital to avoid any untoward incident. Issuing the 'red alert' in the Capital, Inspector General of Police Dr Akbar Nasir Khan had directed for a crackdown against vehicles plying without registration numbers and unauthorized number plates.

"There will be no permission to carry any weapon," he warned, advising motorists to keep documents of their vehicles and identity cards with them to avoid any inconvenience. He asked landlords to register their tenants with respective police stations without any delay in line with fool-proof security arrangements being made to tackle anti-social elements.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the suicide blast in Islamabad's Sector I-10/4, saying that the whole nation stood by security forces for elimination of terrorism. The prime minister paid tributes to head constable Adeel Hussain who was martyred

in the terror incident.

"The police personnel intercepted the terrorists by rendering sacrifices. The nation salutes their brave soldiers," he remarked.

He said the people of Pakistan would continue struggling till the elimination of terrorism.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb strongly condemned the incident of terrorism, paid rich tributes to ICT Police and the Eagle Squad for timely action and averting a major disaster. Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman also condemned the suicide blast in Sector I-10/4 of the federal capital. She expressed solidarity with the family members of Shaheed Head Constable Adeel Hussain who embraced martyrdom in a vehicle laden with improvised explosives. Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani also condemned the incident, expressed sympathies with families of the victims and prayed for early recovery of the injured.

LHC reinstates Pervaiz as CM Punjab, suspends governor's order

LAHORE (NNI): Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday reinstated Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi as Punjab Chief Minister and suspended the order of the de-notification of the governor.

A five-member larger bench of the LHC took the decision after the written undertaking from Ch Pervaiz Elahi in the court about not dissolving the assembly. The LHC larger bench headed by Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh heard the plea against the removal of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi as the Chief Minister of Punjab by the governor.

Earlier, Barrister Ali Zafar, a lawyer for Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, argued before the court that Pervaiz Elahi became the chief minister as the result of an election. "He got 186 out of 371 votes," he added. "Ten votes of the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) MPAs were thrown out by the Punjab Assembly speaker on the basis of a letter from party leader Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, but the Supreme Court ruled in favour of Pervaiz Elahi," he stated.

"Under the Constitution, the chief minister can be removed through two ways. The first is a motion of no

confidence. The second is that the governor can ask the chief minister to take a vote of confidence, under subsection 7 of Article 130 of the Constitution, if he thinks that the chief minister has lost the majority," he added.

"The governor must have solid reasons for asking for a vote of confidence. It cannot happen that the governor suddenly asks the chief minister one day to take a vote of confidence in two hours. The decision of Manzoor Wattoo case is important here," he pointed out.

"Only the speaker has the authority to call a meeting of the House. He has to ensure the availability of all members of the House. He can also call an urgent meeting after the notice, or he can fix a date for the meeting," he added. "It is nowhere in the law that the governor can de-notify the chief minister," Barrister Ali Zafar maintained.

"But he can ask the chief minister to take the vote of confidence," the court remarked. "But there is a procedure for that," Barrister Ali Zafar replied.

Earlier, the chief justice of Lahore High Court has formed a new larger bench to hear the ousted Punjab chief minister's petition challeng-

ing the governor's order of denotifying him as chief executive of the province after a judge of the earlier formed bench recused himself from hearing the case. The chief justice has included Justice Asim Hafiz in the bench in place of Justice Farooq Haider when the latter expressed his inability to become part of the bench citing personal reasons.

A new five-judge bench headed by Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh and comprising Justice Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal, Justice Tariq Saleem, Justice Muzammil Shabbir and Asim Hafiz has been formed by the chief justice to hear the petition.

Earlier in the day, Ch Pervaiz Elahi moved the Lahore High Court challenging the governor's order to denotify him. A 9-page petition on behalf of Pervaiz Elahi was filed in the LHC on Friday by former chief minister's close aide Amir Saeed Raan, praying the court to declare Punjab governor's notification as null and void.

The petition made Governor Balighur Rehman and Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan respondent through principal secretary.

PML-N, PPP withdraw no-trust motion against Elahi

LAHORE (INP): PML-N and PPP leaders on Friday withdrew the no-confidence motion against PML-Q leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi who had been serving as the Punjab chief minister with the help of the PTI as the parties consider it unnecessary after Elahi ceased to be the chief minister following his de-notification.

The opposition leaders headed by PML-N chief whip Tahir Khalil Sindhu reached Punjab Assembly to withdraw their no-confidence motion submitted on Monday, citing that the Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman's notification to remove Elahi as chief minister yesterday made the notice "infructuous".

Sindhu clarified that only the no-trust motion against Elahi had been withdrawn and the ones against the Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan and the deputy speaker would remain. In a tweet, Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique reiterated the reasoning for the withdrawal. "Both Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies are now secure," Rafique said on Twitter. "PTI should perform in their remaining governments instead of making failed attempts to create agitation and chaos."

COAS visits SSG HQ in Tarbela, Miranshah to review security situation

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir visited Miranshah - North Waziristan and Tarbela on Friday. At Miranshah, the COAS laid a floral wreath at the Martyrs' Monument to pay homage to brave soldiers who laid lives while defending the motherland, the Inter Services Public Relations said in a statement today.

The COAS was briefed by field commanders on the latest security situation in the area and response mechanisms to thwart the terrorist threats.

The COAS also visited frontline troops deployed along Pakistan and Afghanistan border and interacted with officers and men.

The COAS commended their professionalism, high morale, and operational readiness. The COAS said that Pak Army remains focused on evolving security situations and is determined to take the battle to the terrorists and break nexus with their facilitators so as to ensure lasting peace through socio-economic development.

Pakistan Army will consolidate the hard-earned peace, made possible by the supreme sacrifices of the resilient

Pakistani nation and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs).

Later, the COAS also visited HQ SSG Terbela and met officers and men including the elite Zarrar Company whose soldiers gallantly acted in the recent Bannu CTD complex operation as well as Aviation.

The COAS praised their

indomitable spirit, sacrifices, and commitment to duty in various operations. The COAS said that SSG is the pride of the Nation and it had proved its metal over the years. Earlier on arrival, the COAS was received by Lieutenant General Hassan Azhar Hayat, Commander of Peshawar Corps.



The Frontier Post

Mahmood narrowly escaped

PESHAWAR (INP): Deputy Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Mahmood Jan remained unhurt after some unknown miscreants opened fire at him in the Regi Lalama area here Friday. Police said the attackers escaped after retaliatory firing by the deputy speaker's security staff. Mahmood Jan narrowly escaped. The deputy speaker was addressing a function of the livestock department when came under fire.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on Information Technology Exports.

PM directs early construction of modern housing units for expatriates in Capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned to ensure early construction of modern housing units in the Federal Capital for overseas Pakistanis.

The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting to provide the residential units of international standards for expatriates, said the provision of modern housing facilities for the overseas Pakistanis was among the government's priorities.

He said that the construction firms of international fame should be engaged for the said housing projects.

The prime minister said the overseas Pakistanis were a valuable asset for the country and the protection of their rights would be ensured.

The senior officers of the Capital Development Authority gave a detailed briefing to the prime minister on the housing projects. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Advisor Ahad Cheema, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Bajwa, former MNAs Tariq

Fazal Chaudhry and Anjum Aqeel, CDA Chairman Captain (Retd) Muhammad Usman Younus and senior officers attended the meeting.

PM urges steps to promote export of IT products on priority: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said Pakistan had immense talent and skills in the field of information technology and stressed the need for increasing the export of IT-related products on a priority basis.

Chairing a meeting to promote the exports of IT products, the prime minister called for devising a future strategy to promote IT-related exports. The prime minister stressed taking benefit from the workforce of the country's professionals in information technology.

He directed the relevant ministers and officials to resolve the problems faced by the exports of IT products. He also stressed improving the connection of universities and academia with the IT industries.

Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistani

entrepreneurs had played an important role in the promotion of the IT sector, adding that such exporters would be appreciated at the government level. The meeting was informed that last year, Pakistan's IT-related export touched \$2.6 billion, while efforts were afoot to increase the volume up to \$5 billion in the next five years. It was told that the largest chunk of the IT products was being exported to the United States, which comprised 57 percent of the total exports.

The meeting was informed that the country had the second biggest free-lance workforce in the world, for which Pakistan Software Export was taking steps to use the potential. Also, the launch of two-year associate degree programmes in IT is under consideration to encourage the young generation to join the field. It was highlighted that promotion of artificial intelligence, cyber technology, chain, and cloud technology was the priority of the government.

Move to get Af-Pak further hostile

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: Certain forces and lobbies around the world are working on seeing Afghanistan and Pakistan further escalate their hostility with each other or maybe even worse by going towards surgical strikes on each other's land and properties.

These lobbies are motivating Pakistan to take action against TTP hideouts in Afghanistan but these lobbies are not taking into consideration that during over twenty years of US forces in Afghanistan, Pakistan had these same concerns that terrorists from across the bordering from Afghanistan are coming into Pakistan and conducting their terrorist activities. At that time Pakistan mostly accused Indian sponsored terrorist groups. But now it's the TTP claiming responsibility for every terrorist

attach in Pakistan.

When Suhail Shaheen, the Taliban interim government spokesperson was asked about Pakistan targeting TTP hideouts in Afghanistan, he replied by saying that "taking action inside a country under whatsoever name provokes reaction which leads to flaring up war and distrust between the two countries. None will benefit. Only those who fish in troubled water will benefit."

Afghanistan recent conduct with regard to girls education is creating more and more hatred for the Taliban government and some senior Taliban officials even do not agree with their leadership over girls education. "I am completely for girls education with Hijab" a senior Taliban official said. In the midst of all this some international forces are raising concerns about ISIS, Al Qaeda and TTP hide-

outs in Afghanistan. Which is again something contradictory to what the Taliban had agreed to in Doha, that they will not allow foreign terrorist groups to take refuge in Afghanistan.

When asked about this scenario a senior journalist here in Washington DC stated that any such move will bring about tremendous reaction from the Pakhtun populations which mostly resides on both side of the Af-Pak region. He further said that obviously the Pashtuns will be the ones who will suffer the most on both sides of the border.

Another journalist opined that such scenario will make the security situation very difficult for both the countries because people from both sides of the border, look alike, speak alike and even dress alike. He also said that maybe some bigger forces want to use such scenario for their personal gains.

KP CM launches second phase of 'Insaf Rozgar Scheme

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has launched the second phase of 'Insaf Rozgar Scheme' with a total cost of Rs 700 million. Under the scheme, interest free loans from 50 thousands upto One million rupees will be provided to the jobless people of newly merged districts.

People in the age group of 18-50 years, who are permanent residents of newly merged districts, will be eligible to get interest free loans under the scheme. Briefing the participants about the Insaf Rozgar Scheme, Managing Director of BoK informed that the first phase was launched in June 2020 with a cost of Rs. 1.1 billion. In the first phase, 4576 jobless people have been provided with interest free loans enabling them to start their own business. He disclosed on the occasion that the scheme has been proved as the most feasible and result oriented initiative of the provincial government adding

that 90 percent recovery of the loans, provided in the first phase, has been made. Under the second phase of the scheme, additional 3,000 jobless people would get interest free loans for initiating their own business.

The Chief Minister has extended his profound felicitations to the relevant stakeholders on the successful completion of the first phase as well as launching of the second phase of Insaf Rozgar Scheme. He said that Insaf Rozgar scheme is undoubtedly poor friendly initiative of the provincial government which has resulted in providing self-employment opportunities to the jobless citizens of the merged areas.

The Chief Minister maintained that incumbent government has gone all out to promote employment opportunities in the province with special focus on newly merged tribal areas. In this regard, Insaf Rozgar scheme is one of the important initiatives taken by the provincial government. Mahmood Khan made it clear that it has been the top most priority of

KP Govt. decides not to dissolve provincial assembly

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided not to dissolve the provincial assembly on Friday. Reliable sources in PTI told APP that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was analyzing the political situation after the de-notification of the Chief Minister Punjab Pervaiz Elahi and has not yet prepared advice for dissolution of KP assembly by the Chief Minister Mahmood Khan.

"The KP assembly was not being dissolved today," the sources reiterated. Earlier, the Chief Minister Mahmood Khan told the media that the advice of the KP Assembly's dissolution would be sent to the Governor KP after receiving orders from PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

Imran Khan had announced the dissolution of KP and Punjab Assembly on Friday (today) during his address to party workers on Saturday last. Ikhtair Wali, PMLN KP spokesman and member provincial assembly told APP that it would be yet another turn on part of Imran Khan if the KP assembly was not dissolved today.



CM launches ambulance, fire, Urban Search & Rescue, water Rescue Services thru 1122

KARACHI (NNI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the State-of-the-Art Central Command & Control (CC&C) has been established in Karachi to provide Ambulatory services, Fire Services, Urban Search & Rescue Services, Water Rescue Services through one number 1122.

"It's the very first-time government-owned Emergency Rescue service launched in the province,"

This he said on Friday while talking to the media just after inaugurating the headquarters of Sindh Emergency Service, Rescue 1122, and its Central Command and Control at Gulshan-e-Iqbal. He was accompanied by his advisors Rasool Bux Chandio and Murtaza Wahab.

The CM said that state-of-the Art post-medical health facilities have been established in 4 districts of Karachi and one in Larkana along with the establishment of Rescue stations. "The central command & control is established in Karachi and the Ambulatory Service, Fire Service, Urban Search & Rescue Service, and Water Rescue Service shall be provided through one number 1122," he said. He said that the Water Rescue Service would deal with the issues of urban flooding and the plan was underway to integrate police emergency service into Rescue 1122.

Mr. Shah said that the 1122 service was working in all districts of Karachi, Larkana, Thatta, Sujawal, Qambar-Shahdadkot, and Hyderabad and it would be launched in District Badin within the next two days. He

added that 12 districts would be added to Sindh Emergency Service Rescue 1122.

Murad Ali Shah announced that the Rescue service would also be established on main highways after every 50 km for which locations have already been identified where work was in progress.

The CM said that the first batch of 107 cadets was provided with specialized rescue training from Punjab, and another batch of 315 cadets was under training. "These are purely technical positions," he said and added the Sindh Emergency Service Rescue-1122 was modeled after successful emergency services elsewhere in Pakistan.

He said that he himself dialed the 1122 number from his mobile phone and lodged a complaint about the fire in the Sadar area and the operator asked him the location. He added that he has advised the Central Command and Control administration to update/upgrade the 1122 Service software so that the location of the complainant could automatically start reflecting on the screen. "In this way, fake complaints could automatically be identified, and genuine complaints would be addressed at the earliest without indulging unnecessary queries with the complainant.

Q&A: In reply to a question, the chief minister said that Muttahida was not a coalition partner of his government, but we have developed a good working relationship. He added that MQM leaders have no issue with his government but one of them

might have some reservations individually on which the media should not waste its time.

To another question, Murad Ali Shah said that the Governor [of Punjab] under Article 130(7) of the constitution has the power to call the assembly session for the chief minister to take a vote of confidence. The objection made by the speaker on calling the session by the Governor was not valid.

The Sindh CM advised his counterpart in Punjab to take the vote of confidence instead of going to the court of law. He added that the chief minister has to take a vote of confidence to show his majority.

Talking about law & order, the chief minister said that he had held a high-level meeting a day before and had given clear instructions to the law enforcement agencies to launch a vigorous operation against street criminals. He added that during the last two weeks some such incidents have happened the citizens have lost their lives while resisting the muggers. "The police have made some arrests and the killers would be brought to book at any cost," he said and added that some of the habitual criminals have been released by the court for which he has directed his prosecutors to focus on investigation and made the cases strong.

To a question, Mr. Shah said that Murtaza Wahab, as an administrator of KMC, worked hard and he had no need of any official responsibility to serve the people, but he would be doing it as a party [PPP] worker.



LAHORE: Construction work is going on Sumanabad Underpass.

Pervaiz Elahi should prove majority in PA: Kaira

LAHORE (INP): Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira has said that Pervaiz Elahi should prove majority in the Punjab Assembly (PA).

He was addressing a press conference after attending a ceremony at the Pakistan Peoples Party Lahore President Ch Aslam Gill's residence while Senior Minister Sindh Nasir Shah and PPP Central Punjab General Secretary Syed Hassan Murtaza were also present.

He said Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his companions were being exposed, adding that elections for the chief minister Punjab would be held soon. He said that the assembly session for obtaining vote of confidence could be held at any time.

Kaira said that the gov-



ernment never claimed it would go for elections in case the PTI dissolved two assemblies. He said inflation had increased due to impact of international financial crunch, adding that continuity of the IMF programme was

need of the hour, otherwise, the country had to face severe financial effects. To a question, he said that the Federal government supported the flood-affecteds by cutting the public sector development programme funds

instead of provincial funds, adding that the infrastructure in Thar had been improved.

He said continuity of the democratic process would strengthen institutions and democracy in the country.

Illegal hydrants demolished near Jail Chowrangi flyover: Saifur Rehman

KARACHI (APP): Administrator Karachi Dr. Syed Saifur Rehman on Friday said that illegal hydrants have been demolished during a major operation near Jail Chowrangi flyover. "The KMC store built under the flyover has also been demolished and all the walls built under the flyover were removed.

The operation launched at Jail Chowrangi will continue till the encroachments are cleared," the Administrator said this while supervising the grand operation conducted by Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on Thursday night against encroachments near Jail Chowrangi.

Dr. Syed Saifur Rehman said that the work of establishing a park and urban forest has been started on the

vacated area. He said that according to the Supreme Court's judgment, encroachments cannot be established under bridges and flyovers.

Administrator Karachi Dr. Syed Saifur Rehman reached Jail Chowrangi late at night and personally supervised the operation.

He said that water was

stolen during the night hours, robbing the rights of the citizens which cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

He said that encroachment is a bad mark on the forehead of the city, so the encroachment mafia cannot be allowed to set foot anywhere in the city. Dr. Syed Saifur Rahman inspected

the Jail Chowrangi flyover and the surrounding areas after the encroachment removal and gave the necessary instructions to the concerned officers.

He said that this place should be continuously monitored so that in the future any encroachments will not be established here.

Court rejects Dania Shah's bail plea in leaked video case

KARACHI (TLTP): A local court has rejected the bail application of late politician and renowned TV presenter Dr Amir Liaquat Hussain's third ex-wife Dania Shah in the obscene video leak case.

Judicial Magistrate Mukesh Kumar has announced the verdict reserved earlier. During Thursday's hearing, the court reserved its verdict after hearing arguments from both parties. The TLTP learnt that Dania Shah is accused of leaking lewd videos of late MNA Hussain on social media.

The FIA registered a case against Ms Shah on the complaint of Hussain's daughter. The FIA arrested the accused from Punjab. During the hearing, Shah told the court that Hussain was hungry for fame and she made indecent videos as he insisted upon doing so. Talking to media, she claimed that the indecent videos of Hussain were saved on her mobile phone but she did not make them public and was unaware who posted them.

Children need to be ridden off the notions infused by Imran: Ghani

KARACHI (NNI): Senior Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Saeed Ghani said on Friday Imran Khan was misleading the youth of the country and the notions inculcated by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chief should be cleared out.

He said there was neither struggle nor sacrifice in PTI's chief's 22 years career and his politics life was full of lies.

Highlighting the political state of affairs, he was of the view that the responsibility of sober political parties increases given the situation that country faces.

Talking about his party co-chairman, the PPP's leader added no leader of Bilawal Bhutto's caliber was in Pakistan and he was solving the problems of the country at a rapid pace and it is his party's mission to make Bilawal the next premier.

UHS issues first merit list for MBBS, BDS programs

LAHORE (NNI): The University of Health (UHS) on Friday issued the first provincial merit list for MBBS/BDS 2022-23 seats of public sector medical/dental colleges of Punjab. The first selection list consisted of 3047 candidates for open merit MBBS/BDS seats in 16 government medical colleges across the province.

Human rights activists worldwide raising voice for Aafia: Dr Fowzia

KARACHI (NNI): Global Aafia Movement Chairperson and noted neurophysician of Pakistan Dr Fowzia Siddiqui has said that human rights activists and justice loving people worldwide have been raising voice for the detained Pakistani mother, Dr Aafia Siddiqui while for the Pakistani masses release of Aafia is a sacred cause.

Addressing a reception at her residence hosted in honour of Justice for Aafia Norway chapter head Zamran Ahmed Butt, she said if there is an apathy in case of Aafia it is only present in the corridors of power.

She said that she is hopeful that the government of Pakistan in the light of the orders of the Islamabad High Court would take serious steps to ensure the health and safety of Aafia besides her early release.

She said that she hopes that IHC will dole justice to the family of Aafia. She said that during the next hearing they

are expecting good development. She said after the demise of the mother of Aafia Siddiqui, the family wants telephonic contact with her.

Zamran Ahmed Butt in his address said that their organization along with the Norwegian civil society is raising a voice for Dr Aafia who should be doled out. He said for the last twenty years, Dr Aafia has been facing inhuman atrocities and her fundamental human rights are being violated and this should end now for good.

He assured full cooperation on behalf of his organization for the cause of Aafia.

Later, Zamran Ahmed accompanied by Dr Fowzia Siddiqui, the son of Aafia, Ahmed, Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) chairman Altaf Shakoor and volunteers of Aafia Movement visited the grave of the mother of Aafia Siddiqui, Late Ismat Siddiqui, and offered Fatiha.

409 projects of Rs100m approved to resolve PU's socio-economic issues

LAHORE (INP): Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi on Friday approved as many as 409 research projects worth 100 million rupees to solve socio-economic problems of the country and society and create new knowledge in the relevant fields.

In a press statement, Dr Asghar Zaidi said that this initiative would not only promote research culture but also help add new studies in the existing body of knowledge.

He said that it was the era of knowledge economy and the nations who were spending on research were ruling the world. Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said

that no nation could progress without spending required money on education.

The PU VC said that funding of these research projects would also promote research culture in the university.

Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that research funding would increase the research capabilities of teachers and students. According to the notification, lecturers/assistant professors would be able to spend Rs 200,000, associate professors Rs 250,000 and professors Rs 300,000 against their approved research projects.

Punjab University

Academic Staff Association President Prof Dr Azhar Naem and Secretary Dr Amjad Abbas Magi have thanked the Vice Chancellor for expediting the whole process, which was meant for promotion of research culture in Punjab University.

