

ISLAMABAD (INP): Sessions of the Senate and the National Assembly will separately be held at the Parliament House in Islamabad on Monday. The Upper House will meet at 3:00 in afternoon, while the Lower House will meet at 5:00 in the evening. Besides legislative business, both the Houses will take matters of national and international importance.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX

No. 359

Regd. No. 241

JAMAD-US-SANI 23 1444 -- MONDAY, JANUARY 16 2023

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

Price. 20

PM kicks off three-day nationwide anti-polio campaign — vows to eradicate polio

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday inaugurated a three-day nationwide anti-polio drive by administering polio drops to the children. In a brief ceremony held here, the Prime Minister said that a nationwide drive was being started to overcome the resurfacing of the polio cases.

The Prime Minister said that floods in the summer season had disrupted the national drive, but despite all those difficulties, the polio workers carried out the onus with their hard work and commitment.

He further observed that unfortunately, Pakistan was among the few countries

where polio cases had resurfaced.

A few years back, during the government of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, these cases were completely eradicated, he added.

The Pprime Minister said about 20 cases of polio were reported from Waziristan, but due to consistent efforts, these were restricted and controlled and did not spread to other parts.

The Prime Minister also lauded those frontline workers and law enforcement agencies personnel who had laid down their lives for achieving the objective and embraced shahadat.

He said that their sacri-

fices would always be remembered.

"I have the conviction that all the provincial governments, along with the federal government will continue collaborating to eradicate the disease forever," he added.

The resurfacing of the few cases had certainly raised concerns among the partners including Bill Gates Foundation, World Health Organization (WHO) and other stakeholders, he added.

The Prime Minister said that during a telephonic conversation, Bill Gates had expressed his commitment to support the government's efforts to eliminate the disease.

The Prime Minister also expressed his gratitude to the WHO, stakeholders, related departments, law enforcement personnel and the daughters of the nation for their continuing efforts and commitments.

The Prime Minister mentioned that he had held meetings with the federal health ministry officials and others, whereas the federal and provincial governments were all supporting these efforts.

He expressed confidence that they would control the disease with collective efforts.

Earlier, the prime minister also gave away certificates to the best-performing polio workers.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif giving appreciation award to a polio worker for her services in line of duty.

At least 68 killed in Nepal's worst air crash in 30 years

KATHMANDU (Reuters): At least 68 people were killed on Sunday when a domestic flight crashed in Pokhara in Nepal, the country's Civil Aviation Authority said, in the worst air crash in three decades in the small Himalayan nation.

Hundreds of rescue workers were scouring the hillside where the Yeti Airlines flight, carrying 72 people from the capital Kathmandu, went down.

Local TV showed rescue workers scrambling around broken sections of the aircraft. Some of the ground near the crash site was scorched, with licks of flames visible.

The crash is Nepal's deadliest since 1992, the Aviation Safety Network database showed, when a Pakistan International Airlines Airbus A300 crashed into a hillside upon approach to Kathmandu, killing all 167 people on board.

The plane made contact with the airport from Seti Gorge at 10:50 a.m. (0505 GMT), the aviation authority said in its statement. "Then it crashed."

Police official Ajay K.C. said rescue workers were

having difficulty reaching the site in a gorge between two hills near the tourist town's airport.

"Half of the plane is on the hillside," said Arun Tamu, a local resident, who told Reuters he reached the site minutes after the plane went down. "The other half has fallen into the gorge of the Seti river."

Khum Bahadur Chhetri said he watched from the roof of his house as the flight approached.

"I saw the plane trembling, moving left and right, and then suddenly its nose dived and it went into the gorge," Chhetri told Reuters, adding that local residents took two passengers to a hospital.

The government has set up a panel to investigate the cause of the crash and it is expected to report within 45 days, the finance minister, Bishnu Paudel, told reporters.

Nearly 350 people have died since 2000 in plane or helicopter crashes in Nepal - home to eight of the world's 14 highest mountains, including Everest - where sudden weather changes can make for hazardous conditions.

The European Union has banned Nepali airlines from its airspace since 2013, citing safety concerns.

Those on the twin-engine ATR 72 aircraft included three infants and three children, the Civil Aviation Authority's statement said.

