

PML-N MNA arrested
LAHORE (INP): Punjab anti-corruption establishment team on Tuesday arrested PML-N MNA Chaudhry Ashraf over 'land grabbing' charges. The PML-N MNA from NA-161 Sahiwal, Chaudhry Muhammad Ashraf is accused of occupying 157 acres of government land. The Punjab anti-corruption department said the PML-N lawmaker occupied the land through fake documents with the help of Muhammad Saleem Patwari.

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First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

FIA to summon YouTuber
ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cybercrime Wing has decided to summon Lahore-based YouTuber who allegedly leaked compromising videos of deceased televangelist Aamir Liaquat. It reported that it is being alleged that late TV host's personal videos were uploaded on the internet by the suspect. As per reports, the suspect Fazeel was Liaquat's personal secretary and custodian of all of his video archives.

Vol. XXXIX No. 340 Regd. No. 241 JAMADI-US-SANI 04 1444 -- WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28 2022 PESHAWAR EDITION 12 PAGES Price. 20

Bilawal says IK was ousted through ‘Bilawal House conspiracy’



GARHI KHUHA
BUKHSH (NNI):
Pakistan's Foreign
Minister and Pakistan
Peoples Party (PPP)
Chairman Bilawal Bhutto
on Tuesday said that
unlike the proclamations
of Pakistan Tehreek-e-
Insaf (PTI) Chairman
Imran Khan that there was
an American conspiracy,
the former prime minister
was ousted through a conspiracy
hatched by 'Bilawal House'.

He said this while
addressing a mammoth
rally in Garhi Khuha
Bukhs in Larkana on
Tuesday to commemorate
the 15th death anniversary
of PPP slain chairman and
former prime minister
Shaheed Mohtarma
Benazir Bhutto.

He said that the conspiracy
against the 'selected'
was not hatched
behind closed doors,

rather it happened on the
streets and in the parliament
in plain sight.

"Bilawal House, not
White House ousted
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
(PTI) chairman Imran
Khan from power," he said.

Bilawal Bhutto said that
the 'selected' (a term for
former prime minister
Imran Khan to denote
alleged political engineering
to bring him into power),
has no political future in the country.

"The future is for common
people of the country
and for democracy," he
said. "Now it is time to say
to goodbye to the handlers
of the selected," he added.

He further said that in
the past, the PPP challenged
the dictator General (retired)
Pervaiz Musharraf, and ousted
him through democratic means.

He said that we have to
unite as a people and not
ignite conflicts, adding
that they have had to
struggle to obtain democratic
rights for the sake of the
country. He said that
Benazir Bhutto has provided
rights to laborers and
the underprivileged.

"We have to complete
the work left behind by
Shaheed Benazir and
restore their democratic
rights by all means," he
said. "My mother was a
patriotic Pakistani and her
name was carved not only
in country's history but
across the world. She was
the voice of the poor, an
ambassador for the destitute,
a true supporter of democracy,
and a strong answer to
terrorists," said Bilawal.

"It is our responsibility
to follow Bibi's vision
and achieve the mission
she had set out on," the
PPP chairman

stressed.
"President Zardari and I
tried to take her mission
forward and whatever
work is left will be completed
in the next 15 years," he
promised.

Launching a tirade
against PTI chief Imran
Khan, he said Khan
attacked the 18th amendment,
which gives legislative
and financial autonomy
to the provinces, many
times for his personal
gains. "We ousted Imran
Khan through a no-trust
motion and saved the
country from a fascist
leader," thundered
Bilawal.

The foreign minister
held Imran Khan responsible
for rising terror attacks
in the country, saying he
bent his knees in front of
the proscribed TTP without
asking people and parliament.
He added that he would
urge the government to
review policy towards
terrorism, adding that
"we will have to quit that
policy and establish the
writ of the state."

"Only the PPP has the
ability to steer the country
out of the prevailing crisis
because we had dealt with
the terrorists effectively in
the past and will do so in
future as well," he added.

Furthermore, he said
that the next time would
be for jiyalas, suggesting
that in the next general
elections, the PPP will
win.

He also requested his
followers to refrain from
pursuing a politics of
hatred and promote a
politics of hope amongst
the masses.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing "Solarization Conference".

PM for fast-track solarization of Federal Govt's buildings to slash costly fuel import bill

ISLAMABAD (APP):
Prime Minister Muhammad
Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday
said they had devised a plan
to immediately convert all
the Federal Government
entireties' buildings on solar
power by April next year to
slash a huge chunk out of
the country's costly fuel
import bill hovering around
\$27 billion.

Unveiling details, he
said the procedures for
conversion of solar power
should be fast-tracked as
they had set April 2023 as
the timeline for the
implementation of the plan.

Addressing a solarization
conference, the prime
minister said under the
plan, all the Federal
Government ministries,
departments, authorities
and their offshoots in the
provinces would immediately
shift on solar energy.

It would be a model for
the provincial governments
as the Federal Government
would not make additional
expenditures over the
solarization process, he added.

The prime minister also
urged all the relevant
authorities and stakeholders
to complete the required
process by the end of April
next year and meet the
timeline which had been set.
"Consider it as our political,

Shehbaz pays tribute to Benazir Bhutto as 'crusader for human rights & democracy'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime
Minister Muhammad
Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday
paid tribute to politician
Benazir Bhutto on her death
anniversary, saying that she
was a "crusader for human
rights and democracy".

Shehbaz Sharif said Benazir
Bhutto left an indelible mark
on politics of the country,
adding that the void left by
her martyrdom continues to
widen over the years.

He said the black day of
27 December 2007 is an
unforgettable day relating
to the martyrdom of a beloved
leader of the people. "Benazir
Bhutto is a shining example
of democratic and political
struggle who sacrificed her
life while fighting for the
rights of people," he said.

He mentioned that as the
first woman prime minister
of the Islamic world, Benazir
Bhutto, was a fascinating
story of continuous struggle
throughout her life. "We
pay tribute to the historical
services of Benazir Bhutto
for the country, people and
democracy," he said. He
recalled that Pakistan Muslim
League leader

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif
and Pakistan Peoples Party's
Benazir Bhutto gave the
historical gift of the Charter
of Democracy that started
a new era in the country's
politics. He termed the
Charter of Democracy a
landmark achievement of
the political vision of the
country's leaders which
ushered in a new political
culture and tradition in
Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif
said Benazir Bhutto took a
bold and clear stand
against terrorism and added
that her martyrdom showed
the country's determination
against the menace.

He said Benazir Bhutto
also rendered immense
services for the strengthening
of national defence,
constitutional institutions
and for social welfare.

The prime minister
extended condolences to
the family of Benazir Bhutto
including his husband Asif
Ali Zardari, son Bilawal
Bhutto and all other relatives.

He prayed to Allah
Almighty to elevate the
ranks of all martyrs
including Benazir Bhutto,
and grant patience to the
families.

social, national and religious
duty to implement it as soon
as possible," he opined.

The prime minister said
with the urgent measures,
they would be able to generate
300 MW to 500MW of cheap
power, thus reducing the
import bill worth billions of
dollars each year. He assured
that the whole process would

be conducted through
transparent bidding via a
third party. He also urged
the provincial chief ministers
to emulate the Federal
Government's launched
pattern and introduce solar
systems in their respective
provinces and assured his
government's complete
assistance in that regard.

"It is the only option of
our survival as a nation,"
he added. The prime minister
said the process for the
generation of 10,000MW
solar power in the country
had already commenced
and such a conversation
by the Federal Government
buildings would be the
first phase.

CM KP chairing a progress review meeting on the project

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief
Minister Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood
khan has directed the
quarters concerned to
complete all requirements
for initiation of physical
work on the extension and
upgradation of
Naseerullah Babar
Hospital in Peshawar,
including the transfer of
proposed land to the
health department as well
as the completion of its
feasibility study.

He termed the project
of great importance in view
of the increasing population
in the provincial capital,
adding that the government
is working under a well
devised strategy, keeping in
view the public needs and
requirements of the near
future. Completion of the
ongoing development
initiatives, to this effect,
will bring forth an effective
network of service delivery
in the province, he added.

He was chairing a
progress review meeting on

the project regarding the
extension and upgradation
of Naseerullah Babar
Hospital, Peshawar. MPAs
Asif Khan and Malik
Wajid, Higher authorities
of Health and food
departments and other
relevant officials attended
the meeting. Matters
regarding the transfer of
land, feasibility and
tendering of the project
were discussed in detail.

The Chief Minister
directed the authorities
concerned to immediately
move a summary for
transferring the proposed
land to health department
so as to get the matter
approved by the provincial
cabinet on a priority basis.

He also directed them to
finalize the feasibility study
of the project without any
delay, adding that his
government will provide
the required resources for
this purpose. He made it
clear that the upgradation
of Naseerullah Babar
Hospital is of vital importance,
keeping in view the
increasing demand for
health facilities in the
region. He said that

the incumbent provincial
government has established
a model of sustainable
development having long,
mid and short-term
initiatives in various
sectors with the aim of
meeting contemporary
needs and addressing
possible future challenges.

Upgradation and
Extension of Naseerullah
Babar Hospital is also
a part of this strategy
which, on completion,
will help reduce the
burden on the existing
tertiary hospitals in
Peshawar. He
maintained that the work
on revamping of District
Headquarter Hospitals
and establishment of
four new tertiary
hospitals is also in
progress. These projects,
once completed, will
provide quality health
care facilities to people
on their doorsteps, he
added.

Mahmood Khan made
it clear that the provincial
government has undertaken
reforms in every sector,
keeping in view present-day
needs and to ensure
optimum performance
of the existing
government machinery.

PTI postpones verification of MNAs' resignation

ISLAMABAD (INP):
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
(PTI) on Tuesday has
decided not to appear in
the National Assembly,
tomorrow, for the
confirmation of the
resignations tendered
by the MNAs due to
the non-availability
of the Speaker Raja
Pervaiz Ashraf.

PTI was expected to
visit NA tomorrow
Wednesday for the
confirmation of the
resignations of MNAs,
but due to the
unavailability of the
speaker, the decision
has been postponed.
Imran Khan was also
scheduled to address
the MNAs in Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa House
in Islamabad.

The NA speaker has
invited PTI MNAs for
verification of their
resignation in pursuance
of Paragraph(b) of
Sub-Rule(2) of Rule 43
of Rules of Procedure
& Conduct of Business
in NA, 2007. The letter
mentioned that MNAs
of PTI were earlier
invited in the Chamber
of NA speaker for
verification of resignation
from 06th to 10th June
2022 but none of them
came for verification
of their resignation.

Maulana Tariq Jamil suffers cardiac arrest

KARACHI (INP):
Renowned Islamic scholar
Maulana Tariq Jamil —
who is currently on a trip
to Canada — was moved
to a hospital on Tuesday
after he suffered a cardiac
arrest, according to his son.

Confirming the news in
a tweet, Yousaf Jamil
said: "Baba jaan is
currently in Canada and
has been shifted to the
hospital due to a heart
attack. By the grace of
Allah, his condition is
much better now." He
requested Jamil's fans
and followers to pray for
the scholar's speedy
recovery. "May Allah
Almighty bless my father
with perfect health,"
Yousaf added. Separately,
in a video message
posted on the scholar's
YouTube, Jamil said that
his father experienced
pains in his chest at
around 1pm local time
and was subsequently
shifted to the hospital.

Economic, political stability impossible in presence of current govt: Imran Khan

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan
Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)
chairman Imran Khan has
said that economic and
political stability is
impossible in the presence
of the current government.

He said that General (ret)
Bajwa had hired Hussain
Haqqani for his promotion
during the PTI government.
"Only one person is
responsible for the regime
change. The dollar rate was
at Rs178 during the PTI
government. Nobody
knows how the dollar
rate went up," he opined.
Imran Khan said that
PCB former chairman
Ramiz Raja was doing
good work. "Pakistan
reached the final of

the World Cup due to
decisions made by
Ramiz Raja. Now
Najam Sethi has been
made the PCB chairman.
What is his experience
in cricket. The PCB
needs continuity of
decisions," he added.

Meanwhile, speaking
to a private television
channel, Imran Khan
said on Tuesday
audio tapes were being
released to blackmail
him and malign his
image. Speaking to
TV, he said conspiracy
to oust him as prime
minister was hatched
inside the country
adding Hussain Haqqani
was conspiring against
him. "What could be
more treacherous than
installing thieves on
powerful positions and
quashing

cases against them," he
added. Taking a dig at
the incumbent government,
he said the government
had ruined all the
institutions adding PM
Shehbaz Sharif destroyed
Federal Investigation
Agency (FIA) first
after coming into power.
"FIA official Rizwan
died of cardiac arrest
and four witnesses
against Mr Shehbaz
are no more," he added.
Mr Khan went on to
say that the amendments
to National Accountability
Bureau (NAB) law
were helping powerful
criminals reign free
adding the amendments
had given license of
corruption to the
powerful.

Zardari says assemblies will complete term

ISLAMABAD (NNI):
Pakistan People's Party
(PPP) Co-Chairman and
former President Asif Ali
Zardari has said that
with God's will, the
assemblies will complete
the parliamentary term
of five years and the
country will be on the
path of a strong
democracy.

Former President Asif
Ali Zardari in his message
on Shaheed Mohtarma
Benazir Bhutto's
Martyrdom Day said
that she had guided him
in politics, and now the
philosophy of Shaheed
Bibi is guiding him.

Showing his determination
with the ideology of his
assassinated wife, Asif
Zardari said he cannot
ignore the mission of
Shaheed Benazir Bhutto
even in his dream.

He said no one faced
difficulties like Bibi for
the sake of the restoration
of the constitution and
democracy. She dispelled
the fear of dictators with
extreme bravery, patience,
and endurance, he added.

Former President Asif
Ali ZARDARI further
said that after going
through oppressive
conditions, they (PPP
leadership) have become
stronger as this is what
Bibi Shaheed has taught
to them. He also said
a continuation of
democracy was the
beautiful dream of
Shaheed Bibi Benazir
Bhutto, and Alhamdulillah
he has fulfilled her dream.

Zardari said the
declaration of the
institutions to be
detached from politics
and follow the constitution
is the realization of
Bibi Shaheed's dream.

He said they will
continue the mission
of serving the people.

Protesters of Gwadar Rights Movement shoot policeman

GWADAR (NNI): A police
constable died when
protesters of 'Haq Du
Tehreek' (Gwadar Rights
Movement) fired shots at
the lawmen deputed
around the demo in
Gwadar.

According to the
provincial government
spokesman, the police
officials were deployed
around the site of a
protest of HDT near
Hashmi Chowk in
Gwadar. The protesters
sprayed on duty police
with bullets leaving a
cop injured seriously,
the official said adding
that the injured was
rushed to the GDA
Hospital where he
breathed his last.

The spokesman said
that the police force is
patiently bearing the
provocation of the
protesters. An FIR will
be registered against
the protester's leader
Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman,
who has been on
campaign against the
development of

the port city.

Gwadar police arrested
over 20 persons in
connection with
challenging the writ
of the government.
Hidayat is Jamat-e-Islami
Balochistan General
Secretary. The participants
of the sit-in demanded
an end to illegal
trawling and a
reduction in security
check posts.

The movement started
in September 2021 and
gained popularity
also sweeping local
body elections. Last
year, the sit-in also
went on for months
and ended only after
Chief Minister
Balochistan visited
the coastal city and
gave assurances to
resolve all the
movement's demands.

However, according
to Hidayat ur Rehman,
the authorities have
failed to keep their
promises and they were
left with no other
option but to restart
the protests.

The provincial
government spokesman
said that

direct firing at the
police-men deployed
from their security
is regrettable.

Civil society and the
citizens of Gwadar are
also condemning the
behavior and unjustified
provocation of HDT's
leaders. He said such
incidents are intolerable,
for which all the
responsibility lies on
Maulana Hidayat ur
Rehman and his
followers.

The police constable
identified as Yasir
received a bullet in his
neck fired by an angry
mob. Balochistan IG
Police Abdul Khaliq
Sheikh said that the
police despite its full
power is fulfilling the
promise of life and
property of the common
people. The officials
are avoiding the use
of firearms of any kind
under any circumstances.
The accused involved
in the incident should
be arrested soon, he
added.



Hammad warns of economic collapse if govt's strategy persists

LAHORE (INP): PTI leader and former finance minister Hammad Azhar on Tuesday hit out at the government for worsening economic situation in the country, stressing change in the strategy to avoid financial collapse.

Mr Azhar said the economy of the country was on the verge of collapse and predicted shortage of various commodities and increase in prices if the strategy remained unchanged. Taking a dig at Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, he said: "Economy needs serious decision making, and not Ishaq Dar".

For Pakistanis, the outgoing 2022 was a year of turmoil as inflation that plagued the country at the end of 2021 touched new extremes this year. By November last, the consumer price index surged to nearly 24 per cent, with prices of essential food items going beyond the limit of ordinary people.

LHC Justice plants sapling in Railway park

LAHORE (APP): Lahore High Court (LHC) Justice Jawad-ul-Hassan on Tuesday planted a sapling at Railway Station park under maple tree plantation campaign launched by the Parks and Horticultural Authority (PHA).

He prayed for the peace and stability of the country after a planting sapling.

Briefing the chief guest, PHA In-charge zone-II, said the PHA was carrying out various plantation drives in the city to reduce the impact of pollution and make the city greener.

The PHA was planting large maple trees across the city under the maple tree plantation drive, he said and added that the authority was encouraging people to participate in the plantation activities.

Shaheen force officials shoot and kill young man

KARACHI (NNI): A young man was shot and killed by Shaheen Force officials in Karachi's Gulistan-e-Johar on Tuesday. The slain youth was identified as Amir. The police officials from Shaheen Force – a specialised unit established to curb street crimes in Karachi – shot and killed a young man namely Amir in Gulistan-e-Johar.

Police claimed that Shaheen Force personnel asked motorcyclists to stop but they refused to obey their command. While trying to flee from the scene, the motorcyclists allegedly opened fire at the cops.

Police said that an accused was killed in retaliation by the personnel. Police added that the department is checking the criminal record of the killed man. They also claimed that they also recovered used rounds of the bullets fired by the accused men.

On the other hand, the mother of the slain youth told the media that the policemen have 'murdered' her son. She said that Amir works at Fishery with his brother.

CM launches healthcare projects worth Rs 15 bln

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi launched healthcare projects worth more than 15 billion rupees during a ceremony held at CM's office, on Tuesday.

The CM inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of numerous projects and stated that the provision of 26 billion rupees to improve health facilities was a record. He added that work had been started for providing quality healthcare facilities to the people. He said a Cyberknife machine was being provided to Nishtar Medical University Multan with Rs.1.20 billion. Allied Hospital Faisalabad was provided with 1.25 billion rupees to treat cancer patients with a linear accelerator machine, he said. A linear accelerator machine would also be installed for cancer patients in Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Teaching Hospital Gujrat at 1.30 billion rupees, he added.

The CM informed that a new cardiology hospital would be built along with the provision of modern machinery in cardiology hospitals in Punjab. Meanwhile, the Institute of Cardiology Wazirabad was being upgraded with 200 additional beds for five billion rupees, he said and added that gamma camera electrophysiology equipment and transit time flowmeter were being provided for heart patients as well. The land had been acquired for the expansion of the Institute of Cardiology Wazirabad for Rs.385 million, he cited. He said that a pharmacy was being established in Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC) Lahore to supply medicines to the patients. A CT angiography machine and a gamma camera (thallium scan) were being installed in the Institute of Cardiology Lahore with 50 crores. Alongside this, the Chaudhry Anwar Ali Cheema Institute of Cardiology was being established in Sargodha with 6 billion rupees. He said that CT angiography machine and gamma camera (thallium scan) were being provided at Chaudhry Parvez Elahi Institute of Cardiology in Bahawalpur at a cost of Rs.700 million. Mother and child block of 200 beds was being made function-

al at Lady Willingdon Hospital Lahore at a cost of Rs.5 billion, he further said.

Rs.500 million had been allocated to acquire land for the children's hospital in Gujrat, the CM said and added that a modern radiotherapy unit was being established in Children's Hospital Lahore with 2 billion rupees. A medicine store was being constructed in Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Teaching Hospital Gujrat with 390 million rupees, he added. Modern operation theatres, a 10-bed ICU and a laundry would also be constructed in Gujrat Teaching Hospital. The CM said that the old block of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital Lahore would be upgraded at a cost of 200 million rupees. Residential flats would also be constructed for Ganga Ram Hospital's supervisory staff. He said that Bashir Ahmad Auditorium had been built in Punjab Institute of Neurosciences with 5 crores rupees while the scope of the Punjab Thalassemia Program was also being expanded and 346 million rupees had been allocated for this purpose.

The government had worked at a fast pace to develop the health sector on modern lines for 4 months, he said. He felicitated the Provincial Minister Dr Yasmin Rashid and her team for providing quality health facilities. Earlier, Secretary Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Dept Dr. Ahmed Javed Qazi gave a briefing about health projects. Provincial Advisor Aamir Saeed Raan, Rana Shahbaz Ahmad MPA, Principal Secretary to CM Muhammad Khan Bhatti, former president Bank of Punjab Hamesh Khan, secretary information, VC University of Child Health Sciences Dr Masood Sadiq, Principal Allama Iqbal Medical College Dr Nadeem Hafeez Butt, MS General Hospital Dr Khalid Bin Aslam, ED Punjab Institute of Neurosciences Dr Khalid Mahmood, Dr Asif Bashir, Principal Fatima Jinnah Medical College, ED Chaudhry Parvez Elahi Institute of Cardiology Wazirabad Dr Waheed, MS Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Hospital Gujrat Dr Abid Ghauri, ED PIC Lahore Dr Bilal Mohyuddin and others were also present.

Governor hails Ulema for interfaith harmony

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that Ulema and Mashaikh have played a key role in the promotion of interfaith harmony and peace. Talking to Ulema delegation led by Pir Nazim Hussain Shah during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Tuesday, he said the religious elders spread Islam in the sub-continent through the message of love, brotherhood and peace.

The delegation comprised Mufti Asiq Hussain, Pir Idrees Zinjani, Pir Zahur Kazmi, Pir Aslam Bukhari, Pir Mian Ijaz, Pir Javaid Shah, Makhdoom Asim Mahmood and Mufti Liaqat Ali.

The Governor Punjab urged the religious scholars to play their role in the moral education of the society. Taking a jibe at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership, he said breaking promises and commitments is considered an undesirable act around the world and, especially, in our religion of

Islam, adding that there is a party which deems taking u-turn quality of a good leader.

Balighur Rehman said upholding the constitution, law and economic stability in the country is top priority of the government, claiming record loans were taken by the previous government in the last three and a half years. He said the coalition government has saved the country from default by taking tough decisions and repaying huge debts.

On the economic situation, he said traders and business community are going through difficult situation due to economic problems. He said Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) has steered the country out of economic crises in the past. The Governor Punjab expressed the hope that political and economic stability will prevail in the country soon. He said it was first ever in the history of country that coalition government was established after successful no-confidence motion in a constitutional manner.

Petition seeking removal of Punjab governor filed in LHC

LAHORE (INP): A constitutional petition seeking removal of Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman was filed in the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday.

A citizen named Shabbir Ismail has lodged the plea through his counsel advocate Azhar Siddique, arguing that the governor breached his authority by asking Punjab Chief Minister Parvez Elahi to seek a vote of confidence from the provincial assembly without any reason. The governor couldn't issue an order for the trust vote until a current assembly session was over, the petitioner said.