پبلک نوٹس

بذریعہ اشتہار خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ تحصیل میونسپل ایڈمنسٹریشن مردان اپنے بڑے ہونے اخراجات میں اضافے اور افزوں ذمہ داریوں جن میں آب رسانی، سڑک لائسنس، گلیوں و تالیوں کی تعمیر و مرمت، تنخواہوں شرح پیشین میں ایذا دہی اور دیگر گواہی سہولیات فراہم کرنے کیلئے نقشہ جات میں ایذا دہی اور زنجیر آبادی پر بمطابق سیکشن 42 لوکل گورنمنٹ ایکٹ 2013 سڈیول 3 پارٹ 3 درج ذیل سیکشن کرنا چاہتی ہے۔ اس سے حاصل شدہ تمام آمدنی میونسپل سروس کی فراہمی کے کاموں پر صرف کی جائے گی۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص ادارہ کو کوئی اعتراض یا تجویز پیش کرنا ہو تو اشتہار کی اشاعت کے چندہ ایم کے اندر اندر مطابق ذیل سیکشن پروگرام پیش کر سکتا ہے۔ لہذا معیار کو کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔

مزید یہ کہ تجویز شدہ سڈیول میلہ مال سویٹیاں محبت روڈ اور اس کے لئے اراضی درکار ہے

نمبر شمار	نام	انٹری فیس / فروختگی فیس
1	گائے، بھینس، بھیڑ، بکری وغیرہ	10 روپے فی داخلہ
2	گائے، بھینس، بھیڑ، بکری وغیرہ	10 روپے بیکہ فروختگی فیس
3	ہر قسم پایاؤں فروش وغیرہ	بحساب 40 روپے فی میلہ
4	ہر قسم کڑھریزی ٹی بوری وغیرہ	50 روپے فی بوری

ٹیکسٹیشن پروگرام حسب ذیل ہیں۔

- 1- اعتراضات / تجاویز وصول کرنے کی آخری تاریخ:- 05-01-2023
- 2- سب کیلکلی طرف سے اعتراضات / تجاویز پر غور و خوض:- 10-01-2023
- 3- سب کیلکلی رپورٹ:- 16-01-2023
- 4- مجوزہ مشر ہائے ٹی ٹی ٹی کی منظوری و ٹیکسٹیشن کے نفاذ کا اجراء:-

المشترک
تحصیل آفیسر (ریگولیشن) TMA مردان
تحصیل میونسپل آفیسر TMA مردان
INFP/7114/22

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
IRRIGATION DIVISION DISTRICT KHYBER
E-mail: xen.irr.khy@gmail.com Phone No. 091-5820090

CORRIGENDUM

Reference to our Tender Notice for the work "Construction of Irrigation tube wells / Lift Irrigation Schemes and Solarization of existing Irrigation Tube Wells in Merged Areas (ADP / AIP No. 2280/210588/2022-23) and Solarization of Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in Tribal District [MA] (ADP No. 2210/192017-190092/2022-23)", the following amendments / corrections may kindly be noted:

01. For NIT bearing No. INF(P) 6931/22, published in daily Mashriq dated: 10-12-2022.

a. Last date of submission of Bids is 05.01.2023 at 12:00 (Noon) and will be opened on the same day i.e. 05.01.2023 at 12:30 PM

Note: All Terms and Conditions remain same and can be downloaded from website (www.irrigation.gkp.pk)

Executive Engineer
Irrigation Division, District Khyber
Near Jamrud Civil Hospital, Jamrud Tehsil
District Khyber
(Contact No. 091-5820090)

INFP/7149/22, The Frontier Post Peshawar, Date: 24-12-22

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

A reputed public sector organization of the Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites applications from suitable candidates / domiciled in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the following position:-

Vacancies	Age (years)	No of vacancies	Qualification and Experience
Driver (BPS-06)	18-40	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literate having valid Light Transport Vehicle (LTV) Driving License issued by the competent authority; Provided that preference shall be given to those who have vast experience in driving, repair and maintenance of vehicles.

Terms and Conditions:

1. Application along with CV, attested copies of the academic documents/ experience certificates, CNIC and 2 passport size recent photographs must reach on the below mentioned P.O. Box latest within 15 days of the publication of the advertisement.
2. Applicants working in Govt, Semi Govt and Autonomous Bodies shall apply through proper channel and shall produce NOC of their employer's.
3. Only short-listed candidates will be called for test / interview.
4. Applications received after due date will not be entertained.
5. The Management reserves the right to accept / reject any application without assigning any reason.
6. No. TA/DA will be permissible / paid for test / interview.

Address: P.O. BOX # 642, GPO Peshawar Cantt, Peshawar.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY BOARD
Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

خیبر پختونخوا انفارمیشن ٹیکنالوجی بورڈ
حکومت خیبر پختونخوا

Plot No: 134, 135 & 136, Industrial Estate Phase V, Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
091-5891513, 091-5891516, Fax: 091-5891511 | Info@kpitb.gov.pk | kpitb.gov | www.kpitb.gov.pk

TENDER NOTICE

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board (KPITB) invites sealed bids along with 2% bid security of the total quoted price from reputed bidders registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments and who are on Active Taxpayers List (ATL) of FBR & KPRA, for the Procurement of Furniture for ADP Scheme "Establishment of Citizen Facilitation Centers in KP".

PROCUREMENT OF FURNITURE		
2	Date & Time of Bid Submission	January 10, 2023 at 02:00 PM
3	Date & Time of Bid Opening	January 10, 2023 at 02:30 PM

Detail Bidding documents containing eligibility criteria, specifications of items and other terms and conditions, can be downloaded from the website of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board (KPITB) i.e. www.kpitb.gov.pk/rfps

The sealed bids prepared as per instruction in the bidding documents shall be submitted to the office of KPITB located at Plot 134-136, Industrial Estate Phase#5, Hayatabad, Peshawar on or before the above mentioned date and time. All the bids will be opened in the presence of bidders / their representatives who want to be present at the time of opening of bids. The bids received after due date and time will not be considered.

Assistant Director Procurement, INF(P) 7162/22
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board,
Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar, Pakistan.
Phone #: 091-9219505, 091-5891613



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan being briefed on the second phase of 'Insaf Rozgar Scheme' for newly merged districts.

Muqam expresses affection for disabled boy

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engr Amir Muqam on Friday expressed love and affection for a disabled boy after seeing him in the rest area of Peshawar-Islamabad motorway while going to Islamabad.

The boy in the chair expressed happiness after seeing Amir Muqam in the refreshment area and desired to meet his beloved leader. Muqam sat with an adjacent chair and expressed love and affection for him. The boy raised slogans in favour of PMLN and Amir Muqam on this occasion. The boy's parents thanked the prime minister's adviser for his love and affection with his son on this occasion.

Meanwhile, Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political, Public Affairs and Culture Division Engr Amir Muqam on Friday strongly condemned the Islamabad blast and paid tribute to martyred policeman Adeel Hussain and other injured police cops for thwarting terror attempt.

In a statement here, Engr Amir Muqam said the terrorists had started a war against the brave Pakistani nation and the murderers of humanity would be dealt with iron hands.

Elections to be held as scheduled

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan People's Party Provincial Deputy Coordination Farzand Ali Wazir has said that the elections will be held as per scheduled, saying that government will complete its constitutional term.

By standing on the basis of culture, he disappointed all classes and gave Pakistan nothing but isolation, but now his politics of lies will not last long, the people have understood the false politics of Imran Niazi, they can no longer mislead the nation. The coming time belongs to Pakistan Peoples Party.

Drive against narcotics mafia accelerated

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Divisional administration of Peshawar has decided further acceleration of crackdown against narcotics mafia and taking of anti-encroachment operation narcotics smugglers to logical end.

The decision was taken during a meeting of Divisional Intelligence Coordination held here on Friday with Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud in the chair. Besides, Deputy Commissioners (DCs) Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda and tribal districts of Khyber and Mohmand, District Police Officers (DPOs), civil and military officials attended the meeting.

During the meeting DCs of all five districts of the division gave detailed briefing regarding steps taken in view of the security situation and operation against narcotics smugglers in their respective districts. The meeting decided for further acceleration in the pace of the ongoing crackdown against narcotics smugglers to end the menace of drug addiction and taking narcotics smugglers to a logical end.

The meeting decided the registration of FIRs against narcotics sellers with solid proofs and their vigorous following of such cases. The meeting further issued directives for making best security arrangements in

the prevailing security situation for the Christmas festival of the Christian community.

The meeting also took crucial decisions for eradication of extortion and directed DCs and DPOs for launching joint operations in their respective districts, beside beefing up the security of foreigners and for this decided the implementation of the revised National Action Plan in letters and spirit. Addressing the meeting Commissioner Peshawar, Riaz Khan Mehsud directed for the utilization of all available resources for maintenance of law and order in the region and furnishing of report in this regard on a daily basis.

KMU 26th Academic Council meeting held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The 26th meeting of the Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar Academic Council was held under the chairmanship of vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq in the Committee Room. Registrar KMU Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Gandapur, Pro VC and

dean of clinical sciences Prof. Dr. Lal Muhammad Khattak, Prof. Dr. Haider Darain dean of Allied Health Sciences, Dr. Inayat Shah Director IBMS and Dr. Brekhna Jameel Director IHPE, Muhammad Islam additional director academics, besides heads of various institutions and other members attended the meeting.

UI Haq welcomed all the participants, he said that the academic council is a very imperative forum for making important policies related to different levels of academics, examinations, and admissions. He said that the leading and constructive role being played by the KMU academic council in medical and allied health sciences was admirable.



PESHAWAR: Resident of Adezai chanting slogans during a protest in favour of their demands. - F.P. photo

Small dams to combat desertification, water woes in Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Desertification and drought have recently emerged as one of the major environmental and agricultural development problems across the globe where around two billion people live on dry lands and their biological productivity was under threat due to aggressive degradation of natural resources, especially consumable water in the wake of climate change's challenges.

Out of 195 countries having eight billion populations, about two billion people in 110 states including Pakistan and two-thirds of the world's agricultural land were highly prone to land degradation, drought and desertification mainly due to scarcity of water. According to available data, an estimated USD 42 billion of economic loss and six million hectares of productive land was being lost every year due to land degradation, drought and desertification in the world, thus affecting overall agricultural productivity and posing threats to food security in the aftermath of weather patterns.

Dr Ikram-ur-Rehman, former Provincial Coordinator, Sustainable Land Management Program (SLMP Phase-II) said out of 79.6 million hectares of land in Pakistan, about 70

percent was arid to semi-arid, 50.88 million hectares were rangeland and only 22 million hectares were under cultivation. He said around 1.5 to 2.5 million hectares of irrigated land, 3.5 to four million hectares of rain-fed agricultural and 35 million hectares of rangelands were either becoming barren or non-productive annually due to drought, land degradation and desertification.

SLMP-II program, which was started with co-partnership of Federal and Provincial Governments with financial assistance from UNDP and Global Environment Facility (GEF), has revealed that underground water resources in the western dry mountains of Sindh and Balochistan were shrinking due to heavy exploitation of aquifers without any natural recharge. The National Water Policy 2018 has disclosed that Pakistan was gradually heading towards water stress due to shortage of dams, which might lead to food insecurity for all living creatures in near future.

According to the policy, per capita surface water availability has declined from 5,260 cubic meters per year in 1951 to around 1,000 cubic meters in 2016 and this quantity

would likely further drop to 860 cubic meters by 2025. It warned that the groundwater situation was expected to further drop in the country mostly in Punjab and Sindh, where one million tube wells were currently pumping about 55 million acres feet (MAF) of underground water for irrigation, which is 20pc more than that available from canals.

Termining the findings of the policy alarming, Ikhtair Wali, spokesman of PML-N KP and MPA accused the PTI's government for its poor energy and economic policies that plunged the country into energy and gas crisis besides increasing an import bill to \$ 27 billion. He said work on Mohmand dam with capacity of 800 MW and Diamir Bhasha dams with a 4500 MW capacity was unnecessarily delayed by the PTI government, resulting in a sharp increase in demand and supply gap of electricity and gas that plunged the country into load shedding.

Had Diamir Bhasha and Mohmand dams constructed and gas and alternative power resources were developed, Pakistan would have achieved 50,000MW affordable electricity today. Ikram said in the second phase, 200 more villages were

ANP chief denounces Islamabad suicide blast

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Central President Awami National Party (ANP), Asfandiyar Wali Khan on Friday strongly denounced a suicide blast in Islamabad that claimed the life of a cop and injured four others. In a message issued from Bacha Khan Markaz here, the ANP chief said the gravity of the situation could be asserted from the terrorists' entry into Islamabad. All we have to do now is take this issue very seriously.

Khan said when we talked about terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, no one took it seriously. The terrorists, he said reorganized themselves in the last three years adding that sadly today the terrorists were even carrying out attacks in Islamabad.

He said I had warned the KP government that terrorists have their roots in the province and people were in fear of terror attacks but no tangible steps were taken to rectify the situation. If the decisions made after the APS attack in Peshawar, were not implemented in letter and spirit then God forbid the situation may aggravate. He said police were the front-line force against such elements and their capacity building and provision of modern technology and training to them was prerequisite to contain such incidents in future. The ANP chief also prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul of the martyred policeman and early recovery of the injured from the blast.

Islam guarantees right to edu for all

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Islamic cleric and Khatib of mosque Qasim Ali Khan, Mufti Shahabuddin Pupalzai has said that forbidding women from acquiring education on the pretext of 'veil' was against the teachings of Islam and the Holy Quran.

In a statement, he said, "The duty of seeking knowledge and learning is obligatory for every Muslim (man and woman) in Islam as the religion guarantees the right to education for all, without gender discrimination." Mufti Pupalzai said, "The philosophy and thought of banning women from leaving the house may be a tradition and custom of a region, but it has nothing to do with Islam."

"Islam has not established any distinction between the two genders for obligatory knowledge", he added, "Acquisition of knowledge is an obligatory duty and this has been clearly supported by the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)."

"There is consensus among all schools of thought in Islam that the denial of an obligatory duty is disbelief. "Anyone who thinks female education is forbidden, is actually denying a religious obligation which is a great sin", Pupalzai said.

KP Police arrest 806 terrorists, shot 196 dead in encounters

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police have arrested 806 terrorists including 90 those carrying head money while 196 were shot dead in encounters during the outgoing calendar year, said annual performance report of the force issued here on Friday.

The provincial police during the year 2022 have arrested 62 kidnappers wanted in connections with the cases of kidnapping for ransom. During the year a total of 81 incidents of extortion occurred and 158 extortionists have been brought into the court of justice.

Similarly, the force also upheld its tradition of battling against terrorists and sacrificed their lives to protect the people from terrorism. As many as 1877

search and strike operations were conducted in Malakand Division while 478 intelligence-based operations were also conducted.

During these operations several terrorist commanders have been eliminated and elements wanted in connections with militancy and extortionists were arrested. 18 check posts were established on the hill tops to prevent the movement of terrorists. Similarly, a total of 20601 search and strike operations were conducted under the National Action Plan (NAP) and a huge number of 129637 suspects taken into custody while 22416 different kinds of weapons and 511447 cartridges were taken into official possession.

Furthermore, 356958 houses were checked and

11604 FIRs were registered over the lack of filing tenancy rent form and 1196 FIRs were registered against hotels for lack of guests' verification. Similarly, 120459 suspects were arrested during 79940 snap checkings across the province and 15786 numbers of various weapons and 433786 cartridges were also recovered from them.

The provincial police have also made breakthrough in operation against narcotics through Narcotics Eradication Teams (NETs) have carried out successful operations against narcotics sellers and recovered 903.645 kilograms of ice drug, 1279.431 kilograms of heroin, 18841.834 kilograms of hashish, 1381.3 kilograms opium and 12883.52 litres of liquor.



PESHAWAR: Activists of All Municipal Workers Union WSSP holding a protest for acceptance of their demands. - F.P. photo

WAPDA issues water position in rivers, dams

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has issued the position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma along with the reservoirs levels and the barrages on Friday morning.

According to a spokesperson of the authority inflows and outflows in Indus River at Tarbela was recorded 18800 cusecs and 27000 cusecs while inflows and outflows in Kabul River at Nowshera was 8200 cusecs and 8200 cusecs while inflows and outflows in the same river at Khairabad Bridge was 13800 cusecs and 13800 cusecs respectively.

Similarly, inflows and outflows in Jhelum River at Mangla was 8600 cusecs and 20000 cusecs and in Chenab at Marala, the inflows and outflows was 5300 cusecs and 2000 cusecs respectively.

Meanwhile, in Jinnah Barrage, inflows and outflows were 40500 cusecs and 36000 cusecs while in Chashma, the inflows and outflows were 34200 cusecs and 27000 cusecs,

Taunsa (inflows 37700 cusecs and outflows 27700 cusecs), Guddu (inflows 30000 cusecs and outflows 20800 cusecs), Sukkur (inflows 20000 cusecs and outflows 2800 cusecs), Kotri (inflows 11700 cusecs and outflows 700 cusecs) Trimmu (inflows 6000 cusecs and outflow Nil cusecs while in Panjnad the inflows and outflows were recorded 6100 cusecs and Outflows Nil cusecs.

Tarbela dam was operating at level of 1489.29 feet against minimum operating level 1398 feet and maximum conservation level 1550 feet, live storage on Friday morning was 2.706 million acre feet (MAF).

Mangla: Minimum operating level 1050 feet, present level 1116.50 feet, maximum conservation level 1242 feet, live storage today 0.705 MAF.

Chashma: Minimum operating level 638.15 feet, present level 642.00 feet, maximum conservation level 649 feet, live storage today 0.058 MAF.

The inflows and outflows of River Indus at Tarbela, Jinnah and Chashma, River Kabul at Nowshera and River Jhelum at Mangla have been reflected as mean

flows of 24 hours, whereas the other flows have been gauged at 6.00 a.m.

Cold and dry weather predicted

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Friday predicted that mainly very cold and dry weather is expected in most districts of the province during the next 24 hours.

It said that dense to very dense Fog is likely to occur over Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi and D.I. Khan districts, as well as over Peshawar to Swabi Motorway during morning and night hours. The center advised the travelers on Motorways and National Highways to adopt precautionary measures during travelling. During the last 24 hours mainly cold and dry weather occurred in most districts of the province, while very cold in hilly areas and upper parts. Foggy conditions prevailed over most plains areas of the province during night and morning hours.



In brief

38 toolkits distributed Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: As many as 38 toolkits were distributed among skilled workers by Qatar Charity to provide help for desirable people to established their businesses, on Friday. According to details, Qatar Charity has providing assistance to the needy people in Nowshera and Peshawar districts for development of their skills and small-scale businesses. Qatar Charity provided electrician, carpenter, bakery and other tools among needy traders to ease their business activities. Coordinator Qatar Charity Sajjad Khan claimed that it is non-profitable organization and committed for socio-economic uplift of marginalized segments of society. He added that donors finances are utilizing in best possible manner to facilitate maximum people.

9000 dialysis performed F.P. Report

SWABI: More than 9000 patients have been provided free dialysis facility under Sehat Sahulat Program in Bacha Khan Medical Complex (BKMC) so far during current year. A data report released by BKMC here Friday said that average of 900 dialysis were conducted in each month while average number of dialysis performed on daily basis in 35. In Charge Dialysis Unit, Dr. Tariq Ikram said that thirteen dialysis machines are installed that are working from 8:00 AM to 10: PM for maximum facilitation of patients. He said that about 2000 patients of emergency wards were also given dialysis facility in current year.

Teachers hold protest F.P. Report

SHANGLA: Second Shift Teachers arranged protest and walk from Alpuri press club to Deputy Commissioner Shangla Office in favor of their demands, on Friday. The protesting teachers claimed that from last months they are deprived from their salaries despite making Second Shift Learning Programme successful. The protestors chanted slogans in favor of their demands while arguing government and competent authorities to address their grievances on priority basis. The teachers claimed that they are working without service structure and fate of services to educate youth of the nation to compete with global village. They claimed that deprivation from salaries since last six months had made worse livelihood of Second Shift Teachers.

Lawyers aggrieved F.P. Report

HANGU: Lawyers showed their grievances regarding construction of New Judicial Complex and claimed that it will tehsil category complex rather than district category. This was claimed by District Bar Association (DBA) Hangu president Nadeem Khan along with Noor Karim, Noor Nawaz, Muhammad Asim, Shabbir Ahmad Khan, Aurangzeb, Hassan Ahmad Khan, Hidayat Shah, Shaheen Khan, Jamal Hussain, Shah Hussain, Salah Shah, Khan Emir Bugti, Zahoor Ahmad, Anwar Sadat and Ishfaq Ahmad Khan while addressing media forum at barroom. The legal fraternity claimed that they were deprived from their financial and legal rights from last ten years while added that compensation didn't provided to victims of 2011 judicial complex blast.



SHANGLA: Second shift teachers holding protest for release of their salaries. — F.P. photo

Illegal hydrants demolished

HYDERABAD (PPI): Administrator Karachi Dr Syed Saifur Rehman has said that illegal hydrants have been demolished during a major operation near Jail Chowranghi flyover. "The KMC store built under the flyover has also been demolished and all the walls built under the flyover were also removed. The operation launched at Jail Chowranghi will continue till the encroachments are cleared," the Administrator said this while supervising the grand operation conducted by Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on Thursday night against encroachments near Jail Chowranghi. The relevant officers of KMC were also with him.

Dr. Syed Saifur Rehman said that the work of estab-

lishing a park and urban forest has been started on the vacated area. He said that according to the Supreme Court's decision, encroachments cannot be established under bridges and flyovers. Administrator Karachi Dr. Syed Saifur Rehman reached Jail Chowranghi late at night and personally supervised the operation. He said that water was stolen during the night hours, robbing the rights of the citizens which cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

He said that encroachment is a bad mark on the forehead of the city, so the encroachment mafia cannot be allowed to set foot anywhere in the city. Dr. Syed Saifur Rahman inspected the Jail Chowranghi flyover

and the surrounding areas after the encroachment removal and gave the necessary instructions to the concerned officers.

He said that this place should be continuously monitored so that in the future any encroachments will not be established here. The Administrator said that thousands of tons of garbage have also been removed from Jail Chowranghi flyover loop after which the work of creating an urban forest has been started here.

He directed the Director General Parks to improve the green belts of all the roads in the city and to plant saplings in empty spaces. He directed that seasonal flower should also be planted at 28 major roads managed by KMC.

Murad offers condolence with family of martyred SSG official F.P. Report

LARKANA: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah offered condolences with the bereaved family members of martyred SSG commando Saeed Ahmed Soomro at his native Koreja village in Shikarpur district.

On the application of the villagers, he also approved a road for the village, a girls primary school, gas connection and also obtained three applications for jobs from the martyred man's brothers, including Waheed Ali, Naveed Ali and Suhail Ahmed and handed them over to DIGP Larkana Range.

Shah while talking to media on the occasion said that martyred Saeed Ahmed Soomro embraced martyrdom while fighting with the terrorists during encroachment of CTD in Bannu. He said the nation is proud of his sacrifice. He said applications of the villagers will be implemented about a road, gas and girls school.

While answering a question about the recent wave of law and order situation unrest, Shah said that there are some issues of law and order in Shikarpur, Ghotki and some other districts for which we are giving modern weapons and technology to police and head-money has also been fixed on notorious bandits. He said that some people get cheated and kidnapped and they should realize the seriousness of the prevailing situation. He said that the police should be informed about such calls and offers.

Talking about the acute shortage of gas and electricity, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Shah said that the previous federal government's energy policy was inadequate, mistaken and natural resources were not explored. He said that for saving in the energy sector, we have to work on controlling and reducing imports.

Provincial Energy Minister Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, Nisar Khuhro, Sindh Government Spokesperson Murtaza Wahab and others were also present.

RPO visits churches F.P. Report

KOHAT: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Kohat, Tahir Ayub Friday visited churches situated in Kohat and Hangu to review security arrangements being made for Christmas.

He reviewed security plan and discussed measures taken to ensure holding of Christmas in a peaceful manner. He also met with Christian community members and assured them full cooperation of police on the occasion.

He also directed police force to remain vigil and ensure peace and serenity on eve of Christmas. District Police Chief of Kohat Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, DPO Hangu Asif Bahadur and other concerned officials also accompanied the RPO.

Historical girl's school reopened after decade

Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: District Education Authority Hafizabad has reopened government girl's high school No 1, Hafizabad formally, which was closed more than ten years ago situated in the heart of the city Hafizabad.