Passengers included five Indians, four Russians and one Irish, two South Korean, one Australian, one French and one Argentine national.

The journey to Pokhara, Nepal's second largest city tucked under the picturesque Annapurna mountain range, from the capital Kathmandu is one of the Himalayan country's most popular tourist routes, with many preferring a short flight instead of a six-hour-long drive through hilly roads.

Pokhara Airport spokesman Anup Joshi said the aircraft crashed as it approached the airport, adding that the "plane cruised at 12,500 feet and was on a normal descent." The weather on Sunday was clear.

Flight tracking website FlightRadar24 said on Twitter the Yeti Airlines air-

craft was 15 years old and equipped with an old transponder with unreliable data. It added that the last signal from the transponder was received at 0512 GMT at an altitude of 2,875 feet above mean sea level.

Pokhara Airport is located at about 2,700-2,800 feet above mean sea level, according to FlightRadar24.

The ATR72 of European planemaker ATR is a widely used twin engine turbo-prop plane manufactured by a joint venture of Airbus (AIR.PA) and Italy's Leonardo (LDOF.MI). Yeti Airlines has a fleet of six ATR72-500 planes, according to its website.

"ATR specialists are fully engaged to support both the investigation and the customer," the company said on Twitter.

Airbus and Leonardo did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

On its website, Yeti describes itself as a leading domestic carrier. Its fleet consists of six ATR 72-500s, including the one that crashed. It also owns Tara Air, and the two together offer the "widest network" in Nepal, the company says.

PPP wins all eight wards in Sehwan in LG elections

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candidates won all eight wards of the Saeedabad Town Committee of Sehwan Sharif in the local government elections on Sunday.

As per the unofficial results, the PPP contested all eight wards of the Saeedabad Town Committee of Sehwan Sharif. Siddique Memon of the PPP won ward number 2 by obtaining 189 votes.

In ward number 3, Imdad Ali Baghio won by securing 390 votes. Rajab Baghio won ward number 4 by securing 556 votes and Abdullah Shoro won unopposed from ward number 5.

Qurban Ali Babbar was declared successful with 212 votes from ward number 6 and in ward number 7, Syed Zowar Shah won by

securing 400 votes. Muhammad Siddique Memon of PPP won ward number 8 with 652 votes.

It may be noted that the LG Polls in Phase II in Sindh districts were held on the seats of Metropolitan Corporation, Municipal Corporation, Town Municipal Committees, District Councils, Union Councils, and Wards. In Karachi, the mayor will be elected by any party that has a simple majority of 124 UCs.

Acts of violence, sabotage reported during ongoing LG elections

Several acts of violence, clashes and setting elections camps on fire were reported in different districts of Sindh the ongoing local government elections on Sunday. According to media reports, unidentified people set seven election camps of different political

parties on fire during ongoing local government elections in different areas of the provincial capital.

Police said first incident was reported in Saeedabad area where fire was brought under control in no time. The suspects fled the scene. The Korangi SSP said the investigation is underway to determine the elements behind the incident.

The camps were set on fire in Korangi and Malir areas. Rangers and police are present at the affected camps. The PTI leaders alleged that some masked men entered a polling station in North Nazimabad Town UC-3 of Rachi district, harassed the polling staff and returning officer and tampered with the technical equipment. It was further alleged that unknown

(Cont: on Back Page)



POKHARA: Rescue teams work to retrieve bodies at crash site of an aircraft carrying 72 people in western Nepal.

Pakhtuns can't support leader influenced by western culture: Fazal

PESHAWAR (APP): PTI MNA Nasir Khan Musazai formally announced joining JUI-F along with his family, 30 Village Council Chairman and over 100 councilors here on Sunday.

The joining ceremony was held in the residence of Nasir Khan Musazai wherein former chairman Village Council Musazai, former general secretary PTI district Peshawar, Taimur Khan and Hamza Khan also announced their joining the JUI-F fold.

Besides, Maulana Fazalur Rehman, Opposition Leader in KP Assembly, Akram Khan Durrani, Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman, Maulana Atta-ul-Haq Darwaish, Nasir Khan Musazai, Abdul Jalil Jan, Asif Iqbal Daudzai, Maulana Maskeen Shah, Khalid Waqar Chamkani and Ashraf Ali Marwat also addressed the joining cere-

mony.