He said a letter was also sent to President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif but they took no action against the Punjab governor. He pleaded the high court to direct the president and the prime minister to remove Balighur Rehman as governor.

Last week, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) leader Fayyazul Hassan Chohan demanded action against the governor under Article 6 for violating the Constitution. In a statement, the spokesperson of Punjab Chief Minister Parvez Elahi said the Lahore High Court (LHC) blocked an attempt to violate the Constitution by suspending a governor's move to denotify the CM.

The high court had reinstated the chief minister and his cabinet and binned the unconstitutional notification, he said, adding that Governor Rehman should be removed immediately for taking unconstitutional step. On Friday last, an LHC bench suspended Governor Balighur Rehman's notification of denotifying Chaudhry Parvez Elahi as Punjab chief minister after Mr Elahi submitted an undertaking stating he won't dissolve Punjab assembly until he obtained a vote of confidence from the house.



LAHORE: Thick fog engulfs the roads during Evening time.

Senate panel seeks education, law ministries' input on narcotics bill 2022

ISLAMABAD (APP): Standing Committee of the Senate on Narcotics Control on Tuesday directed the ministries of education and law to give its input on the Control of Narcotics Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2022 which mainly involved educational institutions.

The directives were passed by Chairman Committee of Narcotics Substances Senator Ejaz Ahmed Chaudhary at the request of Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shazain Bugti.

Secretary for Ministry of Narcotics Control Humaira Ahmed stated that the bill, which involved the educational institutions, had been sent to the ministry concerned for its input, but the latter had not responded on the matter so far.

Senator Mohsin Aziz, mover of the

bill, said its primary objective was to reduce drugs' usage in the varsities and ensure the creation of a healthy environment for the students.

The panel also deliberated on the current status of a drug trafficking case against Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sanaulah.

The committee was told that the court had decided in the favour of Rana Sanaulah.

The secretary for Ministry of Narcotics Control informed the committee that an inquiry had been initiated to probe the matter related to the alleged involvement of some officials of the Anti-Narcotics Force in bribery at the Islamabad airport.

The report would be submitted before the committee once it was completed, she added.

The senate body was also briefed

about the steps taken by the ministry so far for the eradication of drugs from the country.

The federal minister remarked that the ministry had taken stern action against the drugs' peddlers and seized 100 metric tons of drugs in the last few months.

The committee congratulated the ministry for their efforts and assured full support in curbing the menace of drug from the country.

The meeting was attended by Senator Naseebullah Bazai, Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmed, Senator Falak Naz, Senator Dost Muhammad Khan, Senator Mohsin Aziz, Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shazain Bugti, Secretary for Ministry of Narcotics Control Humaira Ahmed, and other relevant officers were also in attendance.

Governor Sindh meets Bohra community's spiritual leader

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori on Tuesday met the spiritual leader of Dawoodi Bohra Jamaat Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin. On this occasion, his three sons were also present, said a spokesperson of the Governor House.

The governor welcomed Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin on his arrival in Pakistan and requested him to pray for the development and prosperity of the nation.

Kamran Khan Tessori said that the Bohra community was playing an important role in the development of Pakistan. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin said that Pakistan was his second

home and he was very happy to visit the country.

DMCs Administrators call on Sindh Governor: The District Municipal Committees and city Administrators of Karachi and Hyderabad on Tuesday called on the Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor house.

They informed the Governor of ongoing development projects in Karachi and Hyderabad, cleanliness, and issues in this regard.

Those, who called on included Administrator Karachi Dr. Saifur Rehman Administrator Hyderabad Farooq Khan, Administrator East

Syed Shakil Ahmed, and Administrator Korangi Mohammed Sharif. Governor Kamran Tessori directed the administrators to be in contact with the people to resolve their problems.

He said that DMCs Administrators should also perform well.

He said that the citizens of second big city of the province Hyderabad were facing many issues.

The Governor directed the Administrator Hyderabad to resolve the problems of the citizens on priority basis. He said that the administrators should ensure measures to resolve the issues of the people.

Sharjeel congratulates Democrats panel F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has congratulated the Democrats panel on their marvelous victory in the Karachi Press Club annual elections.

The provincial minister congratulated the newly elected office bearers of the Karachi Press Club who returned unopposed.

The minister congratulated new President Saeed Sarbazi, Vice President Mushtaq Sohail, Treasurer Ehtisham Saeed Qureshi, Secretary Shoaib Ahmed, Joint Secretary Muhammad Aslam Khan.

He also congratulated Zulfiqar Wahoocho, Zulfiqar Rajpar, Shams Keerio, Rafiq Bashir, Kulsoom Jahan, Mohammad Farooq Sami and Mohammad Rameez Vohra for being elected to the governing body of the Press Club.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the unopposed success of the Democrats panel is proof of their excellent performance in managing the affairs of Karachi Press Club.

He said that Karachi Press Club has a distinct identity in the country, it is hoped that the newly elected officials will maintain the traditions of Karachi Press Club. Provincial Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sind government believes in the strengthening of journalism and journalists institutions.

He assured that Sindh government will continue its cooperation with the newly elected officials of the Karachi Press Club.

LHC allows theaters to remain open till 11.30pm

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday allowed the theaters to remain open till 11.30pm.

The court ordered the district administration for issuing a notification to keep the theaters open from 9.30 to 11.30pm.

The court also ordered to suspend show cause notices issued to theaters for remaining open after 10.00 pm.

Justice Shahid Karim passed the orders while hearing a petition filed by Punjab Artist Producers Theater Association.

The petitioner's counsel argued that the theaters remain closed for 22 hours and only open for two hours a day. However, the administration has issued notices to

theaters for remaining open after 10.00pm, he added. He pleaded with the court to extend the theaters' opening hours.

At this stage, the court observed that it had not given any orders of closing the theaters at 10.00pm.

To which, a provincial law officer submitted that the court had ordered the closure of commercial areas by 10.00pm.

The court addressed the law officer and observed that "the administration started closing theaters too".

Subsequently, the court adjourned further proceedings till December 30 and allowed theaters to remain open till 11.30pm.

Need stressed to promote country's soft image through films

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Secretary of Information and Culture Asif Bilal Lodhi said on Tuesday that all possible facilities would be ensured for the promotion of local film industry.

He was presided over a meeting regarding the selection of land for the establishment of film production centre, complex and commencement of construction work here at Al-hamra Cultural Complex. Apart from additional secretaries of culture and admin, well-known filmmaker and producer Syed Noor and chairman of Punjab Censor Board Ch Gull Zaman attended the meeting. The secretary said that film was a powerful medium of mass communication and limiting films to mere entertainment was an abuse of this medium itself. Films were simultaneously reflecting cultural values, society and even political, economic and geographical situations, he said, adding that film could be used not only as a means of training and character building for our generation but

also to promote the country's soft image before the international community.

He thanked the Punjab Chief Minister for announcement of the establishment of a world class film production centre and complex in Lahore. The secretary appealed to

the filmmakers through Syed Noor to make their films a means of moral and social training for the youth and teach them to love their values. Instead of promoting western culture, focus should be on preserving local culture, he maintained.



KARACHI: Children enjoying rides in an area of the metropolis.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN	
PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	
No.CCD/DIK/AB/TENDER/520	Dated: 26/12/2022
ADDENDUM (Time Extension)	
The Tender Notice bearing No. CCD/DIK/AB/TENDER/459, Dated: 05/12/2022 published in various newspapers on 09/12/2022 vide PID, (P) No.309/22 and also uploaded on PPRA website vide TS497666E Dated: 08/12/2022 for the work mention in the above refer Tender Notice with application date up to 28/12/2022 & sale of documents on 02/01/2023. To is hereby extended due to unavoidable reasons with application date up to 10/01/2023 and tender issuance on 13-01-2023 and opening on 17-01-2023 please visit Newspaper & PPRA website too.	
Other terms and conditions of original advertisement will remain the same as advertised on 09/12/2022.	
Executive Engineer	
Central Civil Division Pak-PWD, D.I.Khan	

Minister inaugurates dialysis unit in KTH

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Taimur Khan Jhagra, Minister of Health & Finance Khyber Pakhtunkhwa inaugurated the newly established Dialysis Unit and Daycare Center at Khyber Teaching Hospital on Tuesday.

Khyber Teaching Hospital's daycare center is designed to provide supervision and care for infants to young children during the daytime and easing the lives of the mothers who work at the KTH. This center will allow them to continue to grow their career while enjoying the value of motherhood.

Daycare Center holds a capacity of approximately 40-60 children. It was completed in 8 months with a cost of 5 million.

A 25 beds dialysis unit at Khyber Teaching Hospital is equipped with sophisticated dialysis machines, cardiac monitors, a ventilator, and a centralized oxygen supply. The KTH dialy-

sis unit is also providing bedside dialysis in CCUs, ICUs and to the patient on ventilators.

The Dialysis Unit provides a modern, comprehensive treatment program for patients with end-stage renal disease.

Moreover, the KTH dialysis unit is providing Free of cost services round-the-clock and treats more than 60 patients on daily basis. This project was completed in 8 months with a cost of Rs. 7.5 million.

During Media talk Mr. Taimur Jhagra appreciated the KTH - Management, and Board of Governance for the continuous journey towards the development of hospital infrastructure and facilities which is a remarkable achievement.

Moreover, he said that we are facing cultural, political, and financial challenges but our full support is with KTH and ongoing reforms results are satisfactory and KTH set an example in public sector hospitals.

He further added that KTH is the first public sector hospital to get ISO 9001: 2015 certificate and the MTI law makes the hospital autonomous to take its own decision for the development of the hospital now KTH's journey towards development has proved it.

After Inauguration ceremony a formal gathering was organized, where Dean KMC, Prof. Dr. Mahmud Aurangzeb in his speech welcomes and thanks the honorable guests for their participation and said that Mr. Taimur Jhagra always gives favor to KTH and we are delighted with the value you are giving us.

Moreover, he said that for big organizations daycare is very essential and it's a very comprehensive daycare center in KP among public sector hospitals.

Furthermore, he said that the Board of Governors decided to put the hospital on re-mapping and these infrastructure develop-

ments are remarkable we have also introduced 13 new specialties. Dean KMC also appreciated the nephrology department for their hard work and role in the establishment of the dialysis unit.

Hospital Director - Dr. Zafar Afridi delivered a presentation regarding hospital development projects. Furthermore, he stated that according to BOG vision we have set S.M.A.R.T (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) objectives to achieve our vision effectively and efficiently and this development journey is remarkable and we are grateful to our esteemed chief guest for his continuous support and moreover we request him for upcoming budget year kindly allocate healthy budgets for KTH pending projects.

The event ended with shields and certificates distribution among the guests and KTH technical staff members.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan chairing a meeting regarding extension and upgradation of Naseerullah Babar Hospital.

Health management information system to be introduced

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Minister for Science & Information Technology, Atif Khan has said that steps are being taken for a digital system to provide services to the people in an easy and transparent manner.

He was pressing over a meeting regarding the starting of a health management information system in various hospitals of the province here on Tuesday. Besides, the Provincial Minister for Health, Taimur Saleem Jhagra, Secretary Science & Information Technology and Secretary Health, other concerned authorities also attended the meeting.

The provincial minister for science and information technology said that a health information management system is being initiated in all hospitals of the province, which will not only bring improvement in the administrative affairs of hospitals, rather will put the provision of facilities to patients on a durable and organized system.

The meeting was briefed in detail regarding the initiation of the project in the district headquarters hospitals in Mardan, Charsadda, Haripur, Swabi, Naseerullah Khan Babar Hospital, Maulvi Jee Hospital and Sifwat Ghayyur Hospital (Pehawar).

The meeting decided in principle to begin a health information management system in all hospitals on an experimental basis and directed the concerned authorities to complete all preparation and other requirements in this regard.

Zia supports proposal of trade in local currency

PESHAWAR (APP): Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has supported a proposal of making trade and investment in local currency to overcome dollar crisis in the country.

In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, Zia Sarhadi termed the suggestion made by Chairman Exchange Companies of Pakistan, Malik Bostan as timely and need of the hour.

Malik Bostan while addressing a press conference in Karachi had also urged investors and exporters to do business in local currency.

Zia said presently, an hefty amount of dollar two billion are being smuggled to Afghanistan on monthly basis, creating a very difficult situation for businessmen in Pakistan. He advised Federal Minister for Finance, Ishaq Dar to end the condition of trade with Afghanistan in Dollar and allow opening of LC and trade with neighboring country in local currency.

He also endorsed the suggestion of Malik Bostan of imposing restriction on banks from transferring more than one hundred thousands dollars abroad on annual basis.

Provincial govt decides deduction from salaries of 3800 teachers

PESHAWAR (APP): The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has approved deduction from the salaries of 3800 teachers of BPS-17 and above for absence from duty without permission.

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting regarding the monitoring mechanism in the Education Department held here with Secretary Elementary & Secondary Education, Muatasim Billah Shah on Tuesday. The meeting was convened on the directives of the Provincial Minister for Elementary & Secondary Education, Shahram Khan Tarkahi.

The meeting also decided to hold science exhibitions in all schools after the winter vacation. A 10-member committee of women officers was constituted during the meeting, which will pay visits to girls' schools across the province and check laboratories and cleanliness conditions.

On finding inactive laboratories and poor cleanliness conditions will issue suspension orders of the concerned officers.

The meeting also decided to cross check the demands of books regarding the new academic year through the Education Management System, which will complete in one or two days and then will issue show-cause notices to all those principals, which have sent demand for new year books.

The meeting also took an important decision of writing letters to all Deputy Commissioners to tell them that the education department has banned ready-made practical copy, wherever that copy found will be confiscated and the shopkeeper will also face legal proceedings.

The meeting also decided that in case of not matching the hand-writing, the students will be granted zero marks and he would be considered a failure in the practical paper.

Furthermore, the meeting also decided on regular monitoring of the training standard of all Regional Professional Development Centres and for this purpose a joint meeting of the senior officials of the Education Department and District Education Officers (DEOs) of the concerned districts has been convened in divisional headquarters next week.

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Rain predicted in KP from December 28th to 30th

PESHAWAR (APP): The Regional Meteorological Department on Tuesday predicted three-day rains starting from Wednesday to Friday in most parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a notification issued by Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) stated that Regional Met Office Peshawar has informed that after a long dry spell, a westerly wave has entered in Northwestern parts of Balochistan and likely to grip most parts of the province on Wednesday, the 28th December (night) and likely to persist in upper parts of the province till Friday, the 30th December (Morning and Noon).

Under the influence of this weather system light to moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in most districts of the province from 28th (night) to 30th (morning and noon).

Possible Impacts during the forecast period, rain would be beneficial for the standing crops especially in Barani areas, foggy conditions are likely to subside during the forecast period, day temperatures are likely to fall (05-07) °C during the wet spell, snowfall may disrupt normal vehicular traffic in mountainous and hilly areas.

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2-day training organized by PID, PIC kicks-off



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A two-days training organized by Press Information Department and Pakistan Information Center for journalists on Digital Media Reporting and Authentication kicks-off at Peshawar, on Tuesday.

Deputy Director Press Information Department (PID) Romina Asad Khan welcomed participants and briefed journalists on importance of training in the digital age. She added that it is second of phase of training organized collectively by PID and Pakistan Information Center (PIC).

PID's Deputy Director claimed that trainings playing crucial and pivotal role in development professionalism across the board. She added that digital media is

playing important role in the era of information technology because most of educated youth is engaged on social media platforms.

Senior journalist Muhammad Fahim throws light on digital media platforms and argued journalists to utilized social media for obtaining finances. He claimed that viewers are regulators on social media platforms unlikely other communication mediums which is regulated by laws. He argued media personnel to focus on culture, sports, tourism and social segments on digital media because it is neglected by top brass of journalist's community.

Assistant Professor Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at University of Peshawar

Ali Imran claimed that digitization has leading to multiple-identity of media personnel. He claimed that information propagated by journalists perceived as factual by audience.

Assistant Professor Ali Imran said Social Media platforms owned by handler neither by organization especially in case of journalist community while facing multiple-identity at same time and space.

Moreover, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has initiated training programs at Islamabad, Gilgit Baltistan, Peshawar, Quetta, Karachi, Lahore and Azad Kashmir through its regional PID offices and Pakistan Information Center, which will further strengthen the professional skills of journalists.

3 fraudster women arrested

PESHAWAR (APP): A woman was deprived of her money by three fraudster women in a Chingchi rickshaw however the police in prompt action arrested the cheater women and recovered the looted money.

According to police, a woman lodged a report that she was travelling in a Chingchi rickshaw when a female passenger woman started vomiting. She said another woman grabbed her purse during the situation and stole Rs 24,000 from the purse.

She said all three women and the driver were involved in stealing her money. The police along with lady constable staff raided houses in Kachi Muhallah and Gharibabad and arrested the three fraudster women.

The arrested women were identified as Zainab, Kainaat, and Ruqayya. The police also recovered the stolen money which they had distributed among themselves.

A case was registered against them and the recovered amount was returned to the complainant woman.

Dr. Arjumand attends COP 27

PESHAWAR (APP): International community is urged to take destruction and damages caused by disastrous flooding in Pakistan as a test case and initiate practical measures to build long-term and robust resilience in a manner that we do not have to meet emergencies again and again.

"Rebuilding again after a climate-induced disaster is not the solution that can help countries like Pakistan, we need to build for the better to withstand greater pressures," observes Dr. Arjumand Nizami, Country Director Helvetas Pakistan.

These views were expressed by her in a virtual message sent during the recently held Climate Change Conference (COP 27) in Sharm el-Sheikh.

"In a longer term we have to rethink and revisit our concept of development," opined Dr. Arjumand who has 29 years of work experience in development cooperation.

The high emitting countries need to fast track emission reductions and spend more on providing low emitting countries with stronger and well governed adaptation solutions, she proposes.

KPRA to hold taxpayer ceremony

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) will hold taxpayer appreciation ceremony on December 29, at KPRA Headquarter 3pm.

KPRA officials would be given appreciation certificates and cash prizes who played vital role in tax collection, said a notification issued here on Tuesday.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister Taimur Khan Jhagra inaugurates newly established Dialysis Unit and Daycare Center at Khyber Teaching Hospital.

Women Property Act: PHC orders Law & Justice Dept for necessary actions

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court has observed that government may amendment Provincial Ombudsman laws to protect inheritance rights of women while forwarded the petition to Department of Law for necessary actions in various cases.

Justice Syed Arshad Ali of PHC further observed that unfortunately women are depriving from their rights in inheritance while added that provincial government must look into current laws and amend it to protect female folk's rights.

The counsel for petitioner Ghulam Mohi-u-Din Malik Advocate informed that provincial government has passed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Enforcement of Women Property Act 2019 which has empowered Provincial Ombudsman to seal disputed property in which female especially widows are deprived from their inheritance.

The counsel further added that such decision sometimes depriving both parties from their fundamental rights because the property is only source of income for the family and identical situation was faced by applicant woman from 18th June 2021 decision in which property were sealed under the 2019 Act.

PHC declared that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Enforcement of Women Property Act 2019 didn't provide clear procedure for disputed inheritance's property while the court forwarded the issue to Law & Justice department for necessary actions.

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Speakers pay tributes to Shaheed Benazir Bhutto

PESHAWAR (APP): Speakers here on Tuesday paid glowing tribute to former prime minister Benazir Bhutto Shaheed by highlighting her political struggle and services rendered for the country and vowed to accomplish her mission.

PPP KP held a seminar on the 15th death anniversary of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed here in Peshawar Press Club on Tuesday. The speakers included People's Doctors Forum president Dr Nisar Khan, PPP provincial senior vice president Syed Ayub and others. A large number of PPP activists and workers also attended the seminar. They chanted full-throated party slogans and paid rich tribute to Shaheed Benazir

Bhutto and Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, party activists and workers.

Speakers remembered Benazir Shaheed's role in developing missile technology and her political struggle and services rendered for the country and vowed to accomplish her mission.

The participants said Shaheed Benazir Bhutto sacrificed her life for strengthening democracy. Her name will be written in golden words in the history of the country, they added.

The martyrdom of Benazir Bhutto has created a leadership vacuum not only in the Pakistan People's Party, rather in the entire country, the speakers said. They added that the Bhutto family is the public and ideological family of this country.

The speakers highlighted that the role of PPP is not traditional and it has adopted a revolutionary manifesto to empower the people. They emphasized the adoption of the mission of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed and its spread to the whole society.

Meanwhile, a similar ceremony was also organized in Bara press club in the tribal district of Khyber. Local leaders of PPP including Haji Walayat Khan Afridi, Atta Muhammad Shinwari, Shah Rehman Shinwari, Haji Abdul Hanan Afridi, Qaisar Afridi besides a large number of the party workers participated in the moot.



PESHAWAR: President Peoples' Doctors Forum Prof. Dr. Nisar Khan addressing on occasion of 15th death anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

10,000 kg of substandard spices seized

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority (KP FS&HFA) during a raid in the Hayatabad area here on Tuesday confiscated over 10,000 kg of adulterated and substandard spices from a production unit.

The unit was caught red-handed producing substandard spices unfit for human consumption. The action

was taken on the directions of the Director General KP FS&HFA Shahrugh Ali Khan, where a large quantity of unhealthy spices was confiscated.

During the inspection, The Food Safety team inspected various food production units in the area. According to the Food Safety Authority, the spices production unit was found in violation of Food Safety

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), while a range of adulterants including expired spices, banned China Salt, and other unhealthy ingredients were found on the premises for grinding purposes.

The Food Safety team sealed the premises over severe violations and imposed heavy fines on the culprits; while further strict legal action will be taken

against the violators.

The statement added that the Food Safety Authority found the production unit very unhygienic. The factory was supplying unsafe spices to various snack-producing units.

Director General Food Safety Authority Shahrugh Ali Khan said the Authority will take strict action against the culprit involved in such a heinous crime.



In brief

Police arrests 23 alleged culprits F.P. Report

PABBI: Police has arrested 23 alleged culprits including two proclaimed offenders in the premises of Pabbi police station while recovered contrabands from their possession. According to details, police has arrested 23 alleged culprits including two proclaimed offenders, two drug-dealers and four facilitators while registered separate cases against outlaid. Police recovered one Kalashnikov and four kilograms hashish from their possession. District Police Officer Nowshera already directed personnel to ensure community policing and crack-down against outlaid activities indiscriminately.

3 Afghan drug smugglers held F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Tuesday recovered a big consignment of narcotics at Torkham Border and arrested three Afghan nationals for bringing the contraband into Pakistan. The ANF spokesman told media at Torkham Border that during a search operation at the border, 36, 5 kg ice drug, 8.58kg suspected substance and 7 kg heroin were recovered from three Afghan national smugglers. The Afghan smugglers and narcotics were taken into custody and cases were registered against the drug smugglers.

8 criminal gangs busted

BUREWALA (APP): Vehari district police have busted eight gangs of criminals and recovered valuables including cattle heads, motorcycles and four-wheelers from their possession during its week long anti-crime operations. Police spokesman said on Tuesday that operations against criminals were carried out on the orders of DPO Muhammad Zafar Buzdar with the help of modern technology that enabled police smash eight gangs of criminals involved in theft, robbery, murder attempt and other cases. Stolen/looted valuables worth Rs 16, 7 million including 55 cattle heads, 52 motorcycles, 4 four-wheelers, nine laptop computers, and cash were recovered. Several accused were arrested during the crackdown. Police said that during operations against drug peddlars and dealers before Christmas, police recovered 15 kilogram of Hashish, 6500 litres of alcoholic liquid while eighteen (18) distilleries were unearthed. Six Kalashnikovs, one rifle, six guns, 30 pistols, a carbine and hundreds of bullets were also recovered.