Senior officer of Administrative Services and ex-Senior Member Board of Revenue Punjab, Babar Hayyat Tarar, Special Secretary Education Punjab, Kalsoom Saqib, Administrator District Education Authority and DC Hafizabad, Toqeer Ilyas Cheema and CEO District Education Authority Hafizabad Javed Iqbal Babar jointly inaugurated the school. Project Director Danish School Authority Punjab Ahmer Malik, Superintendent District Jail Hafizabad Muhammad Abu Bakar Abdullah, AC Coordination Ishfaq Ahmad, DO Abdul Majeed, Headmistress Nagmana Hayyat, DDEO Nargis Arif, DDEO Pindi Bhattian Sofia Jabeen, Principal Centre of Excellence Shaista Ahmer, education officers and other prominent personalities of the city also attended the function.

Addressing the ceremony, Babar Hayyat Tarar said that restoration of this historic school was a big achievement of DC and CEO Education and this school was an ideal educational institution which was famous for its quality education and other co-curriculum activities in the area.

With reopening of this school would provide cheap educational opportunities to daughters of poor and less-resources people at their doorsteps, he added. Secretary Special Education, Punjab, promised that building of this school would reconstruct-

ed and new staff would also be recruited in the school.

While addressing the ceremony and talking to media, DC said that restoration of this school was longstanding demand of people of the area which was being fulfilled today. He said that under educational friendly vision of the Punjab government, concrete steps were being taken for promoting quality education in the district while dilapidated portion of this school would be reconstructed for convenience of the students. Students of the school highlighted culture of four provinces of the county to perform tableaux which was lauded by the gusts.

One commits suicide after critical injuring his beloved: A youth committed suicide after shooting a girl for not getting marry according to his own wish. A youth Kashif resident of Kaleke Mandi Town wished to marry a girl of same locality allegedly but the parents of the girl refuse to do so. On Thursday, he shot the girl and latter committed suicide to shot himself. As a result of which he killed on the spot while girl injured critically. The injure girl and dead body of Kashif was shifted to Trauma Centre Hafizabad. Police was engaged in investigation.

Meanwhile, a woman was injured when gas slander was exploded in village Malik Wala near Hafizabad. It was stated that a housewife was forgot to close gas cylinder and gas was accumulated in the room. When, as soon as she stuck the match early in the morning, on Thursday, the gas cylinder was exploded. As a result of which, she receive burn injures and she was shifted to Trauma Centre Hafizabad. Window panes were also broken due to explosion.

Number of 'Dar ul Aman' increased: Sumera Shams

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A woman MPA elected on reserved seats from Lower Dir Dr Sumera Shams who also leads the Parliamentary Women Caucus in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has said that provincial government had increased the number of Dar ul Aman in the province to provide better facilities to the helpless and oppressed women in the province. Talking to local journalists here at Timergara the other day, the lawmaker said that earlier destitute women from all over the Malakand division were kept at the Swat Dar ul Aman that faced a huge burden.

Dr. Samira Shams said that the establishment of Dar ul Aman at the far off districts was not easy as the number of oppressed women was high due to which many difficulties were being faced. She said that Dar ul Amans in Lower Dir, Mardan, Bannur, Kohat and Chitral had been made functional while the establishment of such Dar

ul Aman in Shangla and Bunir were in progress. She said that the Chief Minister Mahmood Khan supported her in the establishment of Dar ul Aman as her party, the PTI believed in providing relief to women and other vulnerable communities.

Meanwhile the Additional Deputy Commissioner visited the newly established Darul-Aman at Timergara along with the officials of the social welfare department. The ADC checked different parts of the Dar ul-Aman with regard to women safety and food and expressed his satisfaction on the arrangements.

The in charge was asked to submit a detailed report with regard to issues related to the staff and female inmates shifted from other districts. The representative of the Social Welfare Department Dir Lower was also directed to carry out necessary arrangements and deficiencies in the Dar ul-Aman.

DFC inspects floor's mills: In the light of the

special orders of Secretary Food Department Capt. Retired Mushtaq Ahmed and Director Rehan Qudus Khattak, District Food Controller Muhammad Shahabuddin Khan and Assistant Sultan Rum Khan made a surprise visit to various flour mills, official flour records of flour mills.

The quality and quantity of government flour was also checked. Sealed samples of government flour from flour mills were sent to Food Laboratory Peshawar. While Assistant Food Controller Mr. Riaz Ahmad Khan and Food Inspector Mr. Shabbir Ahmed checked various government flour dealers in Chakdara Bazar, government flour records and distribution process were also inspected, butchers, bakers, and government flour dealers at various general stores.

The shopkeepers who sell at a higher rate than the list price and keep expired food items were fined Rs 73500 on the spot and bank challans were deposited in the national treasury.

Showcase notices issued to two TMOs

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Local deputy commissioner Fazal Akbar has sought explanation from tehsil municipal officers of Lakki Marwat and Ghaznikhel, asking them to cite reasons within three days for not attending the monthly performance review meeting.

An official of district administration said on Thursday that explanation notice had been issued to both officers of the tehsil municipal administrations. He said that the performance review meeting was held last week with the deputy commissioner in the chair to discuss and review overall progress and performance of the line departments.

The meeting took up for discussion various important points and agenda items relating to the municipal administrations", he maintained. The official said that in the absence of both TMOs, the deputy commissioner as well as other participants faced troubles to make decisions and formulate a mechanism for their implementation.

He said that the meeting was of vital importance as the chief minister's directives including cleanliness awareness campaign, anti-encroachment drive, availability of facilities like waiting sheds, drinking water and cleaning wash-rooms at bus stands were also discussed in it.

"Matters pertaining to chlorination of water tanks,

disposal of complaints received through citizen portal and Marastyal App, removal of speed breakers and construction material from roads, illegal billboards and availability of facilities at Children Park in Lakki city and action against illegal housing societies were also discussed in the meeting", he added.

The official said that the deputy commissioner also expressed displeasure over the absence of both officers from the meeting as it showed non-seriousness towards official responsibilities on their part. He said that both officers had been directed to attend meetings in future and implement the decisions and assigned tasks in letter and spirit.

Christmas Bazaars to be set up in Bahawalpur

BAHAWALPURMUL-TAN (APP): Christmas bazaars would be set up for the Christian community on Christmas day in Bahawalpur where high-quality food items will be available at lower prices. This was stated by Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zahid Pervaz Warrach while reviewing the arrangements for Christmas bazaars in a meeting held in the committee room of his office.

Assistant Commission-

ers of all tehsils of the district attended the meeting through the video link.

The DC directed the best cleaning arrangements should be made in the Christmas bazaar. He said that relevant staff of the Health Department and Rescue 1122 should also be present in the bazaar.

He said that fool-proof security arrangements should be ensured. The DC that assistant commissioners of the respective

tehsils should monitor the Christmas bazaars so that the Christian community can benefit from this facility.

Christmas bazaars will be established in Model Bazar and Islami Colony in Bahawalpur and all other tehsils including Yazman, Hasilpur, Ahmedpur East, and Khairpur Tamiwali. The bazaars will feature items like have flour, sugar, pulses, rice, chicken, meat, fruits, and vegetables.

X-Mass cake-cutting ceremony arranged

F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: A cake-cutting ceremony was held here on Friday at the Catholic Church in connection with Christmas celebrations.

Deputy Commissioner Tariq Salam Marwat was the chief guest on the occasion. Addressing the ceremony, he said, "Our constitution guarantees the rights of minorities and all possible steps are being taken by the district administration in this regard." The deputy commissioner congratulated the entire Christian community and assured them

of all possible support from the district administration.

He also distributed Christmas gifts amongst the minority members. On this occasion, ADC Relief and Human Rights Rabia Sajjad, District Youth Officer Talal Salim, In-charge Sangi Foundation Abbottabad Muhammad Shahdaziz Tanoli, In-charge Sahil Foundation Muhammad Jawad Tanuli, In-charge Al-Khidmat Foundation Jameel Malik, minority representatives, minority leaders, Tehsil Member Waqar Gul, Father Rafiq Javed Gul, Father Nasir William and Father Salim Ghori participated.



Putin says Russia wants end to war in Ukraine

MOSCOW (Reuters): President Vladimir Putin said that Russia wants an end to the war in Ukraine and that this would inevitably involve a diplomatic solution. Putin made the comments a day after US President Joe Biden hosted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the White House and promised him continued and unwavering US support.

"Our goal is not to spin the fly-wheel of military conflict, but, on the contrary, to end this war," Putin said. "We will strive for an end to this, and the sooner the better, of course." White House spokesman John Kirby said Putin has "shown absolutely zero indication that he's willing to negotiate" an end to the war, which began when Moscow sent troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24.

"Quite the contrary," Kirby told reporters during an online briefing. "Everything he (Putin) is doing on the ground and in the air bespeaks a man who wants to continue to visit violence upon the Ukrainian people" and "escalate the war." Kirby reiterated that Biden was open to talks with Putin, but only after the Russian leader "showed a seriousness about negotiations" and after consultations with Ukraine and US allies.

Russia has persistently said it is open to negotiations, but Ukraine and its allies suspect a ploy to buy time after a series of Russian defeats and retreats that have swung the momentum of the 10-month war in favour of Kyiv. "I have said many times: the intensification of hostilities leads to unjustified losses," Putin told reporters.



"All armed conflicts end one way or another with some kind of negotiations on the diplomatic track," he added. "Sooner or later, any parties in a state of conflict sit down and make an agreement. The sooner this realization comes to those who oppose us, the better. We have never given up on this." Russia says it is Ukraine that is refusing to talk. Kyiv says Russia must halt its attacks and give up all territory it has seized.

Putin also played down the significance of the Patriot air defense system that Biden agreed to supply to

Zelenskyy, saying Russia would find a way to counter it. He said it was "quite old" and did not work like Russia's S-300 system. "An antidote will always be found," he said, boasting Russia would "crack" the Patriots. "So those who do it are doing it in vain. It's just prolonging the conflict, that's all."

Putin also said a price cap imposed on Russian oil by Western countries, designed to limit its ability to fund the war, would not damage the Russian economy. He said he would sign a decree early next week to set out Russia's response.

Kosovo asks NATO to airlift a Serb detainee

PRISTINA (Reuters): Kosovo has asked NATO troops to airlift a former Serb policeman who was detained two weeks ago but could not be transferred elsewhere because local Serbs demanding his release set up barricades to prevent him being moved. Dejan Pantic was arrested on Dec. 10 on charges of assaulting serving police officers during a previous protest.

Tensions have been running high since then as thousands of Kosovo Serbs protest, demanding the country's Albanian-majority government pulls its police force out of the north, where the Serb minority is concentrated. Local Serbs, who number around 50,000 in northern Kosovo, reiterated at a protest that they would not remove the roadblocks unless Pantic is released.

"He (Pantic) should be in a detention center and not in a police station and that's why we have asked our international partners to transfer him in an adequate facility," Interior Minister Xhelal Svecla told a news conference in Mitrovica, just a few kilometers away from the first barricade. NATO's mission in Kosovo, KFOR, is the only force that has helicopters. Kosovo has no helicopters and would need NATO's permission to hire one.

KFOR has already airlifted nine police officers in recent days who were ill but unable to get out of the area after the roads were blocked. The NATO force, which has more than 3,000 troops on the ground, said the KFOR commander is the sole authority to decide over Kosovo's airspace. "Every request that has been refused was because, as in the current situation, there were not the needed security conditions," KFOR said in a written statement to Reuters without saying what request has been refused.

Svecla said his police force could remove the barricades but that he wanted local Serbs or NATO troops to remove them. "For the sake of stability we are waiting for them to be removed by those who set them up or KFOR, but even waiting has its end," he said. Kosovo's government has previously said people at the barricades are armed and any police intervention could harm people from both sides. Ethnic Serb mayors in northern municipalities, along with local judges and some 600 police officers, resigned last month in protest over a Kosovo government decision to replace Serbian-issued car license plates with ones issued by Pristina.

Migrants flee more countries

HONG KONG/SHANGHAI (Reuters): At the public hospital in Shanghai where Nora, a 30-year-old doctor, works, tension has spiraled since China relaxed its stringent zero-COVID policy on Dec. 7. Patients quarrel with doctors to access drugs that are in short supply, like cough medicines and pain killers. Medics are overloaded; infected staff continue to work because of a scarcity of personnel.

"The policy of controlling covid was relaxed very suddenly," said Nora, who would not give her full name because of the issue's sensitivity. "The hospitals should've been notified in advance to make adequate preparations." After years of enforcing harsh measures to stamp out the coronavirus, President Xi Jinping's abrupt abandonment of zero-COVID in the face of protests and a widening outbreak has left China scrambling to avert a collapse of its public health system.

Shortages of drugs and testing kits and logistical disruptions are upending daily life. Four hospital workers told Reuters that insufficient planning for the end of zero-COVID had left them to manage a chaotic reopening. "I think China thought that its policy was successful and that a gradual transition to the endemic phase was feasible, but obviously it was not," said Kenji Shibuya, a former senior adviser to the World Health Organisation.

More than a dozen global health experts, epidemiologists, residents and political analysts interviewed by

Armenia says food shortages hit Nagorno-Karabakh

TBILISI (Reuters): The breakaway territory of Nagorno-Karabakh is running short of food due to a blockade now well into its second week, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was quoted as saying, blaming Azerbaijan. Pashinyan also criticised Russian peacekeeping troops for failing to keep open the Lachin corridor, the road route across Azerbaijan that links Armenia with the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave where some 120,000 ethnic Armenians live.

The enclave is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan, but its inhabitants are predominantly Armenian and it broke away after a war in the early 1990s. In 2020, Azerbaijan retook territory in and around Nagorno-Karabakh after a short war that ended in a Russian-brokered ceasefire. Pashinyan told his Cabinet the humanitarian situation in the enclave was "extremely tense as a result of the illegal blockade by Azerbaijan of the Lachin corridor".

He said he had proposed terms to Azerbaijan for lifting the blockade of the route, where Russian

peacekeepers have been confronted by a crowd of Azerbaijanis describing themselves as environmental activists. Azerbaijan says they are involved in a genuine protest against illegal Armenian mining in Nagorno-Karabakh and it was the Russian peacekeepers who closed the road.

Pashinyan said the peacekeepers were not fulfilling their function, which he said was "precisely to prevent such illegal actions and, in particular, to keep the Lachin corridor under control". Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the Russian peacekeepers, deployed after the last war in 2020, were working to ensure peace and order, in accordance with their mandate.

Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh depend on the Lachin corridor for supplies of food, medicine, fuel and other essential goods. "Hundreds of families remain divided on different sides of the blockade. In Nagorno-Karabakh, there are shortages of a number of essential goods, including food," Pashinyan said. He called for a fact-finding mission to be sent to Nagorno-Karabakh from

the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan spoke separately with Azerbaijani presidential aide Hikmat Hajiyev and Armen Grigoryan, secretary of Armenia's Security Council, the White House said in a statement. "Sullivan noted our ongoing concern over impeded access to the Lachin Corridor and the growing humanitarian implications of this situation, and called for full restoration of free movement through the corridor," it said.

US-based Human Rights Watch this week called on the Azerbaijani authorities and Russian peacekeepers to ensure that vehicles with humanitarian goods can pass. "The longer the disruption to essential goods and services, the greater the risk to civilians," it said. The standoff is fuelling tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which have yet to reach a peace deal. Violations of the 2020 truce remain commonplace, with more than 200 soldiers killed on both sides in a flare-up of fighting in September.

Venezuela Opp vote to remove Guaido's govt

CARACAS (Reuters): Venezuela's political opposition to the ruling Socialists voted by a wide margin to remove the interim government led by Juan Guaido, as they seek a united front ahead of presidential elections tentatively scheduled for 2024. The motion was backed by three of four major opposition groups but rejected by Guaido's Popular Will and must pass through another consultation scheduled next week before it is finalized.

The other three major parties - Justice First, Democratic Action and A New Era - have for weeks been drafting a plan to create a board of directors to manage Venezuela's assets held abroad, especially US-based refiner and fuel retailer Citgo, as a way to dislodge Guaido. Acting as congress chief and interim president following Nicolas Maduro's disputed re-election as president in May 2018, Guaido in 2019 appointed the board of

Citgo, a subsidiary of state oil firm PDVSA.

While mostly powerless at home where Maduro's government exercises control over nearly all institutions, including security forces, Guaido's interim government has supervised the foreign assets and runs many embassies. Opposition motion passed in a virtual Zoom session with 72 votes in favor, 23 against and nine abstentions. If approved next week, opposition lawmakers will then choose five representatives for the board of directors that will head assets held abroad, and Guaido's interim presidency, along with his government, will be removed.

Central to the debate is Citgo and the government's most important foreign asset. A majority stake in the company was used as collateral for a bond on which PDVSA defaulted, but is being protected from creditors by a US license that expires in January. Opposition

groups hope this will be renewed. Venezuela owes more than \$60 billion to creditors for defaulted bonds and company nationalizations carried out under then-president Hugo Chavez.

Some US courts have granted creditors permission to negotiate the sale of Venezuelan assets, but many remain protected by the US government. Guaido has been the face of Venezuela's opposition abroad since he declared himself interim president in 2019. But due mostly to the opposition's failure to remove Maduro from power, Guaido has fallen from favor. Talks between the opposition and Maduro's government hosted by Mexico ended earlier this month with no further negotiations scheduled. At a late November meeting in the Mexican capital, both sides signed a deal to create a United Nations-run fund to combat the country's humanitarian crisis.

China lacked a 'zero COVID' exit plan

HONG KONG/SHANGHAI (Reuters): At the public hospital in Shanghai where Nora, a 30-year-old doctor, works, tension has spiraled since China relaxed its stringent zero-COVID policy on Dec. 7. Patients quarrel with doctors to access drugs that are in short supply, like cough medicines and pain killers. Medics are overloaded; infected staff continue to work because of a scarcity of personnel.

"The policy of controlling covid was relaxed very suddenly," said Nora, who would not give her full name because of the issue's sensitivity. "The hospitals should've been notified in advance to make adequate preparations." After years of enforcing harsh measures to stamp out the coronavirus, President Xi Jinping's abrupt abandonment of zero-COVID in the face of protests and a widening outbreak has left China scrambling to avert a collapse of its public health system.

Shortages of drugs and testing kits and logistical disruptions are upending daily life. Four hospital workers told Reuters that insufficient planning for the end of zero-COVID had left them to manage a chaotic reopening. "I think China thought that its policy was successful and that a gradual transition to the endemic phase was feasible, but obviously it was not," said Kenji Shibuya, a former senior adviser to the World Health Organisation.

More than a dozen global health experts, epidemiologists, residents and political analysts interviewed by

Reuters identified the failure to vaccinate the elderly and communicate an exit strategy to the public, as well as excessive focus on eliminating the virus, as causes of the strain on China's medical infrastructure. The country spent big on quarantine and testing facilities over the past three years rather than bolstering hospitals and clinics and training medical staff, these people said. "There is no transition time for the medical system to prepare for this," said Zuofeng Zhang, professor of epidemiology at the University of California, Los Angeles. "If they could spend a small portion of resources (used) in COVID-19 testing and lockdown, China would be better off in this policy change."

China's National Health Commission did not respond to requests for comment on the resilience of the health system and supply of medical staff; whether there were contingency plans to cope with soaring hospital admissions; and whether strict coronavirus measures had imposed improvements to medical capacity. State media has defended Beijing's approach while recasting its messaging to emphasize the Omicron variant's milder nature. In a review of China's COVID-19 responses, the official Xinhua news agency said on Dec. 9 that Xi had "done right" by taking "resolute actions to curb the virus' spreading".

As the outbreak grows, official data on severe cases and mortality rates are

unlikely to reflect the situation, experts including Mike Ryan, WHO's emergencies director, have said. In Beijing, funeral homes and crematoriums are struggling to meet demand. The National Health Commission has reported only a handful of COVID-related deaths since the reopening, taking China's official pandemic total to 5,241 deaths, very low by global standards.

Meanwhile, a drive to vaccinate the elderly that began three weeks ago has yet to bear fruit. China's overall vaccination rate is above 90% but the rate for adults who have had booster shots drops to 57.9%, and to 42.3% for people aged 80 and older, according to government data. China has declined to roll out Western-made mRNA vaccines, which studies show are more effective than its homegrown shots. The failure to boost vaccination rates among the vulnerable could imperil China's health system, more than a dozen experts said.

"As we have seen in Hong Kong, unvaccinated older people are at particularly high risk of death and perhaps healthcare capacity in China will be overwhelmed by caseload demand soon," said Hiroshi Nishiura, a member of Japan's COVID task force. Discontent over China's frequent lockdowns and tough pandemic curbs reached a tipping point in November as protests erupted nationwide. Within days, Beijing announced a sudden relaxation of its zero-COVID rules.

Arizona restricts farming to protect groundwater supply

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP): The outskirts of Kingman, Arizona, used to be a place where pilots would train and recreationists tested their all-terrain vehicles. The dry and empty landscape has since morphed into something much more green that supports pistachio and almond orchards, as well as garlic and potato fields, in a climate similar to California's Central Valley. The crops are fed by groundwater that also serves the city of Kingman.

The Arizona Department of Water Resources this week put a limit on the amount of land that can be watered, designating the Hualapai Valley as an irrigation non-expansion area. That means anyone who hasn't farmed more than 2 acres there during the past five years can't. It's the first such designation in Arizona in four decades — highlighting struggles around the US as water supplies dwindle and tensions grow between farmers and cities. Just last week, a board that advises the Kansas governor voted to make a historic recommendation to protect

the Ogallala aquifer, which has been tapped for decades to irrigate crops in an arid region.

In Arizona, elected officials supported the designation, saying they want to ensure residents have access to affordable water in the future. Some residents saw the designation as an assault on their private property rights, and farmers felt they were targeted as water guzzlers despite using what they say is the best available technology to conserve. "It's really tricky," said Kathy Tackett-Hicks, a consultant for Peacock Nuts, LLC, which grows pistachio trees on roughly 5 square miles (13 square kilometers) in the valley. "No one is totally right, and no one is totally wrong."

The Hualapai Valley stretches more than 60 miles (97 kilometers) from where the Colorado River exits the Grand Canyon to the south and east of Kingman, taking in small, unincorporated communities in Mohave County. According to some estimates, nearly 22 square

miles (57 square kilometers) are irrigated. State Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke said the rate at which the groundwater is being recharged isn't keeping up with what is being taken out. Without action, the department said, one in 20 wells would no longer produce in 100 years. Groundwater levels are expected to drop regardless.

The new designation doesn't restrict the amount of water that can be used but rather prohibits irrigating any more land than has been in production over the past five years. The restriction doesn't apply to people who want to grow gardens or farm on less than 2 acres. Property owners with larger pieces of land who can show they have made a substantial capital investment toward farming also could be exempt.

Meters will have to be installed on wells equipped to pump more than 35 gallons (132 liters) a minute, which applies mostly to commercial operations. The amount of water used also must be reported to the

state. Groundwater use generally is unregulated in Arizona outside of major metropolitan areas. Elected officials in Mohave County first requested the irrigation non-expansion area designation in 2016 to regulate what they expected to be rapid and dramatic growth in corporate agriculture in the valley. The land has been advertised as ideal for growing — with little regulation, established wells, a good climate and proximity to Interstate 40 and rail lines.

The Water Resources Department twice declined requests for the designation before agreeing to consider it this year because new data was available. The department held public hearings and solicited comments before Buschatzke signed off on the designation. Mohave County Supervisor Jean Bishop said the rapid growth in farming changed the perspective that the aquifer can produce indefinitely. She said she appreciates technological advances in farming but said it's still unsustainable over the long term.

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Haiti’s gangs’ violence

DEPUTY UN Chief urged the countries to urgently consider Haiti’s request for an international specialized armed force to help restore security in the Caribbean state and alleviate a humanitarian crisis. The Deputy UN Chief told the Security Council that it is time to step up and turn the current crisis into an opportunity for Haiti to bounce back stronger.