Speaking on the occasion, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazalur Rehman congratulated Nasir Khan Musazai and his associates and welcomed them to his party fold.

He said "Pakhtuns can not support a political party whose leader is influenced by western culture, as it runs counter to our values and history."

He said that the decision of the Nasir Khan Musazai to join JUI-F is not limited to an individual or family, rather the whole province is presently looking towards their party and awaiting their government in the province in near future.

Maulana Fazalur Rehman said that since last 15 years he is saying that the spirit, thinking and morality of the PTI affiliated people are representing the culture of the West. He

said that they had competed Qadianiat, United States and Russia.

He said that he is talking of the protection of the belief of Pakhtuns and urged on them not to follow such a political party, which does not represent their customs and traditions.

He said that during the PTI government, the country was pushed towards economic bankruptcy and international friends of Pakistan saying that in case of the return of Imran Khan into power, they will not waste their investment. He also accused the PTI chief of spreading lie through fake social media IDs.

Maulana Fazal said that if PTI is the fate of Pakistan, then neither country will remain Islamic nor economic or moral and the very existence of the country would be at risk.

President, PM condoles loss of life in plane crash

ISLAMABAD (APP): The President Dr Arif Alvi on Sunday expressed his deepest condolences over the sad loss of precious lives in a plane crash in Pokhara, Nepal.

The President conveyed his prayers for the families of the victims who lost their lives in the tragic incident and prayed to Allah Almighty to grant them the strength and the courage to bear this loss with patience and fortitude.

The President in his message said that "at this moment of most profound grief, our thoughts and prayers are with the affected families and grieving people of Nepal".

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious lives in the plane crash in Pokhara, Nepal.

In a statement, he said in this difficult and sad time, our sympathies and prayers are with the government of Nepal, the affected families and the people of Nepal.

"May Allah grant the bereaved the courage to endure this trauma with patience and perseverance," he added.

S Waziristan Police holds flag march

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN (APP): The police force held flag march in Sub-division Wana on Sunday aimed at maintaining law and order situation in the area.

According to the vision of Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Muhammad Saleem Marwat, the flag march was led by South Waziristan District Police officer (DPO) Shabbir Hussain Shah and SP Investigation Fazal Subhan.

The flag march, participated by police from all the police stations, was started from Police Line Wana and culminated at the same point after passing through Main Bazaar and various highways.

Speaking on this occasion, the DPO said the confidence of the masses in the police force would be increased through this march that the police were there with high morale, full enthusiasm and full preparation for their protection. He expressed the commitment to fulfill the responsibilities with honesty in any case.

He said the South Waziristan Police was a public friendly force and it was the department's commitment to respect the people and help them.

The people of the area appreciated the district police for holding flag march, saying, it had boosted their morale. It proved that our police are present among us with full spirit.

LAHORE (INP): As the Punjab Assembly automatically stood dissolved late on Saturday, now for the caretaker set-up, both the PTI-PML-Q alliance and the opposition PML-N will have to float two names each after formal consultations. If both sides do not reach a consensus on the subject, the matter will go to the Election Commission of Pakistan that will make the appointment.

As the Punjab Assembly automatically stood dissolved the PTI concluded a series of hectic meetings deliberating its political strategy and finalizing candidates for the slot of caretaker CM, to be appointed in consultation with the outgoing assembly's opposition leader.

PTI Chairman Imran Khan, in a meeting with senior party leaders, is said to have finalized the candidates to be proposed for the caretaker CM. However, at the eleventh hour, the party decided to hold onto the names for another day as Mr Khan is scheduled to present them to outgoing CM Parvez Elahi in a formal meeting at his residence.

CM Elahi and Opposition Leader in the Punjab Assembly Hamza Shehbaz are now required to consult and mutually decide a candidate to propose for appointment as the caretaker CM within the next three days.

Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan had earlier claimed the PTI had

finalised three names to be suggested for the caretaker chief minister's post. Those names would be shared soon after the dissolution of the assembly.