Adulterated milk wasted

MULTAN (APP): A food safety team of Punjab Food Authority (PFA) Tuesday spilled 1000 liters of milk during a raid at a milk shop after it was found unfit for human consumption. PFA spokesman said that a team led by director operations Multan raided a milk shop at Shershah road where they tested the milk and found detergent and water mixed in it while it was lacking in natural food ingredients including fat, DG PFA Mudassir Riaz Malik said in a statement. Milk was to be supplied to different milk shops and hotels in the city but PFA operation prevented it, the DG said adding that PFA would continue its operation against elements involved in business of adulterated and sub-standard food items.

Jirga system must be kept alive in Pukhtun society

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Commissioner Malakand division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai has said the Jirga System in Pukhtun society plays a vital role and the system must be continued in the region. He was addressing the oath taking ceremony of the Qaumi Islahi Jirga Talash Dushkhel (QJTD) as chief guest at Ziarat Talash here on Tuesday.

Besides the jirga members, area elders, social and political activists, deputy commissioner Lower dir Muhammad Zubair Khan Niazi, Tehsildar Talash Amjad Khan, Timergara tehsil chairman Mufti Irfanud Din, DHO Dr Irshad Rughani, DSP Pervaz Khan and other officials attended the function.

The commissioner was given a warm welcome on his arrival to the function. He administered oaths to the newly elected cabinet members of the jirga. The function was also addressed by former MNA and chairman of the Dir Grand Jirga Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, chief of the Dir Qaumi Pasoon Malik Jehan Alam, president of QJTD Ibrahim Khan, general secretary Dr Noor Muhammad, Haji Ali Haidar and others.

The commissioner lauded the role of jirgas in Malakand division and said that these jirgas had played an important role in maintenance of peace, resolution of petty issues among citizens and bridging the gap between the government functionaries and the public. The commissioner announced the construction of a community hall for the Talash Jirga and said the area had been declared a separate tehsil, so the additional assistant commissioner and a Tehsildar would manage it temporarily till the construction of its infrastructure.

He asked the participants to continue their efforts on uniting the people and restoring the Pukhtun norms, values and traditions. He said that some elements did not want Pukhtun to educate, develop and play their due role in the country. The commissioner said that unfortunately schools in Pukhtun belt were being torched just to keep them illiterate and ignorant. He asked the jirga members to play their active role in educating the new generation and keeping alive the old tradi-

tions of love, brotherhood, unity and collective work.

Speaking on the occasion the Talash Dushkhel Jirga president Ibrahim Khan said that after its formation in 1998 the jirga had resolved more than thousand of cases including murders and property disputes. He said that it was the jirga that kept the area of Talash the most peaceful during militancy.

LG secretaries boycott duties in Dir: On the call of All Secretaries Village and Neighbourhood Councils Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the offices of Village and Neighborhood Councils in Lower Dir district were closed down for an indefinite period as protest against armed attack by a provincial minister on the office of Director General Local Government and Rural Development Department at Hayatabad Peshawar on December 24 last week.

Assistant Director Local Government and Rural Development Department Dir Lower Amir Nizam Durrani and president All Secretaries Village Councils Association Dir Lower Salahuddin Khan alias Chief of Munda told reporters that on December 24, more than fifty armed people on behalf of Provincial Minister for Relief Rehabilitation and Settlement Iqbal Wazir and held hostage more than hundred employees of the department including women and children in the office of Directorate General Local Government and Rural Development Department.

The Local Government Employees Association has announced a shutter down strike across the province till their demands are met, he said. "Offices of all Village and Neighbourhood councils will remain closed till indefinite period and the offices would provide no services regarding issuance of death, birth, marriage and divorce certificates", Amir Nizam Durrani said.

He strongly condemned the attack on a public office by a sitting provincial minister and demanded the government to provide protection to public servants. Local Government Employees' Association has demanded the government to immediately de-notify provincial minister for relief rehabilitation and settlement Iqbal Wazir and register a case against him to provide protection to public servants, he added.

Tank dwellers to have clean drinking water soon

F.P. Report

TANK: The efforts of the district administration to provide all basic necessities of life to residents of the southern district of Tank mainly the potable water in line with the vision of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government have borne fruit.

According to the district administration, the KP government has released Rs 257 million for 25 drinking water supply schemes under the "Least Developed Districts Uplift Programme" to provide clean drinking water to urban and rural dwellers of the district.

"Provision of clean drinking water to residents figured high on the priority list of the district administration and the case was

thoroughly pursued since I assumed the office, and today this long-standing demand of the area is going to be fulfilled," as the required funds have been released for the supply of clean drinking water schemes," Deputy Commissioner told media.

He said drilling work of all these schemes had been successfully completed and so far all sources were located in the sweet zone.

He said that clean drinking water schemes were in progress in Gola/Naurang, Rodi Khel, Gara Shahbaz, Azami, Audal, Khanu, Toran, Sheran, Kot Kat, and New Abadi Gul Imam. He said the entire work was done in a transparent manner and an inspection committee has been constituted

to verify work on the site and funds were released upon approval of a body that comprised relevant officials of the departments and assistant commissioners of the district administration.

Meanwhile, the district administration has expedited efforts to complete all the ongoing development projects within the scheduled timeline and in this regard assistant commissioners and other relevant officials have been mobilized to undertake visits on a daily basis and ensure quality and transparency. The district administration says a multi-pronged strategy was being pursued to accelerate the pace of development in the district which remained neglected for years.

LG staff observes strike

F.P. Report

BANNU: Local government offices in Bannu were closed in protest against the alleged hooliganism of the Provincial Minister Relief Muhammad Iqbal Wazir, on Tuesday.

A complete boycott of birth, death, marriage and divorce certificates and other issues has also been announced until a full investigation of the misbe-

havior, Malik Amjad Mirakhel, president of the South Districts of All Village Council Association, has said while talking to the media representatives at the Bannu Press Club. That last day Provincial Minister Relief Muhammad Iqbal Wazir along with his colleagues bullied the offices of the Director General of Municipalities and took hostage the municipal offi-

cers and staff of the offices due to which there is great anger among the officers and staff of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

For the first time in history, such an incident has taken place that the provincial minister took hostage the officers and staff of the entire department, which is a very sad place and a great proof of the failure of the provincial government in terms of management.



BARA: Local leaders of PPP sitting on the stage in gathering organized in connection with commemorating the 15th death anniversary of Benazir Bhutto. — F.P. photo

Flour crisis continues in Balochistan

QUETTA (INP): Flour crisis continues in Balochistan, as the per kg price of flour is being sold between Rs125 to 130. According to details, the prices of flour have skyrocketed in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan while the commodity was not available in most shops across the province. The price of a 20-kg flour bag has reached Rs2,500. Meanwhile, a 50-kg bag of flour was being sold between Rs6,000 to 6,500 in the local market.

The provincial government is failing to control sky-rocketing flour prices. Earlier on September 13, flour mill owners blamed the provincial government for the ongoing flour crisis in the province, alleging that the food department failed to procure wheat according to the requirement for this year.

Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) Balochistan chapter representatives said there was a huge gap between the demand and supply which created the crisis. They said flour mill owners were being blamed for the crisis, while in reality, the provincial government has imposed an inter-provincial and inter-district ban on the transportation of wheat during the harvesting season.

Balochistan health dept relieves 76 employees: Health Department has relieved 76 employees of different cadres serving in Health Department, Balochistan Civil Secretariat on attachment basis with strict direction to report to their respective DDOs for duty.

According to a relieving order issued by the Government of Balochistan, Health Department on December 26, 2022 in compliance with the directives of Saleh Muhammad Nasar, Secretary, Health Department, 76 employees of different cadres serving in Health Department, Government of Balochistan on attachment basis have been relieved.

The relieved employees have been directed to report to their respective Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDOs) for duty. Meanwhile, Muhammad Ajmal Kurd has been appointed as Coordinator to Chief Minister Balochistan on honorary basis.

PPP observes Benazir 15th death anniversary

F.P. Report

BUNER / BARA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Buner district workers observed Shaheed Binazir Bhutto 15th death anniversary at the residence Rafiqullah Khan Advocate in Daggar, on Tuesday.

The PPP district chapter leaders and activists were largely participated. The participants were jointly offered prayer for high ranks of Shaheed BB and rest of the martyred of her family. The participants were wearing party caps and muffler and waving party flags. They were gathered and raised slogans of BB long live and BB mission would be accomplished.

The senior leaders Rafiqullah Khan Advocate, Dr Sukhtan and Bakht Rawan addressed while PDF district chapter president Dr Imran Shah and Jeala Khazar Khan talked to media persons. The speaker and media chatters were crystal clear that ZA Bhutto, MA Bhutto, SN

Bhutto and BN Bhutto were assassinated by anti-democratic forces just because all of them were struggling for empowering the marginalized class of society and were fighting for their due rights.

The speakers and chatters made it clear that martyred Bhuttos were still alive in the history and hearts of Jealas and poor segments of society and their mission would be accomplished.

The speakers and the chatters asked party workers and poor segments of society for uniting under the banner of PPP to jointly fight for their genuine rights from which they were deprived. The speaker and media chatters also demanded organizational structure in the district so as to further strengthen PPP in the district and hoped KP cabinet would shortly announce party district cabinet.

Meanwhile, Pakistan People Party (PPP) Khyber chapter observed 15th death anniversary of

Benazir Bhutto here in Bara press club on Tuesday.

Local leaders of PPP including Haji Walayat Khan Afridi, Atta Muhammad Shinwari, Shah Rehman Shinwari, Haji Abdul Hanan Afridi, Qaisar Afridi besides a large number of the party workers participated in the moot. Speakers on the occasion while paying homage to the slain leader said that the PPP chapter was full of sacrifices.

With assassination of Benazir Bhutto, great suffering was done to the country's politics and created a vacuum that could not be filled for decades, they remarked. PPP manifesto guarantees basic rights of people, they added and said except the PPP, no political party can resolve the miseries of the masses. At the end prayers were offered for the departed soul of the slain PPP leader. Benazir Bhutto was assassinated on December 27, 2007 while attending a rally in Rawalpindi.

Journalist's union elects Shafiullah elected as SVP



Shafiullah

MINGORA: The Election Committee of Swat Press Club, has issued a press release and announced the new cabinet notification of the Swat Press Club, Swat Union of Journalists and the Governing Body, in which all the candidates of the Independent Journalist Panel were elected unopposed.

According to the Election Committee, 25 and 26 December were fixed for the nomination papers for the election, while 27 December was fixed for the examination of papers, objections, return and release of the final list and 28 December for

polling. Only one panel (Independent Journalist Panel) submitted nomination papers till the due date and no other panel submitted nomination papers against this panel.

According to the election committee, all the candidates of the panel of independent journalists have been declared successful after the scrutiny and no objections. For Swat Press Club, President Shireen Zada (Hum News), Vice President Asmat Ali Akhon (Daily Shahbaz), General Secretary Niaz Ahmad Khan (Mashreq TV), Deputy General Secretary Obaid Fazal (92 News), joint Secretary Shaukat Ali (PTV News) and Finance

Secretary Nasir Alam (Daily Ausaf) were elected. Similarly, for Swat Union of Journalists, President Hazrat Ali Bacha (Daily Express), Senior Vice President Muhammad Shafiullah (The Frontier Post), General Secretary Saleem Athar (Dunya News), Deputy General Secretary Muhammad Zubair Khan (Geo News), joint Secretary Omar Farooq (Daily Shamal) and Finance Secretary Ifthikhar Ali (Daily Azadi) have been elected. Fazal Rahim Khan, Ghafoor Khan Adil, Fazal Khaliq Khan, Khurshid Ali and Muhammad Hayat Chaman were elected unopposed for the governing body.

‘Daughter of East’

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

A leader is someone who motivates, who makes decisions that have a positive impact on his or her group, and who motivates a diverse team of people to work toward a common goal. But if all managers are not leaders, then what is the characteristic of a leader that distinguishes him from others? Personal attractiveness is a trait that is often misunderstood as the most important attribute.

However, personal appeal is more easily achieved if you work hard to develop the following qualities. Benazir Bhutto Shaheed is an unforgettable chapter in the political history of Pakistan. Benazir has many distinctions in the political history of Pakistan which cannot be shared by anyone else. Benazir was Benazir like her name. All the difficult challenges he faced in his political life was also his characteristic, even he sacrificed

his life while adhering to the democratic principles. Benazir Bhutto Shaheed has the honor of being the first woman Prime Minister of the Islamic world and she achieved this position due to her political tact, continuous struggle and great leadership skills.

Every time a thinker, journalist and intellectual will write about her services for the people, democracy, human rights, defense of the homeland and the constitution of Pakistan, they will record her services in political, constitutional, defense, social and economic fields in golden letters. Will do I am proud that I fought the democratic struggle under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed. I worked alongside other leaders of their convoy and raised my voice for the upliftment and rights of the people of Pakistan. I am proud that our first and great leader who sacrificed his life for the people and

democracy was Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

After him, his daughter Shaheed Benazir Bhutto took up the burden of serving the people from the platform of Pakistan People's Party and set new and shining examples of struggle and service for the country and the people. And finally, while fighting for democracy, rights and justice for his people, he sacrificed his life in front of the people at Liaquat Bagh Rawalpindi on December 27, 2007.

If today we are alive in the era of democracy and the aspirations associated with democracy and if the houses of power are within the political reach of the elected representatives of the people, then the credit goes to Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. Who took back the power from the torture of the absolute dictators and usurpers of the past and put it in the cradle of the people. The great leaders and workers of the People's Party accomplished this feat by

sacrificing their lives.

Today, on the occasion of Benazir Bhutto's death anniversary, we are proudly saying this, saying that she defiantly fought dictators like Zia-ul-Haq and then Pervaz Musharraf and restored the usurped rights of the people. History has also seen that during times of trouble Mard Ahan, Sher Babbar and Bebaak leaders and those with such titles parted ways with the party and fled abroad or distanced themselves from the party during difficult times. But salute to Benazir Bhutto's courage and greatness who bowed down to an oppressor and dictator and did not compromise with a dictator at the cost of democracy and people.

In this struggle for democracy and people's rights, she endured oppression, imprisonment and exile. Remembering the sufferings of General Ziaul Haq's dictatorship, Ms. were prominent. She did not allow insects, mosquitoes and flies to invade China

at night. Going through these difficulties and sufferings, she became the first woman Prime Minister of the Islamic world and despite the fact that both the terms of her Prime Minister-ship were incomplete due to the conspiracies of the enemies of democracy, she did many unprecedented things for this country and its people. Achieved achievements including the acquisition of missile technology. The government may be of any political party but the truth is that today we are living in the era of Bhutto's vision and this era will live forever and will take us to the final destination of success.

He took special measures for the rights of women during his tenure. Among them, the establishment of the first women's bank and the women's police station, the establishment of women's study centers in Karachi, Quetta, Lahore, Peshawar and five universities of Islam, the establishment of a

five percent quota for women in government jobs, the lady health workers program, the development of women.

The establishment of a federal ministry for women, the establishment of lady computer centers and the issuance of loans for women are included. There is democracy in this country, and the recognition of democratic values is due to the political vision of Mrs. Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, which was accepted by the people wholeheartedly and adopted for the political system. I am sure that in the coming time, we will bring our country among the prosperous, strong and stable countries of the world in the light of the political vision of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed and Mrs. Benazir Bhutto Shaheed. We pay tribute to their services for the country and democracy and hope that their party leaders will always continue their struggle with the people to fulfill their mission.



Serbs put up new roadblocks as tensions soar in Kosovo

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP): Serbs erected more roadblocks in northern Kosovo and defied international demands to remove those placed earlier, a day after Serbia put its troops near the border on a high level of combat readiness. The new barriers, made of laden trucks, were put up overnight in Mitrovica, a northern Kosovo town divided between Kosovo Serbs and ethnic Albanians, who represent the majority in Kosovo as a whole.

It is the first time since the recent crisis started that Serbs have blocked streets in one of the main towns. Until now, barricades had been set on roads leading to the Kosovo-Serbia border. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said he ordered the army's highest state of

alert to "protect our people (in Kosovo) and preserve Serbia." He claimed that Pristina is preparing to "attack" Kosovo Serbs in the north of the country and remove by force several of the roadblocks that Serbs started putting up 18 days ago to protest the arrest of a former Kosovo Serb policeman. Kosovo officials have accused Vucic of using his state media to stir trouble and trigger incidents that would act as a pretext for an armed intervention in the former Serbian province.

Kosovo has asked NATO-led peacekeepers stationed there to remove the barricades and hinted that Pristina's forces will do it if the KFOR force doesn't react. Some 4,000 NATO-led peacekeepers

have been stationed in Kosovo since the 1999 war that ended with Belgrade losing control over the territory. Tensions between Kosovo, which declared independence after a war in 2008, and Serbia have reached their peak over the past month. Western attempts to reach a negotiated settlement have failed, with Serbia refusing to recognize Kosovo's statehood. KFOR and the European Union have both asked Pristina and Belgrade to show restraint and avoid provocations. Kosovo remains a potential flashpoint in the Balkans years after the 1998-99 Kosovo war that ended with a NATO intervention that pushed the Serbian troops out of the former Serbian province.

Musk says around 100 Starlinks now active in Iran

NEW YORK (Reuters): SpaceX Chief Executive Elon Musk said that the company is now close to having 100 active Starlinks, the firm's satellite internet service, in Iran, three months after he tweeted he would activate the service there amid protests around the Islamic country. Musk said, "approaching 100 starlinks active in Iran", in a tweet.

The billionaire had said in September that he would activate Starlink in Iran as part of a US-backed effort "to advance internet freedom and the free flow of information" to Iranians.

The satellite-based broadband service could help Iranians circumvent the government's restrictions on accessing the internet and certain social media platforms amid protests around the country.

The Islamic Republic has been engulfed in protests that erupted after the death in September of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody after being arrested by the morality police for wearing "unsuitable attire".

SK's ex-leader Lee granted special pardon

SEOUL (Reuters): South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol granted a special pardon on Tuesday to former President Lee Myung-bak, who was convicted of corruption and other charges and who has in recent years been suffering from poor health.

Lee, 81, who was president from 2008 to 2013, has been serving a 17-year sentence for corruption, embezzlement and bribery since 2018, though he has often been released temporarily for medical treatment. In June, prosecutors suspended Lee's imprisonment, upon his request, citing his deteriorating health. The pardon, effective, will cancel the remaining 15 years of jail.

Lee was initially expected to be pardoned in August when Yoon first exerted his clemency power after taking office in May. Lee is the fourth former South Korean president to be jailed. His successor, Park Geun-hye, was imprisoned in connection with a corruption scandal that ended her presidency in 2017. She was pardoned by Yoon's predecessor in late 2021 after nearly five years in prison.

Peru arrests six generals

LIMA (Reuters): The anti-corruption unit of Peru's attorney general's office detained six generals amid an investigation into allegations the government of ousted former President Pedro Castillo illegally promoted police and military officers.

Police also seized "documents and devices" during a raid of the home of Castillo's former Defense Minister Walter Ayala, the anti-corruption unit said. Castillo, who was arrested earlier this month after lawmakers voted him out of office for attempting to illegally dissolve Congress, is being investigated for influence peddling. He faces six separate charges of corruption, all of which he has denied.

"Through these interventions, six of those investigated were arrested. The proceedings ... include 26 raids nationwide," the attorney general's office said on Twitter. The leftist former president is serving 48 months of pretrial detention while he is being investigated on charges of "rebellion." The attorney general's office said on Twitter the detained generals are being investigated for "allegedly having paid to rise in rank in 2021 with the authorization of former President Pedro Castillo." Former Defense Minister Ayala criticized the search of his home and the arrest of the generals. "This has been unnecessary, because they haven't found anything," Ayala told reporters. "This investigation is over a year old ... this is a show."



BELGRADE: A man passes by a barricade made of trucks loaded with stones that was erected during the night on a street in northern, Serb-dominated part of ethnically divided town of Mitrovica, Kosovo.

China ends Covid quarantine for travellers in January

BEIJING (BBC): China will scrap quarantine for travellers from 8 January, officials said, marking the last major shift from the country's zero-Covid policy. After almost three years of closed borders, this will reopen the country to those with work and study visas, or seeking to visit family.

Chinese citizens will also be able to travel overseas, the immigration authority said, Covid has spread ferociously in the wake of restrictions being lifted. Reports say hospitals are overwhelmed and elderly people are dying. The true toll - daily case counts and deaths - is currently unknown because officials have stopped releasing Covid data. Beijing had reported about 4,000 new Covid infections each day last week and few deaths.

It said it would stop publishing case numbers altogether. But British health data firm Airfinity estimated China was experiencing more than a million infections and 5,000 deaths a day. China is the last major economy in the world to move to "living with Covid" after three years of lockdowns, closed borders and mandatory quarantine for Covid cases and contacts. The so-called zero-Covid approach battered the economy and made citizens weary of restrictions and repeated tests.

Resentment against the policy exploded into rare public protests against President Xi Jinping in November, which was followed by authorities dropping Covid rules just a few weeks later. Closed borders remain the last major restriction. Since March 2020, anyone entering China had to undergo mandatory quarantine at a state facility - for up to three weeks at a time. That was recently reduced to five days. But the

National Health Commission announced that Covid would be formally downgraded to a Class B infectious disease on 8 January.

That meant quarantine would be axed - although incoming travellers will still need to take a PCR test. A cap on the daily number of flights allowed into China would also be scrapped. Authorities said they would also "optimise" visa arrangements for foreigners wishing to come to China for work and study, as well as family visits and reunions. It's unclear if that includes tourist visas, but officials said a pilot programme would begin for international cruise ships.

Chinese citizens wishing to apply for visas to travel abroad will also be able to do so from 8 January, the immigration authority announced. Prior to the pandemic, the number of outbound tourists from China stood at 155 million in 2019, according to Statista. This number dropped to 20 million in 2020. The new rules have been welcomed by many Chinese who will now be able to travel overseas again.

The country's top online travel agencies reported a spike in traffic within hours of the announcement. Many people will be hoping to visit family and loved ones during Chinese New Year, which begins on 22 January. But many have also expressed anger over the sudden freedom after years of controls. "I'm happy about it but also speechless. If we're doing this [reopening] anyway - why did I have to suffer all the daily Covid tests and lockdowns this year?" said Rachel Liu, who lives in Shanghai.

She said she had endured three months of lockdown in April, but nearly everyone in her family had become infected with the virus in

recent weeks. She said her parents, grandparents and partner - living across three different cities in Xi'an, Shanghai and Hangzhou - had all come down with fever last week. Many have also expressed concern online about borders reopening as Covid cases peak in China.

"Why can't we wait until this wave passes to open up? The medical workers are already worn out, and old people won't survive two infections in one month," read one top-liked comment on Weibo. People in cities like Beijing and Shanghai, which experience chilly temperatures in the winter, say they're running out of flu and cold medicine. It's feared that hundreds of deaths may be going unreported as crematoriums are overwhelmed.