The Republic of Haiti is currently battling a persistent socioeconomic and political crisis that has been marked by the rising energy crisis, gang violence, violent protest, civil unrest, scarcity of fuel and clean drinking water along with outbreaks of deadly cholera and famine in most parts of the country. Haiti has multiple issues however political uncertainty and gang violence are the core problems that totally trembled the Caribbean democracy.

Although the North American nation had been facing continued political tumult since 2018, however, the newest upsurge in violence had been witnessed after the de facto Haitian Prime Minister announced a sharp cut in energy subsidies provided by the government which enraged the Haiti public and a coalition of armed gangs commonly known as G9 Family took control of an important fuel terminal in the capital. After Haitian security Forces failed to liberate the crucial energy hub from armed gangs, the Haitian government requested the international community to deploy Specialized Military Troops to repel armed gangs and restore peace in the violence-hit nation.

Haitian gangs have expanded their territory since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moise. The resulting violence has left much of the country off-limits to the government and led to routine gun battles with police. The crooks alliance shattered the country’s peace and created a humanitarian crisis by choking energy supplies that resulted in an outright halt in industrial production, economic activity, and public mobility.

Shambled by foreign interventions, political unrest, and natural disasters, the former French colony had long suffered from underdevelopment, violence, and corruption. The recurrent natural and manmade events had transformed one of the wealthiest colonies in the Americas into the poorest nation in the entire western hemisphere. Presently, Haiti’s economy is heavily dependent on foreign loans and more than half of the population is living below the poverty line. The country is grappling with security and economic crises and is in dire need of support from the global community but so far no one including the UN has taken any practical step to assist the violence-ridden nation. The UN is urging the member nations for international security support, including a non-UN multinational force, as requested by the Haitian government but global powers need some assurances before sending their troops to Haiti so later, they can maneuver their interests unhinderedly.

According to a recent study, Haiti possesses one of the greatest oil and gas reserves in the world that could be greater than Venezuela, while it has tremendous untapped gold deposits worth trillions of dollars but recurrent incidents and unending political unrest impoverished the Caribbean nation throughout in the history. Earlier, French occupied Haiti for decades than America stayed as self invited guest in Port-au-prince for years and gifted political unrest and gang violence to resource rich Caribbean state. Surprisingly, violence-hit Haiti became a most urgent topic at the UN amid growing global energy crisis and war in Ukraine. Apparently, the ongoing developments in Caribbean nation would have far reaching effects on the global politics, however, the future events will expose the agenda of global influential.

Pak-Afghan prospective on terrorism

THE Spokesperson Pakistan’s Foreign Office, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has said that Pakistan believes in a peaceful neighborhood and it will continue engagement with Afghanistan on different issues for regional peace and stability. According to her, the government would take all requisite steps to protect the Country’s sovereignty and citizens and will definitely defeat the menace of terrorism again.

The geopolitical stability and regional peace had shattered after the recurrent incidents of cross-border terrorism and attacks on Pakistani border check posts and civilian populations from Afghan soil over the past weeks. The government of Pakistan had sensitized the Afghan interim authorities about the safe heavens of terrorist outfits inside Afghanistan and also raised the issue of continuous attacks on Pakistani security forces from across the Pak-Afghan border but Afghan rulers mostly display a cold shoulder and never took the case seriously through blatantly denial of the presence of any terrorists hide out in their country. In fact, such legacy was an utter violation of the global law as well as Doha agreement, however, who cares about the global law and Geneva Convention.

After the Bannu terrorist attack, Pakistan has categorically told the Afghan rulers that Pakistan would not tolerate such terror incidents any more in the future and would use all available options and resources to eradicate the menace of terrorism, its safe heavens, facilitators, and sympathizers.

Presently, Pakistan’s weakness lies in its internal security and economic fragility that needs to be addressed at urgent basis without any compromise.

Quote of the day

The most terrible job in warfare is to be a second lieutenant leading a platoon when you are on the battlefield.

— Dwight Eisenhower, American general & President.

AGAINST the background of the visit of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky to the United States, the trip of the deputy head of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev to China almost went unnoticed. Partly logical. Zelensky’s voyage turned out to be loud, both in a figurative sense - he returned from his first trip abroad after the start of a special operation with generous promises of money and weapons, and in the direct: the applause was too long, for which the public was generous in Congress. True, to the disappointment of the frontman of the "95 quarter", a little more than a third of the Republicans gathered in the House of Representatives, who are the majority there. But that didn’t stop him from demonstratively shedding a tear for the amusement of the sponsors of the new season of Servant of the American People.

Medvedev’s trip, in turn, was staged with far less fanfare. This is understandable: the diplomatic level is not the same, and representatives of the Russian authorities meet with Eastern partners much more often. As noted in the Kremlin, Medvedev conveyed a message from Vladimir Putin to Xi Jinping as part of his visit. "It concerned bilateral relations, as well as the international situation, and concerned advanced relations, an advanced strategic partnership between Russia and China," said Dmitry Peskov, a spokesman for the Russian leader. He added that Moscow and Beijing regularly exchange views and working messages on the international agenda. And such a routine trip is extremely indicative: in politics, especially international politics, one often has to replace real work with statements - when nothing can be done, it helps to buy time. So Zelensky’s trip had a rather demonstrative effect: yes, the White House became generous with a whole Patriot division, new shells and weapons, but this help will not allow to radically change the situation at the front. Namely, this is

now critically needed by the West and Kyiv. The problem for the "civilized world" is that time is now working for Moscow and Beijing. And although China’s participation in the special operation is not manifested in any way - the countries are only developing economic relations, but the eastern neighbor still plays an important role.

The West failed to surround Russia with several problematic points, as it was originally planned. The attempted coup d’état in Belarus failed, as in Kazakhstan, and it was not possible to bring Saakashvili to power in Georgia - nothing else can explain his attempt to return. But he would not hesitate to open a "second front" at the first opportunity. Instead, the West itself faced the threat of confrontation on two fronts. China is no longer particularly hiding the fact that it is seriously considering the possibility of a forceful solution to the issue with Taiwan. The political and especially economic impor-

tant position belongs to envious characters

HERE is a recent regional election story: the fight was between two female candidates. One is the owner of an elite university diploma, worked in the diplomatic department in various positions, was also a lawyer, flickered a little on television, co-author of a book about why the whole world needs her beautiful country. In general, the metropolitan celebrity. The second never left her region for a long time, as a lawyer she defended protected forests there from being placed on the list of ordinary forests and fought other metropolitan encroachments to include something local and tasty in federal property.

We chose the second one. And the clever author of the article says: this is what should happen, our entire elite should be updated from below, relying on people who will come from the regions. Because with such an elite, as now, we will not go far (I would like to add to help him: we will lose the state).

Actually, we’re talking about the US . And not about the recent elections themselves, but about the primaries - the internal party selection of a

Republican candidate for the Senate from one of the states. We know the first woman, if only because her dad was vice president of the United States under the second George W. Bush , that is, we are talking about Liz Cheney. And the second name is Harriet Haigman - and she, and not Liz, has now become a senator from the deaf and reserved state of Wyoming (apparently, the choice of the candidate turned out to be correct: Harriet was well voted for).

And here it is interesting for us that not only in Russia there are and always will be those who want to understand the acute issue: the elite is, in general, what? Which have? What should be? Well, it is understandable that in tense times such conversations become a furious cry. And Russia does not have a monopoly here, in the United States now, too, the time is nowhere more tense. And for some, it’s not even about making America great again, but simply about keeping it functional as a society.

Now an article from The American Conservative that describes this situation. The article is not brilliant, sometimes naive, sometimes confused, but there are good thoughts there.

Bilateral engagements and sensitive issues

THIS week, I travelled to Jordan to represent the EU in the second Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership, co-hosted by King Abdullah and President Macron. Key actors from the region discussed support for Iraq, its sovereignty and security. I also had a number of bilateral meetings, some of which focused on complex and sensitive regional and global issues.

The first edition of this conference took place in August 2021 in Baghdad. Iraq was then making its return as an active regional player after years of looking inward, and domestic conflicts to which also policy mistakes of Europeans and the international community had contributed. This conference was also remarkable for bringing together some of the often-conflicting forces of the region and notably Saudi Arabia and Iran.

This week’s “Baghdad II Conference” picked up on these efforts. We discussed in particular how to meet the aspirations of the people of Iraq and how to support the government of Prime Minister Al Sudani in delivering on these. They can be easily summarised: more

security and sovereignty, more stability, and more development and prosperity. These are every people’s aspirations. And that is the main point of the Conference: bringing normality to Iraq after so many years of violence and suffering. These are also the priorities of the new Iraqi government installed in October 2022. It has presented an ambitious reform agenda and wants to engage with the EU and other regional and international partners.

The stability of Iraq is not just important for Iraqis and the region

In my speech at the conference and my meeting with the new Prime Minister of Iraq, I underlined the EU’s full support for Iraq’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in the context of recent foreign incursions on its soil. The EU supports also Prime Minister Sudani’s commitment to undertake the comprehensive reforms demanded by the Iraqi people. A stronger and more democratic sovereign Iraq would above all benefit its people and the region. And the EU has a direct interest in achieving that goal, because instability in Iraq would impact Europe in terms of migration flows and threaten our economic and security interests.

David Narmania

from the warehouses of the US army, just like Ukraine. And, of course, the law provides for the conclusion of multi-year contracts for the supply of American missiles.

It is worth noting that Washington has already concluded several deals with Taiwan for the supply of missiles, but admits that it will be difficult to transfer them before the end of the conflict in Ukraine.

But that’s not all. To prevent Beijing, Washington is forced to take desperate steps, sacrificing strategic interests for the sake of tactics. We are talking about Japan, which has actually abandoned the demilitarized status. The National Security Strategy adopted there recently says that by 2027 Tokyo will spend about two percent of GDP on military needs, which makes the Japanese army, which, although called the Self-Defense Forces, but with such appetites, poorly corresponds to this status, the third in terms of spending in the world.

At the same time, Tokyo will arm itself on its own, since Washington is now dealing with the problems

demonstrative escape from the country of ardent supporters of the West, is trying to clearly determine why these people are not the elite - more precisely, they are no longer the elite. The weakest position belongs to the envious characters, who were inspired by the idea that any elite is evil and that any elite that exists needs to be radically changed. Such people are hopeless, because when they see how a new layer of elites has formed, they will start their cry again. Well, such characters do not like that in any society, if it is not subjected to regular bullying, some people turn out to be more respected (and, perhaps, richer and more powerful) than others.

Therefore, their position looks very weak when they try to claim that “I didn’t really want to” - all these Grebenshikovs, Khamatovs, Pugachevs and other characters from the very beginning were mediocre and miserable upstarts who made their way only thanks to the corrupt connections of their parties, so “bring another elite” - artistic, literary, political, business.

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Josep Borrell

To achieve this, Iraq must shield itself from malign foreign interference and be protected from being abused as a proxy battlefield, as it has been so often in the last decades. Instead, Iraq should become a regional bridge builder contributing to reduce tensions. That is why we support the Iraqi government’s efforts to further develop a balanced foreign policy.

For the EU promoting peace and stability in the wider Gulf region and in the broader Middle East are key priorities and the EU Strategic Partnership with the Gulf has proven a useful platform for this end. As EU, we are ready to do more and better to support Iraq and the region.

Bilateral engagements and sensitive issues

At the side-lines of the conference, I had bilateral meetings with the Jordanian King and the Jordanian Foreign Minister, and with the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, as well as of Iran.

I met the Jordanian King and Foreign Minister Safadi. Jordan is an important partner for the European Union and an anchor of stability in a turbulent region. We are working together for upholding

the rules-based international system and dealing with the damaging consequences of Putin’s war on food and energy security. We also discussed the ongoing Jordanian efforts to implement a wide range of political and economic reforms. The EU will continue to help Jordan in areas where our assistance can be useful and is requested.

With the Qatari Foreign Minister, I discussed not only regional issues and our bilateral relations - which went through a positive trend lately - but also the ongoing corruption investigations against European Parliament members and staffers carried out by the Belgian authorities. I shared my principled concern on this serious issue and underlined the EU’s zero tolerance policy in that matter. Our counterparts denied that Qatar is involved in this, that they regretted not having been officially informed on the allegations by respective authorities and that they resent being judged based on media speculations. We agreed to fully support a thorough investigation by the Belgian law enforcement authorities and the European Parliament itself, to bring full clarity to the matter.

from the warehouses of the US army, just like Ukraine. And, of course, the law provides for the conclusion of multi-year contracts for the supply of American missiles.

It is worth noting that Washington has already concluded several deals with Taiwan for the supply of missiles, but admits that it will be difficult to transfer them before the end of the conflict in Ukraine.

But that’s not all. To prevent Beijing, Washington is forced to take desperate steps, sacrificing strategic interests for the sake of tactics. We are talking about Japan, which has actually abandoned the demilitarized status. The National Security Strategy adopted there recently says that by 2027 Tokyo will spend about two percent of GDP on military needs, which makes the Japanese army, which, although called the Self-Defense Forces, but with such appetites, poorly corresponds to this status, the third in terms of spending in the world.

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Iran is choosing a wrong path and new sanctions. With the Iranian Foreign Minister, we had a tough exchange on the unacceptable developments inside Iran, on the country’s extremely worrying military support to Russia and on the nuclear deal.

The EU is closely following the brutal war Iranian authorities deal with recent protests. We urge Iran’s leadership to stop the executions of arrested people and the bloody repression of peaceful protesters, and with the delivery of drones and the military cooperation with Russia, with which the country supports the illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. Tehran is aware of Russia’s ongoing war crimes, targeting civilian infrastructures. Iran is making a huge strategic mistake; it is choosing the wrong path and is destroying its credibility when it pretends not to take sides in that war. Let me note here that reacting to me stressing this, the Iranian Minister forcefully denied that Iran is providing drones to Russia and claimed that such deliveries had only happened before Russia’s attack. However, siding with Russia and the unacceptable repression of protests cannot come with-

out consequences. That is why last week’s Foreign Affairs Council adopted new sanctions against Iran in reaction to its delivery of drones to Russia, as well as because of the human rights violations.

Nevertheless, I still believe that when it comes to nuclear non-proliferation, there is no alternative to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Those who think otherwise simply fool themselves. This is why, as coordinator, I continue working towards restoring the JCPOA based on the results of the Vienna negotiations. I talked long with Minister Abdollahian about that. I also stressed that bringing the JCPOA back to life does not happen in a strategic vacuum. It is part, a key part, of a broader picture. The Islamic Republic should listen to its own citizens, instead of repressing them. Iran must stop immediately its military support to Russia. In that regard, I urged the Foreign Minister to continue the direct conversation with his Ukrainian counterparts on the transfer of military equipment to Russia.

Josep Borrell, the EU Rep-resentative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission.

of Kyiv and there are not enough weapons for other allies. Interestingly, the Japanese themselves are in no hurry to rejoice at the revanchist ambitions of the leadership. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has already announced that the burden of spending will be placed on ordinary citizens by raising taxes - it is not surprising that the rating of the head of government is hitting anti-records for the entire time he has been in office.

In the bottom line, due to failures in the Russian direction and against the background of the risks of a collision with China, the United States risks growing no less formidable power in the Pacific region. Whether Japan will continue to act in the wake of American policy, freeing itself from the US military umbrella, is a big question.

But Washington doesn’t have time to look into the distant historical perspective, because in addition to all these problems, Iran is the icing on the cake. And here, too, after the collapse of the nuclear deal, the threat of a new war looms on the horizon.

The weakest position belongs to envious characters

HERE is a recent regional election story: the fight was between two female candidates. One is the owner of an elite university diploma, worked in the diplomatic department in various positions, was also a lawyer, flickered a little on television, co-author of a book about why the whole world needs her beautiful country. In general, the metropolitan celebrity. The second never left her region for a long time, as a lawyer she defended protected forests there from being placed on the list of ordinary forests and fought other metropolitan encroachments to include something local and tasty in federal property.

We chose the second one. And the clever author of the article says: this is what should happen, our entire elite should be updated from below, relying on people who will come from the regions. Because with such an elite, as now, we will not go far (I would like to add to help him: we will lose the state).

Actually, we’re talking about the US . And not about the recent elections themselves, but about the primaries - the internal party selection of a

Republican candidate for the Senate from one of the states. We know the first woman, if only because her dad was vice president of the United States under the second George W. Bush , that is, we are talking about Liz Cheney. And the second name is Harriet Haigman - and she, and not Liz, has now become a senator from the deaf and reserved state of Wyoming (apparently, the choice of the candidate turned out to be correct: Harriet was well voted for).

And here it is interesting for us that not only in Russia there are and always will be those who want to understand the acute issue: the elite is, in general, what? Which have? What should be? Well, it is understandable that in tense times such conversations become a furious cry. And Russia does not have a monopoly here, in the United States now, too, the time is nowhere more tense. And for some, it’s not even about making America great again, but simply about keeping it functional as a society.

Now an article from The American Conservative that describes this situation. The article is not brilliant, sometimes naive, sometimes confused, but there are good thoughts there.

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Return to the beauty of her Connecticut farm, her adoring husband, her perfect baby son, and the ease with which she prepares seven course meals. Except none of this is true. Elizabeth is single, she lives in a New York apartment, there is no farm

(Continued on Page 7)

‘What a Christmas!’

Emina Melonic

darkness, seduction, and glory.

Stanwyck did not consider herself to be funny. In an interview, Stanwyck noted, “I am not really a comedienne, per se.... I’m not a funny person.” It was characteristic of

Stanwyck to be this objective and straightforward about her acting abilities.

Yet despite some mild self-criticism, she was fully capable of being funny. She worked diligently as an actress and took the art of acting seriously. This atti-

tude and talent for comedy comes through in Peter Godfrey’s screwball comedy, Christmas in Connecticut (1945).

Stanwyck plays Elizabeth Lane, a writer whose focus is food and country living. In her regular column, Elizabeth waxes poetic about the

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‘A very philosophical question’

IN a Wednesday press conference in Washington, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky highlighted the moral difficulties facing any push toward peace in his country.

“I don’t know what just peace is,” Zelensky lamented, calling it “a very philosophical question.”

“For all of us, just peace is different,” he continued. “For me, as a president, just peace is no compromises as to the sovereignty, freedom, and territorial integrity of my country [and] payback for all the damages inflicted by Russian aggression.”

But, Zelensky noted, that formula may not satisfy the Ukrainian parents who have lost their children to Russia’s guns. “No compensations or reparations are of consequence [for them]. They live by revenge.”

Unfortunately, he may be right. There is likely no way to achieve a moral end to this brutal war. But that leads to an important question: If there can’t be a just peace, then what’s the best realistic option to end the conflict?

Historian Vladislav Zubok sketched out an

answer to that question in Foreign Affairs this week. For Zubok, a realistic peace will require both sides to make significant compromises, lest the conflict turn into a grinding war of attrition. “[T]he West’s current approach to simply let the war continue, though morally satisfying and politically popular, is risky,” Zubok argues, noting that it “subjects Ukrainians to the continual horrors of conflict.”

“What is missing, then, is a coherent political plan to bring an end to the suffering, and to reassure Ukrainians that Russia will not begin a new war at the earliest opportunity, even if Putin remains in power,” he continues. “That will require the Russians to accept a defeat but also require the Ukrainians to accept that complete victory may be unobtainable.”

Ukrainians, of course, are not the only ones who will have to swallow a bitter pill. As Zubok notes, the West has only used sticks with Russia in response to the conflict, but an end to the war will require carrots as well. “The West must be prepared to offer a map for the Russian elites and gen-

Connor Echols

eral population, outlining how they can end their isolation, free themselves of sanctions, and remove their pariah status,” he writes.

“Publicizing a map toward negotiations now, while Putin continues his barbaric war and millions of Ukrainians suffer, does not constitute appeasement of Russia or condone Moscow’s aggression,” Zubok concludes.

“On the contrary, it would be a prudent, strategic, and realist political move by the West and Ukraine to address the large and growing number of Russians who would prefer peace but abhor a choice between war and defeat.”

In other diplomatic news related to the war in Ukraine:

— Career diplomat Lynne Tracy will take over as the new U.S. ambassador to Russia following her Wednesday Senate confirmation, according to AP News. In Responsible Statecraft, James Carden noted that Tracy is “?a well regarded member of the senior foreign service” but worried that her “activist mindset” could

damage chances for improved ties between Washington and Moscow.

— Russian President Vladimir Putin said there are “no funding restrictions” on the needs of Russia’s army, signaling that Moscow is prepared for a long-term conflict, according to Newsweek.

— French President Emmanuel Macron said Wednesday that European leaders must “gain more autonomy on technology and defense capabilities, including from the U.S.,” according to the Wall Street Journal. Macron also reiterated his stance that, in order to end the war in Ukraine, there must be an agreement that provides security guarantees for all affected parties, including Russia. “This means that one of the essential points we must address — as President Putin has always said — is the fear that NATO comes right up to its doors, and the deployment of weapons that could threaten Russia,” the French leader argued.

— In the Spectator, Henry Kissinger argued that it’s time to start pushing for peace talks in Ukraine. “The goal of a peace process would be

twofold: to confirm the freedom of Ukraine and to define a new international structure, especially for Central and Eastern Europe,” Kissinger writes. “Eventually Russia should find a place in such an order.”

— On Wednesday, Russia and China began a week of joint naval exercises in the East China Sea, according to Al Jazeera. Chinese officials said the drills are “directed at demonstrating the determination and capability of the two sides,” adding that they will “further deepen” ties between the two countries.

U.S. State Department news: In a Tuesday press conference, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said the Biden administration remains opposed to designating Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism. “We’re working with Congress on a potential alternative that would allow us to continue to increase the costs on the Kremlin and those who are responsible for Russia’s war against Ukraine without some of the unintended consequences that the state-sponsor designation might bring,” Price said.



EU is trying to escape from US

Victoria Nikiforova

IN today’s economic war of all against all, the obvious weakness of such a seemingly giant as the EU is amazing. Due to what do the Americans manage to twist the arms of old Europe? She is already, poor, and so on the verge, and Washington continues to push her to the final economic suicide. Europe almost does not resist - that’s what is strange.

The matter is not limited to the mass betrayal of the European elites, bought up by Washington in the bud. Otherwise, the indignant citizens would have already taken them out of government residences long ago. So far, the matter is limited to rallies and strikes. In France, irritated citizens take their breath away by slapping President Macron during his public appearances. Well, what is it to him - he is used to it: he dusted himself off, straightened his collar, and went on.

However, despite the anti-American speeches, it is clear that the population of Europe is afraid to finally break the pots with Washington. The reason for this is simple: the United States continues to be the most important customer and buyer of European goods. It is the richest market, able to gobble up Mercedes and Ferraris, champagne and clothes, bags, perfumes, ribbons, laces, shoes, anything for the soul, casually paying crazy markups for brands.

No, of course, this nonsense is bought both in the Emirates and in China, but there is no mass demand in the world for European products. The open secret is that all this luxury is monstrously overpriced. If we honestly enter the world market with these luxury goods, consumers will turn their noses and buy everything the same - either their own or Chinese, Turkish production - paying an order of magnitude cheaper. Yes, yes, the epic battles of our ladies of the demimonde in terms of “explaining for gear” and for a fake bag - they are exactly about that.

Overpriced European goods are successfully sold in the US and - very importantly - in Britain. These two countries account for more than 30 percent of European exports (China only 10). This is what keeps the EU economy afloat. However, at any moment the Americans can screw this faucet. Forty years ago they carved Japan in a similar way. Congressmen smashed a Japanese radio receiver under the cameras with hammers. Japanese products have been thrown out of the US market thanks to brutal tariffs and duties. The Plaza agreement was imposed on the country. As a result, the Japanese yen devalued, the country’s economy went into a peak and still has not really recovered.

Now the fate of Japan threatens the economic locomotives of Europe - Germany and France. And people there know about it. And he has a great perspective. If the United States unleashes a trade war against the EU, the Americans themselves will suffer insignificantly, but for Europe it will be a complete ruin: the closure of production, mass bankruptcies, unemployment, poverty.

The scheme worked perfectly as long as cheap hydrocarbons were flowing from Russia to Europe. Now, however, the US is running an artificial oil and gas deficit. Their prices are rising. Europeans will be forced to raise prices for their goods, as a result of which sales will become even more problematic for them. Who will buy a fashionable bag that costs 15,000 euros today for 30,000?

And in the US, the printing press is in full swing. Trillions of dollars spring up literally out of nothing. With record prices for hydrocarbons, Europeans will be tied to the American market even more strongly. What should they do? The answer to this question lies in the gray area of the economy. The Europeans will - and are already beginning - to cheat, stir up all sorts of complex schemes, lie, dodge and try to escape from the power of Washington, verbally assuring him of their eternal loyalty.

The loud scandal associated with the World Cup, which has already been dubbed “Katargate”, clearly illustrates the “new economic policy” of the EU. A dirty story floats on the surface of the information field. Allegedly, the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Eva Kylie, as part of a “criminal group”, as they say, took bribes from the leadership of Qatar and bribed colleagues to defend this country from attacks in preparation for the football championship. Searches were carried out in the house of Eva Kylie and other defendants, some bag of cash was found. Eva accuses her lover of betrayal, her father takes the blame - well, in general, there are enough plots for several seasons of the detective series.

If you take a closer look at this story, you can see that it is by no means about football, but about the economy. The period of preparation for the football championship was at the same time the time of the liveliest negotiations that the leaders of the European countries had with Qatar. This country is an ideal economic partner for the EU. On the one hand, Qatar can supply gas, on the other hand, it can buy up any European luxury in commercial volumes.

And since the summer there has been intense trading. On November 29, it ended with Qatar signing a long-term agreement with Germany on the supply of LNG for 15 years starting from 2026 in the amount of two million tons annually. Prior to this, the Italian Eni and the French Total entered joint gas production projects with Qatar.

Two million tons is, of course, very little, so the negotiations will go on, the leaders of individual European countries will fight for Qatari gas, and Qatar, of course, will receive all sorts of goodies for this, including image ones. To present a gold medal to Lionel Messi is also a separate trophy in our times.

Interestingly, at all stages of negotiations with Qatar, Greece actively tried to fit in: there is one LNG terminal there, the second one is under construction now, and the geographical location obliges. Back in August, the Prime Minister of Greece said directly in Doha that his country was going to become a gas bridge between Qatar and Europe.

Returning to the notorious Cathargate: Eva Kylie belongs to an influential Greek family. It seems that this beautiful blonde was used to cover up precisely the economic ties between Europe and Qatar. Because Washington, of course, is very annoyed by all this initiative of the Europeans.

It is Washington’s henchmen in Brussels who are promoting Cathargate today. On the one hand, it

distracts from the corruption scandal with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. She has long been accused of pushing vaccine purchases from Pfizer for a bribe. However, according to Washington, when a European politician serves an American corporation for money, this is good. The scandal with Ursula is being diligently extinguished - just like the story with Macron, who lobbied for the interests of the American company Uber, was extinguished.

At the same time, Cathargate is a signal to European leaders not to overdo it. They must buy hydrocarbons strictly from American companies, and deliver goods only where Washington allows. And to “do not rock the boat and sit straight.”

However, the situation in the economy is such that the Europeans are forced to rock the boat. Olaf Scholz sneaked into Beijing in the summer to avoid being noticed in the White House. At the G20 in Bali, European leaders lined up for Xi Jinping “to talk.” Of course, they all need an alternative market to the American one.

In the same way - slowly - they spud and alternative suppliers of hydrocarbons. Just remember how recently Macron courted Maduro at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was held in Sharm el-Sheikh. As soon as oil was needed, the French president immediately forgot that on the orders of American patrons, the regime of the Venezuelan leader was “shaking”.

Large-scale infrastructure projects have not gone away either. In Germany and other European countries, most of the 5G is still being developed on Huawei technologies. The French have not abandoned a joint plan with China to build infrastructure in Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia - the total cost of this project is more than \$ 1.7 billion.

Of course, the Europeans will do all this on the sly, in the gray zone of the world economy. There will be bribes, and smuggling, and whatever. How could it be otherwise, if Washington controls almost the entire white economy in such a way that one cannot breathe.

For their part, the Americans will shout to the whole world about European corruption, well, here, as they say, a thief stole a club from a thief. They will be the hands of their proteges in the Old World to start lawsuits, arrange purges and show trials.

Washington’s appeals to Themis look amazing after what they did to her. In front of our eyes, in a couple of years, strategic opponents have completely destroyed all the rules and laws by which the world economy existed. All these IMF and WTO have lost all meaning. They don’t work, let’s face it.

Naturally, in order to survive, states will look for workarounds and work in the gray zone of the economy. There is a suspicion that not immediately, but a new system of rules and interactions will be built here. This will be the real economy of the multipolar world. The place of the USA in it will be very modest. And Europe, in order to survive, will have to become a blonde outlaw - to lie, dodge, cunning.

Perhaps in this way she will be able not to repeat the sad fate of Eva Kylie, which the angry Washington demands to urgently land on the bunk.

The Christmas thieves

ACCORDING to the leading American media, the President of Ukraine did not achieve his goals at the talks in Washington. At the same time, as some congressmen noted, his speech in parliament was more like a performance than an attempt to build a dialogue. Why Zelensky did not receive all the “gifts” for the New Year - in the material of RIA Novosti.

Christmas Thieves

The visit to the United States was Zelensky’s first foreign trip since the start of the Russian special operation. His main task was to negotiate new deliveries of weapons and ammunition. Therefore, in Congress, he talked for a long time about the heroism of Ukrainian soldiers, the Russian threat, from which there is no hiding even across the ocean, and the resilience of Kyiv, which needs daily support from the world community.

The deputies accepted Zelensky as their own. The speech was interrupted by applause 18 times. It seemed that everything he asked for would be given to him. However, the US midterm elections in early November changed a lot. The lower payment of the

parliament went to the Republican Party, which does not hide its skepticism about financing the Kyiv regime.

According to The Washington Post, after Zelensky’s speech, the head of the Republicans in the House of Representatives, Kevin McCarthy, said that he supports Ukraine, but wants to check how American aid is being used. Congressmen Lauren Bobert of Colorado and Matt Gaetz of Florida did not applaud the distinguished guest at all. Rep. Chip Roy of Texas called what he saw “political theater” staged by the outgoing congressional leadership. Only 86 of 213 Republican congressmen came to listen to Zelensky, the Hill notes.

According to Bloomberg, on December 22, the Democratic Party wanted to quickly vote for a \$45 billion aid package for Kyiv, but was only able to do so on the second attempt. For the first time, the Republicans blocked the initiative. Democratic Senator Chris Koons stressed that some of his party members were also against it.

Joe Biden assured Zelensky that Washington intends to support Kyiv for

Mikhail Katkov

as long as it takes. Even if the Republicans become stubborn, the Ukrainian army can be supplied under Lend-Lease. It is assumed that, as in the Second World War, those receiving aid will pay only for what will survive after the end of hostilities.

Tanks for Peace

However, not everything went smoothly at the level of presidents either. At a personal meeting, Zelensky did not hesitate to insult the head of Russia, Vladimir Putin. The American was more reserved. The Washington Post explains this by saying that Biden does not want a direct clash with Moscow.

For the same reason, he refused to transfer M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine. According to Biden, this could destroy the unity of NATO, since few people there are willing to fight Russia. Before that, the Pentagon pointed out that Kyiv already had enough military vehicles, and the American models were too complicated. It is noteworthy that earlier Germany announced its unwillingness to supply “Abrams” before the Americans do it.

Politico writes that

Zelensky is disappointed. “We would like to get more” Patriots “(and not one division, as promised. - Approx. ed.),” he said, surrounded by American officials and journalists. And he added, “I’m sorry.”

According to the media, Biden used the meeting with Zelensky to have a serious conversation about the ongoing hostilities. The US President tried to explain his caution, and his counterpart made it clear that Kyiv relies only on Washington. At the same time, they tried to agree on a common approach to future negotiations with Moscow, but it was more of an academic discussion, writes The Washington Post. In public, the head of Ukraine only repeated that all territories “should be liberated.”

Behind the scenes

Experts interviewed by RIA Novosti believe that Biden needed this meeting rather than Zelensky. Kyiv remains an American puppet, and all attempts to gain independence are doomed to failure.

“The Americans inflated Zelensky to a world-class leader and fell into the traps set by them. The President of Ukraine imagined that he could determine American

‘What a Christmas!’

(Continued from Page 6)

in Connecticut, she has no children, and she can’t cook to save her life. The recipes she so succulently writes about are from the great gourmet mind of Felix Bassenak, a rather portly and rotund Hungarian chef extraordinaire. In any case, the entire “human feature” column is a great lie, meant to sell a particular image of a perfect woman and increase the circulation of the magazine.

Elizabeth’s readers obviously don’t know the truth about her, but neither does her publisher, Alexander Yardley. He prides himself on printing only the truth, and if he finds out that Elizabeth and her editor have been working under this pretense, both will be fired. There was nothing Elizabeth could fear in being exposed as a fraud until a war nurse sent a letter to Yardley, asking him to host a returning war hero, Jefferson Jones, at Elizabeth’s farm. Jefferson is a big fan of Elizabeth’s columns and a food aficionado, and it would be a wonderful gesture to welcome the war hero back to America again.

Yardley finds this to be a great opportunity for the magazine, and considers the act of inviting Jefferson a “patriotic duty.” Elizabeth panics and offers excuses as to why she should not host Jefferson. After all, in order to do that, she needs a husband, a baby, and a farm, not to mention, she needs to learn how to cook. That’s an impossible task for any woman, no matter how powerful or independent she deems herself to be.

To the rescue comes John Sloan, a friend who has been proposing to Elizabeth for quite some time, despite her continued refusals. John happens to have a farm in Connecticut, but in order to help Elizabeth, he politely but resolutely requests that she

marry him. Elizabeth says yes but it’s obvious that she is confused and is only trying to save her career.

But what about the baby? No problem! There is a housekeeper and cook at John’s farm who regularly babysits for neighbors (women who work at the “war factory”), so Elizabeth can check the baby off the list too.

In order to make that delicious seven-course Christmas meal, Elizabeth brings her friend, Felix, who suddenly gains a much higher standing by becoming her “uncle.” And so, the charade is all set, and the players are ready for the arrival of Jefferson Jones and Alexander Yardley. Being a screwball comedy, we can expect that things will not go exactly as planned, but will hopefully be resolved in an amicable manner.

Naturally, Elizabeth just wants to get the whole affair over and done with. She doesn’t much care about Christmas anyway, and is not interested in entertaining anyone. But one look at Jefferson Jones, and she is smitten (as is Jefferson with her). Jefferson is simply perfect. He’s handsome, well-spoken, and completely at ease and comfortable in his own skin. He even sings and plays piano! Jefferson tries to hide his attraction for Elizabeth out of respect that she is a married woman with a child, but as the film progresses, it gets harder and harder to set those emotions aside.

Elizabeth is nearly speechless around him, which adds to the general disorder in the house. As she makes her own moves on Jefferson, a baby is crying in the distance. Any good mother will tell you that the sound of her child will always come first above all else, and that she will tend to the child immediately.

But Elizabeth doesn’t have that instinct (for obvi-

ous reasons), and it takes Jefferson to nudge her in the right direction.

Elizabeth doesn’t even know how to hold the baby and she keeps calling the baby “it.” In a rather humorous scene, Elizabeth tries very badly to give the baby a bath, but once again, Jefferson to the rescue! He is a good uncle to his sister’s children and is an old pro at taking care of babies. Jefferson is becoming more and more attractive in Elizabeth’s eyes.

A series of hilarious events ensue as Elizabeth tries very hard to maintain the pretense that she is the incarnation of “Elizabeth Lane, food writer and housekeeper,” and the more she tries, the more things unravel.

Her life is crumbling before her and not just a silly façade she temporarily put up for the benefit of Jefferson and Yardley: she begins to question what kind of woman she’d like to be.

The juxtaposition of Christmas to the disordered materialism and independence creates a stark contrast. Almost everyone in the film is deeply involved in their own self-centered affairs, and the very idea of a family is missing. Even Yardley laments that he doesn’t see his children and grandchildren at all, but never really asks whose fault that is. Does a traditional life exist and if so, is it only possible in the country?

Christmas in Connecticut was a huge hit. It earned over 3 million dollars domestically, and it’s clear that people loved it. Yet critics of today often dismiss these images of America.

In Barbara Stanwyck: The Miracle Woman, Dan Callahan sees no value in the film. He writes that it “is the sort of holiday movie to have been made as bland as possible so that audiences can watch it after stuffing themselves

with turkey and cranberry sauce.” Callahan doesn’t stop there: “It’s the kind of script that might come alive with any halfway-competent comedy director, but Peter Godfrey directs in a plodding, totally uninterested manner.” Callahan even goes as far as to say that “Stanwyck isn’t even at her second best here.”

Another critic, Emanuel Levy, wrote that the film “obviously propagated conservative ideology, sending women to the kitchen to dutifully play their roles as housewives and mothers after tasting the War years.”

This couldn’t be further from the truth. Christmas in Connecticut is a highly enjoyable, funny, and a delightful film. Stanwyck’s presence is obviously quite different here: she’s no femme fatale but this is hardly a negative element in the film. Stanwyck is still commanding the screen and even the supporting cast adds a variety of comedic mishaps as the film unfolds. In addition, the film contains many wonderful one-liners.

Several issues arise from such silly criticisms. Film critics and academics tend to dismiss films as “crowd pleasers” and find it impossible to comprehend that a film can be very popular and very good at the same time. Should the film have been more depressing to make it more worthy? Should it have criticized capitalism and implicitly endorsed communism?

Christmas in Connecticut is a light-hearted film, but it also doesn’t mince criticism. It’s a film that evades any “feminist” readings, nor is it some “scary” conservative propaganda meant to keep women “barefoot and in the kitchen.” Yet the film’s script is not shy to question the reality and meaning of being an independent and single woman.

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Ayaz for action plan to boost Pakistan-Kazakhstan trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq here on Friday highlighted the importance of developing a plan of action for improving trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, which is a far blow to its potential.

Addressing the Pakistan-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Joint Commission (IJC), the minister said the trade volume between the two countries was recorded at just \$163 million in 2022, including \$163 million exports from Pakistan and \$56 imports from Kazakhstan.

He said, there was a lot of potential available that needs to be explored and highlighted that both countries should develop a plan of action to raise the trade volume through enhanced

trade activities and the removal of trade barriers.

He said holding frequent joint business council meetings and facilitating businesses to introduce products into each-others markets could also play a vital role in promoting the trade.

The minister expressed the hope that early finalization and signing of a transit trade agreement between the two sides would further enhance bilateral trade.

The minister said, Pakistan and Kazakhstan enjoy good cordial relations that would be further strengthened through this forum, which was established back in 1993.

He said, IJC resulted in enhancing bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields including trade, investment, cultural exchange and tourism.

He expressed the hope that IJC would provide a solid base to consolidate relations to move forward for capitalization of economic opportunities available including investment, and trade to benefit people.

He said, business and investment in Pakistan have improved and various agreements with Kazakhstan would further help enhance it.

He said, the promotion of tourism and culture was also a priority of the Pakistan government as Pakistan was a beautiful place with huge diversity, having 5 out of 14 highest peaks of over 8000 meters. He invited Kazakhstan in the tourism sector.

He also underlined the need for cooperation in agriculture research as the economy of both countries has a dependence on agri-

culture.

He said cooperation could be enhanced for value addition, processing and joint ventures.

He said cooperation could also be enhanced in the higher education sector by the exchange of faculty and students besides the signing of agreements between various universities.

He said, Pakistan attaches importance to a peaceful environment in the neighborhood and invited Kazakhstan to be part of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and benefit from it.

He said, there was also a need to have connectivity through rail, road, and air besides cooperating in tapping the potential of natural resources and precious metals.



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing secondhand shoes at a roadside stall.

Japan inflation at 3.7% in November, highest since 1981

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Prices in Japan rose at their fastest pace since 1981 in November, data showed Friday, fuelled in part by higher energy costs.

Core consumer prices, which exclude volatile fresh food costs, climbed 3.7 percent last month, compared to a year earlier, data released by the internal affairs ministry showed. Prices jumped most for processed food items but were also higher for electricity and durable goods like air conditioners. Rises in gasoline costs were tempered by government subsidies. The November figure is well below the sky-high levels that have sparked concern in the United States, Britain and elsewhere, but far exceeds the Bank of Japan's long-term goal of 2.0 percent.

Even excluding fresh food and energy, the index was up 2.8 percent.

The headline core consumer price index (CPI) has risen consistently since the beginning of the year, putting pressure on the Bank of Japan to tweak its longstanding monetary easing policies. The US Federal Reserve and other central banks have sharply hiked interest rates this year to tackle inflation. But Japan, which since the 1990s has swung between periods of sluggish inflation and deflation, has gone against the grain and continues to keep interest rates at ultra-low levels as it tries to kickstart its economy.

The Bank of Japan says it sees the recent price increases as temporary and that there is no reason to change course yet.

The starkly different approaches taken by the BoJ and the Fed have driven down the value of the yen against the dollar this year from around 115 yen per dollar in March to as low as 151 yen. The currency has recovered somewhat, helped by government interventions. This week, the Japanese central bank delivered a shock tweak to its ultra-easy monetary policy, prompting the yen to strengthen rapidly.

Export of Sports goods increases 29.36% during July-November

ISLAMABAD (APP): The export of sports goods from the country witnessed an increase of 29.36 percent during the first five months of the current financial year (2022-23) as compared to the export of corresponding months of last year. The country exported sports goods worth \$174.034 million during July-November (2022-23) as compared to the export of \$135.034 million during July-November (2021-22), showing growth of 29.36 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Among the sports products, the exports of footballs rose by 60.16 percent as its surging from \$63.671 million last year to \$101.976 million during the current year.

The gloves exports however dropped by 2.73 percent by going down from the US \$31.724 million last year to US \$30.857 million during the current year, the PBS data revealed.

Likewise, the exports

of all other sports goods increased by 5.56 percent to \$41.843 million from US \$39.639 million last year.

Meanwhile, year-on-year basis the sports goods export witnessed an increase of 18.85 percent in November 2022 as compared with the export of the same month of last year.

The sports goods exports in November 2022 were recorded at \$35.458 million against exports of \$29.835 million in November 2021. During the period under review, the footballs export increase by 52.52 percent whereas the exports of gloves and all other sports product however dipped by 14.52 and 4.74 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis, the exports of sports goods decreased by 4.19 percent during November 2022, as compared to the exports of \$37.007 million in October 2022, the PBS data revealed.

On month-on-month

basis, the exports of footballs and gloves decreased by 7.22 and 9.04 percent respectively in addition the exports of other sports commodities increased by 8.27 percent.

It is pertinent to mention here that during the first five months of the current fiscal year, the merchandise trade deficit witnessed a decline of 30.14 percent and was recorded

at \$ 14,406 million this year against the deficit of \$ 20,621 million last year.

According to PBS data, the exports from July-November 2022 were recorded at \$11,932 million against the exports of \$12,362 million in July-November (2021-22), showing a decline of 3.48 percent.

On the other hand, the imports of the country decreased by 20.15 percent during the period under review by going down from \$ 32,983 million last year to \$ 26,338 million during the current year.

Deposit protection corporation issues annual report for FY22

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Deposit Protection Corporation (DPC), a subsidiary of State Bank of Pakistan, has issued its second Annual Report today, covering its activities for FY22.

The report has been issued with the objectives to further enhance public awareness regarding explicit but limited protection of deposits in the banking sector, the role of DPC in financial stability and to provide disclosure of its financial position. The total number of depositors that

falls under DPC's protection scheme goes beyond 98 percent and out of these approximately 95 percent of the depositors are now fully protected.

The report highlights the Corporation's milestones and provides statistics on important factors like total and eligible deposits, coverage ratio, premium received and growth in deposits. A part of the report has been exclusively dedicated to public awareness and corporate communications, which reflects the Corporation's endeavors

towards public awareness.

It may be mentioned here that DPC commenced its operation in 2018 as a subsidiary of State Bank of Pakistan. It has been mandated to compensate the bank depositors for their loss in the event of a bank failure, as provided in the Deposit Protection Corporation Act, 2016. All scheduled banks in Pakistan are member banks of its deposit protection scheme. DPC provides coverage of up to Rs. 500,000 per depositor-per bank for the domestic operations of member banks.

Two years after EU exit, UK business feels Brexit blues

LONDON (AFP/APP): Two years after Britain's departure from the European Union, bosses of UK businesses are reeling from the cost of Brexit, including some who voted to cut ties with Brussels.

"It's cost, cost, cost with no benefit," noted Adrian Hanrahan, chief executive of a small chemicals company, Robinson Brothers, based in central England and for which the EU remains a key market.

The problem is not the customs duties, largely eliminated by the post-Brexit free trade agreement between London and Brussels, but rather a mountain of new regulatory paperwork.

"We've added probably 25 percent extra now on our administration costs just to cope with the changing paperwork... of getting stuff in from the EU and out of the EU," Hanrahan told AFP.

The company employs 265 people, producing chemicals used by various sectors featuring food, electronics, pharmaceutical and other firms.

Robinson Brothers exports around 70 percent of its products, of which more than half goes to the EU. The company is far from alone in struggling with the consequences of Brexit, with 56 percent of UK businesses facing difficulties adapting to new trading rules, the British Chambers of Commerce

said Wednesday.

"Businesses feel they are banging their heads against a brick wall as nothing has been done to help them," said BCC director general Shevaun Haviland.

"The longer the current problems go unchecked, the more EU traders go elsewhere, and the more damage is done."

The government of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has said it believes the UK economy has entered a recession on fallout from sky-high inflation.

While it repeatedly blames this on Russia's invasion of Ukraine fuelling energy prices, analysts claim Brexit has also pushed up costs.

"There's good causal evidence that the depreciation of sterling immediately following (the 2016 vote for) Brexit led to higher inflation, specifically for goods we import a lot of," London School of Economics researcher Nikhil Datta told AFP.

He added that new trade deals, such as the one struck with Australia, "have been tiny".

Bank of England monetary policy committee member Swati Dhingra told MPs last month that Brexit was to blame for "a much bigger slowdown in trade in the UK compared to the rest of the world".

According to King's College London economist Jonathan Portes,

"there is a reasonable degree of consensus that Brexit has reduced UK trade by perhaps 10 to 15 percent compared to a no-Brexit scenario". The government's own economic forecasting body, the OBR, estimates that Brexit will reduce the country's long-term output by around four percent.

Complicating matters has been the loss of EU workers in sectors such as health, hospitality and agriculture, even if some of those returning home have been replaced by staff from non-EU countries.

Witnessing the fallout, some high-profile bosses who voted for Brexit are calling on the government to relax the new and tighter immigration rules.

"In respect to immigration, it's definitely not the Brexit I wanted," Simon Wolfson, head of clothing giant Next, told the BBC last month.