In the capital, Beijing, authorities say they are planning to distribute the Pfizer tablets, Paxlovid, in order to try and reduce the severity of infections and ease the pressure on hospitals. But health centres contacted by The Global Times said the drug had yet to be delivered. President Xi issued his first remarks on the changes, calling on officials to do what was "feasible" to save lives. State media quoted him saying the country faced a new situation with pandemic control, and needed a more targeted response.

China's about-turn on how it manages the pandemic has put Mr Xi in a tough spot. He was the driving force behind zero-Covid, which many blamed for restricting people's lives excessively and crippling the economy. But having abandoned it, analysts say he now has to take responsibility for the huge wave of infections and hospital admissions. Many have questioned why the country was not better prepared.

Cost of Living: Asylum seekers left without basics to live on

LONDON (BBC): Rising prices have driven some asylum seekers to destitution, a charity has warned. The Welsh Refugee Council (WRC) has called for asylum seekers to be allowed to work in order to increase their income. It said it was having to support more people with its hardship fund, as well as clothes and food donations. The Home Office said it provided accommodation and a weekly allowance to support asylum seekers.

People seeking asylum are given somewhere to live, and a weekly allowance of £45 to cover food, essential items and travel. The WRC provides help for asylum seekers in accessing support, including guidance on applying for asylum, and finding legal representation, as well as more practical help in building their lives in Wales, after escaping conflict zones, such as Ukraine, or human rights abuses in north Africa.

Ms Protheroe-Soltani added it was very difficult, with people falling into destitution and not surviving. Frezgi Meles, fled war in

the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia, and came to Cardiff. "There is a genocide in Tigray, a lot of people are killed, women are raped, a lot of infrastructure is getting destroyed," he said. "We cannot live in our country because of the dictators."

Fighting in the region led to the destruction of homes, school and hospitals. Human Rights Watch has estimated more than two million people in Tigray have been forced to leave their homes. Now living in Cardiff, the 38-year-old volunteers for the Red Cross and the Welsh Refugee Council and said he has found it difficult to afford the basics on his £45 allowance, and said he would rather work.

"It would be good if we could get work permits, so that we could get jobs," Ms Protheroe-Soltani said asylum seekers were in a "no man's land between having

this really small amount of money, and not being able to work". She added a lot of asylum seekers would "love to work". "Remember the HGV drivers crisis? There were many of our clients that would've been willing and able to go and fill that shortage, but they're unable to, so they're in a really difficult position," she said.

The Home Office said: "The Nationality and Borders Act will fix the broken asylum system, by processing application more quickly, and focusing on those genuinely fleeing persecution. "For asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute, we provide accommodation, and a weekly allowance for food, clothing, transport and sundries." The Home Office ensures all spending is carefully scrutinised to make sure that every pound of taxpayers' money is spent in the most effective way, and we review the allowance rate annually."

Taiwan extends compulsory military service to 1 year

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP): Taiwan will extend its compulsory military service from four months to a year starting in 2024, President Tsai Ing-wen said Tuesday, as the self-ruled island faces China's military, diplomatic and trade pressure. Taiwan, which split from the mainland in 1949 during a civil war, is claimed by China. The decades-old threat of invasion by China into the self-governed island has sharpened since China cut off communications with the island's government after the 2016 election of Tsai, who is a member of the Democratic Progressive

Party and seen by Beijing as pro-independence.

China's People's Liberation Army in particular has stepped up its military harassment of Taiwan, sending fighter planes and navy vessels toward Taiwan on a near-daily basis in recent years. In response, the island's military actively tracks those movements, which often serves as training for its own military personnel. The longer military service applies to men born after 2005, and will start Jan. 1, 2024. Those born before 2005 will continue to serve four months, but under a revamped training curricu-

lum aimed at strengthening the island's reserves forces.

"No one wants war," Tsai said. "This is true of Taiwan's government and people, and the global community, but peace does not come from the sky, and Taiwan is at the front lines of the expansion of authoritarianism." The plan sets Taiwan up for increasing its defense capabilities but what remains to be seen is how well the defense ministry will carry out the reforms, said Arthur Zhin-Sheng Wang, a defense expert at Taiwan's Central Police University.

Taiwan's current 4-month military conscrip-

tion requirement was widely panned by the public as being too short and not providing the training that professional soldiers actually need. The government had slashed it down from a year to four months in 2017 as it was transitioning the army into an all-volunteer corps. Of Taiwan's 188,000-person military, 90% are volunteers and 10% are men doing their required four months of service.

A poll from the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation in December found that among Taiwanese adults, 73.2% said they would support a one-year military service.

DR Congo president under attack over security force

DR CONGO (AFP): Three prominent Congolese figures, including Nobel winner Denis Mukwege, accused President Felix Tshisekedi of pushing the country towards breakup by bringing in outside nations to tackle its security crisis. In a sign of mounting pressures on Tshisekedi over DR Congo's deeply troubled east, the trio said sub-Saharan Africa's largest country faced "fragmentation" and "Balkanisation."

This is "the result of a blatant lack of leadership and governance by an irresponsible and repressive regime," they said in a communique. In addition to Mukwege, a gynaecologist who co-won the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize for his work in helping women victims of sexual violence, the statement was signed by politician Martin Fayulu, whom Tshisekedi defeated in controversial elections in 2018, and former prime minister Augustin Matata Ponyo.

Scores of armed groups roam eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, many of them a legacy of two regional wars that raged at

the end of the last century. The latest emergency is over a resurgent armed group called the M23, which has seized swathes of territory in North Kivu province since emerging from dormancy last year.

With the DRC's armed forces floundering, Tshisekedi has called in a seven-nation body, the African Community (EAC), to deploy troops. The EAC's members include Rwanda and Uganda, which critics have long accused of stirring up friction in the east. The DRC in particular accuses Rwanda of abetting the rebels -- a claim Rwanda denies, although the assertion is supported in a new report by independent UN experts.

"Instead of providing the country with an effective army, the government has prioritised externalising national security, (placed in the hands of) foreign forces and, even worse, of countries which are behind the destabilisation of this country," the three said in their statement. The EAC force is under Kenyan command and Kenyan troops have

already been deployed. But key details about its planned size, scope and composition remain unclear.

The M23, under pressure from the international community, took part in ceremonies to hand the strategic town of Kibumba over to the EAC force. But the following day, the DRC army said the rebels' purported withdrawal was a "sham" and accused the group of reinforcing its positions elsewhere.

Tshisekedi, a veteran opposition figure, was elected president in December 2018. He succeeded Joseph Kabila, who had ruled with an iron fist since 2001, and whose decision to step down marked the country's first-ever peaceful handover of power. However, the vote was marked by allegations of rigging, and Fayulu insists he is the legitimate president, claiming more than 60 percent of the ballot. Tshisekedi, Fayulu and Matata have already declared their intention to contest the next presidential elections, due on December 20, 2023.

Suspect held in killing of UN peacekeeper

BEIRUT (AP): The Lebanese army has arrested a suspect in the killing earlier this month of a UN peacekeeper from Ireland who died when his convoy was shot at in southern Lebanon, officials said Tuesday. The area of the Dec. 14 shooting attack, near the southern town of Al-Aqbiya, is a center of support for the Lebanese militant Hezbollah group, which has denied any role in the killing.

Hezbollah spokeswoman Rana Sahili said that the Lebanese army arrested the suspect "in cooperation with Hezbollah," and that he wasn't a member of the militant group. Two Lebanese security officials confirmed the arrest, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, and said the investigation into the killing is ongoing. They did not identify or provide any details about the suspect.

Initially, the military detained three people in connection with the attack but released two who were found not to have been

involved in the killing, one of the security officials said. Andrea Tenenti, spokesman for the UN peacekeeping mission known as UNIFIL, said the peacekeepers have yet to receive "official information" regarding any arrests.

On the fatal night, 24-year-old Pvt. Seán Rooney of Newtowncunningham and several other Irish peacekeepers were on their way from their base in the south to the Beirut airport. Two UN vehicles apparently took a detour through Al-Aqbiya, which is not part of the area under the peacekeepers' mandate. According to earlier reports, a group of angry residents confronted the peacekeepers, claiming they were outside their jurisdiction, and opened fire at their vehicles. Confrontations between residents in southern Lebanon and UNIFIL troops are not uncommon.

However, one of the two security officials said the suspect who was arrested had been part of a group that followed the UN convoy from the town of

Sarafand, about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) away, suggesting a targeted attack. The conflicting reports about the attack could not be immediately reconciled. Rooney was buried in Ireland last week, while another Irish peacekeeper, who was wounded in the attack, 22-year-old Pvt. Shane Kearney, was medically evacuated from Lebanon to Ireland.

UNIFIL was created to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon after a 1978 invasion. The UN expanded its mission following the 2006 war between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah, allowing peacekeepers to deploy along the Israeli border to help the Lebanese military extend its authority into the country's south for the first time in decades. Hezbollah supporters in Lebanon frequently accuse the UN mission of collusion with Israel, while Israel has accused the peacekeepers of turning a blind eye to Hezbollah's military activities in southern Lebanon.

Daughter of ex-Thai PM extends pre-election poll lead

BANGKOK (Reuters): The youngest daughter of billionaire former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra remains Thailand's top choice to become its next leader, according to an opinion poll, with more than double the score of incumbent and nearest rival Prayuth Chan-ocha. Paetongtarn Shinawatra, 36, whose father Thaksin and aunt Yingluck both led popularly elected governments toppled in coups, was the top choice for 34% of respondents in a survey by the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA).

Paetongtarn's support rose sharply from 21.6% from a September poll, when the majority surveyed were undecided. NIDA polled 2,000 voting-age people between Dec. 17 and Dec. 22.

Thailand must hold an election by May next year, according to its election commission, but no date has yet been set. Best known by her nickname, "Ung Ing", Paetongtarn is an executive in the Pheu Thai party, which has yet to name her as its prime minister candidate.

The Shinawatra name has proven to be a huge

election draw in Thailand since 2001, synonymous with populist policies that won Thaksin, Yingluck and their allies tens of millions of votes from the rural poor and urban working classes in ballots between 2001 and 2011. Respondents in NIDA's poll who backed Paetongtarn said it was due to her "party's policies and previous achievements of the Shinawatra family." Prayuth's ratings also improved to 14.05% from 10.1%, according to NIDA. He has been in power since 2014, when as army chief he led a coup against a government run by Yingluck.

The Frontier Post**JALIL AFRIDI***Managing Editor*Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,
Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 415-3704551

Global competition and Nepal's envy

ACCORDING to the media, Nepal's newly elected leader intends to balance ties with its immediate neighbors China and India for the economic growth of one of the poorest countries in the world. While announcing his government's manifesto former rebel leader vowed to maintain relationships of equi-proximity with both neighbors, keeping a particular focus on containing inflation, maintaining foreign reserves, narrowing the trade deficit, and lowering interest rates in the country.

Nepal is one of several South Asian countries that India and China seek to influence to implement their strategy of regional hegemony. India has long considered Hindu-majority Nepal, a natural ally based on their close historical ties and a long open border, while the People's Republic of China (PRC) considers Kathmandu a crucial ally to deter foreign intervention in Tibet disputed region from the United States and India, as Tibetan exiled leader enjoys full support from New Delhi and Washington. Over the past years, Beijing and New Delhi poured billions of dollars in economic assistance and investment into Nepal's fragile economy in a bid to consolidate their influence in land locked democracy. Previously, Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli was beleived to be a pro-China ruler and Kathmandu's ties with Beijing improved significantly during Oli's regime while New Delhi lost its influence during this period. Presently, a new Sheriff is in town, who intends to create a balance in Nepal's bilateral relations with two important countries in the region.

Interestingly, the recent General Election returned a hung parliament in Nepal that facilitated the former rebel leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal to become Prime Minister for the third time after leaving his previous coalition and constituting new partnerships with six other political groups including the opposition Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) party and five smaller political parties. The newly incumbent leader aims at simultaneously enjoying all available options while receiving economic, military, and technical aid from both China and India, bordering the country in the North and South East and west respectively. As regard to bilateral relations with Nepal, both opposing nations had always preached mutually beneficial ties, noninterference in each other internal issues, and no persuasion in foreign relations except cooperation in converging areas of interests however practically New Delhi and Beijing both bullied the landlocked nation multiple times over numerous issues in recent years.

China coaxed Kathmandu to resolve all its woes through grants and loans from Beijing and rely on the potential economic prospects of Xi's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) while keeping its border open for Chinese goods while India offers Nepal all possible help and encourages Kathmandu to accept the US-funded MCC joint infrastructure and energy projects that aim at countering Chinese growing influence in South Asian region. Historically, India had enjoyed the utmost influence in Nepal over the past decades whereas unnecessary and recurrent Indian interference in Nepal's domestic affairs antagonized the Kathmadu's rulers against their powerful neighbor, who subsequently countered New Delhi's aggressiveness through Beijing assistance. Although, Khadmundu successfully pushed back New Delhi's incursion in the past however Chinese coercion had increased in recent months over US economic assistance to Nepal that China perceives a part of the US Indo-Pacific strategy against it.

Presently, Nepal and several other nations had been caught between the tussle of two giants, thus they are not in peace in one or the other way. Realistically, both amity and enmity with influential had always proved to be counterproductive, thus, a disassociation with them might bring peace and harmony for poor nations.

COVID's upsurge and Pak stratagem

RECENTLY, the Chairman of the NDMA convened a special session of the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) to review the latest regional trends of a new variant of coronavirus and trajectories development for Pakistan.

Almost a successful mitigation of the deadly pandemic about a year ago, the world is again witnessing an unprecedented upsurge in coronavirus infections, after the Chinese government withdrew Zero COVID Policy from its country. According to the reports, the cities and towns in mainland China face tens of thousands of coronavirus cases on regular basis and the rapid spread of infection forced people to stay at home while factories, shops, and corporations were forced to close due to the non-availability of workers and customers. According to the media, China's Zhejiang region registers one million new COVID infections daily and these numbers are likely to become double in the coming days. Meanwhile, other major Chinese population centers including Beijing and Shanghai are also battling similar conditions over the past few days. At the same time, the epidemic also resurged in neighboring India where the infection tally has touched three-digit numbers so far.

The pandemic conditions are gradually worsening in our neighborhood, while experts fear that the emergence of new variants of the coronavirus can reignite the newest threats to the survival of mankind in the universe.

The government must in-place COVID-19 SOPs at entry points along with enforcement of travel restrictions for the nations with increased cases of infection so the newest assault of deadly disease can be stopped outside the national borders, as the prevention is thousands of times better than treatment of the scourge.

Quote of the day

A man who has never gone to school may steal a freight car; but if he has a university education, he may steal the whole railroad.

— Theodore Roosevelt, American President [1901-1909].

American establishment wishes to forget that Afghanistan ever existed

Anatol Lieven

fore led to a measure of Schadenfreude in the West.

RECENT months have seen escalating cla-shes along Pakist-an's disputed border with Afghanistan. In the latest, on December 11 and 15, c-ivilians on both sides were killed when Taliban forces fired into Pakistan and P-akistani troops retaliated.

These clashes have their origins in three factors: the presence in Afghanistan of Pakistani rebels who launch attacks across the border into Pakistan, Pakistani attempts to fence off the border to limit militant attacks, smuggling, and illegal mass migration (more than 250,000 Afghans have fled near-famine conditions in Afghanistan since the Taliban took control last year), and the radical reduction in Western aid.

The Taliban, like every previous Afghan government, has also refused to accept the legality of the frontier that was established by the British Empire. The border fence has caused violent resentment among Afghans living along the border, as well as some of their neighboring Pakistani Pashtun fellow-tribesmen.

Clashes between the Taliban and Pakistan are on the face of it surprising. Pakistani support was instrumental in helping the Taliban take over Afghanistan in the mid-1990s, and during the U.S. and Western intervention in Afghanistan, Pakistani shelter of the Taliban played an important part in allowing them to continue their struggle. Some Western and Afghan government propagandists even accused the Taliban (quite falsely) of being mere Pakistani puppets. The problems that Pakistan has faced since the Taliban victory last year have there-

This is misplaced. For what Afghanistan exemplifies is a wider problem that may reach terrifying dimensions in the years to come: that of societies that while ferociously determined to resist intervention and even influence from outside, are themselves incapable of generating or accepting effective modern state institutions.

The modern history of Afghanistan is not only the history of the defeat of successive attempts at outside intervention — whether British, Soviet, or American. More importantly, it has been the history of the failure of successive Afghan regimes to create an effective modern state. Thus in the 1920s, the attempt of King Amanullah to bring accelerated modernization led to a revolt of the tribes under the banner of conservative religious reaction. Following his overthrow, a more limited and cautious royal regime was established. In the decades after the Second World War, with the help of U.S. and Soviet aid and modern weaponry, this state expanded its power; but it proved incapable of meeting the increased expectations that it had generated in sections of society.

The collapse of dynastic rule in the 1970s led to the catastrophic Communist attempt at accelerated modernization, resulting in another conservative revolt and the eventual victory of the Taliban. Their overthrow by the United States after 9/11 led to yet another attempt at modernization

(this time coupled with an attempt at “democracy”), with the results that we now see before us.

The Taliban have certain advantages denied to previous state-builders: their deep rootedness in the conservative Pashtun rural society of eastern and southern Afghanistan; and the tremendous prestige that accrues from their defeat of an infidel superpower. Their ambitions when it comes to state-building are also limited, which given Afghan realities may also be an advantage. Essentially they want to create a state with basic internal peace, which in cultural terms adheres strictly to their version of conservative Islam.

They are however completely incapable of developing Afghanistan economically. As the population surges and public misery grows, this is bound to undermine their rule. Moreover, their limited form of rule allows other armed militant groups to exist, like the Pakistani Taliban and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which are tolerated by the Taliban because they do not threaten their rule, they do threaten all Afghanistan's neighbors. For very obvious reasons, however, none of these neighbors is likely to think of intervening directly in Afghanistan to deal with these threats.

The American establishment clearly wishes to forget that Afghanistan ever existed, and since Kabul is 7,000 miles from the United States this could be possible. Americans will however find it more difficult to ignore state collapse in their own backyard.

Haiti is in many ways very different from Afghanistan, but the underlying problem is the same: the perennial failure of attempts at modern state-building, both domestic and through outside intervention. And while Haiti, unlike Afghanistan, has not incubated a terrorist threat to its neighbors, like Afghanistan it has generated huge numbers of migrants and great problems of criminality. Haiti over the past 40 years has seen repeated coups and rebellions.

A brief U.S. military intervention in 1994-95 (until 2000 continued as part of a UN mission) failed to solve or even seriously mitigate any of Haiti's underlying problems. Given its extremely limited numbers, funding, mandate, and time-frame, there was never any serious prospect that it would. Haiti today lacks an effective government and is dominated by criminal gangs whose warfare and crimes are a nightmare for most of the population.

Haiti might on the surface seem a much more suitable area for U.S. military intervention than Afghanistan. There is no terrorist threat from Haiti, so American forces would not face anything like the fanatically determined resistance of the Taliban. Nor would Haitian gangs receive support and protection from outside powers.

But to do any good, a U.S. intervention would have to be in effect permanent, and involve a government that would for the foreseeable future be staffed by Americans. Every short-term effort followed by a “restoration of democracy” has failed and

will go on failing.

In principle, the fact that Haiti is a neighbor of the United States should make this possible. The United States cannot simply walk away from Haiti, any more than Pakistan can walk away from Afghanistan. In practice, however, such a long-term U.S. intervention however looks highly improbable, barring a radical transformation in American attitudes and priorities. Especially after the miserable experiences of Afghanistan and Iraq, the American public and Congress are extremely unlikely to accept such an open-ended commitment.

Moreover, the creation of what would in effect be a permanent colonial government would not only challenge contemporary ideas of national sovereignty, it would radically contradict the present largely bipartisan U.S. doctrine of a world divided between democracies and hostile autocracies.

And that is indeed a key point about the examples of Afghanistan, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and elsewhere: the complete irrelevance of U.S. (as previously Soviet) ideological nostrums to these societies. Both democratic and authoritarian regimes have failed to create effective states in these countries, and on the record so far will continue to fail.

As climate change, coupled with population growth poverty and water shortages, undermines more and more vulnerable states around the world, this problem of failed states in recalcitrant societies is likely to grow, until it becomes a dire threat to all organized and developed societies — once again,

irrespective of whether these states are democracies or autocracies.

Above all, such failed or failing states are likely to generate immense waves of migration — as we see already in western Africa and Central America. As the example of Afghan migration to Pakistan indicates, this is not simply a problem for the West, but for every state around the world. The most ferocious anti-immigrant (as opposed to security) border in the world is probably that created by India to stop migrants from Bangladesh, more than 1,200 of whom have been killed by Indian security forces over the past 20 years. Once again, this is a problem that transcends ideological systems, to which neither democracies nor autocracies have found answers that manage to be both effective and reasonably humane, and which demands the combined attention of the international community.

Judging by U.S. behavior during the Cold War, American administrations will be tempted to meddle in these failed states for geopolitical reasons, picking one tribe or gang as anti-Chinese or anti-Russian and then blessing them as “democratic,” as President Reagan notoriously blessed the Afghan Mujahedin. This will make local conflicts even worse. Instead, we should recognize that effective statehood is a fragile thing, and that all countries that have achieved it have a common interest in defending it. In the future, this will also mean finding ways to cooperate in managing the problems emanating from places like Haiti and Afghanistan.

‘The title of a golden age’

David Lewis

FOR decades, there's been no surer route to success within academic social science and history departments, or on the left side of the partisan divide, than to lament the persistence and rise of economic inequality in the United States. Some even maintain that inequality has transformed the nation into an oligarchy rather than a constitutional republic. In 2014 Bernie Sanders denounced “the obscene and increasing level of wealth and income inequality in this country” as “immoral, un-American, and unsustainable.” And more broadly, in 2020 The Economist, channeling Jane Austen, proclaimed it “a truth universally acknowledged that inequality in the rich world is high and rising.”

The problem with these assertions (both quoted on this book's opening page), as economist (and former Senator) Phil Gramm and two other distinguished academic colleagues demonstrate, is that they are false. And their falsity is a product of a distortion of statistics by economists inside and outside the government. The consequence is both a radical underestimation of the opportunities that America offers to poor people, and a misdirection of public policy that weakens their ability to achieve what President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed in 1964 as the goal of the War on Poverty: not to make the poor permanent dependents, but “to allow them to develop and use their capacities” so as to share in America's “promise.”

Sins of Omission

The authors' most striking point is the contrast between frequently-cited statistics issued by the Census Bureau which portray vast inequalities of income between the top and bottom quintiles of American households (the former being 16.7 times higher than the latter in 2017), along with a poverty rate that hasn't changed since the War on Poverty began, buttressed by BLS data making it appear that production workers' average hourly earnings “peaked more than 45 years ago,” and the reality of American economic life.

The core problem is that these statistics omit most government transfer payments to households in the bottom quintile, which more than quadrupled in inflation-adjusted terms from \$9,677 to \$45,389 between 1967 and 2017. In consequence, in 2017, while “the average household with earned income in the bottom 20 percent ...

received more than \$45,000 in government payments ... Census failed to count nearly \$32,000 of those transfers” as income. Transfer payments include benefits like food stamps, the “refundable” Earned Income Tax Credit, housing supplements, Medicare, and Medicaid, with the Census Bureau counting less than a third of such payments made by federal, state, and local governments, which totaled \$2.8 trillion in 2017, with over two-thirds going to the bottom 40 percent of households.