Tim Martin, boss of pubs group J D Wetherspoon, is of a similar opinion.

For Hanrahan, Brexit fallout has led questioning whether his company can survive.

"If this continues, then we have no other option but to shrink our offering to remain in business. "We've had two or three very large German customers tell us that they're no longer going to come to us because it's too complex for them to work with anybody in the UK."

‘Climate challenge needs coordinated actions from key stakeholders’

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), the collective body of over 200 foreign investors, launched a whitepaper titled, "Synergizing the Climate Ambition: A Blueprint for Achieving NDCs through Private Sector Engagement in Pakistan".

The paper was presented at a Round Table which featured Dr. Shamsad Akhtar, Waqar Hussain Pulpoto, Ali Tauqeer, and experts from academia, corporates, and social sector organizations.

The white paper incorporates the key learnings and insights from Pakistan Climate Conference 2022, organized by OICCI in Karachi on March 16, 2022. The conference brought together global climate experts, policy makers and corporate decision-makers including global CEOs, Mr. Alan Jope (Unilever), Mr. Jesper Brodin (IKEA), Mr. Bill Winters (Standard Chartered Bank), and Mr. Alok Sharma, President COP26. This white paper also showcases the best practices from the industry, highlights the commitment of OICCI members, such as Chevron, Indus Motors, Engro Corporation and Unilever etc. to promote positive climate actions accompanied by an outline for action to boost public-private investment in climate change adaptation and resilience.

Pakistan made an ambitious commitment, according to the OICCI

white paper, of reducing 50% emissions by 2030 in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) targets presented at the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26). Under Pakistan's NDCs, about 15% of the total proposed emissions reduction is unconditional whereas the remaining 35% is to be achieved subject to conditional support from bilateral and multilateral sources.

Dr. Shamsad Akhtar while addressing the round table mentioned, "PSX launched ESG taskforce and interaction with all the corporates in Pakistan. ESG compliance is very important for attracting foreign direct investment and is a very attractive instrument to attract long term investment."

"With ever-rising greenhouse gas concentrations and accumulated heat, the past eight years have been the warmest on record. Heatwaves, droughts, and floods have affected millions making it evident that climate change is a grave and mounting threat globally", said Vice President OICCI and CEO Unilever Pakistan Amir Paracha during the report launch event. "Pakistan is the 5th most vulnerable country despite having less than 1% greenhouse gas emissions. Taking the right actions now can move us towards a fairer, more sustainable world by addressing climate change", he added.

The industries will require, as per OICCI white paper, transforming business models that could open new revenue streams and drive innova-

tion. However, the industry partners cannot work alone without the support from government, civil society, and consumer bodies. Coordinated actions, behavioral change, financial commitments, and compliance with regulatory frameworks will be needed, highlights the white paper.

The OICCI's recommended roadmap aims at harmonizing the efforts, sharing learnings of OICCI members such as Shell Pakistan, Siemens, Total Parco and Nestle etc. and lead the way for other industry players. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism suggested in the working paper will help consolidate data and efforts for promoting collaborations as well as support the industry and government stakeholders to streamline the projection and demonstration of their work.

"Pakistan is at a crossroads, the decision it takes today will impact the sustainability of its future" commended M. Abdul Aleem, CE/Secretary General, OICCI, adding that, "a key outcome proposed by OICCI through this white paper is the recommendation to the Government to adopt three primary resolutions to mobilize climate action amongst stakeholders across the country - Set up a Climate Change and Corporate Implementation Task Force, establish a Steering Committee that reviews and gradually raises the bar for improving the Climate Related Disclosures thoughtfully and develop a Pakistan Climate Knowledge Sharing Initiative".

Fruits, vegetables valuing \$133.456m exported in 5 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Different fruits and vegetables worth \$133.456 million were exported during first five months of current financial year as compared the exports of the corresponding period of last year.

The exports of vegetables from the country during the period under review grew by 20.86 percent, where as exports of fruits decreased by 37.24 percent, as compared to exports of corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July-November, 2022 about 423,489 metric tons of vegetables valuing \$121.976 million exported as compared the exports of 278,244 metric tons worth \$100.926 million of same period last year.

However, the exports of fresh fruits from the country during period under review decreased by 37.24 percent as about 187,744

metric tons of fruits worth \$111.480 million exported as against the exports of 211,640 metric tons valuing \$177.631 million of same period last year, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

In last five months, about 48 metric tons of leguminous vegetables worth \$47,000 exported, which posted 100 percent growth as compared the exports of same period of last year. On the other hand, \$185.952 million earned by exporting about 71,659 metric tons of fish and fish preparations as against the exports of 56,731 metric tons of fish valuing \$150.502 million of same period of last year.

During the period form July-November, 2022, the exports of meat and meat products also grew by 20.64 percent as about 34,340 metric tons

of above mentioned commodities worth \$161.310 million exported as against the exports of 30,870 metric tons valuing 133,714 million of same period of last year.

It is pertinent to mention here that overall food group exports from the country during the first five months of the current financial year witnessed about a 1.03 percent decrease, whereas imports increased by 1.63 percent as compared to the exports and imports of the corresponding period of last year.

During July-November, this year, exports of different food commodities was \$1.927 billion as compared to \$1.947 billion in the same period of last year, whereas food commodities valuing \$4.080 billion were imported as against the imports of \$4.015 billion of the same period, last year.



ISLAMABAD: People selecting secondhand overcoats at a roadside stall.



In brief

Sydney terminate Farooqi's contract

SYDNEY (Agencies): Sydney Thunder have cancelled their contract with Fazalhaq Farooqi for behaviour "sitting outside our values". A complaint was made about the 22-year-old Afghanistan fast bowler on 15 December, which was referred to Cricket Australia for investigation. Following the investigation, Thunder have terminated Farooqi's contract with immediate effect. A day after the complaint was made, Thunder were bowled out for 15 - the lowest score in men's Twenty20 history. In a statement, Cricket NSW CEO Lee Germon said: "The behaviours displayed by Fazalhaq Farooqi sit outside our values and it was determined that his contract be terminated." The club have not revealed what Farooqi was being investigated for. Germon added: "Our focus now is providing the necessary support to those affected by this incident." Farooqi has 17 international T20 caps and signed a nine-game deal with Thunder after impressing in last month's World Cup in Australia. He has taken five wickets in four BBL matches. Thunder say no decision has yet been made about a replacement.

Swabi upset Mardan

PESHAWAR (APP): Star player Swabi Tahzeeb Khan on Friday hammered a cracking unbeaten 43 runs steering her team to clinch the coveted trophy of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inter-Constituency Women's Games-2022 Cricket, played at BISE Mardan Sports Complex ground. Opener Tahzeeb along with another opening star Maryium Khan guided their team to a comfortable 9-wicket victory with Maryium the first to be out for 28 runs including one six and four boundaries. Tahzeeb smashed an unbeaten 43 runs including four sixes and two boundaries. The strong Mardan team had the services of cricket players including Kainat, Salma, Tuba, Aiman and Javeria but they failed against the Swabi team. Mardan won the toss and scored 85 runs for the loss of four wickets. Kainat was the leading contributor with her 27 runs including three boundaries. Aiman made 23 with two boundaries and one six, whereas Salma and Tuba scored 17 runs each with two boundaries. For Swabi right-arm Maryium, Nooreen, Arsh and Tahzeeb took one wicket each. Arsh was also the pick of the pack who took three timely difficult catches and played a key role in her team's victory as a fielder on the long-on boundary. Mardan had set up an 86 runs winning target for Swabi. Tahzeeb and Maryium, who recently represented KP in the PCB Women U19 Cricket, played a key role in their team victory with star fielder Arsha Khan who took three catches. Faryal was the other not-out player for Swabi who scored 16 runs. Thus, Swabi won the match by nine wickets. For Mardan, Tuba took one wicket. Member of Provincial Assembly Sajida Hanif was the chief guest on the occasion who gave away trophies and cash prizes to the winners and runners-up. Six teams each from all UCs from Mardan, Swabi and Nowshera took part in the game. Director Female Games Rashida Ghaznavi, Regional Sports Officer Nimatullah, Deputy Director Syed Jafar Shah, Director Sports Mardan Board Asia, DSO Swabi Tariq Khan, DSO Mardan Abzar Khan, coaches Sumaira and Bushra were also present.

PSF National Squash C'ship 2022 kicks off

ISLAMABAD (APP): The PSF National Squash Championship 2022 rolled into action at Mushaf Squash Complex, here on Monday.

The event has been organized by Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) as part of its efforts to promote the game of squash in the country. The championship is taking place in various categories - the senior events, which include men seniors, women seniors and the 1st National Masters Championship are scheduled from December 23-25.

The junior boys and girls events will be played from December 25-28. The junior boys' event includes U-11, U-13, U-15, U-17, and U-19 categories, whereas junior girls' event will be played in U-15 and U-19 age groups. An amount of Rs 900,000/- will be distributed as prize money amongst players.

The 1st and 2nd round matches of senior events were played on Friday. Following are the results:

Men Senior Round 1:

Noor Zaman (KP) bt Abdullah (Army) 11/5, 12/10, 11/9 (25 min), Tanveer (KP) bt Kamran (KP) 12/10, 9/11, 12/10 11/7 (28 Min), Faraz (Navy) bt Arbab Mehran (KP) 11/8, 11/5, 11/3 (17 min), Samiullah (KP) bt Naveed Rehman (Sindh) 10/12, 11/3, 11/9, 6/11, 11/8 (41 min), Hamza Khan (Army) bt Zain Ramzan (PB) 9/5 (Redt), Waqar Mehboob (KP) bt Fawad (KP) 11/8, 11/3, 11/8 (20 min), Ashar Butt (PB) bt Wajihullah (KP) 11/2, 11/4, 11/3 17Min, Zeeshan zeb (KP) by Mehmood Mehboob (PB) 11/2, 11/4, 11/3 18 Min, Nasir Iqbal (Wapda) bt Anas

Ali (KP) 12/10, 11/3, 11/8 15 Min, Abdul Qadir (PB) bt Khaqan Malik (PB) 8/11, 9/11, 11/5, 11/2 25 Min, Saddam Ul Haq (Army) bt Varun Asif (PB) 11/4, 11/1, 11/9 18 Min, Bilal Zakir (Army) bt Abdullah (KP) 11/7, 11/3, 11/4 17m, Salman Saleem (PB) bt Jawad (KP) 11/5, 11/7, 11/9, 19 Min, Mutahir Ali (KP) bt Owais Mastor (Sindh) 11/3, 11/8, 11/2 28 Min, Kushal Riaz (KP) bt Usman Nadeem (PB) 11/5, 10/12, 11/1, 4/11, 11/2, Farhan Zaman (PAF) bt Abdullah Nadeem (PB), 9/11, 11/9, 11/7, 11/6 22 Min.

Round 2:

Noor Zaman (KP) bt Tanveer Khan (KP) 11/3, 11/8, 11/5 15 Min, Faraz (Navy) bt Naveed Rehman (Sindh) 11/9, 11/6, 11/7 27 Min, Waqar Mehboob (KP) bt Zain Ramzan (KP) 11/9, 11/3, 11/4 17 Min, Zeeshan Zeb (KP) bt Ashar Butt (PB) 11/4, 11/8, 11/2 18 Min, Nasir Iqbal (Wapda) bt Abdul Qadir (PB) 11/1, 11/7, 11/7 18 Min, Saddam Ul Haq (Army) bt Bilal Zakir (Army) 9/11, 11/5, 11/4, 11/5 29 Min, Salman Saleem (PB) bt Mutahir Ali (KP) 9/11, 11/8, 11/4, 8/11, 11/4 40 Min, Farhan Zaman (PAF) bt Khushal Riaz (KP) 11/5, 10/12, 11/1, 4/11, 11/2 25 Min

Women Senior Round 1:

Anam Mustafa (Sindh) bye, Mahnoor (Sindh) bye, Zohra Abdullah (KP) bye, Hira Aqeel (KP) bye, Saima Shoukat (Wapda) bye, Amina Malik (Army) bt Wajeeda Altaf (KP) 11/6, 11/2, 11/5 15 Min, Noor Ul Ain (PB) bt Naheed Faiz (KP) 11/0, 11/2, 11/2 10 Min, Komal Khan (Wapda) bye, Mehwish Ali (Sindh) bye, Maira (KP) bt Fajar (PB)

11/7, 11/4, 11/3 14 Min, Sadia Gul (SNGPL) bye, Mishal Khan (KP) bye, Mariam Malik (Army) bt Kalsoom (KP) 11/4, 11/1, 11/3 16 Min, Sehrish Ali (SIN) bye, Minahil Aqeel (KP) bt Zarlish Safdar, Rushna Mehboob bye.

Round 2:

Anam Mustafa (Sindh) bt Mahnoor Ali (Sindh) 11/6, 11/6, 11/6 13 Min, Hira Aqeel (KP) bt Zohra Abdullah (KP) 4/11, 11/7, 11/8, 3/11, 11/4 30 Min, Saima Shoukat (Wapda) bt Anna Malik (Army) 7/11, 13/11, 11/2, 11/3 20 Min, Noor Ul Ain (SNGPL) bt Komal Khan (Wapda) 7/11, 13/11, 11/2, 11/3 20 Min, Mehwish Ali (Sindh) bt Maira (KP) 11/3, 11/4, 11/5 14 Min, Sadia Gul (SNGPL) bt Mishal Khan (KP) 11/2, 11/1, 11/1 10 Min, Mariam Malik (Army) bt Sehrish Ali (Sindh) 11/3, 11/4, 11/5 16 Min, Mihail Aqeel (KP) bt Roshna Mehboob (ZTBL) 11/1, 11/3, 11/5 15 Min.

Masters Round 1:

Bilal Khudadad (AWC) bt Muhammad Usman (PB) 11/3, 11/3, 11/6 17 Min, All other players got bye

Round 2:

Bilal Khudadad (AWC) bt Sheikh M Ibrahim (PB) 11/5, 11/3, 11/7 20 Min, Imtiaz Ahmad (PB) bt Air Cdre Waseem (PAF) 11/3, 13/11, 11/1 15 Min, Omar Qadoosi (PB) got W/O, Wg Cdr Taimur (PAF) bt Arif Ali (Sindh) 11/6, 11/8, 11/1 16 Min, M Mehdi (Bal) bt Col Zulfiqar Malik (Army), 11/4, 12/10, 9/11, 12/10 26 Min, Air Cdre Babar (PAF) bt Zahid Ali Shams (PB) 5/11, 11/7, 11/7, 8/11, 11/5 20 Min, Zubair Sheikh got W/O, Habib Ahmad (PB) got W/O.

National Netball Championships in February next year

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Men and Women Netball Championships will be held from February 11 to 14, 2023 at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad, Pakistan Netball Federation (NBF) said on Friday.

The championships will be played under the supervision of PNF in collaboration with the Pakistan Sports Board. Pakistan WAPDA will defend their title in both men and women events.

President of NBF Mudassar Arain in a statement said that 16 teams from all over the country had been invited to participate in the event. The teams include Pakistan Army, Pakistan Railways, Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan WAPDA, Pakistan Police, Higher Education Commission, LUMS, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Inter Board, AJK, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, LGS, Balochistan and Islamabad.

The Manager's Meeting of the participants will be held on February 10. The semifinals will be played on February 13, while the finals of both events will be held on February 14.

After the final matches, trophies, medals and certificates will be delivered to the winning teams. Mudassar that the players showing good performance during the c'ships will be selected for the national men and women teams.

Sam Curran becomes most expensive IPL player

NEW DELHI (Agencies): England's Sam Curran has become the most expensive auction buy in the history of the Indian Premier League (IPL) after being bought by Punjab Kings for £1.85m. Six franchises made a bid for the 24-year-old all-rounder before Punjab were eventually successful.

Yorkshire's Harry Brook has been sold to Sunrisers Hyderabad for £1.35m. The 23-year-old was the leading run-scorer for England in their recent 3-0 Test series win in Pakistan. Curran was named player of the tournament at this year's Twenty20 World Cup after helping England to become double white-ball world champions.

He took 13 wickets at an average of 11.38 in last month's event in Australia and has improved his batting to become a genuine all-rounder. "Back to where it all started! Looking forward to it," Curran tweeted. The previous most expensive IPL player was South Africa all-rounder Chris Morris, who was signed by Rajasthan Royals for £1.6m in April 2021. That figure was overtaken again on Friday when Mumbai Indians paid £1.75m for Australian all-rounder Cameron Green.

England red-ball captain and all-rounder Ben Stokes was acquired for £1.63m by Chennai Super Kings - one of the franchises to miss out on Curran.

However Stokes' England team-mate, batter Joe Root, went unsold, as did teenager Rehan Ahmed, Tom Curran and Chris Jordan.

Adil Rashid will join Brook in Hyderabad, while Will Jacks and Reece Topley have been signed by Royal Challengers Bangalore and Delhi Capitals took Phil Salt.

Left arm seamer Josh Little became the first Irish player to win a full IPL contract as he was signed by Gujarat Titans for nearly £450,000.

Lahore Open Polo Diamond Paints/Sheikhoo Steel, FG/Din Polo qualify for main final



LAHORE (APP): Diamond Paints/Sheikhoo Steel and FG/Din Polo qualified for the main final of the Coca-Cola Lahore Open Polo Championship 2022 after winning their respective semifinals played here at the Lahore Polo Club on Friday.

Manuel Carranza's superb seven goals steered Diamond Paints/Sheikhoo Steel outclass Salam Polo by a good margin of 10-4 in the first semifinal.

Nicolas Antinori, the foreign player of Diamond Paints/Sheikhoo Steel, got injured at the end of the first round and was replaced by Manuel

Carranza, who remained instrumental throughout the next three rounds.

Carranza emerged as top scorer with a classic contribution of seven goals while his teammates Nicolas Antinori, Mir Huzaifa Ahmed and Omar Asjad Malhi scored one goal each from the winning side.

Nicolas Ruiz Guinazu and Hamza Ali Hakeem banged in a brace for Salam Polo.

Tomas Marin Moreni fired in fabulous five goals in FG/Din Polo's convincing 7-5 triumph over Diamond Paints in the second semifinal of the day. Moreno was top

scorer from the winning side with a contribution of five goals while his teammates Shah Shamy Alam and Mian Abbas Mukhtar converted one goal apiece. Lt Col Omer Minhas (R) cracked a quartet and Mir Shoaib Ahmed struck one goal for Diamond Paints.

The main final of the prestigious tournament will be played on December 25 between Diamond Paints/Sheikhoo Steel and FG/Din Polo at 3:00 pm while the subsidiary final will be contested between Master Paints Black and Remington Pharma on the same day at 1:30 pm.

12th Engro SGA President Cup

Saim Shazli and Yashal Shah lead on first day

F.P. Report

KARACHI : First round of the 12th Engro SGA President Cup 2022 was played on Friday at Defence Authority Golf Club.

Saim Shazli and Yashal Shah both from KGC are leading in the main Amateurs Category with a joint score of 70, two under par. M A Manan, Vivek Anand and Arsalan Mughal are following the duo with 74, two over par.

In the Veterans 75 years and above, Col Shahid Mahboob from DHA and Group Captain Aftab A

Khan from KGC are at top with joint score of 41. Dr. Zubair Mirza is at third in this category on first day.

Major Rizwan Farooq of DHA Club is leading in Veterans 70-75 years category, with Brig Naveed Nasar following him.

In the Juniors under 14 category, Waleed Bilal from KGC is leading on first day with 85, 13 over par. Nyle Aurangzeb is following him with 87, 15 over par.

The 54 holes tournament will be played for three days, following the rules and regulations of Pakistan

Golf Federation (PGF). Final round will be played on Sunday 25th December and will decide the Winner for this year. The greens at DHA Golf Club are in best shape and Karachi's weather is suitable for the play.

President Sindh Golf Association - Khurram Khan said, "Golf is helpful in maintaining both physical and mental fitness. It changes the way you think and helps in focussing. On behalf of SGA, I would like to welcome all participants from different areas of Pakistan in this championship."

National teams of India, Afghanistan, others to play in 15th West Asia Baseball Cup

KARACHI (APP): The national baseball teams of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Palestine and Afghanistan are expected to participate in 15th West Asia Baseball Cup scheduled to take place from January 26 to February 2, 2023 in Islamabad.

These views were expressed by Sindh Baseball Association President Engr. Muhammad Mohsin Khan, Secretary Pervez Ahmad Sheikh, Vice President Aisha Irum while talking to President Pakistan Federation Baseball (PFB) Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, said a statement issued here on Friday.

In a conversation after the start of the coaching camp of the Pakistan baseball team at the Pakistan

sports Complex Islamabad under the Pakistan Sports board for the preparations to participate in the 15th West Asia Baseball Cup to be held in Islamabad in January, they said that, these are efforts of PFB President that the Baseball Federation of Asia (BFA) has given the hosting to Pakistan.

They said the participation of national baseball teams of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Palestine and Afghanistan in the event will lead to improvement in relations with other neighboring countries.

They thanked the Secretary Sports and Director General PSB on the approval of this mega event preparation coaching camp of one month.

Syed Fakhar Ali Shah

said that we have organized many international events in Pakistan before and considering our past performance and services, all other teams including India will come to Pakistan for participation. Secretary of PFB Women's Wing Aisha Irum said that the Federation has organized several international events and matches in Pakistan under the leadership of late Syed Khawar Shah in the past.

In which the Indian team has also been participating and this year, under the leadership of President Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, the Malaysian women's team has been invited to Pakistan and held a successful series, so the West Asia Cup will also be held successfully.

Aqeel to face Shoaib in Begum Kulsum Saifullah tourney final

ISLAMABAD (APP): Top seed Aqeel Khan and second seed Muhammad Shoaib made it to the final of men's singles of the 8th Begum Kulsum Saifullah Khan National Ranking Tennis Tournament 2022 after notching up wins in the semifinals at the PTF-SDA Tennis Complex Islamabad on Friday.

Aqeel dispatched Muzammil Murtaza in straight sets 7-5, 6-1, while Shoaib prevailed against Muhammad Abid 6-2, 6-2. In the ladies' singles first semi-final, seasoned Sarah Mahboob outmaneuvered Natalia Zaman 6-2, 6-1 to take on Noor Malik in the final, who in the other semifinal outplayed Meheq Khokhar 6-2, 6-3.

The finals of both categories will be held on Saturday. Competitions

were also held in other categories on Friday.

Following are the complete results: Men's Singles Semi-Finals: Aqeel Khan bt Muzammil Murtaza 7-5, 6-1; M. Shoaib bt M. Abid 6-2, 6-2 Men's Doubles Fourth Quarter-Finals: Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi / Aqeel Khan bt Bilal Asim / Mahatir Muhammad 6-0, 6-0 Ladies Singles Semi-Finals: Sarah Mahboob bt Natalia Zaman 6-2, 6-1; Noor Malik bt Meheq Khokhar 6-2, 6-3 Boys Singles Quarter-Finals: Hamid Israr bt Hamza Roman 6-2, 6-3; M. Talha Khan bt Mahatir Muhammad 6-1, 4-6, 7-5; Sami Zeb Khan bt Ahmed Nael Qureshi 6-4, 6-4; Bilal Asim bt Farman Shakeel 3-6, 6-3, 3-0 (ret'd) Boys 14 & Under Singles Quarter-Finals: Abdul

Basit bt Taimoor Ansari 4-2, 5-3; Abubakar Talha bt Nabeel Ali Qayum 4-1, 4-0; Sameer Zaman bt Haziq Asim 4-2, 4-2; Amir Mazari bt Muzammil Bhand 4-2, 4-2 Girls 14 & Under Singles Semi-Finals: Soha Ali bt Lalarukh Sajid 4-0, 4-0; Zunaisha Noor bt Mahrukh Sajid 4-2, 1-4, 4-0; Boys / Girls 12 & Under Singles Quarter-Finals: Hajra bt M. Arsalan 4-2, 4-2; Razik Sultan bt Ihsanullah Kabir 4-1, 3-5, 4-1; Hassan Usmani bt Shayan Afridi 5-4(4); 2-4, 5-4(3); Abdur Rehman bt Haziq Areejo 4-0, 4-1 Men's 45Plus Doubles Semi-Finals: Mahmood Khan / Azeem Khan bt Talha Waheed / Rashid Ali 2-6, 6-3(10-7); Rashid Malik / Israr Gul bt Imran Ahmad / Col.Zia 6-0, 6-2.

Salt Bae banned from major football tournament after 'upsetting behaviour'



CHICAGO (Agencies): Dubai-based chef Nusret Gökçe, popularly known as Salt Bae, has been banned by US Open Cup - the oldest national soccer competition in the USA - after his antics at the FIFA World Cup final upset fans. FIFA has launched an investigation to find out how he gained "undue access" to the pitch and has promised to take action.

On Wednesday, the Open Cup's official Twitter account declared a ban on the celebrity chef for their championship final in 2023, which features about 100 teams from various levels. The tweet has reached almost 17 million accounts and

has thousands of retweets and comments, mostly approving this decision.

There has been a lot of chatter surrounding Salt Bae following the FIFA final - and not in a positive light. Photos and videos of him have been circulating on social media, many shared by himself, where he grabbed the trophy out of a player's hands, posed with it and bit another player's medal.

These antics have dismayed fans, who have openly expressed their disapproval online. What many have wondered is how the 39-year-old Turkish restaurateur got onto the pitch in the first place. They are also bring-

ing up the fact that Gökçe broke FIFA rules since the trophy can only be held by tournament winners and the likes of FIFA officials and heads of state.

According to AFP, FIFA are probing into the matter. "Following a review, FIFA has been establishing how individuals gained undue access to the pitch after the closing ceremony at Lusail stadium on December 18," a spokesman told BBC. "The appropriate internal action will be taken."

This is not Salt Bae's first controversy. He was sued for \$5 million in 2021 for misusing artwork featuring himself. He had commissioned one mural but ended up using it for his restaurants around the world and as a logo. He has also been recently criticised for the ridiculously high prices at his eateries.

Gökçe owns a chain of luxury restaurants around the world including Beverly Hills in Los Angeles and London's swish Knightsbridge.

His technique for preparing and seasoning meat with salt has become an internet meme.

England recalls Broad for test series

LONDON (AP): Experienced bowler Stuart Broad has been recalled to England's squad for the two-test series in New Zealand while rising star Rehan Ahmed will not make the trip.

The 36-year-old Broad is back after missing the recent 3-0 test series sweep in Pakistan for the birth of his first child. The first test begins Feb. 16 at Mount Maunganui.

Ahmed became the country's youngest ever men's test cricket player when the 18-year-old legspinner lined up against Pakistan in Karachi last week and took a decisive

five-wicket haul.

The tests in New Zealand are not likely to favor spin and, with Jack Leach retaining his status as first-choice, Ahmed did not make the 15-man squad with England also taking a careful approach over his development. Ahmed will play in the UAE T20 League in January.

Mark Wood, who impressed against Pakistan after elbow surgery earlier this year, will be rested from all cricket in a bid to protect him from further injury ahead of the Ashes.

England is also being careful with Jofra Archer, who was picked for January's ODI trip to South Africa but will wait longer to return to test cricket after a long spell on the sidelines.

Along with Broad, the bowling stocks are replenished by fast bowlers Matthew Potts and Olly Stone. Potts started his test career this summer by taking 20 wickets at an average of 28 in five appearances.

Three other players who took part in England's first test trip to Pakistan in 17 years were not included. Liam Livingstone was injured on his debut in Rawalpindi, while opener

Keaton Jennings and Jamie Overton, who did not feature in the three-match series, drop out.

Essex batter Dan Lawrence joins for the first time under the leadership of head coach Brendon McCullum - the former New Zealand star - and captain Ben Stokes.

England squad: Ben Stokes (captain), James Anderson, Stuart Broad, Harry Brook, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ben Foakes, Will Jacks, Dan Lawrence, Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Liam Livingstone, Ollie Robinson, Joe Root, Olly Stone.



In brief

Graduation ceremony at NDU

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Graduation Ceremony for National Security Course 2023 was held here at National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad on Friday. President Dr Arif Alvi was the Chief Guest.

National Security Course was attended by selected participants from Civil Services of Pakistan, along with officers from the Armed Forces. The main focus of this course was to enable the course members to comprehend the interplay of all elements of national power in the construct of Comprehensive National Security. President congratulated the graduating students and awarded the certificates.

IRSA releases 60,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 60,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 41,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1489.29 feet and was 91.29 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 18,800 cusecs while outflow as 27,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1116.50 feet, which was 66.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 8,600 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded at 30,300, 27,700, 20,800 and 2,800 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Ranjha condemns terrorist attack

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MNA, Mohsin Shah Nawaz Ranjha on Friday strongly condemned the suicide blast here that claimed the life of a police officer and injured several others. In a tweet, he paid glowing tributes to martyred Adeel Hussain, and the injured in averting a major disaster. He prayed to Allah Almighty for speedy recovery of those injured, and to give courage to the family of the martyred officer to bear the irreparable loss with patience.

Christmas celebrations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) celebrated Christmas in a befitting manner here Friday at Shakarparian. A day-long Christmas festival was organized which featured special attractions like congregation of Christian community, Christmas cake-cutting ceremony, the erection of a Christmas tree, an exhibition of artisans-at-work with master artisans in different specialized craft fields, folk songs, folk dances, video documentaries on Christmas and performances by traditional drummers (Dholis). Lok Virsa complex remained the center of Christmas celebrations throughout the day. A prestigious opening ceremony was held at the Pakistan National Heritage Museum which was attended by the Christian community and local audience. Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), Saint Thomas Church, Blue Area and U.P. Church, F-7/4 collaborated with Lok Virsa for Christmas celebrations.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Perviz Ashraf in a group photo with Somali delegation led by Minister of Interior Federal Affairs and Reconciliation Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi Ahmed at Parliament House.

Somalia to learn from Pakistan's experience of constitutional development

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of ministers from Somalia is in the town to attend seminars, sessions, and visit various institutions to learn from Pakistan's experience of constitutional development.

United Nations Development Program UNDP-Pakistan and UNDP-Somalia have organized the first-ever Ministerial Study Tour on Federalism, Devolution and State-Building from December 20 to 27, 2022. The Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) of Somalia is leading the tour of honorable ministers representing both Federal Government and Federal Member States including representatives of Banadir Regional Administration (BRA). His Excellency, Mr. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi Federal Minister, Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, Federal Republic of Somalia is the lead focal person of the study tour.

The technical sessions of the third day were about Understanding Somalia's Constitutional Review Process: Issues and Options, Federalizing functional assignments: Case Study of Implementation Commission of 18th Amendment

from Governance Perspective; and Constitution-Making in Post-Independence Pakistan (1947-73): A Recount of Power Struggles over Federal Design. Ahmed Moallim Fiqi Federal Minister, Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, Federal Republic of Somalia and Ms. Hoda Osman, advisor to the President of Somalia, spoke about the committees which are involved in the constitution review process.

Ms. Hoda shed light on pathways addressing the contentious issues such as justice system, natural resources, fiscal federalism, elections, and principles of the constitution such as subsidiarity and one nation desiring equalization.

Somali delegates talked at length about problems associated with inclusive politics, and reasons why a review process of the constitution is taking place so that federal member states come together and ensure a peaceful state-building process.

Mohammad Ali Farah, who works with UNDP Somalia, alluded to the fact that political culture in Somalia is presidential while political institutions are parliamentary, and these realities have to be addressed, too.

Pakistani delegates talked at length about making the constitution review which tries to help solve the problems the nation is facing and does in a way that an inclusionary political outcome is possible. Former Chairman Senate, Mian Raza advised the study tour delegates to work on creating one committee instead of three or four committees simultaneously dedicated to constitutional reforms process.

He further advised that Somalia should form two lists of powers spread across the constitution; one the federal and the other concurrent, and then iron out them in a way that solves the core contentious issues.

Maryam S. Khan, Research Fellow at the Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS) in Pakistan, narrated the journey of Pakistan's constitutional development during the last 75 years, and how dismemberment of Pakistan took place. After 1971, she said, the question of provincial autonomy emerged and political institutions were designed to address that question. It tried to address the question of distribution of natural resources and established the Council of Common Interests along with Senate as equal representation body.

HEC seeks applications for interim placement of fresh PhDs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited applications for the Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) programme in all areas of study/disciplines under the IPFP Phase-II (Batch-IV).

According to official sources, HEC launches the IPFP programme to create an opportunity for fresh PhDs to obtain academic experience and mentorship, for one year in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and federal/provincial government postgraduate colleges prior to their formal entry into the academic job market.

The sources said that as per eligibility criteria, the Pakistani/AJK nationality holders can apply and their age at the date of advertisement should not be over 40 years. The candidates must hold a Ph.D. degree from any of the HEC-recognized universities (Pakistani or foreign) completed within the two years preceding the advertisement, they added.

They should have published at least two research publications in HEC-recognized or indexed journals. Only unemployed applicants are eligible.

However, those holding

irregular or contract positions (or other sub-optimal jobs) in universities or elsewhere may apply, and if selected, will have to resign and submit a clearance certificate from their previous employer.

Eligible candidates will get an opportunity to attend up to four weeks of outstanding training (free of cost) under the National Faculty Development Program (NFDP) with a team of highly reputed international and national trainers. However, no stipend will be paid during the training, the sources added. Under One-Year placement at host institutions, HEC will facilitate in providing opportunity of placement at HEIs for a period of one year as an IPFP Fellow by sharing the credentials of successful candidates with the public sector institutions.

However, HEC will pay a fixed remuneration during placement, currently fixed at PKR 100,000/- per month for a period of 12 months from the date of joining as IPFP Fellows.

Interested applicants are required to apply online through HEC eportal: <http://eportal.hec.gov.pk/ipfp> for IPFP Phase-II (Batch-IV) on or before January 16,

2023 till midnight. The scanned copies of the HEC-attested PhD degree, and/or an equivalence certificate issued by the HEC Equivalence Section for foreign PhDs must be uploaded together with the application, they informed. Deposit slip (cash counter receipt, online or ATM transfer receipt) of Rs. 3,000/(non-refundable) as application processing fee in favour of Director General Finance, HEC in the Account Number 1742-79001334-01 Habib Bank Limited shall also be required to upload at <http://eportal.hec.gov.pk/ipfp>. Applicants are required to post the hard copy (printed application form) along with photograph and original fee deposit slip at the address specified on the website. Hard copy must be bounded and flagged properly otherwise will not be entertained.

Eligible applicants will be required to appear in the mandatory pre-assessment test to be held tentatively on Sunday, February 19, 2023. The applicants who obtain a minimum score of 50% on the pre-assessment test will attend the mandatory training under NFDP followed by an evaluation test before placement at Higher Education Institutes (HEIs).

ITP distribute gifts among christian employees

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police (Traffic Wing) on Friday arranged a ceremony in connection with Christmas and distributed gifts among these employees.

Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer joined a ceremony held here at traffic police Headquarters in honor of Christian employees on their holy occasion.

The event was held following the directions of IGP Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan and was attended by Christian employees and other senior police officers and officials of traffic police. The Chief Traffic Officer said, "We are proud of Christian employees who are serving in various wings of the force. The minorities enjoy equal rights in the country and are contributing significantly to its development." He said, "Christmas event gives a lesson and all of us should work together to promote interfaith harmony." Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer also announced holidays for Christian employees in the traffic police force.

Govt committed to root out terrorism: Ahsan

RAWALPINDI (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal here on Friday said that the government was committed to ending terrorism in the country and the whole nation stood by their side.

Talking to the media, he said that resource-rich Pakistan was facing scores of challenges due to political instability, adding that economic stability could only be achieved through political stability.

Expressing concern over the worsening law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), he said the provincial government was not taking concrete steps. "The elements that had been elimi-

nated are rising again," he said.

"We had eradicated terrorism earlier and would root out the menace again," he added. The government would not allow anyone to play with peace in Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal said.

The KPK government gave another opportunity for the terrorist elements to rise again, he said.

"The government is working on the economy and rehabilitation of the people in flood-affected areas while Imran Khan is playing political games, Ahsan Iqbal said. "There is a need to stand united against the terrorists who are resurfacing," he added.

Federal capital's hospitals to remain on high alert

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on Friday directed all the administrative heads of hospitals located in the federal capital to remain high-alert, keeping in view the prevailing situation after an explosion in Sector I-10/4, Islamabad.

According to the ministry's order, hospital heads have also been directed to ensure the availability of medical and para-medical

staff as well as essential services in their respective hospitals around the clock.

The directions have been issued to the heads of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), the Federal Government Polyclinic (FGPC), and the National Institute of Rehabilitation Medicines (NIRM).

Meanwhile, following the directions of the ministry, the administrations of all three hospitals have started taking special meas-

ures to keep the emergency department on high alert for the provision of medical facilities to injured persons.

Similarly, all vehicles or ambulances will be on standby in the premises of the hospitals to cater to any emergency situation besides making other necessary arrangements to meet any untoward situation. All the officers or officials working in the emergency department will remain physically present in their respective shifts.

Police devise foolproof security plan for Christmas

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi District Police have devised a foolproof security plan to avoid any untoward situation on the eve of Christmas with over 3,200 police personnel would be deployed.

Under the security plan, all churches have been divided into three categories and police personnel including Elite Force commandos would be deployed to ensure foolproof security.

According to a Police spokesman, no one would be allowed to park vehicle near Churches. Walk-through gates would be installed at the entrance of the Churches and the visitors would be checked through metal detectors. Best possible security arrangements would be ensured to avoid any untoward incident in the city, he said.

The security duty at public places including parks would be made more effective, he said adding security had also been tightened at the entry and exit points of the city and special checking was ordered for this special occasion.

He said the City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari had directed the SPs, DSPs and SHOs to ensure effective patrolling in their respective areas.

Plain-clothed and well-equipped policemen would perform duties near churches and public places, he added. The security of the churches would be monitored through closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras while a control room would be set up where all the departments concerned would work jointly to keep an eye on the security arrangements.

Sharpshooters would also be deployed on the rooftops of different buildings, he added. The City Traffic Police (CTP) would make arrangements for parking vehicles for the visitors of the churches and the parking lots would be set up nearly 200 feet away from the churches.

The Police and other law enforcement agencies have divided 159 churches of the district into A, B and C categories. Additional security personnel would be deployed at the churches falling in A-category. The worshippers would be checked at three points. The roads adjoining the entry points of the churches would be sealed with barbed wires while elite commandos and sniper shooters would be deployed at rooftops. The police vehicles equipped with cameras would also remain stationed outside the churches.

OGDCL to organize Free Eye Surgical Camps in Hyderabad

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), in partnership with Al-Shifa Eye Trust Rawalpindi, has launched a health programme titled, 'OGDCL Three Day Free Surgical Eye Camps (OTDFSEC)' to facilitate local population residing around the company fields and operational areas in Hyderabad district of Sindh province. As part of the health programme, OGDCL, under its Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) initiative, will organize a three-day free surgical eye camp from January 10 to 12, 2023, at RHC Tando Jam district Hyderabad.

Similarly, OGDCL Free Surgical Eye Camp will be organized from January 14 to 16, 2023, at OGDCL Tando Alam Oil Complex (TOC) in district Hyderabad through Al-Shifa. During the three-day Free Eye Camps, doctors and eye specialists of Al-Shifa Trust will provide free Ophthalmic OPDs, treatments, provision of glasses, medicines,

and surgeries (including cataract-Mota) to the local population residing around OGDCL fields and operations.

The company has asked local parliamentarians for administrative support to extend the maximum benefit to the masses of the area and make the programme successful. The company has launched an awareness campaign about the free eye camp among area notables, community centers, schools, colleges, and the local population for the free treatment of needy locals.

Connected Women Conference to be held today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Connected Women Conference (CWC22), an exciting and informative event to empower women by increasing their participation in the digital economy would be held at Aiwan-e-Quaid of Fatima Jinnah Park tomorrow (Saturday). Talking to APP here on Friday, organizer of the event Muhammad Umar said that the day-long conference was being organised by 'Connected Pakistan' featuring a range of activities designed to help attendees learn valuable digital skills and establish connections with other like-minded women.

He said CWC22 will kick off with a series of speaking sessions led by industry experts and successful female entrepreneurs. He said that these sessions will cover a wide range of topics related to digital entrepreneurship, including online business, freelancing, and other digital

tools to succeed in the digital economy.

He informed that in addition to the speaking sessions, attendees would also have the opportunity to participate in question-answer sessions with the speakers and network with other attendees during dedicated networking breaks.

Umar said that to wrap up the day, the CWC22 will feature the Women Heroes Awards, which will recognize and celebrate the achievements of successful female entrepreneurs in Pakistan.

He said that a conference is a must-attend event for anyone looking to succeed in the digital economy to connect, learn, and grow with other amazing women. He underlined that the panel discussions will provide solutions in exclusive sessions, adding the event will allow the participants to network with the right people.



ISLAMABAD: A street is illuminated with colorful lights ahead of Christmas celebrations at 100 quarters.

Chromite mine discovered

KABUL (Agencies): Chromite reserves, estimated at around 13,000 tons, have been found in Daman district of southern Kandahar province. Local officials said that exploration work is ongoing at the site of the mine. "It is in the exploration stage. It is being done to determine the size of the chromite mine," said Abdul Hanan Hamidi, provincial director of mines in Kandahar. According to the official, the mine is estimated to have 13,000 tons of chromite.

Farmers arrested

KABUL (Tolo News): At least 35 people, mostly farmers, were arrested in Uruzgan on charges of poppy cultivation on their farmlands. Uruzgan security officials said that a market used for selling drugs in the province was also closed. "If poppy is cultivated in the province that may be so less. We arrested those who cultivated poppy and put them in prison and destroyed the poppy fields," said Amin, the deputy head of police headquarters in Uruzgan.

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

Reactions continue to closure of universities for women

KABUL (Tolo News): The closure of universities for women has faced continuous reactions within and outside the country.

Dozens of female students held a protest near the Kabul University in the west of Kabul, calling for women and girls' access to education and work. The European Union in a statement called the decision another violation of international obligations and said it constitutes an institutionalized and systematic "discrimination

against women and girls."

"Every child should have access to both primary and secondary education without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's religion, sex, ethnic or social origin, disability, or any other status," the statement reads. The statement said the Afghan women are essential for the prosperity and stability of the country. "The EU expects from the Taliban to abide by their obligations, revert their decision, and ensure universal

access to quality education throughout the country," the statement regards. A joint statement from Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union condemned the decision of the Islamic Emirate for suspension of higher education for the girls' students.

Residents criticize 'unfair' distribution of aid to needy

KABUL (Tolo News): A number of Kabul residents on Friday criticized "a lack of transparency" in the aid distribution aid by welfare organizations to needy families and said that it is not distributed to those who need to be helped.

Sabir, a Kabul resident, said he is faced with economic problems due to unemployment but he has not received aid from relevant organizations. "If there is aid so why we don't receive it? We are in a tough situation," said Sabir, a Kabul resident.

"We face many problems. I am so sad about it. We need to be assisted,"

said Simagul, a Kabul resident. The residents said that they need to be provided job opportunities by the government and relevant institutions.

"All these people need humanitarian aid before they find a job but now there is no job opportunity and everyone is faced with economic problems," said Nasimullah, a Kabul resident. "We live here in District 17 (of Kabul) and have seven children. I live in a rented house. I have not received any aid so far," said Humayun Haidari, a Kabul resident.

But a World Food Program spokesman Wahidullah Amani said

the organization lacks enough budget to distribute aid to all those in need. He reiterated that the organization will distribute aid to women and displaced people in the first place.

"WFP does not have enough budget to assist all the people. We have to find the needy families and evaluate them and those who are in need and the most vulnerable will be selected for getting WFP's aid," said Amani. This comes as the United Nations said that 20 million people in Afghanistan are faced with hunger and that 97 percent of Afghans are living in poverty.

Nadim outlines reasons for closure of universities for women

KABUL (Tolo News): Acting Minister of Higher Education Neda Mohammad Nadim said that some reforms planned by the Islamic Emirate were not implemented in the higher education sector over the past 16 months.

Speaking to the RTA, Nadim outlined four reasons for the closure of universities for female students. He said the presence of women at dormitories and their arrival from provinces without male companions, lack of observation of hijab by students, the continuation of co-education, and the existence of some faculties for girls that are in contrast with the "Islamic law and Afghan pride."

"The current curriculum has at least 160 fields. There were some fields that were in contrast with the dignity and pride of women and Afghan culture.



Ghor farmers switch to asafetida as poppy substitute

FEROZKOH CITY (Pajhwok): Farmers in western Ghor province have started growing asafetida as a substitute to poppy after the caretaker government banned the illicit crop.

The interim government has banned cultivation of poppy all over the country. Through a decree, the government has also banned trafficking, import and export of all kinds of drugs. Abdul Azim, a farmer from Dolina district, who had come to Ferozkoh city to purchase asafetida seed and grow it on his 1.5 acres of land, hoped to earn more and legal income from asafetida than poppy.

Abdul Azim told Pajhwok Afghan News: "The price of asafetida is higher than opium, asafetida is better than poppy, so I allocated a part of my land for growing the medicinal plant and I hope to get some legitimate income". "The climate of our province is more suitable for asafeti-

da. People's interest has grown this year. I invested over 200,000 afis in growing asafetida", Azim said.

Hafizullah Hakimi, another farmer who has already grown asafetida on his one acre land, said: "Many farmers have turned to growing asafetida and so I was encouraged to allocate an acre of land for growing asafetida. I hope to get some good chunk of income". He said he brought a kilogram of asafetida seen for over 30,000 afis in Ferozkoh city.