Additionally, in counting household income, the Census Bureau's statistics on inequality omit taxes levied on income by all three levels of government, of which 82 percent are paid by the top 40 percent of households. When adjustments are made for these omissions, income inequality proves to be only one-fourth as large as Census statistics indicate. And far from rising by 22.9 percent since 1947 as the Census numbers make it appear, inequality has fallen by 3 percent since 1947. Finally, once all transfers are counted, “the number of Americans living in poverty in 2017 plummeted from 12.3 percent, the official Census number, to only 2.5 percent.”

Allowing that some few people who are “physically or mentally unable to care for themselves” may have “fallen through the cracks” in the social-welfare system, the authors conclude that “for all practical purposes, poverty due to a lack of public or private support has been virtually eliminated in America.” Meanwhile, contrary to the often-heard charge that the rich don't pay their “fair share” of taxes, “households in the top fifth of income earners lose 35.2 percent of their pretax income to taxes of all kinds,” while “those in the bottom fifth ... lose only 7.5 percent.”

The authors also note other factors to bear in mind when assessing income differences. First, since by definition, income earners must fall equally into one of the quintiles, “when one household moves upward in its quintile ranking, another household” must “fall into a lower quintile even though that household's income may have stayed the same or even risen.”

Additionally, I note, the fact of immigration, even before the massive increase of recent years, means that the lowest quintile will be constantly replenished by new, mostly poor, arrivals. This isn't an argument against legal immigration,

but only a further fact to be borne in mind in assessing income distribution: with time, many poor immigrants, or their offspring, will rise in economic status, just like their predecessors, but they will be replaced by others at the bottom of the scale.

Although the authors only touch on this point, a further misleading aspect of statistics on income distribution is that the lowest income quintile at any given time will include a substantial number of graduate students (whose earnings will rise once they get their degrees) and of retirees (who are living off savings and Social Security, generally at a lower income level than when they were employed). Nor do quintile divisions based on the sheer number of “households” (including individuals) allow for differences in family size: while having more children may lower a family's per capita income, it may incentivize parents to work harder just to support their offspring.

The authors' point in citing corrected statistics on income that account for taxes and transfers is not to argue in favor of some other income distribution on the grounds of justice—a question that lends itself to no formulaic answer. Rather, they raise a pair of problems for the relatively poor caused by the fact that government redistribution currently brings the average income of the lowest fifth of the population to a point only minimally below that of the next fifth.

First, such policies discourage the incentive to work—which (as Nicholas Eberstadt has demonstrated in his book *Men Without Work*)—is detrimental to the moral health of the dependent class, encouraging a lifestyle based on screen-watching and drugs. Second, they promote resentment by hardworking, self-supporting members of the middle class at being taxed to enable those who aren't working or seeking employment to enjoy almost as high a living standard as they do. (This resentment helps draw middle-class and blue-collar workers to politicians like Donald Trump and Sanders who persuade them that “the system” is biased against them.)

Whereas the 1996 Welfare Reform Act's work requirement showed encouraging results, increasing employment and reducing poverty, the requirement “did not apply to other welfare programs, such as food stamps and

unemployment insurance,” which “continued to increase, creating additional incentives not to work,” while the mandate was subsequently weakened by allowing states to stop enforcing it. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Agriculture “trained state and local agencies to encourage their public assistance clients to enroll in food stamps,” rewarding agencies’ “success in overcoming the ‘mountain pride’ of potential beneficiaries’ who wished not to rely on others.” (So much for LBJ's aspirations.) Meanwhile, the Earned Income and Child Tax Credits on average “eliminated all income tax liability” from each of the lowest two quintiles, instead delivering average cash payments at tax time of \$1,884 and \$1,231 in 2017 to those in the lowest and next-lowest quintiles, respectively.

Life Actually Is Better Now

Challenging widely accepted economic “wisdom,” the authors note that the statistics cited by the celebrated French economists Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zucman to demonstrate tax “dodging” by the American rich overlook a change in how income was categorized by the Census Bureau following the 1986 Tax Reform Act, which didn't alter anyone's tax bill. In fact, the share of income-related taxes paid by the top 10 percent of American households—1.35 of their income share—makes it the most progressive system at that income level of any OECD nation, well “ahead” of countries like France and Germany. (The French economists also ignore transfer payments in assessing inequality.)

Further, despite the OECD's release of Gini coefficients (measuring inequality) that portray the U.S. as having higher levels of poverty than France and Germany, in relation to each country's median income, the greater median income earned by Americans means that a much smaller percentage of the population live in poverty than in those countries. Hence, household income in the U.S. “differs” from that in other nations chiefly in that “Americans at all levels have a lot more of it.”

The authors devote an entire chapter to “Measures of Well-Being,” refuting the claim issued by the BLS that “real average hourly earnings for production and nonsupervisory employees” peaked in 1972, then fell for 22 years before returning to the 1972 level

in December, 2018—thus feeding Sanders's 2019 claim that “the average American” hadn't gained a nickel in real wages over the preceding 45 years. To begin with, the claim is typically made by “comparing only wages and salaries and therefore excluding employer-paid benefits,” such as health insurance, which increased individual compensation by 6.7 percent. The figures also “exclude more than a third of all workers,” the self-employed, those who work in agriculture and government, and supervisory or managerial employees.

But the greatest flaw in the claim is that it disregards improvements in what a given, inflation-adjusted sum will buy since 1972: from more spacious houses, often equipped with central air conditioning, dishwashers, and color televisions, to “a far greater array of food products,” including “out-of-season fruits from half a world away” (even while this nutritional abundance costs “an ever-smaller portion” of family budgets), to cars that are safer and “last more than twice as long,” to the tripling in the number of college graduates, to an increase in average life span of 7.8 years, owing largely to medical innovations. These changes are omitted from statistics released by the Census Bureau and BLS because both agencies exaggerate inflation thanks to their reliance until quite recently on measurements that omit improvements in the quality of goods over time, even while price indices that do take account of such changes have long been available. The overstatement also caused the Census Bureau to overstate the threshold for defining poverty—that is, the minimum income necessary to be non-poor—by 72 percent between 1963 and 2017.

In their chapter on the “Super-Rich” (the top 0.1 percent of earners), the authors note that even this group derive a substantial part of their income from work, rather than coupon-clipping; that “almost two-thirds” had come from poor to upper-middle-class families; and that “wealthy investors who accumulate wealth but do not consume it (like the fictional Ebenezer Scrooge, or the real Warren Buffett) are public benefactors, not robbers, since “their wealth is creating jobs” and thereby “promoting the general prosperity.”

In 1843, when Charles Dickens published *A Christmas Carol*, “the Market Revolution, fueled by the thrift of Britain's

Scrooges, was already enriching all humanity,” initiating “a period of broad-based prosperity, the likes of which had never occurred in recorded history,” and a trajectory of progress (interrupted, one must acknowledge, by periodic wars and other catastrophes) that “has never ended.” (I recommend economic historian Deirdre McCloskey's trilogy *Bourgeois Dignity*, *Bourgeois Equality*, and *Bourgeois Virtue*.)

The high degree of economic mobility that Americans have continued to enjoy over the past half-century still persists. As the authors observe, this fact is visible to anyone who has lived through the past fifty years of economic progress, such that “all but 6.2 percent of households in 2017” had achieved “incomes that would have placed them in the top quintile in 1967”—and reminding us that in the earlier year, “half of all households in the bottom quintile” lacked “complete” plumbing (whereas fewer than 2 percent lack it today), and that when people at any income level require hospitalization nowadays, “they will stay only a fraction of the time spent in 1967, are more likely to emerge fully restored, and are far less likely to be readmitted with the same complaint.”

As regards ethnic or racial differences in income, the authors acknowledge the persistence of an “earnings gap” (somewhat reduced since 1967) between blacks and whites (with blacks still earning 36.4 percent less than whites, while Asian-Americans in turn earn 38.5 percent more). They attribute these differences to levels of schooling, occupational choices, average age differences, and geographic variations. But overall, they note, over the past half-century, “the American economy has outperformed all other large, developed economies,” meriting “the title of a golden age.”

The Way Forward

The authors conclude by reminding us that prior to the Enlightenment, “the major source of income and wealth was land,” the quantity of which was fixed: hence (except to a limited extent under the Roman empire) no economic growth, and no individual gain except at someone else's expense. By contrast, the modern commercial republic offers ordinary folk the “open field” and “fair chance” that Abraham Lincoln espoused to advance themselves through their own labor and

(Continued on Page 7)

China and US treat Taiwan issue as a casus belli

THE regional vacuum the United States filled after World War II has long since ceased to exist. This is a sea change that demands a change in U.S. policy and the regional security architecture. Most East Asian states are now both prosperous and rapidly developing the robust self-defense capabilities that U.S. military dominance of their region long seemed to make redundant. But despite all the evidence – for example, the failure of the U.S. humiliation in Indochina to do anything other than mark a transition to a more peaceful and prosperous regional order – U.S. policy continues to presume that a large U.S. military presence is essential to sustain stability in Asia. Meanwhile, the nations of the region increasingly seek to ensure their independence by reaching out to each other and rearming as well as courting U.S. support. Only Taiwan continues to delegate its defense to Americans.

This is ironic. Self-reliant assumption of responsibility for self-defense is a fundamental attribute of sovereignty. Elsewhere in the region, nation-states whose sovereign independence is not in dispute are embracing that responsibility as the basis for their self-government and politico-economic independence. But seven decades of American protection have allowed both habits of dependence on America and aspirations for secession from China to take root in Taiwan. Many there now assert that the island is – or should be – a sovereign state separate from the rest of China. Rather than relying on its own efforts to secure or expand its autonomy, Taiwan prefers the comfort of assigning its defense to an ideologically sympathetic United States.

Others in Asia combine diplomatic dialogue, economic statecraft, and defense policies to cope with the return of China to wealth and power. By contrast, echoing its American protector, Taiwan has adopted a purely military approach to managing its relations with Chinese across the Strait, with whom it remains technically engaged in a civil war. In

effect, Taiwan's aspirations for a sovereignty distinct from the rest of China represent a gamble on its continued inclusion in a U.S. military sphere of influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Taiwan's failure to develop a credible self-defense capability manifests a hope that American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines will be prepared to sacrifice themselves for an independence it is unprepared to ask its own people to die for.

But the U.S. sphere of influence in Asia that Taiwan has chosen to rely upon is eroding. The United States has effectively ceded economic leadership in the region to China, Japan, and ASEAN. Doubts about American reliability have made most Asian countries less inclined to follow the U.S. lead. At the same time, a series of Sino-American crises over Taiwan have supplied a focus and rationale for China's rapid military modernization. The balance of military power in the Taiwan area now favors China over the United States. Meanwhile, the island has become the focus of U.S. military planning in the Indo-Pacific region – the Schwerpunkt of U.S. strategy there and by extension – given the region's increasing centrality in the global order – the world.

There are many drivers of Sino-American hostility, but Taiwan has long been the only one with the potential to produce a mutually devastating nuclear exchange between China and the United States. Until recently, Beijing and Washington honored diplomatic understandings that, backed by superior American military power, preserved the peace in the Taiwan Strait. More recently, as those understandings have withered and U.S. military supremacy has eroded, both China and the United States have come to treat the Taiwan issue as a casus belli. Ironically, since the purpose of any U.S. intervention in a war over Taiwan would be to preserve its prosperity and democracy, a war – whatever its outcome – would surely destroy both.

Destroying something “in order to save it” is perverse, if not insane. But it is not without precedent. And as George Kennan observed, “a war regarded as inevitable or even proba-

Chas Freeman

ble, and therefore much prepared for, has a very good chance of eventually being fought.” A war over Taiwan's status is becoming ever more likely, despite increasing awareness that it would be catastrophic for Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, the United States, and any country that invited Chinese retaliation by joining the U.S. in war with China. This explains why not a single country in the region has officially committed itself to support the U.S. armed forces in a war to determine Taiwan's status. None wants to see Taiwan absorbed into the CPC-ruled mainland, but they all want someone else to ensure that this doesn't happen.

For U.S. security partners in Asia, the primary strategic challenge is not to defend Taiwan's separation from the rest of China, but to find the basis for an equilibrium that includes both acceptable relationships with an ever more wealthy and powerful China and continued support for their freedom of action by an engaged United States. They clearly prefer self-interested relationships with competing hegemony to any choice between them. But current U.S. policy privileges American concerns and preferences over theirs. It asks them to help defend a crumbling status quo in East Asia and the Western Pacific in which the United States remains in charge and China plays no accepted role.

It is in this context that the United States has come to center its approach to Indo-Pacific stability on sustaining Taiwan's place in a continuing American ideological and geopolitical sphere of influence. U.S. policy aims to exclude China from any significant role in managing the affairs of its own region. But Washington has chosen to rely on purely military means to accomplish this. The United States and its 'allies' and friends lack a grand strategy to sustain a stable balance in a newly dynamic Asia. Such a strategy would link diplomacy, economic policy, and force structure to interlocking assurances and constraints that would together inhibit potential challenges to the region's peace and prosper-

ity.

Washington's current approach ignores both the current and potential capabilities of the region's independent states as well as their need to find a basis for coexistence with a reinvigorated China. The United States seeks to perpetuate a commanding U.S. role in the region's security while disinvesting in its economy and asking next to nothing of the countries it has volunteered to protect. This places a hugely disproportionate defense burden on Americans. The U.S. approach aims to hold onto a degree of American strategic management of the region's interactions with a continually strengthening China that is both increasingly unrealistic and concerning to China's neighbors. This is a uniquely costly and inherently unsustainable approach to the management of Asian security. It increases rather than reduces the danger of war.

Here is why:

— Unlike the diplomatic framework Washington and Beijing worked out in 1971-1982 to manage the Taiwan issue, current U.S. policy now provides China with no reason not to pursue Anschluss with Taiwan as an urgent national priority.

— Instead, U.S. policy now seeks to preclude Beijing's embrace of Taiwan by threatening a war that American military planners recognize would be catastrophic for the U.S. as well as Taiwan and the China mainland.

— The evolution of U.S. policy toward ever more explicit commitments to defend Taiwan's continued ideological and geopolitical separation from the China mainland is now the main factor driving Beijing's rapid enhancement of both its conventional and nuclear capabilities. China views its major defense challenge as deterring and, if necessary, countering U.S. intervention in Taiwan contingencies.

— Sino-American interactions include no mechanisms for escalation control or the mitigation of current conventional and nuclear arms races.

— American technological supremacy has visibly eroded. Many aspects of the U.S. qualitative edge over China may already be unrestorable.

— The United States is addressing the ongoing shift in relative power and prestige between it and China with sanctions and export controls directed at retarding China's advance, rather than with a convincing effort at domestic self-strengthening and economic rejuvenation.

— The U.S. has opted out of participation in the crafting of global or regional trade and investment regimes. In East Asia, China – now the economic heavyweight – shares leadership with a politically resurgent Japan, formidably competitive south Korea, and prospering ASEAN.

— Washington expects cooperation and wartime support of U.S. forces against China from Asian security partners but offers no offsets to their increasing interdependence with China or effective protection from Chinese retribution if they facilitate a U.S. war with China.

— The United States has no answer to China's neighbors' need to live alongside a wealthy and powerful China, regardless of the status of Taiwan or the state of Sino-American relations.

— U.S. policy has no endgame or apparent strategy for resolving – rather than perpetuating – tensions with China. If an attempt by Beijing to bring Taiwan to heel were to fail, there would be every reason to expect a successor Chinese regime to regroup and try again. If a Chinese use of force were to succeed, a humiliated United States would have to deal with a wounded China animated by a desire for revenge.

— No Indo-Pacific order that excludes the region's greater and lesser powers – including China, India, Indonesia, Japan, the two Koreas, Thailand, and Vietnam – can hope to be stable. But the United States continues to rely on a “hub-and-spokes” alliance system designed to deal with the threat of a long-vanished ‘Sino-Soviet bloc’ to equally long-gone Asian weaknesses.

In practice, Washington remains opposed to the creation of any inclusive security architecture it cannot lead or dominate. This approach effectively inhibits regional cooperation to balance China's rise. It does not promote it.



‘The dangerous decline of China’

“The Dangerous Decline of China” has been a typical headline of almost every Western publication in recent weeks. In this case, Foreign Affairs magazine, with the subtitle: "Washington must prepare for the fact that the troubles of Beijing are growing."

Something painfully familiar. In the same magazine - "Putin's Last Battle. The Promise and Disaster of Russian Defeat." What, both we and the Chinese have one continuous trouble in the Western media? We are accustomed to our own: we have been suffering defeats right from February-March. But China... We look at the headlines of another American magazine - in terms of the intensity of intellect, it is slightly weaker, for citizens with simpler minds, that is, Foreign Policy. And we see here some set of cluster munitions: " Xi Jinping begins his third term with one defeat after another"; "China is facing a gloomy end to 2022" and so on.

In general, it is already clear what we are talking about. But just in case, let's see how China suffers continuous disasters. In the past year, the customer received the first Chinese large passenger airliner - C919. The world's largest ship carrying liquefied natural gas set sail. Testing of the integrated power supply system of the southern provinces (2.7 billion kilowatts per day) has begun. They launched a railway to Laos, which has already transported 8.5 million passengers and 11.2 million tons of cargo.

Although what kind of railways are there - we almost forgot such a "trifle" as the installation of the Tiangong space station (that is, the "Heavenly Palace"). Its assembly was completed on November 3, now a laboratory module 17.9 meters long and 4.2 meters in diameter is ready in the "palace" - with 13 separate rooms for work. True, the media lists dozens of other technological achievements, but these will suffice.

There are achievements that are not so material - in diplomacy, for example. Foreign Minister Wang Yi counted eight of them. Of which we may be interested in at least this: Beijing firmly rejected the erro-

Dmitry Kosyrev

neous foreign policy of the United States and strengthened good neighborliness, friendship and cooperation with Russia. And one more thing: as soon as a developing country had difficulties, China extended its hand and helped it. So, the prestige and overall position of the country in the world has obviously been strengthened.

Or - going back to domestic affairs - a housing renovation program has been launched across the country: it is now underway in 52,100 communities (that is, villages or city blocks). More than a billion people are covered by old-age health insurance (let us remind you that 15-20 years ago there was actually no pension system in the country).

And that's all, we note, despite the tough "zero covid" policy, which even led to protests. It remains to be seen what the Chinese successes would have been if not for all these quarantine restrictions.

In general, it turns out that China turned out to be practically the only power in the world that actually achieved obvious success in the past year. Well, if this is the case, then the West is left to write about this - "from defeat to defeat."

Before us is yet another technology of brainwashing, designed, of course, for its own population - for Americans and Europeans, who are probably pleased to think that not only they feel bad now, but others are also lousy. But still the main target is the rest of the world. As well as the Russian and Chinese population. It is for this audience that the Western "funeral team" once again buries either us or the Chinese, getting a well-deserved pie off the shelf.

And one should not think that they are tormented in impotence and malice, that their mournful labor is wasted. One example. At least once a month, my Indian friend calls me and issues a machine-gun line of questions: how will the Ukrainians attack Crimea on the southern front? why is the advance in the center so slow? How do your military productions work? what's on your store shelves? And after all, a person is not a wild one, actually a military analyst, but when the English-lan-

guage information sphere is overflowing with such chronic descriptions of Russian defeats, this sets the mood accordingly.

The language barrier is a serious thing, but there are loopholes through which defeatist disinformation also penetrates the barriers. In the case of China, this is the English-speaking part of the medical community plus other English-speaking ones. They are now being terrorized with outright misinformation about the wave of coronavirus cases. A nice picture is emerging: when the “zero covid” policy was a wall in the country, the Chinese from abroad were explained that this was a mistake that would destroy the economy and society. When the wall began to be dismantled with acceleration, exactly the same foreign characters began to vanguard that this was a mistake: be afraid of the virus, now they will start to get sick in the millions and die en masse. And especially nervous people give in to this primitive.

In the case of Russia, everything is even more interesting. Someone from those who permanently buried us noticed that the social stratum of liberals, Westerners and other fugitives has too little influence in our society - it is unproductive to shame or frighten us through this public. But the prestige of the patriots has increased unprecedentedly and deservedly. And if so, then you can play on the feelings of the most nervous of the latter. And it is they who are now indirectly broadcasting in our ranks the same Kiev-Washington infection: they are hitting weakly, the front has froze, there is not enough of this and that, where the latest weapons, in general (see above) - "the promise and disastrous Russian defeat."

By the way, in fact, the conversation on this topic is serious, the same Americans are weighing: what Ukraine's victory promises them and what it means in general - such a victory. Wouldn't it be worse than a defeat - only to know what this defeat really means for them. That is, what to strive for and what to achieve. But all these subtleties do not reach the outside world very much. For the most part, simple emotions prevail there.

‘The title of a golden age’

(Continued from Page 6)

talents.

In 2021 Democratic leaders promised to “cut child poverty in half” through a monthly tax credit costing \$1.6 trillion over a decade, a promise that was wrong, not only because the officially reported child poverty rate would have been only one-fifth as large had the government included existing transfer payments as income, and because the real route to overcoming any remaining poverty is encouraging individual labor, rather than taxing its fruits away.

Currently, an ever-increasing proportion of the population relies on public

assistance, even while employers seek to fill eleven million jobs.

To overcome this situation, the authors recommend the restoration and enforcement of work requirements for public assistance; reforms in public education that would break the “education monopoly” through extended school choice (charter schools, vouchers) that would provide poor families with real options; and abolishing outrageous, state-imposed licensing requirements (including for shampoo assistants!) that bar entry into the work force. Their goal, like Lincoln's and LBJ's, is “an America where people can rise as high and go as far as

the sweat of their own brows will take them,” thus being able to take pride in their achievements, large or small.

Owing to its reliance on statistics rather than sweeping political claims or literary allusions, one cannot expect this book to enjoy the readership and influence of Piketty's Capital in the Twentieth Century (it doesn't draw “evidence” from Balzac's novels, predict the imminent downfall of capitalism, or demand a worldwide taxing authority). Nonetheless, it would be a boon for America if reading it were required of every high school and college teacher of history and the social sciences as part of job certification.

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Today a new phase begins

EUROPEAN Council President Charles Michel said that "it is necessary to develop a mechanism to 'suspend' Russia's membership in the UN Security Council."

The European Union (and the European Council is its backbone institution along with the European Commission and the European Parliament) is going, therefore, to start reviewing the results of the Second World War.

And here you should not look for a second meaning in the words of one of the highest European bosses - we are really talking about following the attempt to "tear the Russian economy to shreds" with the help of sanctions, following the robbery of our country through the freezing of its assets, to cancel the very fact of victory over Nazism and the contribution of the USSR to the defeat of the Nazi Reich and its satellites. True, if you look at who was part of the countries of the Hitlerite axis, you will find a significant part of the member states of the current EU. But we will consider this a simple geographical coincidence - for now, anyway.

Let's turn to historical facts. The UN, no matter what and whoever says it, was created on the initiative of the powers - the winners of the Reich (USSR, USA, Britain, and also France, accepted into this circle thanks to the efforts of General de Gaulle and at the cost of the lives that members of the movement gave in the fight against Nazism resistance). Therefore, it was they who entered, as permanent members of the Security Council with the right of veto, into the supreme body of this international organization.

The price of every seat on the UN Security Council is measured in blood.

These are tens of millions and hundreds of thousands of dead - military and civilian. Tortured, shot, dead from wounds, hunger and deprivation. These

chairs, no matter how much Monsieur Michel would like to think about this and no matter how much he and his aggressors insist on it, are not just a piece of furniture and interior design for the UN building on the East River. And not the microphone that comes with the chair.

It is also worth paying attention to what motivation, according to which Russia's membership in the UN Security Council "should be suspended", Mr. President of the European Council acquaints the interested public.

It turns out that "Russia violates international law."

Let's take a historical digression again.

The modern structure of international law and security in Europe, which is regulated by legal documents, was almost entirely created on the basis of documents signed during three international conferences. This is Tehran-43, this is Yalta-45 and this is Potsdam, also on the 45th, but after the end of the war in Europe (the war with Japan was still going on).

It was there that the architecture of the entire today's world order was laid, and it is also worth recalling that, in addition to the USSR, Ukraine and Belarus also received membership in the UN itself. Because Moscow insisted on this, explaining what contribution the Belarusians and Ukrainians made to the defeat of Nazism. And at the cost of blood.

Violations of the provisions developed during the meetings in Yalta and Potsdam began almost immediately, as soon as the ink dried out on the signed documents. Less than a year later, in March 1946, the West declared a cold war on us.

Yes, some beautiful words were said about the "Iron Curtain", about the onset of the "dictatorship", about the "gloom of threat from the east" thickening over the free world, but in

Elena Karaeva

fact all this rhetoric served a completely different purpose - to wear our country down to limit, starting an arms race. To prevent the economy from developing. In order not to give even the slightest chance to restore the country, the European part of which lay in ruins.

We did not violate international law then. And they. We did not give a damn about all the agreements, but they immediately started to create NATO. This is 1949, if anyone has forgotten or does not know. The Warsaw Pact came about six years later, in 1955. And as a response.

We were not the initiators of the then confrontation on the European continent, but they.

Contempt for the word given to those who were once considered "brothers in arms" is not our way of conducting foreign policy. Once again: we are only responding to the enmity offered to us and to the threat to the existence of our country, which this enmity can carry.

Violation of international law, which so worries the European bureaucrats of the highest echelon of power today, is in fact an exclusively European style of doing business in this very international arena.

And lying during the discussion, misleading the interlocutors, demagoguery, separate negotiations are the method of implementing the plans. Not ours. And the West.

Looking for a consensus with a common enemy behind the back of one of the partners in the anti-Hitler coalition, while simultaneously asking this partner to speed up and intensify actions on the battlefield - you should not list the details of the secret Anglo-American-German operation "Sunrise" (aka "Crossword"), as called it by the British). Moreover, it was just during the preparation of the Vistula-Oder

offensive of the Red Army, with the beginning of which Stalin was so rushed by London and Washington. This has long been common knowledge.

The Second World War, which devastated Eastern and Central Europe, and the fact that it was the USSR that liberated the continent from the Nazi plague, is sitting like a splinter today. In the political heels of the current leaders of these countries.

To do everything so that the feat and the sacrifices that we suffered, clearing Europe from the dictatorship of the Reich, would become in the public mind of the philistine "an instrument of violence, repression and suppression of civil liberties" - one of the main geopolitical tasks of the united family of today's "enlightened Europeans". And, as we all have the opportunity to observe, it began to be resolved long before the current round of the crisis.

It was just that the events seemed to be local, they formed very gradually into the overall picture.

Today a new phase begins.

Its contours are generally clear.

It was not the USSR, "an aggressor and violator of international law, civil liberties and an enemy of progress", that liberated Europe, contributing, among other things, to the creation of the EU, but Europe did it itself.

Of course, with the help of valiant American GIs (hello, rescued Private Ryan), British and partly French troops.

And the USSR trudged along in the convoy, which was supplied to it as part of the Lend-Lease, robbing houses along the way in order to take out china sets and women's nightgowns, and between "robbery" and "looting" also "raping millions of German women."

Well, what to do, the Russians - they are "barbarians". These "barbarians" and "Bolshevik hordes",



Pakistan Stock Exchange's 100-index loses 352 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 352.25 points, a negative change of 0.88 percent, closing at 39,802.91 against 40,155.16 points on the previous day.

A total of 153,741,052 shares were traded during the day as compared to 146,880,187 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 5.537 billion against Rs 5.134 billion on the last trading day. As many as 322 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 98 of them recorded gains and 212 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 12 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Bank Al-Falah with 16,339,606

shares at Rs 29.96 per share, Pak Petroleum with 12,467,526 shares at Rs 61.11 per share and Bank of Punjab with 7,700,000 shares at Rs 4.63 per share.

Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 559.85 per share price, closing at Rs8024.52, whereas the runner-up was Nestle Pakistan with a Rs 347.88 rise in its per share price to Rs5577.75. Pak Services witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 119.90 per share closing at Rs 1479.10 followed by Colgate Palm with a Rs 79.83 decline to close at Rs 1890.17.

Rupee extends losses against dollar: The exchange rate of the Pakistan rupee depreciated by 33 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs 226.15 against the previous

day's closing of Rs 225.82.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 232.7 and Rs 234.9 respectively. The price of the euro was increased by Rs 1.01 and closed at Rs 240.87 against the previous day's closing of Rs 239.86, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs1.69, whereas an increase of 52 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 272.79 as compared to its last closing of Rs 272.27.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 09 paise each to close at Rs 61.57 and Rs 60.13 respectively.

Gold price up by Rs4500 to Rs172,700 per tola: The price of 24 karats per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs4500 on Tuesday, reaching all-time high at Rs182,700 against its sale at Rs178,200 the previous day.

The rates of 10 gram 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 3858 to Rs 156,636 from Rs152,778 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 143,583 from Rs140,046, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver increased by Rs30 to Rs2050 whereas that of ten-gram silver went up by Rs.25.72 to Rs1757.54.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$12 to \$1810 against its sale at \$1,798, the association reported.



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Jawed Ali Manwa with his team meeting with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.

Gold imports up by 26.43%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The gold imports increased by 26.43 percent during the first five months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported.

The gold imports during the July-November (2022-23) were recorded at \$11.172 million as compared to the imports of \$8.837 million during July-November (2021-22), according to the data. In terms of quantity, Pakistan imported 193 kilograms of gold during the months under review as compared to the imports of 148 kilograms last year, showing growth of 30.41 percent.

Meanwhile on year-on-year basis, the gold imports into the country witnessed a decrease of 31.79 percent as these were recorded at \$2.189 million in November 2022 against the imports of \$3.209 million in November 2021.

In terms of quantity, the imports of the commodity declined by 36.36 percent, from 55 kilograms in November 2021 to 35 kilograms in November 2022.

Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis, the gold imports during November 2022 decreased by 11.05 percent when compared to the imports of \$2.461 million in October 2022.

In terms of quantity, the gold imports decreased by 14.63 percent in November 2022 when compared to the imports of 41 kilogram registered in October.

It is pertinent to mention here that the merchandise trade deficit during the first five months witnessed a decline of 30.14 per cent 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 (2022-23) were recorded at \$11,932 million against the exports of \$12,362 million in July-November (2021-22), showing a decline of 3.48%.

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

Call to revive local engineering industry

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) Tuesday urged the government to adopt effective measures for the revival of local engineering industry.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar stated this here in a meeting with a delegation from the engineering sector led by former chairman of Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts & Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) Engr Mumshad Ali. LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt were also present.

The PAAPAM delegation informed the LCCI office-bearers that tractor parts manufacturing industry was on the verge of collapse. The delegates mentioned that demand for tractors was about to crash and severe cash crunch due to stoppage of GST (General Sales Tax) refund by FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) to tractor assemblers.

They said the industry employed over 100,000 people mainly in Lahore region, and the recent floods, high inflation, and

other factors had badly hit tractor sales leading to closure of tractor production by AGTL (Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited) and four-day week production of Millat Tractors.

Both plants carry surplus inventory of CBUs (Completely Built Units) parts, worth billions of rupees and were not purchasing parts from local part making SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises), leading to their closure and redundancies of over 100,000 skilled workers technicians and engineers, they said, adding that due to drop in fresh bookings and stuck up GST refunds, the assemblers were running short of cash and struggling to make payments to part makers.

If the tractors sales drop below 3000 units a month, they apprehended, it was no longer commercially viable for part makers to produce parts, and were, therefore, forced to close their operations.

They said tractor production in the first six months of the current financial year was expected to remain around 10,000 units

averaging around 1600 units per month, which was far short of the industry break-even point.

They said if the industry did not achieve 3000 units average production per month in the next six months, the industry would not be able to revive itself, adding that it was essential for the government to take concrete steps now, rather than to wait for the next budget.

The three steps, they recommended, were to start low mark-up tractor financing through commercial banks and ZTBL (Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited), facilitate tractor exports as current GST regime was making Pakistani tractor uncompetitive in African market and, release stuck up GST refunds of assemblers to increase industry liquidity.

President of the Lahore Chamber Kashif Anwar assured his all-out support to the tractor parts manufacturers of the country, and agreed to take up the matter of this vital national industry with the ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industries.

Electric fans exports increase 14.64 per cent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The export of electric fans from the country has witnessed an increase of 14.64 percent during the first five months of current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Pakistan exported fans worth US \$9.524 million during July-November (2022-23) as compared to the export of US \$8.308 million during July-November (2021-22), showing a growth of 14.64 percent.

In terms of quantity, the fan export also rose by 6.92 percent from 474 thousand to 507 thousand, the data revealed.

Meanwhile, year-on-year basis the fan export however decreased by 46.90 percent during the month November 2022 as

compared to the same month of last year.

The fan exports in November 2022 were recorded at US \$0.668 million against the export of \$1.258 million in November 2021, the PBS data revealed.

On month-on-month basis, the exports of fan also dipped by 59.42 percent in November 2022 as compared to the \$1.646 million in October 2022.

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.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activities reported at the Port on Monday 26 th Dec-2022 where four ships namely, MSC Riku, Aurelia, Ondo and Ullswater carrying Containers, Palm oil, LNG and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal, Multi purpose Terminal, Pakistan Gasport Terminal and SSGC LPG Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile four more ships, African Pheasantan, EM Astoria, MSC Sasha and Maersk Atlanta scheduled to load/offload Cement and Containers also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hour.

A total of 08 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containers ship 'MSC Riku' left the Port on Tuesday morning while three more ships, Two Million Ways, Hafnia Aquamarine and Calypso Gas are expected to sail on today in the afternoon.

A Cargo volume of 130,385 tonnes, comprising 119,437 tonnes imports cargo and 10,948 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 1,224 Containers (580 TEUs Imports and 644 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 18 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, 03 ships, Maersk Atlantra, MSC Sasha and Rigel & another ship 'Sea Power' carrying Containers and Wheat are expected to take berths at QICT and FAP on Tuesday.

Pakistan's energy sector needs up to \$155b investment until 2030

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's energy sector needs investments ranging from US\$62 billion to US\$155 billion until the 2030, according to a report titled "CAREC Energy Outlook 2030", recently released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The energy investment needs until 2030 vary with estimates ranging from \$62 billion to \$155 billion. The most significant investments are required in the power generation and energy efficiency sectors because of the rapidly growing demand and low baseline efficiency, the report added.

One of the objectives of this report is to present a detailed overview and analysis of future energy market trends in Pakistan. For this purpose, three areas were developed considering the country's regulatory framework, technological development and consumer preferences.

The three areas include business-as-usual (projected energy supply and demand, with current energy system and policies), government commitments (projected energy supply and demand, considering

individual priorities of the Government of Pakistan) and green growth (projected energy supply and demand, considering enhanced energy transition and environmental policies). In all three areas and scenarios, the largest investments are needed for the development of the country's hydropower capacity, ranging from \$11 billion to \$26 billion, the report added.

Investment needs for wind and solar energy are expected to reach nearly \$12 billion in the BAU scenario, \$36 billion in Government Commitments scenario, and \$57 billion in the Green Growth scenario, which illustrate the country's ambitious plans for harnessing its large renewable energy potential.

Moreover, in accordance with the country's targets for nuclear power generation, investments needed for the expansion and rehabilitation of nuclear facilities account for nearly \$12 billion in the BAU scenario, \$21 billion in the Government Commitments scenario, and \$31 billion in the Green Growth scenario.

Generation rehabilitation and expansion are the

investment categories estimated to require the largest share of the total, ranging from 60 to 75 percent, or \$38 billion to \$115 billion, varying across scenarios.

The second biggest category is energy efficiency measures on the consumption side, requiring \$12 billion in the BAU scenario, almost \$21 billion in the Government Commitments scenario, and over \$26 billion in the Green Growth scenario.

The modernization and expansion of the power and gas grids, and the introduction of advanced metering equipment require investments of approximately \$13 billion to \$14 billion.

To further unlock Pakistan's energy market for private companies, the report also proposed addressing several challenges.

It said one of the key challenges is the lack of clarity regarding the categorization of resources. For example, although hydropower is generally considered a renewable energy resource across the world, the Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy has categorized hydropower sources as non-renewables.

Considering the 30 percent renewable energy target in 2030, it would be hardly possible to reach this level only via wind and solar PV sources. If hydropower were to be included in the definition of renewable energy sources, it would make reaching the stated target and introducing stronger competition more realistic.

Another challenge is the lack of a detailed energy plan for the energy sector. Although the National Energy Policy has been approved, the corresponding division of roles in policymakers who would assign policy areas to all relevant stakeholders has not been completed yet.

In the current framework, sector-specific policies are developed by relevant authorities. For instance, the alternative energy policy is developed by the AEDB, whereas power generation policy is drafted by NEPRA. This not only creates uncertainty regarding the long-term direction of sector development, but also leads to unnecessary bureaucracy and delays in project implementation.

Family Based Solar Business raises funds at \$4.5m valuation

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Intermarket securities, a leading brokerage firm, confirmed a 4.5 million USD valuation for NetLine, a family-owned business in the energy and power sector. NetLine is known as one of the pioneering businesses in the field of solar and UPS (uninterruptible power supply). NetLine has demonstrated top-performing capabilities as a turnkey Solution specialist firm serving some of Pakistan's largest industries and companies since 2002.

Mr. Iqbal Zavary, the founder and chairman of NetLine, commented, "The years 2021 and 2022 were pivotal for our organization, and we are overjoyed with the outcomes. Our quality, innovation, consistent performance, and dependability demonstrate that our products are technologically sophisticated and exceed industry standards. We are able to

stay ahead of the curve thanks to investments in technology and prompt adoption of energy trends. We are honoured to be recognised as one of the leading family-based energy companies. This valuation by Intermarket Securities demonstrates our dedication to providing our clients with trustworthy and reliable products. I am proud of our team that has helped NetLine become one of the leading firms in Pakistan, offering benchmark sustainable energy solutions via world-class innovations and technology."

Pakistan's booming solar industry is also one of the reasons why businesses like NetLine are making such strides and achieving success. Pakistan aims to boost its share of renewable energy to 60% as compared with 4% today. Energy demand is increasing by more than 9% annually in Pakistan - and it is projected that total energy demand

will further increase 8-fold by 2030, and 20-fold by 2050 in Pakistan. Renewable energy sources, in particular solar power, present a sustainable solution to the widening energy demand and supply gap.

Mr Wajid Hussain, CEO of Intermarket Securities, said, "Pakistan has an abundance of solar irradiance and receives sun energy virtually all year. When paired with international investment, this represents a fantastic chance to harvest solar energy from the most irradiated places in the country. The Pakistani solar energy market is expected to be spurred by supporting government policies and initiatives by well-developed businesses like NetLine."

NetLine is a prominent provider of energy solutions with a focus on constant innovation to improve the energy performance of electrical installations in infrastructures for industrial and commercial sites.

Netline is one of Pakistan's leading players in Critical Power and Energy Solutions, with offices in Pakistan, UAE and USA. The group is committed to enable a more sustainable and resource-efficient future by addressing the world's energy challenges.

Asian markets up after China ends travel quarantine

HONG KONG (AFP/ APP): Asian markets rose on Tuesday after China said it would end quarantine for arrivals, spurring hopes for the revival of the world's second-largest economy and boosting oil which continued its upward surge on fears of Russian production cuts.

China has abruptly reversed its strict pandemic restrictions even as a surge in infections overtakes the country. The curbs had torpedoed the economy and sparked nationwide protests.

The latest easing will see three years of border controls end on January 8 when Beijing downgrades Covid-19 to a Class B infectious disease.

People in China have since gone rushing to search for overseas flights, with the reopening set to be a boon for the travel industry.

China's benchmark Shanghai index and the second index in Shenzhen both posted healthy gains, while Tokyo ended a shade higher with Seoul, Singapore and Mumbai all also up. Markets in Hong Kong and Sydney were still closed for a holiday.

"Global equities climbed Tuesday while the dollar declined amid positive sentiment from China upping the speed limits on zero-Covid off ramps and the softening of a key inflation measure in the US," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said.

"Inbound tourism is not a huge economic bounty for China relative to domestic tourism but policy fast-track and early zero-Covid exit means growth could recover enormously," he added.

Markets have also been buoyed by fresh data last week that indicated a slowing of US inflation, as well as an uptick in consumer spending, which saw Wall Street take gains into the Christmas break.

But the news was not definitive and all eyes will be on how the Federal Reserve raises interest rates to balance inflationary concerns alongside the possibility of a recession caused by increased borrowing costs.

Following a holiday for commodities traders on Monday, oil continued its surge after a senior official said Russia could cut up to seven percent of its production next year.

Production was also curtailed by freezing conditions in the United States, where more than 1.8 million barrels a day of oil processing capacity in Texas was hit by the extreme weather, according to Bloomberg News.



HYDERABAD: Labourers women packing tomatoes in wooden boxes at Subzi Mandi.



In brief

Sports festival held

B A H A W A L P U R (APP): A sports festival was organised at Mango Orchard Park in connection with Quaid-e-Azam's 146th birth anniversary under the auspices of the district administration and district sports department. The sports festival included gymnastics, tug-of-war, archery, skating, and mass wrestling competitions. On this occasion, Assistant Commissioner City Dr Anam Fatima, Assistant Commissioner General Muhammad Tayyab, Divisional Sports Officer Maqsoodul Hasan Javed, District Sports Officer Aamir Hameed, and other sports officers were present. Prizes were distributed among the players who excellently performed in the sports competitions.

Quaid-e-Azam Day Cycle Race

PESHAWAR (APP): Sana Ullah of Mardan won the Quaid-e-Azam Day Cycle Race of 28-km organized by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cycling Association here at Northern Bypass on Tuesday. Mohsin Khan of Peshawar stood second while Umar Farooq of Mardan was third in the Race. President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industries Peshawar Muhammad Ishaq was the chief guest on this occasion who distributed medals and cash prizes among the cyclists. President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cycling Association Nisar Ahmed, technical officials and other personalities were also present at the concluding ceremony. Around 40 cyclists from across the province participated in the race that started from Northern Bypass Peshawar. Sana Ullah from Mardan finished with his clocked time 47.23 sec and won the gold medal. Mohsin Khan from Peshawar won the silver medal with his clock time 47.24sec while Umar Farooq from Mardan won the bronze medal by covering the distance in 47.25sec. Officials of 1122, Police, Traffic Police and Health Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were also present.

Potohar Sports Festival

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood said that astroturf laying work at National Hockey Stadium was in progress speedily which would be completed in the second week of January 2023. He said this while addressing a press conference at the inauguration of Potohar Sports Festival at Shehbaz Sharif Sports Complex, Rawalpindi on Monday evening. MNA Rashid Hafeez, MPA Umer Tanveer Butt, Amir Kiani, Deputy Commissioner Shoaib Ali, Divisional Sports Officer Waheed Babar, DO Sports Shams Tawheed Abbasi, Deputy Director Nadeem Qaiser and others were present on the occasion. Young artists presented cultural performances of all provinces besides demonstrating taekwondo and wushu skills at the grand opening ceremony. Addressing the press conference, the Punjab Sports Minister said the Potohar Sports Festival was being organized in Rawalpindi division with an aim to provide better sports facilities to youth of the region. "The teams from six districts of Rawalpindi division including Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Murree and Talagang are participating in the grand event," he added.

Conway and Latham propel New Zealand after Agha Salman century

KARACHI (Cricinfo): Devon Conway and Tom Latham added 165 unbeaten runs in New Zealand's high-est opening stand in Tests in Pakistan - they went past the previous best of 136 set way back in 1965 - as the hosts toiled hard on a Karachi pitch which seemed to have eased out enough for steady run-scoring.

It was mostly a chanceless partnership throughout; the fact that Babar Azam himself came on to roll his arm over as stumps approached was an indication of how dominant was the batting and how ineffective the bowling was, having also bowled the final over before tea. New Zealand's deficit was down to 273 after Agha Salman's maiden Test century earlier in the day had pushed Pakistan to 438.

On the way to an undefeated 82, Conway also became the fastest New Zealand batter to 1000 Test runs, getting there in 19 innings. Although both he and his partner are both left-handed, they present entirely different problems for bowlers when they're at the crease together. As if to exemplify this fact, on Tuesday, both of them scored the exact same proportion of their runs - one-third - in diametrically opposite directions. Conway in the arc between point and long-off and Latham between fine leg and midwicket.

Pakistan started the evening session with spin from both ends, as Nauman Ali aimed for the rough outside the batters' off stump, while Abrar Ahmed mixed things up with his variations. And though there was enough turn to keep things interesting, with the odd ball scuttling through at ankle-height, the break-

through they were striving so hard for never came.

Conway often took a big stride forward to smother the spin, and even used the reverse sweep to hit two boundaries, while also driving and slashing each time the bowlers went too full or too wide. Latham, on the other hand, relied on the conventional sweep and the flick, getting 40 of his 78 runs through those shots.

Pakistan could have broken the partnership at 105 in the 31st over when Conway inside-edged a ball from Nauman through to the wicket-keeper. Except it all looked very innocuous and seemed like the right decision was made when the umpire ruled not-out. After all, Sarfaraz Ahmed was the only one to appeal - and even that was half-hearted. But then came the replays which showed evidence of a nick.

Although not everything went to plan, Pakistan still have plenty to play with and that's largely down to Salman, who hit 103 off 155, piling on quick, useful runs with the tail. Pakistan's last four wickets fetched 120 runs, with Salman scoring 99 of those in partnerships of 54 with Nauman, 39 with Mir Hamza and 24 with Abrar.

Salman had started the afternoon session unbeaten on 54, with Hamza for company. He racked up his last 49 runs from just 45 balls, smashing ten fours to ensure Pakistan crossed the 400-run mark. Salman attacked Neil Wagner, often making room to swat or pull his short deliveries. And when Wagner tried something different, Salman hit three fours in the 125th over: swung to deep square leg, loft-

ed over extra cover off a full length, and slapped to deep point when the left-arm quick went for a slower ball.

Confident of his aggressive strokes, Salman reverse swept Ish Sodhi a few times, before raising his century off a pull when the legspinner pitched it short and outside leg. Eventually, Tim Southee trapped him in front when the batter tried to hoick across the line but missed.