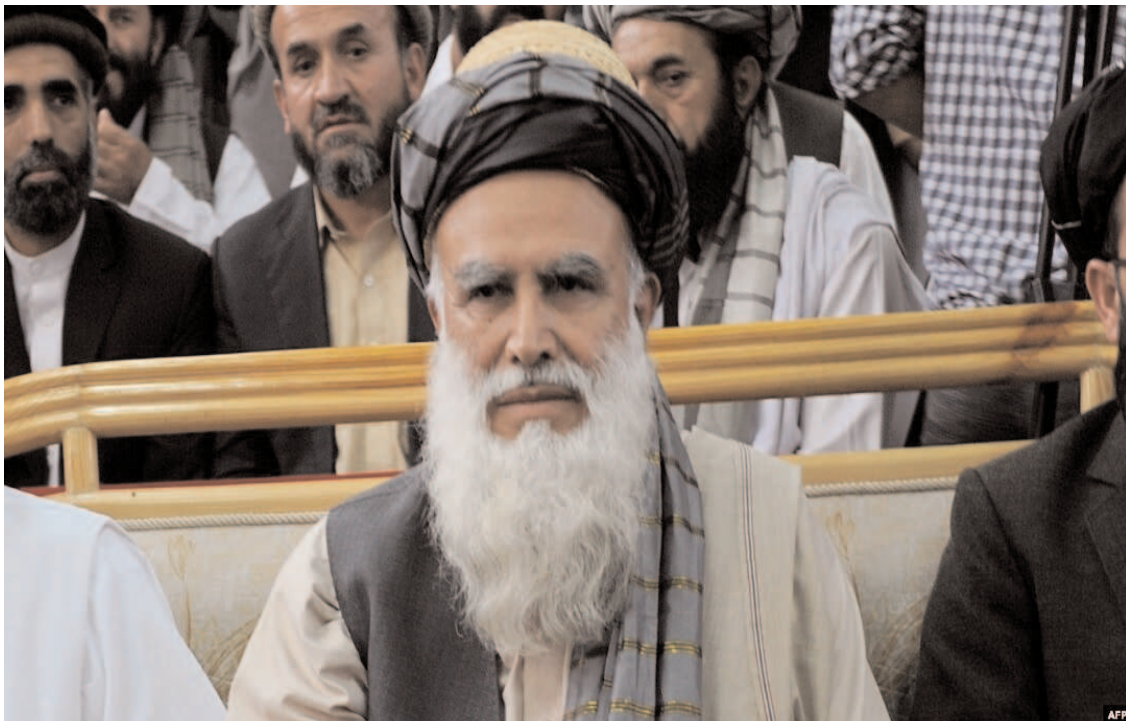
Farmers of Ghor province expect assistance from the Agriculture and Livestock department after shunning poppy. Agricultural specialists say asafetida is an important medical herb that has a high value. Sherzad, one of agricultural specialists, said: "The interland of farmers in growing the plant has increased during the past two years, the plant is used in medicines. A kilogram of its seeds is sold for up to 30,000 afis

while each kilogram of harvest is sold for up to 45,000 afis". "Its bushes become ready to yield asafetida after four years, the stems are cut down close to the root, and a milky juice flows out", Sherzad said. However, the experts blamed the Agricultural Department for asafetida's slow popularization among people and stressed the officials concerned should encourage farmers to grow asafetida as a good alternative to poppy.

Provincial officials say they along with some other relevant organizations will try to encourage farmers to cultivate more asafetida.

Mohammad Zaman Qutaiba, a senior official of the provincial Agricultural Department, said: "Asafetida is literally a good herb, it is halal and valuable, many farmers grow it, our department and other relevant institutions are trying to provide more support to the farmers".

Sharia requires you to facilitate girls' education: Sayyaf to Taliban



ATLANTA (Pajhwok): Reacting to the ban on girls' higher education, Dawat-i-Islami party leader Ustad Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf has asked the Taliban not to pursue their personal desires and ideas in the name of Sharia.

The caretaker government announced suspending higher education for females until further notice, asking public and private universities to implement the order with immediate effect.

Addressing the Taliban authorities, Sayyaf on his Facebook page wrote: "You are not ordered by Sharia to prevent the education of

girls rather Sharia requires you to provide suitable and dignified environment and facilities for their education because a society needs female doctors, female police, female trainers and others."

He said instead of preventing knowledge and education, the authorities should have introduced prudent reforms and provided better and more appropriate facilities for their education.

Ustad Sayyaf said Islam was a religion of knowledge, light and progress and it fought ignorance and illiteracy.

The veteran jihadi leader

said Muslims were the pioneers of science and knowledge during their time of power and glory and had the position of authority in various sciences and arts.

He hoped the Taliban would not present an unrealistic image of Islam to the world. "Islam is a religion of mercy, love and human dignity ...do not oppress people because its consequences are bad."

Many countries, including Muslim countries Saudi Arabia and Turkey, and international organizations, including the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic

Countries, have condemned the ban on women's higher education in Afghanistan.

However, Acting Minister of Higher Education Maulvi Nida Mohammad Nadeem explained the reasons why the ban was imposed in an interview with National Television late last night.

Nadeem defended his decision, saying the ban was necessary to prevent the mixing of genders in universities and because he believed some subjects being taught violated the principles of Islam. He said the ban was in place until further notice.

Only thing all Afghans agree upon is female education: Ghani

ATLANTA (Pajhwok): Former president Ashraf Ghani says the only thing all the Afghans agree upon is the education and work of women, demanding that all the 'secrets' of the Doha agreement should be made public.

The Ministry of Higher Education announced that girls were barred from universities until further notice.

In a statement, the MoHE said: "All public and private universities of the country are informed that based on the cabinet decision No. 28 women higher education is suspended till next order."

Ashraf Ghani in a statement said unfortunately the current problem of women's education and work in the country was very serious, saddening and the most obvious and cruel example of gender apartheid in the 21st century.

He wrote in his Facebook page: "The main problem is the ruling group's illegitimacy because they are ruling in an undemocratic man-

ner and have occupied Afghanistan and held the entire population hostage."

"The responsibility for such unpleasant decisions of the current ruling group and the deepening of the ongoing crisis is not only with the Taliban, but with all those individuals, elements and institutions that organized propaganda and claimed to show them clean and said they have changed," he added.

He said the Taliban and their "preachers" should share the hidden annexes and supplementary parts of the Doha agreement with the nation.

According to him, the question is why they cannot explain to the people the secret commitments with the US and why the details are kept hidden from the public.

He asked in what capacity the ruling group wanted to change the education curriculum of Afghanistan?

"Do they want to change the educational curriculum of

Afghanistan to the curriculum of Haqqania Madarasa? Is their educational system better than Imam Abu Hanifa's curriculum?"

"I have said many times and I'm still saying that if one girl becomes literate, she will change the next five generations and if one girl remains illiterate, she will cause the destruction of five generations in the future.

I strongly reject the claim of those foreign and domestic countries that give cultural cover to such treacherous decisions, the mothers of Mirwais Neka and Ahmad Shah Baba were literate and well-educated leaders."

Ghani also added that he appreciated the girls and boys who protested for the right of education in Nangarhar, Kandahar and other provinces in this difficult situation.

Ghani said the current young generation (women and men) could do away with the "tyranny" for the next hundred years by strengthening their ranks, unity and consensus.

Sanctions make IEA unable to launch major economic projects

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's (IEA) finance ministry says in the last sixteen months, the international sanctions on the Afghan banking system have made the government unable to put Afghanistan on the path of economic growth and development.

Ahmad Wali Haqmal, a spokesman for the Ministry of Finance, has said that these sanctions had the most effects on the people of Afghanistan and that Kabul wants all economic sanc-

tions to be lifted by the international community.

"Over the past 15 months, our major problem was the frozen assets of Afghan people and restrictions on the banking system which has affected our activities and economy," said Haqmal.

According to the officials of the finance ministry, sanctions have made them unable to undertake large economic projects.

A number of investors, however, have expressed that the flow of money transfer has not returned to

normal and that they cannot freely transfer money through global systems.

Economic experts meanwhile have said that the finance ministry should increase its contact and coordination with international financial institutions in order to find a way to solve these problems.

According to economic experts, until financial problems in banks are not resolved and sanctions are not lifted, investors will face problems in their investments in Afghanistan.

Dara-i-Suf coalmine owners want their problems resolved

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some coalmines owners in the Dara-i-Suf district of northern Samangan province says without certain companies who have coal purchase contracts others are not allowed to purchase coal and this faced the coalmines owners with huge problems and may force them to stop mining.

But the Ministry of Mining and Petroleum said no hurdle existed to halt coalmining in Dara-i-Suf.

On October 16, a government committee decided store 400,000 tonnes of coal in different municipality districts of capital Kabul. People will be able to purchase a tonne of coal against 9,000 afis.

Currently one tonne of quality coal sold at 16,000 afis and low quality coal at 7,000 afis in Kabul markets but in Dara-i-Suf one tonne of coal was sold against 1,200 afis to 2,000 afis.

On November 22, the MoMP announced that 300 trucks loaded

with coal had arrived in Kabul which will provided coal to the people at the rate of 9,000 afis per tonne.

According to the source contract had been signed with eight companies to deliver coal to Samangan.

Mohammad Amiri, head of a coalmining company in Dara-i-Suf, said that government purchased third or fourth grade coal at a low cost with tax exemption and sold it at 9,000 afis per tonne on public.

He said: "Without contractors, businessmen and other individuals are not allowed to purchase coal in Dara-i-Suf and some companies that excavated coal at a higher rate refused to purchase them at low rate because they will suffer loss therefore up to 60 percent coalmining companies had stopped their activities."

He said in the past one tonne of Dara-i-Suf coal was accounted for up to 5,000 afis in the excavation site but now contracting companied pur-

chased one tonne of coal up to 1,500 afis at a time when coalmine owner spent 2,500 on one tonne coal to excavate it from the mine.

He said in dara-i-Suf coalminers did not sold their reserves from the past 45 days because they suffer loss.

He asked the government to allow other companies and individuals apart from contract holders to open the market for coal purchase.

"Even our wood and other related materials are not allowed, our work had stopped, labour are asking for the money and we cannot sold our coals at a low cost to the contract holders, this problem should be resolved," he said.

According to Amiri he came to Kabul with some other companies owners and held meeting with the government officials but no assurances had been given to them regarding the resolution of the problems.

Another coalmine owner who

wished not to be named raised similar issue and said people have invested in coalmining but currently they are faced with loss. He said companies holding the coal purchasing contract have demanded one tonne of coal for up to 1,400 afis. Sometimes some truckers want to buy it for up to 1,800 afis but they are fewer. Coal delivery to Kabul.

Mohammad Rasool Totakhel, head of the Coal Exporters Union, has objected the transfer of coal to Kabul which is sold at low rate and said: "A delegation from Kabul visited Dara-i-Suf where it stopped an open coal purchase. We frequently contacted them and told them to buy the coal of your own choice but don't stop the vehicle of common people. It is against the interest of this country and it is tyranny."

But Mufti Mohammad Omaid Khurram, spokesperson for the MoMP, said there was no issue and hurdle existing in the way of coalmin-

ing in Dara-i-Suf. He did not provide more detail.

According to Totakhel, when coal was exported to Pakistan at that time one tonne of coal rate ranged from 3,000 afis to 5,000 afis but now it is sold from 1,200 afis to 1,800 afis.

The MoMP on in July said that up to 15,000 afis tonnes of coal was exported to Pakistan from Afghanistan but lately it did not provide any information in this regard.

He said currently, coal export to Pakistan has declined by 70pc and this caused coal rates to decline in Dara-i-Suf as well.

Totakhel said: "The reason why coal rates has surged in Kabul markets is because its export declined and government want to buy it a low rate and sell it to the people at high price."

This comes that on December 05, one tonne of coal was sold at the \$452 in international market while on November 11, the global rate was

\$323 and currently it stood at \$400.

It was expected that with the subsidies sale of coal its overall rates will also decline but it did not happened.

Mia Jan, a coal seller in the largest coal market in Azizi Hotak area of Kabl, said coal from Dara-i-Suf could not be found in Kabul because government has limited access to contractor and everyone is not allowed to get coal from Dara-i-Suf. He said currently, coal available in the market was from Baghlan's Tala Wa Barfak and its rate is high in the market at time when the quality of Dara-i-Suf coal was higher than Tala Wa Barak coal.

Mohammad Khan, another coal seller, said the rate of coal had surged and the reason was that without a limited number of companies others are not allowed to get coal from Dara-i-Suf. He said currently one tonne of quality coal was sold at 16,000 afis whiel a low quality of coal was sold at 7,500 afis.

Prosperity of Pakistan lies in complete elimination of terrorism: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday said that with the grace of Allah Almighty a major disaster was averted in Islamabad.

In a tweet, strongly condemning the incident of terrorism, she paid rich tributes to ICT Police and Eagle Squad. She said that martyred Adeel Hussain who sacrificed his life in the line of duty and his injured colleagues were heroes of the nation. The minister said Pakistan's prosperity lies in the complete elimination of terrorism from its soil.

She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul of the martyred in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude. She prayed for the early recovery of the injured.

'Imran was imposed on nation by stealing Nawaz Sharif's mandate', says Marriyum: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Friday that in 2018 elections Imran Khan was imposed on the nation as prime minister by stealing Nawaz Sharif's mandate. "Anything that is not yours must be

returned to the original owner", she said in her reaction to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's statement.

She said that Imran Khan was fully aware that his government would fell when he lost majority in the National Assembly and his lies, corruption and incompetence were the reasons behind PTI regime's downfall.

"Hundred per cent Pakistanis say that the only solution to the country's problems is transparent elections, but after the completion of the constitutional term by October 2023", she maintained.

Castigating PTI chairman, she said Imran Khan took anti-people steps, violated the constitution and played with the country's interests, especially on Kashmir issue. She reminded Imran Khan that today was December 23, the day he had claimed, "Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies would be dissolved." She said that people's war was against those who ran away from accountability after looting the country and Toshakhana. Imran Khan's loot and plunder destroyed employment opportunities in the country, she remarked.

Senate approves "ICT LG Amendment Bill 2022" amid uproar

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Senate on Friday approved the passage of "Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2022", amid strong protest from the opposition benches.

The bill was moved by State Minister for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan in the senate after the legislation sailed through the National Assembly (NA) on Dec 22 despite a protest from the opposition members and voices on lack of quorum in the House.

Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani chaired today's session in which the bill was tabled.

The bill was aimed at increasing the number of Union Councils from 101 to 125 within the Islamabad Capital Territory to cater for the existing population of the federal capital. The mayor and deputy mayor shall be directly elected as

joint candidates by the voters. The opposition senators protested over the presentation of the bill and chanted slogans against the government. The opposition lawmakers also surrounded the dice of the Senate's chairman to disrupt the proceedings.

The Senate meeting continued under the chairmanship of Sadiq Sanjrani.

PTI senator Faisal Javed pointed out the quorum in the Senate. The bells were rung for three minutes on the instructions of the Senate Chairman.

The chairman Senate continued reading the agenda item. On this, PTI senators tore up copies of the agenda and bill. PTI senators walked out in the Senate. There were 22 senators from the government and the opposition benches in the Senate, 24 senators are required for a quorum.

C l a u s e - b y - c l a u s e

approval of the Islamabad Municipal Elections Amendment Bill was taken in the Senate session.

The Senate approved the Islamabad LG Amendment Bill 2022 amidst a great uproar. 24 votes were cast in favor of the bill while 12 were against it.

Earlier, the approval of the Islamabad LG Amendment Bill was taken from the National Assembly yesterday.

Under the amendment, the federal government has been authorised to increase or decrease the number of union councils from time to time. "If the office of the mayor of local government falls vacant during the term of the council for any reason, the Election Commission shall hold a fresh election to the office of the head of the local government." The Senate session was adjourned for an indefinite period of time.

IHC suspends CDA's notice to seal Swati's farmhouse

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday suspended the Capital Development Authority's (CDA) notice to seal Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Azam Swati's farmhouse.

As per details, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the petition filed by Azam Swati's wife in IHC. The court issued notices to all the parties and stopped them from taking any further measures. CDA didn't issue any notice prior to sealing the farmhouse, the petitioner's counsel told the court and requested the court to stop CDA from taking any further measures. The court adjourned the hearing for an indefinite time. Earlier, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) sealed farmhouses owned by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Senator Azam Swati, after 'non-compliance' with the notice issued to his wife.

The notice stated that two basements, a ground floor and guard rooms were illegally constructed in the farmhouses. The CDA asked Swati to demolish the illegal constructions, otherwise, the farmhouses will be vacated for not complying with the orders.

LHC constitutes larger bench

LAHORE (TLTP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has constituted a larger bench to hear pleas regarding Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan's disqualification in Toshakhana case.

As per the details, the Lahore High Court (LHC) Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti will head the three-member larger bench, whereas Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh and Justice Sajid Mahmood Sethi are the other two members.

The TLTP learnt that LHC chief justice had requested to form larger bench for hearing of two different pleas in this case.

The three-member bench headed by LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti will hear the case on January 9.

Earlier, the Lahore High Court judge asked the CJ LHC to constitute a larger bench to hear the plea against the disqualification of former prime minister Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case.

Judge Sajid Mahmood Sethi heard the plea filed by a citizen of Mianwali, named Jabir Abbas through his counsel Azhar Siddique. The applicant in his plea stated that ECP is not a court and it cannot disqualify lawmakers. It is pertinent to note here that the ECP declared Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan disqualified in its verdict in the Toshakhana reference.

Awan replaces Ashtar Ausaf as AGP

ISLAMABAD (TLTP): President Arif Alvi has approved the appointment of Mansoor Usman Awan as Attorney-General for Pakistan (AGP) after Ashtar Ausaf resigned from his office. The president approved the appointment under Article 100 of the constitution.

The TLTP learnt that Awan holds a Master of Laws (LLM) degree from Harvard Law School, USA, and a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree from the University of Punjab where he stood first. He was awarded the Justice M. Jan Memorial gold medal for obtaining 1st position in Jurisprudence and Charles Earl Bevan Petman Law Prize for 1st position in Criminal Law.

Awan is a recipient of the Harvard Law School Dean's Award for Leadership (2005). At Harvard Law, he was elected as the LLM Representative to Harvard Law School Council and he also served as the Vice President of the Harvard Graduate Council. The former AGP Ashtar Ausaf Ali resigned from his post back in September. He submitted his resignation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. However, he had offered to continue working till a replacement is appointed.



ISLAMABAD: The shattered remains of a vehicle blown up by an alleged terrorist in the Residential Sector of I-10/4 Islamabad, at a police check post.

IHC directs ECP to decide ICT UCs matter after hearing Federation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday set aside the decision of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding the rejection of Federal Government's notification for an increase in the number of union councils. The court also instructed the electoral body to decide the matter again after hearing the respondents by December 27.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard identical petitions regarding the increase in the number of union councils and changes in the voter lists. Attorney General for Pakistan Ashtar Ausaf, Additional Attorney General Munawar Dogal, Advocate General Jahangir Jadoon, Director General Legal ECP, Ali Nawaz Awan and others appeared before the court.

At the outset of hearing, Jahangir Jadoon argued that the Interior Ministry had issued a notification on December 19, regarding the increase in the number of union councils but the ECP had rejected using its suomotor powers. The ECP neither heard the Federation nor the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation, he added.

He said the Federal Capital had been divided in 125 union councils, and it was the ECP's responsibility to conduct delimitation.

The chief justice remarked that an increase in the number would reduce the size of union councils, and asked whether it would not affect the local area. Advocate General Islamabad said the delimitation of UCs would be done by the ECP on the basis of population and it would not affect local area. AGP Ashtar Ausaf adopted the stance that the ECP was bound to conduct delimitation after the increase in the number of UCs and voters lists would also be changed accordingly.

The additional attorney general informed the court that the local government bill had been approved by the National Assembly and it would now be presented in the Senate. Under the new law, mayor and deputy mayors would be elected directly, he added. He asked whether the ECP had the authority to disobey the notification of the Federal Government.

The chief justice remarked that the ECP was of the view that the number of UCs was increased after the local government elections schedule was announced and that the next elections could be conducted as per the new UCs. To a query related to the changes in voter lists, the DG Legal ECP said the process in that regard had been done. He also produced the

record related to the amendments in voter lists.

The petitioners lawyer adopted the stance that the voters of Golra UC had been shifted to Rawat UC, and same complaints were found in other UCs as well. The ECP had stated that corrections in the voters' lists could not be made after the announcement of election schedule, he added.

He said the voters could not be deprived of their right to vote. The election would not be free and fair if it were conducted with a lot of mistakes in the voters' lists, he added.

The ECP DG said the complaints were lodged too late, which should have been made at the time of preparation of voters' lists. The LG polls should be held on time, he added. The chief justice remarked that all political parties during their stint in power did not show interest in holding LG elections. The polls should have been conducted when the tenure of the last LG bodies was completed in 2020. The problems of the Federal Capital could be addressed when a New Delhi model parliament would be introduced here, he added. The court reserved the verdict after listening to arguments from the lawyers and later instructed the ECP to decide the notification matter after hearing the Federation.

US warns Taliban of 'costs' over university ban for Afghan women

KABUL (Agencies): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has warned the Taliban that the United States will impose "costs" on the group if it does not reverse its recent ban on women attending university in Afghanistan.

Blinken said that the Taliban-led government in Kabul will not be able to improve relations with the rest of the world if it continued to deny Afghan women their fundamental rights. "What they've done is to try to sentence Afghan women and girls to a dark future without opportunity," Blinken said during an end-of-year news conference in Washington, DC.

"And the bottom line is that no country is going to be able to succeed — much less thrive — if it denies half its population the opportunity to contribute. "And to be clear, we're engaged with other countries on this right now — there are going to be costs if this is not reversed, if this has not changed," said Blinken, without specifying what the measures might include.

Afghanistan's aid-dependent economy is already under heavy US and Western sanctions following the Taliban's takeover of the country last year amid the withdrawal of US troops, which ended a 20-year occupation. In response to widespread fears of a return to the harsh policies

that dominated the Taliban's rule of Afghanistan in the 1990s, the group initially promised a more moderate government when it took power in August 2021.

But the move to suspend university education for women, announced earlier this week, sparked outrage across the world, including from several Muslim-majority countries that called on the Taliban to reverse the decree. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that the ban was "neither Islamic nor humane".

"What harm is there in women's education? What harm does it do to Afghanistan?" Cavusoglu said. "Is there an Islamic explanation? On the contrary, our religion, Islam, is not against education; on the contrary, it encourages education and science."

In the Afghan capital, about 50 mainly female protesters gathered outside Kabul University, holding banners and chanting, "Education is our right, universities should be opened." The previous day, students at Nangahar University in eastern Afghanistan also demonstrated and male medical students walked out of exams in protest at their female classmates being excluded.

The Taliban has defended the restrictions, saying that they aim to preserve the "national interest" and

women's "honour".

Acting Higher Education Minister Nida Mohammad Nadim, in his first comments on the matter, told Afghan state broadcaster RTA that several issues had prompted the decision, including female students not wearing appropriate Islamic attire and interactions between students of different genders.

"They didn't observe hijab, they were coming with the clothes that mostly women wear to go to a wedding," he said.

Nadim also said during the interview that discussions over female education were ongoing.

Meanwhile, the decision continues to draw widespread criticism, with the Group of Seven (G7) wealthy nations saying gender persecution may amount to a crime against humanity, in a statement slamming the Taliban's decree.

In Washington, Blinken also said the ban would harm any chance of the Taliban improving its relationships with other countries.

"Any prospect that the Taliban seeks for improved relations with the world, with the international community, which is something that they want and we know that they need — that is not going to happen if they continue on this course," he said.

NAB reference: Court grants interim bail to Suleman Shehbaz till Jan 7

LAHORE (APP): An accountability court on Friday granted interim bail to Suleman Shehbaz till January 7 in a reference filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The court ordered Suleman Shehbaz to submit surety bonds of Rs 500,000 for availing the relief of interim bail, besides directing him to join the investigations.

Accountability Court Judge Qamaruz Zaman conducted the proceedings, wherein Suleman Shehbaz surrendered before the court.

Advocate Amjad Pervaiz, on behalf of Suleman Shehbaz, submitted a bail application in the court. He requested the court to grant bail to his client.

At this, the court asked Suleman Shehbaz to produce his national identity card.

However, Suleman Shehbaz submitted that he did not possess the card at the moment and would produce the same on the next date of hearing.

The court observed that the iden-

tity card was needed today, it should be carried at all times.

Subsequently, the court granted interim bail to Suleman Shehbaz till January 7 and also sought reply from the NAB on the next date of hearing.

It is pertinent to mention that Suleman Shehbaz returned to Pakistan after four years of exile in London in the second week of this month and had obtained a 14-day protective bail from Islamabad High Court in two separate cases.