Southee had also dismissed Babar for 161 with the fourth ball of the day before a dull period in the morning followed. The visitors struck late twice though. That quietened things to the extent that Salman and Nauman went 28 deliveries without scoring, starting with the third ball of the 95th over.

Nauman got off the mark off his sixth delivery, but waited until his 48th to produce his next scoring shot, a slog sweep off Ajaz Patel for four. Salman kept things ticking at the other end. New Zealand thought they had him on 36 when they challenged Aleem Dar's not-out decision for a leg-before appeal. But replays showed Sodhi's googly was turning in enough to miss leg stump.

New Zealand finally broke the frustrating stand which lasted more than 26 overs, when Wagner, brought into the attack with the short-ball ploy in mind, sent Nauman back just before lunch. Michael Bracewell at a short square leg plucked a catch leaping to his left as Nauman tried to pull a rising delivery, before Sodhi got his first Test wicket in four years when Wasim tried a funky scoop shot to a short ball, only for the ball to pop up and into Tom Blundell's gloves.

Warner not out 135 in 100th Test as South Africa struggle



M E L B O U R N E (AFP/APP): Pugnacious opener David Warner battled through searing heat to hit an unbeaten 135 in his 100th Test on Tuesday, passing 8,000 Test runs in the process, as Australia stretched their advantage against South Africa at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The hosts were 231-2 at tea on day two of the second Test, leading by 42 after the Proteas were dismissed in their first innings for 189.

Warner snapped a near-three-year century drought in typically aggressive and gritty fashion, reaching three figures for a 25th time after coming into the game under pressure after a lean run. It was his first Test hundred since January 2020 against New Zealand in Sydney.

Fellow veteran Steve Smith was not out 60.

Their 156-run partnership took the game further away from South Africa, whose bowlers toiled in temperatures touching 37 degrees Celsius (98.6 Fahrenheit) with the wicket of Marnus Labuschagne for 14 their only reward.

It was so hot that chairs were brought out for Warner and Smith to sit on in the afternoon drinks break, with towels draped over their heads and water splashed on their faces.

Warner also needed treatment for cramp. Australia resumed on 45-1, having lost Usman Khawaja late Monday after taking charge of the opening day, with Cameron Green's career-best 5-27 helping dismiss the visitors

for under 200 once again.

The Proteas were all out for 152 and 99 in the first Test in Brisbane, which they lost by six wickets inside two days, with the fragility of their batting on full display.

Warner began on 32 after an attacking start during the final hour on Monday and continued the aggression with an early boundary off Kagiso Rabada.

Anrich Nortje was routinely sending down 150 kph (93 mph) rockets, smacking Warner on the head when he was on 47. The batter was given the all-clear after a mandatory concussion test on the field, with a lengthy delay as a new helmet was found. Disaster struck two balls after play resumed.

Warner pushed Nortje

for a single and came back for a second, but Labuschagne hesitated and was run out on 14 despite a lunging dive.

Unfazed, Warner put his head down to motor to 100, punching the air and saluting the crowd when he got there with a boundary after a near-flawless knock characterised by his trademark strong running between the wicket.

Smith was not as comfortable, escaping on nine when he was dropped by wicketkeeper Kyle Verreynne and then on 39 when he was given out caught behind only for it to be called a no-ball after Rabada overstepped the mark. But Smith persevered to reach a 37th Test half-century with a four off Marco Jansen.



KARACHI: Abrar Ahmed joins in on Agha Salman's century celebration.

CM Pervaiz meets Amir Khan, announces to build boxing arena

LAHORE (NNI): Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has met renowned boxer Amir Khan and announced to build a boxing arena and gyms in Punjab.

According to details, the renowned boxer called on Punjab CM Pervaiz Elahi in Lahore. The meeting was also attended by Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leaders Moonis Elahi and Hussain Elahi.

During the meeting with Amir Khan, the Punjab chief minister announced to build a boxing arena and gyms in Punjab in a bid to promote the sport. He also

directed Secretary Sports to take immediate steps in this regard.

Speaking on the occasion, he announced to give scholarship worth Rs2 billion to players from the sports endowment fund. "International coaches will be invited to train local players", he added.

Earlier in September, Chief Minister Punjab Pervaiz Elahi announced 30,000 new jobs in the province after lifting a ban on recruitment.

The recruitments would be made in different departments, and projects in grade BPS-1 to BPS-5

while hiring related to above BPS-5 will be sent to a sub-committee for consideration.

Earlier, Punjab government had decided to hire 16,000 teachers across the province and a summary has been moved to Chief Minister Parvez Elahi for the approval. Taking to Twitter, Punjab Education Minister Murad Raas said that a summary to hire over 16,000 educators has been initiated, signed and moved forward. "I thank Allah that he has given us the chance to create these opportunities for our youth," he added.

Djokovic, Nadal to kickstart bid for 2023 supremacy in Australia

SYDNEY (AFP/APP): Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal kickstart their 2023 campaigns this week in Adelaide and Sydney respectively, with the superstar veterans and great rivals eyeing up yet more Australian Open glory.

With the pair sharing 43 Grand Slam titles between them -- Djokovic has 21 and Nadal 22 -- the scene is set for an epic showdown at Melbourne Park in January.

Nadal is the defending Australian Open champion and Djokovic is a nine-time winner. Djokovic returns Down Under for the first time since being sensationally detained and then deported ahead of the 2022 Australian Open because of his refusal to get vaccinated for Covid-19.

He starts his bid for an incredible 10th Australian Open title at the Adelaide International from Sunday, following a troubled and truncated year in which he missed two majors because of his vaccine status.

Djokovic was initially barred from entering Australia before 2025, but a new government in Canberra reversed the ruling and he is now gunning for more silverware at his most successful Grand Slam venue. "Over the years I've been really fortunate to start very strong in Australia and I love playing

there," said the world number five in Dubai last week, after ending 2022 with a record-equalling sixth ATP Tour Finals crown.

"After obviously what happened earlier this year, hopefully I can have a decent reception there and hopefully that can help me play some good tennis."

He will face a top-notch field in Adelaide, including Felix Auger-Aliassime, Daniil Medvedev and Andrey Rublev, ranked six, seven and eight respectively. In Djokovic's absence this year, Spanish great Nadal swept past Medvedev to win the Australian Open in an epic five-setter -- then backed it up with a 14th French Open. Nadal will begin his preparations in Sydney at the United Cup, a new mixed-teams event, where a blockbuster showdown with Australian showman Nick Kyrgios will test his credentials. Eighteen countries will compete in the event across 11 days from Thursday, with Brisbane, Perth and Sydney hosting group games in a round-robin format.

Ties comprise two men's and two women's singles matches and one mixed doubles. The finals series will be played in Sydney. World number three Casper Ruud and Germany's Alexander Zverev, who is returning from a serious ankle injury, will participate.

Top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz will warm up at the Kooyong Classic exhibition in Melbourne from January 10-12 as he battles back from the abdominal injury that shortened his pre-season training block.

The 19-year-old Spaniard, a major threat to Djokovic and Nadal, missed the season-ending ATP Finals and Davis Cup Finals with a muscle tear, but is confident he will be ready. "I would say the key is to practise a lot, spend a lot of hours on court," he said this month.

"I will be ready and 100 percent heading into Australia." Italy's Jannik Sinner and world number nine Taylor Fritz, among others, will also use Kooyong to fine-tune. Women's world number one Iga Swiatek will acclimatise in Perth with her Polish teammates at the United Cup on the back of winning the French Open and US Open in 2022.

The three-time Grand Slam champion is targeting a first Australian Open title after losing in the semis this year to Danielle Collins, who then crashed to Ashleigh Barty in the final. Swiatek inherited the top ranking following the shock retirement of Barty in March, and has been dominant ever since.

Israr downs Uzair in Serena Hotels National Ranking Tennis Tournament

ISLAMABAD (APP): Veteran Israr Gul overcame Uzair Khan in an exciting first round of men's singles match of Serena Hotels National Ranking Tennis Tournament at the PTF-SDA Tennis Complex Islamabad on Tuesday.

Israr hit back from on set down to win the three-set match to advance to the next round. After losing the first set 5-7, Israr put up solid performance to take the next two sets 6-3, 6-4.

Earlier, an impressive opening ceremony was held wherein Saeed Ahmad Khan, Senior Vice President of Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) was the chief guest. The ceremony was attended by

Col. (ret'd) Gul Rehman, Secretary General PTF, large number of tennis enthusiasts, players, coaches and media-persons.

Results: Mens Singles 1st Round: Israr Gul beat Uzair Khan 5-7, 6-3, 6-4; Abdullah Adnan beat Asadullah 3-6, 6-2, 6-1; Barkatullah beat Kashan ul Haq 6-0, 6-4; Yousaf Khalil beat Imran Bhatti 6-3, 7-5; M. Abid beat Waqas Malik 6-4, 6-3; Shahzad Khan beat Nofil Kaleem 6-0, 6-0; Faizan Fayyaz beat M. Hamza Asim 2-6, 6-2, 6-4; Heera Ashiq beat M. Salar Khan 6-3, 6-2; Saqib Hayat beat Bakir Ali 6-2, 6-2; Mudassir Murtaza beat Hasam Khan 6-3, 6-3.

Boys Singles 18 & Under 1st Round: Amir Mazari eabt Hamza Rehmat 6-4, 3-6, 6-1; Abdul Nafay beat Abdul Razak 6-1, 5-7, 6-3; Ibrahim Saqib beat Sohan Noor 6-1, 6-2; Hamid Israr beat Nabeel Ali Qayum 6-4, 6-1; Ahmed Nael Qureshi beat M. Haziq Asim 6-3, 6-0; Taimoor Ansari beat Yahya Musa Luni 6-4, 6-1; M. Salar Khan beat Sameer Zaman 6-3, 6-2; Mahatir Muhammad beat Kamran Khan 6-0, 6-0; Abdul Basit beat Ibrahim Bin Sohail 6-3, 2-6, 6-3.

Boys Singles 14 and Under 1st Round: Abdul Razak beat Mahad Shehzad 5-3, 4-0; Abdullah Khan beat Mozzam Babar 4-0, 4-0.



ISLAMABAD: Players in action during PSF-National Squash Championship at Mushaf Squash Complex.



In brief

ANF, FC recover drugs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) and Frontier Constabulary (FC) in a joint operation have recovered over 36 kg of ice, 8 kg of suspicious material and 7 kg of heroin from 3 Afghan nationals at the Torkham border. According to a spokesperson of ANF, the force in another operation in Karachi recovered 230 grams of suspicious material hidden in the parcel booked for London while 10 grams of ice were recovered from the parcel reserved for Dubai. The cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act.

Bid to smuggle flour bags foiled

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police in an operation here on Tuesday foiled a bid to smuggle wheat flour and seized 100 bags. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Naseerabad police conducted a raid and rounded up a driver namely Shah Zaman on recovery of 100 wheat bags from his possession. He said, the Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the authorities concerned were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids.

IT Complex in Parliament House

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Tuesday inaugurated the recently established IT Complex in the Parliament House. Director General (IT) Senate, Syed Asim Raza apprised the Chairman about the current IT projects undertaken as a part of Chairman's initiative of Digital Parliamentary Framework, which consists of upgradation of IT Infrastructure, Automation of Parliamentary Processes and Citizen Centric IT services. The Chairman was briefed that the newly established IT Complex was comprising on Telecasting Cell, Software Development Hall, Helpdesk, IT Store and Workshop. Sadiq Sanjrani also inaugurated the project of Digitalization of Analog Video Record of the Senate Proceedings. Chairman Senate appreciated and lauded the efforts of IT Directorate. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman Senate said that the ICT had revolutionized the functioning of institutions of high public importance. Parliament, to this end, needs to rely more and more on information technology to facilitate the people, he said. He underlined that Parliament was a forum, where the will of the people was residing and the synergy of ICT made it convenient for the people to communicate and interact with their representatives directly. He further said that our aim was to galvanize the Parliament's functioning by introducing state of art ICT services.

Two die in bus-van collision

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least two people died while three others were injured in a collision between bus and carry van, near Kallar Kahar on Tuesday. According to a statement issued by National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), Deputy Inspector General of Police Motorway North Zone, Muhammad Yousaf Malik along with personnel reached the spot and started rescue operations immediately. The DIGP issued orders to take strict action against the driver and the bus company.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan calls on Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Capital police issue special security plan amid possible threat

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad police have issued special security plan amid possible threat of a terrorist attack following the suicide bombing in the I-10 Sector.

According to the security plan unveiled by Capital police, temporary security check posts have been established at 25 different locations in Islamabad while Safe City cameras will record Red Zone entrances. The video of passengers travelling via metro bus service would also be recorded, the police said in a statement.

The Islamabad police have advised citizens to carry their identification documents and use excise office issued number plates on vehicles. "Legal action will be taken against illegal number plates and unregis-

tered vehicles," police said, adding that foreign nationals should also carry their identification documents.

The police have further advised citizens to register tenants and employees at the nearest police station. "Citizens employing unregistered local or foreign workers will also be investigated," the police statement read.

The security plan comes three days after a policeman was martyred and six others, including four fellow cops, had been injured in a suicide blast reported in Islamabad's I-10/4 sector. The slain officer was identified as Head Constable Adeel Hussain.

Recently, Saudi Arabia and Australia have advised their citizens in Pakistan to be cautious and limit their movement in the wake of

the adverse security situation. In a statement posted on Twitter, the Saudi Arabian embassy issued a security alert for its citizens, advising them to remain "careful and limit their movement".

The security alert advised incoming Saudi residents and those in the country to "be cautious" and not step out except for any necessity. "Security of Islamabad has been placed at the highest level," the alert said, adding that Saudis should contact the embassy and consulate if the need arises. Meanwhile, Australia has updated its travel advisory for Pakistan, noting that "Australian officials in Islamabad have been advised to increase vigilance and limit travel within the city."

Meeting held under the chairmanship of Amir Muqam



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Meeting held under the chairmanship of Engineer Amir Muqam. Municipal officials of Swabi district and the local bodies' representatives who were successful on the ticket of Muslim League-N.

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, was also present on the occasion. Engineer Amir Muqam said that the prob-

lems associated with the federal departments pertaining to electricity- will be resolved. Engineer Amir Muqam said that PTI's nine-and-a-half years of incompetence worsened the country's affairs and their performance is now exposed. The "Swabi Tanzeem" expressed confidence in the leadership of Engineer Amir Muqam and said that he had stood with the party in the past and is still standing today.

Provincial Senior Vice President Haji Iftikhar Khan, District President Shiraz Khan, District General Secretary Babar Salim Khan, Mardan Division President Sajjad Khan Murghaz, Tehsil Chairman Chota Lahore Adil Khan, Nazim Adil Khan, Amir Haider Khan, and other party officials attended the meeting.

It was also attended by representatives of local bodies who had won on PML-N ticket.

Mohtarama B.B.'s struggle for people, constitutional supremacy unrivaled like her name: Sherry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator, Sherry Rehman on Tuesday said the life and political struggle of martyred Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto for the sake of people, constitution, parliament and the country was matchless like her name.

In a series of tweets, the federal minister paid homage on the 15th martyrdom anniversary to the former prime minister and Pakistan Peoples Party chairperson also Mohtaram B.B.

Senator Rehman said, "I salute the martyred Benazir Bhutto on her 15th martyrdom anniversary. The killing of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto was the killing of humanity. Today, we were deprived off our leader and the country from its future. Shaheed B.B. was a hope for the

people of Pakistan, the murderers took away their hope from the people."

The Minister while eulogizing the martyred leader said Shaheed B.B. was the chain of all the provinces, the killers tried to disintegrate the country by killing her. Asif Ali Zardari foiled this conspiracy by raising the slogan of Pakistan Khape (We want Pakistan). Shaheed B.B. endured detention, imprisonment, exile and other hardships. She raised the funerals of her father, brothers and workers, she added.

"Our leader and the first woman prime minister of the Muslim world was brutally murdered in broad daylight. His family, People's Party and workers are waiting for justice in the murder case of their leader even after 15 years."

PMD forecasts rain, snowfall over hills in upper parts of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (NNI): After a long dry spell, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain with snowfall over the hills in upper parts of the country that would subside foggy conditions and benefit the standing crops.

The Met Office on Tuesday informed that a westerly wave has entered northwestern parts of Balochistan and is likely to grip upper and central parts of the country on December 28 (night) till December 29.

Under the influence of this weather system, rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Quetta, Zhob, Barkhan, Ziarat, Nokkundi, Dalbandin, Harani, Qillah Saifullah, Qillah Abdullah, Chaman, Pishin, Gwadar, Jiwani, Turbat, Panjgur, Kalat, Khuzdar, Sibbi, Naseerabad and Lasbela from December 27 (evening/night) till December 29.

Light to moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is also expected in Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mardan, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Sargodha, Islamabad, Murree, Galiyat and Potohar region on December 28 and December 29.

Light rain is also expected in Sukkur, Larkana, Jacobabad, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Multan, Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan and Bhakkar during the period.

About the possible impacts, the Met Office revealed that the rain will be beneficial for the standing crops especially in Barani areas.

Snowfall may disrupt normal vehicular traffic in mountainous/hilly areas. Day temperatures are likely to fall by 05-07 degree celsius during the wet spell.

The weather department said the rains might also lessen the intensity of fog, and the temperature might drop by five to seven degrees Celsius.

Connectivity projects to usher in region's prosperity: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the connectivity projects in the region will not only bring trade communities closer, but also usher in a new era of peace and prosperity. The prime minister expressed these views as he received a high-level delegation from Uzbekistan led by deputy prime minister, Minister for Investment and Foreign Trade, Khodjaev Jamshid Abdulkhakimovich.

Recalling his recent meetings with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on the sidelines of SCO Summit held in Samarkand in September and the 6th CICA Summit held in Astana, Kazakhstan in October 2022, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to further enhance the existing excellent relationship between the two brotherly countries.

The prime minister said Pakistan offers connectivity to Central Asia through road and railways.

The delegation apprised the Prime

Minister about their meetings with economic ministries of Pakistan during which it was agreed to enhance economic and trade ties between the two countries. The visiting dignitary also briefed the prime minister about the discussions between the business groups of Pakistan and Uzbekistan in various fields.

The prime minister appreciated that fruitful discussion between business community to establish B2B contacts would enhance bilateral trade and investment.

The Uzbek delegation thanked Prime Minister and reiterated that the bilateral relationship is further deepening and pace of interactions is moving towards a positive trajectory.

The prime minister reiterated that friendship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan is strengthening with the passage of time and visit of delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan is manifestation of the growing relationship.

IHC gives govt a week to name NTDC chief

ISLAMABAD (TLTP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has asked the federal government to fill the vacant post of managing director at the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) within a week.

The court warned that if the government did not comply with the order, the appointment of officers as caretaker managing director (MD) and deputy MD would stand suspended.

The TLTP learnt that Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani passed the directive during the hearing of a petition filed by Saffar Ali, Senior General Manager at the NTDC.

He named the federal government, acting NTDC MD Rana Abdul Jabbar and Deputy MD Manzoor Ahmed as respondents.

The IHC reminded the respondents that the assistant attorney general (AAG) had informed it on

Oct 20 that the NTDC board had already recommended three names to the federal government for appointment as managing director at the company.

According to the respondents, the AAG needs more time as the federal government has yet to give the final approval to one of the names recommended to it for appointment as managing director.

On the other hand, counsel for the petitioner, Mohammad Shuaib Shaheen, contended that the NTDC and the ministry of energy (power division) were violating the IHC order persistently by giving caretaker charge of managing director to Dr Rana Abdul Jabbar, general manager, instead of filling the vacancy.

The court observed: "Prima facie, disclose the highhandedness on the part of the federal government who were not man-

aging the affairs according to rules and law on the subject, though it has clearly been settled by the superior courts that the caretaker appointment is only meant for day-to-day affairs for a short period of time and could not be stretched on months.

It added, "Therefore, as per the undertaking of the Law Officer, seven days' time is granted for appointment of Managing Director, NTDC, to the federal government. However, if no meeting is convened till the next date of hearing, the notification dated July 7, 2022, for appointment of Dr Rana Abdul Jabbar as Managing Director of NTDC, as well as the notification dated March 29 for appointment of Manzoor Ahmed, as deputy managing director on contract basis shall stand suspended till the appointment of regular incumbent."

IHC allows Polish women to meet their children in custody case

ISLAMABAD (TLTP): While adjourning further hearing of kids' custody case filed by two Polish women till Wednesday (today), the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered to keep the two children in the Polish Embassy.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the case. Both Polish women, their Pakistani husband, and the Polish Embassy officials appeared before the court for the case hearing. "I willingly brought the children to Pakistan. Only because of the religion our relations got damaged. They both used to take the children to the church," the Pakistani husband of the two Polish women told the court.

"I have a big business in Poland. I used to help these two women a lot. I can also abandon the Polish citizenship for my children," he added.

"You should keep the Polish citizenship. You should go there and raise your children," the court asked him.

"The mosque is 300 kilometers away from my residence," he replied.

"You are the owner of so many restaurants that you can build a mosque near your house," the court added.

The TLTP learnt that the lawyer told the court that the Pakistani husband was Muslim while his Polish wives were Christian. "He has a son, Muhammad Ahmad, from Polish woman Iza Nawa and a daughter from another Polish woman

Johanna," he added.

"He had married Polish woman Johanna on October 29, 2005, and the marriage ended in a divorce on February 28, 2017. A daughter was born in 2012 from the wedlock," the lawyer further informed the court.

"He contracted Nikah with Iza Nawa because the second marriage cannot be registered in Poland. A son was born in 2015 from the wedlock," he added.

When asked, both the Polish women refused to meet their Pakistani husband. He told the court that he had obtained Polish citizenship in 2012.

He also claimed that he had come to Pakistan in August 2021 with 18-day legal permission from the mothers of the two children. The permission letter to bring the children to Pakistan was also produced before the court.

"Both the children attend school in Poland. They are the citizens of Poland, and their stay in Pakistan is over," the lawyer told the court.

"The children should be brought to the court again tomorrow. The court will decide after hearing more arguments," the court said and ordered to submit passports of both children and that of the Pakistani husband to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). The court then adjourned further hearing of the case till Wednesday (today).



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani inaugurating the newly established IT complex of senate at Parliament House.

Two drug traffickers arrests

BALKH (Agencies): Local police of Balkh say that their police personnel have arrested 2 people on charges of drug trafficking and dealing in Dawletabad district of the province. The Police of Balkh, said 29kg of opium, 7.5 kg Shisha, 447kg of heroin, one Kalashnikov and one pistol discovered from the detainees. According to Balkh police, the dossier of the detainees will be sent to judicial organs after police investigation.

The Frontier Post

Jamadi-us-Sani 04, 1444 — Wednesday, December 28, 2022

Courts resolved 2,000 cases

NANGARHAR (Agencies): The Supreme Court says that in the last six months, Nangahar courts have resolved 2,344 cases. The Supreme Court in a statement said that 3175 deeds have been processed in these courts. The source adds that these cases include the criminal, legal and collateral sections that have been reached. According to another news, during the last three months, Takhar courts have resolved 1144 cases and enforced 1423 cases.

35 private universities at risk of collapse

KABUL (TOLOnews): Following the suspension of women from attending universities, the union of private universities said that at least 35 private universities are at risk of collapse.

“The economic challenges have surged widely. Now that we are interviewing you, 30 to 35 universities are facing major economic problems,” said Mohammad Karim Nasiri, media officer at the union. Some owners of universities warned that many other higher education institutions would be closed due to economic

challenges if female students are not allowed to attend classes.

“There is no man at this educational center. If the implementation of this order continues, we will be obliged to close the doors of this center,” said Azizullah Amir, founder of the Mura educational center.

“The universities are closed for women. But we look at the closure of the university as a temporary and we hope universities will be reopened and students continue their education,” said Enayatullah Khalil Hadaf, deputy head of Dawat University.

Ziaullah Hashimi, a spokesman for the Ministry of Higher Education, said efforts are underway to resolve the issues in the sector.

“We are trying to ease our principles and provide services for the universities and solve the problems that cause obstacles for universities,” Hashimi said.

According to the union of private universities, 140 private universities are currently active in the country. Last week, the Ministry of Higher Education in a letter suspended higher education for women in public and private universities.

Afghanistan towards becoming leading exporters

KABUL (Khaama Press): Over the course of nine months under the Taliban leadership, Afghanistan exported dried fruits worth of \$270 million, said the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC).

Earlier this month, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) said the country witnessed increase in exports and imports of Afghan products through air corridors more recently.

The ministry of commerce vows to provide better facilities for Afghan traders in order to increase export of dried fruits to foreign countries.

The dry fruits that have been sent to various countries include pine nuts, pistachio and raisins – product Afghanistan is known for among the regional countries.

“We have had several shipments of export,” said Akhundzada Abdul Salam, a spokesman for the MoIC, as TOLOnews quoted. “We had exports to Europe, Canada and Australia which showed a sharp rise compared to the previous year.”

Intelligence chief pardons his son’s murderers

MAIMANA (Pajhwok): A government official in northwestern Faryab province has pardoned the murderers of his son, a move that earned admiration and appreciation from local residents and religious scholars.

Three months earlier, the son of Faryab intelligence chief was killed mistakenly by his two bodyguards. The attackers were detained and investigated.

The father of slain person said that the purpose of pardon was to set an example for others.

Haji Ghulam Farooq Mudabir, intelligence chief of Faryab province, told Pajhwok Afghan News his 22-year-old Qari Abdul Basit was killed three months earlier as a result of firing from his security guards inside the intelligence office.

He added, he was in Kabul to attend a seminar when the incident happened and both the killers were arrested by the local personnel and put in the jail.

He added, after 17 days he was provided complete information regarding the killing of his son.

He said: “My son Qari Abdul Basit, and two security guards Zubair and Talha were setting in room. Zubair and Talha were cleaning the weapon and suddenly a fire take place and his son who was studying got killed.”

Regarding the pardoning of his son’s murderers, he said: “Abdul Basit was working as Active Director in the past 14 months when I was appointed as intelligence director. But till the time of his martyrdom nobody in the office knew that he is my son. We were arranging his wedding in 15 days before he got martyred.”

He said the purpose behind the pardon of his son’s murderers was to set an example for others so that other people stop taking revenge and take one another in huge instead of promoting bloodshed.

People hailed pardon Mohammad Arif, the resident of Maimana City, hailed the decision of intelligence chief to pardon his son’s killers and added there were feud in some families and individuals that lasted for years and caused bloodshed.

He added all families involved in feud should learn from the pardon of intelligence chief and enter friendship and brotherhood.

Ahmad Khalid, another resident of Maimana, also hailed the pardoning of two murderers and said people should not promote violence and enmity inherited by mistake and unintentionally.

UN official urges Islamic Emirate to lift ban on female staff at NGOs

KABUL (TOLOnews): The UN deputy humanitarian coordinator in Afghanistan, Fran Equiza, in a meeting with Acting Minister of Public Health Qalandar Ibad called for “the Taliban ban on women working for NGOs and international NGOs to be lifted in its entirety.”

“The ban will impact millions of the most vulnerable Afghans,” the UN official said.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in a phone call reaffirmed the importance of guaranteeing women’s rights and their full and equal participation in all aspects of life, a statement of the Pakistan Foreign Ministry said.

“They also reiterated their support for security, stability and peace in Afghanistan and the importance of international engagement for building a more sustainable future for the Afghan people,” the statement read.

The decision to ban women’s access to work



and education has triggered widespread reactions.

“The Taliban are trying to erase women from society in Afghanistan. Banning women from working for NGOs will prevent millions of Afghans from accessing life-saving aid and supplies,” James Cleverly, the UK foreign minister said on Twitter. “This will impact everyone.

The Taliban must urgently reverse this decision.”

Analysts said that such decisions can affect Afghanistan’s relations with the world.

“The ministries of higher education, economy and education should provide jobs to women so that we will not be isolated from the world. We should con-

sider the aid being provided by the international community,” said Amanullah Hotaki, a political analyst.

“We should build better relations in every sector including organizations so that these restrictions will not cause distance between Afghanistan and the world,” said Najibullah Jamay.

Defeat of Soviet army in Afghanistan is history of firm faith of Afghans against invaders: IEA

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, on the occasion of 27th of Dec, which is the 43rd anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, condemned the invasion and called on all Afghans to protect their independence.

In 10-year occupation of the former Soviet Union and the great atrocities, Afghanistan suffered greatly from

all sides and for the cause to this cruel invasion, millions of Afghans were martyred, disabled and forced to migrate, Islamic Emirate stated in a statement.

This great occasion in history shows that no arrogant power in the world should doubt the faith, challenge and determination of the Muslim and zealous people of Afghanistan and that

Afghans will defend their land in any situation, and Afghans are ready to sacrifice for the purpose.

The Islamic Emirate calls on the people through this statement to always be ready to protect the freedom and independence of their land and not allow anyone to carry out conspiracies and false volitions against the country, its values and the nation.

The Islamic Emirate is committed to continue serving and protecting its country, religious values and the Muslim nation day and night, the statement added.

The former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan 43 years back on Dec 27, and thousands of invading soldiers entered this land, which was defeated by Afghans.

Azizi Bank to provide services to MEW



KABUL (Agencies): The Acting Energy and Water Minister, and the Executive Chairman of Azizi Bank, in a meeting Tuesday, discussed and exchanged opinions about joint cooperation between these two administrations.

The Minister of Energy and Water Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor, and Farid Ahmad Shirzad, Executive Chairman of Azizi Bank, discussed and exchanged opinions about coordination and joint cooperation between these two administrations.

The CEO of Azizi Bank vowed to cooperate in demand to create the necessary facilities in the advancement of electricity bill collection and other services related to the financial affairs of this ministry.

‘Scholars, militaries have same responsibility’



KABUL (Agencies): The Governor of Kabul Sheikh Mohammad Qaseem Khalid met with some religious scholars of Kabul city and districts Tuesday.

In a meeting the governor Khalid said that religious scholars and mili-

taries have the same responsibility in maintaining security in the country.

The Kabul religious scholars assured the governor of Kabul, sharing details about their actions and activities, that they

will not spare themselves from any effort to sustain the current Islamic system.

The governor of Kabul assured the religious scholars of all kinds of cooperation for the betterment of their affairs.

Kahsan schools need govt attention

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): The residents of Kahsan district in western Herat province have complained against the lack basic living facilities and government attention schools and over-all education sector.

Kahsan is one of the important districts of the province where vital Islam Qala Port is situation that play highly important role in the economic development of the country.

Mohammad Hanif, the resident of Kahsan district told Pajhwok Afghan News from the past two years the construction of a half-completed school not completed in their area.

Mirwais, another resident of Islam Qala, said Islam Qala City has more population and people but still there was shortage of education facilities.

He said in most areas of Kahsan schools are without basic facilities, but in Kamana areas where he lives schools a school building is half completed and have no bathrooms.

He added most students whose homes are close to school go to their own housed when their need washroom. “In our locality there no enough facilities and the school system is not up to the standard,” he added.

Mullah Abdul Nasir, deputy education director, told Pajhwok Afghan News the lack of building was he major issue of their district which needed to be resolved. “In some areas schools have no building, if it has building it lack chairs, table and other important items,” he added.

Information Director Mawlana Naemulhaq said he was confident that the Education Department will assess the situation and build schools in the far-flung areas.

Haqqani stressed that government efforts to resolved education sector related issues are ongoing.

Herat education director was not reached for comment despite Pajhwok Afghan News efforts.

Women, girls’ education Acting Minister expects decision next year



KABUL (TOLOnews): Acting Minister of Petroleum and Mines Shahabuddin Delawar on Tuesday said that a decision will be made soon regarding schools and universities for female students.

He referred to the decree of the Islamic Emirate’s supreme leader and said it was instructing a temporary order.

He said the decision will be made in the first month of the next solar year (April 2023) based on the values of Islam and Afghan traditions.

“A decision will be made

by Hamal (the first month of the solar year), which will be in accordance with the Islam and Afghan traditions,” he said.

Some students meanwhile expressed concerns over the suspension of higher education for women saying that universities should be reopened “immediately.” “I am a student of journalism faculty and public relations. I am shocked,” said Parween Iqalli, a student.

“They may reopen the doors of universities for students so that they can reach their educational

dreams,” said Abdullah.

“Women and girls need education. We call on government authorities to reopen schools and universities,” said Mustafa, a student.

A number of the instructors also urged the Islamic Emirate to reopen universities for female students.

“The aftermath would be dangerous for Afghanistan,” said Khawani Hemat, a university instructor.

Earlier, the Islamic Emirate in a letter ordered the suspension of higher education for female students.

Deputy Miniter reiterates commitment to fight drugs

KABUL (TOLOnews): The deputy minister of counter-narcotics, Abdulhaq Akhundzada, said the commitment to fight drugs and said alcoholic beverages, as well as a number of illicit drugs, are brought to Afghanistan from Iran, Pakistan and Central Asia.

Akhundzada asked the countries to prevent the trafficking of drugs to Afghanistan. “If the narcotics are being trafficked to Iran, Pakistan and Central Asian countries or anywhere else, we will prevent it. We have arrested many of them.

Therefore, drugs are coming from their countries to our country. We want them to secure their borders and prevent the export of these materials to our country,” he said.

Akhundzada said the trafficking of drugs from these countries is mostly to the northern province of Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz. He also acknowledged the existence of



opium trafficking from Afghanistan to abroad.

“Some drugs are coming from Central Asia. There are sometimes reports of drugs known as ‘Tablet K’ and wine,” Akhundzada said.

Analysts said that drug trafficking to Afghanistan from neighboring countries will affect the country’s security.

“If the import of the drugs surges, it can affect security in Afghanistan and it can surge the number of drug addicts in our coun-

try,” said Sadiq Shinwari, a military veteran.

“The world should engage with the Islamic Emirate and the Islamic Emirate should draw the assistance of the countries and help farmers to find an alternative for poppy farming,” said Ajmal Zurmati, an international relations analyst. According to the deputy minister of counter-narcotics, so far, over 3,600 people have been arrested on charges of drug trafficking.

Alingar schoolteachers demand promised land plots

M E H T H A R L A M (Pajhwok): Schoolteachers in the Alingar district of eastern Laghman province say they have not been given land plots promised to them in the previous government.

Maulvi Mianoor, a member of the teachers union, told Pajhwok Afghan News that they had received documents of the plots during the previous government but the land was yet to be allotted to them.

He said: “Each of 500 teachers was promised a plot in Shakhtara area of

the district by the previous government, but we are yet to be allotted the land.” “We urge the caretaker government to demark the plots in the district and distribute them to all,” he added.

Enayatulla, a teacher of a girls’ school, told Pajhwok: “Hundreds of teachers in Alingar district have documents given by the former government and now they want the caretaker government to provide them with the lands.” He said they had shared the issue with the Education Department and the gover-

nor’s house but no action was taken in this regard.

Qari Zahidullah Fateh, administrative chief of Alingar district, told Pajhwok: “We have repeatedly urged the provincial Education Department to give teachers their plots and would ask them once again.”

Maulvi Shah Jahan Sajid, director of education, said: “We have shared the issue with the governor’s house, I assure all those teachers who have documents would be allotted the plots.”

Shujaat says elections to be held at scheduled time

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Pakistan Muslim League-Q President Ch Shujaat Hussain on Tuesday urged all political parties to work for Pakistan instead of fighting with each other. Talking to the senior journalists at the occasion of a luncheon in honor of Naveed Anwar Ch, a Pakistani-American entrepreneur, Ch Shujaat said if political parties do not understand, neither the country will run nor the parties. The event was attended by Federal Minister Tariq Bashir Cheema, Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chaudhry Shafay Hussain and other personalities.

The PML-Q leader said the elections should be held at the scheduled time. "Can elections be helpful in ending inflation and unemployment, he questioned.

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain urged all the stakeholders to put their heads together for the country's progress. "Political and economic stability were crucial for the country," he said, adding: "If we all work together, only then can we save Pakistan."

The PML-Q president further said that if the political parties could understand the need to set aside their differences, only then International Monetary Fund (IMF) would lend its support to Pakistan. "If we don't ensure political stability, no one will send a rupee our way," he added.

He also called consensus between political parties, reiterating that it was the only way to ensure Pakistan's survival. "If we cannot comprehend this, then neither can the country nor parties

survive," he added. hujaat added that 'many powers' want to destroy Pakistan as they want supremacy of India in the region. In response to a question, he asked: "Will snap elections ensure an end to unemployment or inflation?"

Responding to another question, he said former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan should return to parliament. "The people, who elected them, are witnessing their actions," he said, adding that if the PTI lawmakers keep enjoying the perks despite not being in the parliament, it will be in no one's interest.

If they only want to take salaries and other benefits, then it is of no use."

The PML-Q President Ch Shujaat said political and economic stability is inevitable in the present situation of the country.

To a question, he said neither the army had to come nor anyone else.

However, he warned if this time passed, then it would not come into anyone's hands. "If we all work for Pakistan, then we will be saved. If we don't come together, everyone will be destroyed," Shujaat hinted. "If we understand and evolve a political consensus, IMF will give financial assistance to Pakistan. If we do not handle the situation properly, not a penny will come." He said that some external powers had the design to damage Pakistan. "Those powers want India's supremacy in the region," he added.

PHC asks varsity to pay pension to 260 employees

PESHAWAR (TLTP): Accepting the plea of over 260 former employees of the Islamia College Peshawar, the Peshawar High Court has ordered the University of Peshawar to immediately release their pension withheld since August this year.

A bench consisting of Justice Lal Jan Khattak and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah ordered the respondents, including the UoP, to make all due pension payments to the petitioners forthwith until any decision was taken by a committee constituted by the higher education department to determine their status.

The TLTP learnt that it declared that as pension payment was necessary for the well-being and peace of mind of the retirees as well as it was their right, their petition was accepted by the court.

The petition was jointly filed by former ICP associate professor Sher Haider and 260 other pensioners.

The UoP has stopped the payment of pension to the petitioners insisting that after the establishment of the ICUP, the ICP was no longer its constituent college and therefore, the pension for petitioners should be released by the ICUP.

The counsel for petitioners, Nazeer Ahmad, said his clients were pensioners of the UoP as they'd either retired on attaining the age of superannuation or their family members were the former staff members.

The bench ruled that the respondents had insisted that the university was unable to pay those benefits to the petitioners due to financial constraints but didn't produce records to prove the assertion.

Irregularities found in PML-N laptop scheme, PAC takes notice

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the National Assembly (NA) has taken notice of the irregularities in the purchase of five lakh laptops between 2013 and 2018.

A meeting of the Public Accounts Committee was held in Islamabad on Tuesday. The PAC chairman Noor Aalam chaired the meeting.

The meeting was told that five lakh laptops were purchased at a cost of Rs 25.77 billion during 2013-18 by the federal government. Audit authorities apprised the meeting that there was an agreement to set up an assembling plant for the local production of laptops. Higher Education Commission (HEC) entered into an agreement with Higher Electrical Corporation to set up an assembling plant, the authorities added.

The HEC Executive Director Dr Shaiista Sohail apprised the meeting that an assembly plant was constructed on Raiwind Road, Lahore in this regard. "The plant could not be made functional because Haier's laptops did not have any demand in the market." Earlier, PAC Chairman Noor Alam had put a ban on the YouTubeers to join the meeting. He allowed only journalists from print media and TV channels.



LARKANA: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and other offer Fateha at the grave of Shaheed Mohartma Benazir Bhutto on the occasion of her 15th death anniversary at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh.

PM invites Qatar's Amir to participate in Int'l Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has invited the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to participate in the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan, co-hosted with the United Nations, in Geneva on January 9, 2023.

In a telephonic conversation, the Prime Minister thanked the Amir for the generous humanitarian assistance provided by Qatar in the wake of the devastating climate-induced floods in Pakistan earlier this year. He recalled that Pakistan now faced the enormous challenge of rehabilitation and reconstruction in a climate-resilient manner. The Prime Minister highlighted that while Pakistan had mobilised its

own limited resources to the extent possible, continued international support and solidarity was required to meet the daunting challenge of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas, and to build resilience against future climate shocks. Shehbaz Sharif congratulated the Amir on Qatar's successful hosting of FIFA-2022 Football World Cup, which had set a new benchmark for international sports events. The Prime Minister and the Emir of Qatar also exchanged.

PM condemns misuse of Punjab Anti-Corruption for political vendetta: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday strongly condemned the arrest of Member of the

National Assembly of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Muhammad Ashraf, and said the Anti-Corruption Department, Punjab was being used as a tool of political vengeance. He said on the behest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Imran Khan, the department was being used against politicians.

The prime minister regretted that like National Accountability Bureau and Federal Investigation Agency, the Anti-Corruption Punjab was being exploited. He stressed that instead of pressurizing the politicians, there was a need to focus on the problems of the general public. Shehbaz Sharif expressed solidarity with the arrested politician Muhammad Ashraf.

LHC orders week-long extension in winter vacation across schools, colleges

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday ordered a seven-day extension in winter vacations across educational institutions in Lahore due to unrelenting smog.

The Punjab School Education Department had on Dec 14 announced winter vacations for public and private schools across the province from Dec 24 to Dec 31.

Last week, the LHC directed authorities to propose to the school education department to implement a two-week-long winter vacation as a step to help curb smog in Lahore.

The court previously ordered the closure of schools on Fridays and Saturdays. Hearing the public interest petitions on different environmental issues today, Justice Shahid Kareem of the LHC observed that vacations in schools and colleges ought to be extended due to the persistent smog.

A representative of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory

Authority (Pemra), who was also present during the hearing, told the court that letters had been written to satellite channels to run advertisements for the awareness and prevention of smog.

The court remarked that smog was in control to a considerable extent. However, it said the prevention of smog was the responsibility of the government.

The judge also summoned the director general of the Pakistan Disaster Management Authority to the next hearing. The hearing was adjourned till Jan 6.

A few days ago, the Lahore deputy commissioner submitted a report to the court containing recommendations to mitigate smog.

The report revealed that the Punjab government had already approved a project to procure 200 drone cameras under a World Bank-funded programme. It said modern drones with

night-vision cameras could be programmed to report smoke emissions even during night-time.

The report further stated that long-range PTZ (Pan-Tilt-Zoom) cameras do not require human control and can automatically detect and record certain emissions from up to 3,000 metres distance. It proposed the installation of the PTZ cameras at smog hot spots in Lahore, including Mehmood Booti, Karol Ghati, Lakhodair, Turkey Road, Ring Road, Multan Road and Bund Road.

It also suggested the installation of at least ten air quality monitoring stations in the city and an increase in field posts for better implementation of government policies.

The report said the Parks and Horticulture Authority had been focusing more on ornamental plants, whereas urban green spaces should be used to purify the air and reduce "fugitive dust" in the city.

ECP postpones local govt elections in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) postponed on Tuesday the local government (LG) elections in Islamabad which were originally scheduled to be held on December 31.

The new date for the polls will be announced later. The elections have been delayed owing to a change in number of union councils in the federal capital. LG elections in Islamabad: ECP rejects govt's decision to increase number of UCs

In a hearing on Tuesday, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) counsel Ashtar Ausaf argued that the number of union councils in Islamabad was increased from 101 to 125 based on the surge in the population. He also called

for changes in constituencies. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja inquired whether the census report had been published.

Ausaf replied that the census bureau had informed about the increase in Islamabad's population. The petition was lodged by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamaat-e-Islami. On December 20, the Interior Ministry notified an increase in the number of UCs in Islamabad from 101 to 125 under Sections 4(1) and 6(1) of Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Act 2015.

On December 21, the ECP dismissed as being in violation of the law, the federal government's decision to increase the number of union councils (UCs) in

Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) from 101 to 125, indicating that the local government elections in ICT would be held on the already announced date of December 31 under the existing arrangement.

This move was strongly criticised by different political and public circles that saw it as a measure to delay the LG polls against the backdrop of increased public popularity of PTI that won most of the recent by-polls of the assemblies.

Section 4(1) states that the government shall, by notification, specify the local area as UCs within the jurisdiction of ICT. Section 6(1) reads that the government shall, by notification in the official gazette, determine the number of UCs within ICT.

After months, govt relaxes import rules for 'essential sectors'

ISLAMABAD (NNI): After months of complaints, the federal government on Tuesday relaxed some of its strict conditions for expending its precious little foreign exchange for imports in 'essential sectors'.

According to a circular issued by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Tuesday, the authorized dealers of foreign exchange were told that circulars of May 20 and July 5 had been withdrawn. In the circulars, the exchange companies had been directed to seek prior permission from the Foreign Exchange Operations Department of the SBP before initiating any import transaction for products listed under HS Codes 84 (Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof.),

85 (Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers, and parts and accessories of such articles.), and 87 (Vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling stock, and parts and accessories thereof). "Consequently, requests for import transactions already submitted to SBP-BSC pertaining to above referred HS Codes stand returned to the ADs for appropriate disposal at their end," the new circular read.

Moreover, the authorized dealers were directed to prioritize and facilitate imports of essential imports in food (wheat, edible oil, etc.) and pharmaceutical (raw material, life-saving/essential medicines, surgi-

cal instruments including stents, etc.).

Other sectors include energy imports, including in the petroleum group (oil and gas) and coal (for power projects based upon merit order of the Ministry of Energy).

Imports by Export-oriented Industry, especially of raw materials, input goods and spare parts, by the export-oriented industries. Imports for agriculture inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. The government also okayed deferred payment for imports and self-funded imports. For imports on a deferred payment basis, goods imported preferably from parent / sister concerns of the importers, beyond 365 days, from shipment date were allowed.

Chairman NDMA meets Chinese Envoy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik met H.E Nong Rong, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan in his office today. Both discussed the

various aspects of mutual collaboration and proactive approach of disaster management in Pakistan.

Chairman NDMA thanked the overwhelming support by Chinese Government in rescue&

relief operations during Floods 2022. He also acknowledged the continued assistance from China for rehabilitation phase in flood affected areas. He shared details of transformation plan of futuristic and technology-driven

National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) which will be the interface of integrated emergency responsiveness with all Government stakeholders, humanitarian agencies and international Donors.

The Ambassador underscored the strong collaboration at the front of climate-induced disaster management and stressed on further expansion of the existing working relation with Pakistan. He suggested to chalk out a comprehensive bilateral MOU between NDMA and Ministry of Emergency Management of China (MEM) for remodeling of National Preparedness & Response Regime complemented with technology & information sharing, establishment of Early Warning System and Weather Prediction Analysis. He further stressed on enhancing the bilateral communication between NDMA and MEM.