In the meeting with senior party leaders at his residence, PTI chief Imran Khan deliberated and reportedly finalized the candidates for the interim chief's slot. On the other hand Governor Balighur Rehman wrote to CM Elahi and Opposition Leader in the PA Hamza Shehbaz, saying: "The provincial assembly of Punjab and cabinet stand dissolved under Article 112(1) of the Constitution on Jan 14. The caretaker chief minister shall be appointed by the undersigned in consultation with the outgoing chief

minister and the leader of the opposition in the outgoing provincial assembly as per Article 224(1A) of the Constitution."

He also invited both sides to participate in the process of appointment of an interim CM and provide names of their nominees for the purpose within three days (by Jan 17). He also offered to meet with Mr Elahi and Mr Shehbaz on the matter, if both leaders wished.

Hamza has been out of the country for over a month and his party is still not sure when he will return. "If Hamza does not return from the US, he may become a part of the consultation on the appointment process from abroad," a PML-N leader told.

Mursal Nabizada, Former Afghan MP Killed in Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): The security authorities of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan confirmed that Mursal Nabizada, a former Afghan Member of Parliament, and one of her security guards were killed in Kabul on Sunday.

Khalid Zadrar, the Spokesperson of the Kabul Security Department confirmed to Khaam Press that Mursal Nabizada, a former representative of Laghman province in the Afghan Parliament was killed by unknown gunmen in the 12th district of Kabul city.

Khalid Zadar said that unknown gunmen entered Mursal Nabizada's house in the "Ahmadsha Baba Mena" locality in the 12th district of Kabul

city and shot two people to death last night.

He further added that perpetrators have not yet been identified and the reasons behind the killing remain unclear.

Meanwhile, Mursal Nabizada's brother was also wounded, however, his family has yet to comment on the terror incident.

The Spokesperson further added that investigations are underway, and will share the finding with the public in this regard in a timely manner.

This comes as terror incidents including suicide attacks, targeted killing, and bombing has unprecedentedly increased in the recent past,



resulting in the death in the injury of scores of Afghan servicemen and civilians.



Joint efforts needed to steer country out of crises : Ashrafi

LAHORE (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Interfaith Harmony and Middle Eastern Affairs Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has said that the country was facing economic challenges and collective efforts were needed to steer the country out of current challenging situation.

Talking to the media after attending 'Hazrat Siddique-e-Akbar (RA) Conference' at Johat Town, he said that all stakeholders would have to come together and prepare a solid plan of action for betterment of the country.

Ashrafi, who is also chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council, said that religious leadership should also play its role for development and prosperity of the country. He said the political and religious leaders should end their differences and strengthen the national economy with joint struggle. "We should take constructive steps to bring the country on a par with the developed countries, beyond political and religious affiliation," he said.

It was easy to talk about the state of Madina but it was difficult to constitute a state on its pattern, he said

and added that the nation should be educated about the system of 'Khilafat-e-Rashidah' and the measures taken for welfare of common people in that era.

He said the Pakistan Ulema Council had decided that the virtues of Syedna Siddique-e-Akbar (RA) and the system of Khilafat-e-Rashidah and the state of Madina would be described in the Friday sermons across the country. He said that teachings of Syedna Siddique-e-Akbar (RA) should be promoted among the youth as it was a light for all Muslims.

5 lakh people provided driving licences, services in 2022: CTP

LAHORE (APP): The City Traffic Police (CTP) provided licences and related facilities to more than five lakh people during the year 2022. In the year 2022, more than three lakh people were provided learner permits, said Chief Traffic Officer Dr Asad Malhi, here on Sunday.

The CTO told APP that 108,718 people got renewed their driving licences while 32,132 availed new driving licences during the outgoing year. More than 32,000

citizens, who appeared in driving tests for licences, could not pass, the CTO said and added that new international driving licences were issued to 13,726 citizens.

The CTO said that duplicate licences were issued to 3,616 citizens after they lost their document, adding that cases were registered against 18 touts, who were involved in looting people in the name of driving licences. Dr Asad Malhi said that 413 licences were cancelled over careless,

irresponsible and rash driving, saying that in the year 2022, only 142 candidates could pass the public service vehicles test.

In the year 2022, more than 255,000 tickets were issued for driving without a licence, he added. The CTO said that six driving testing centres and 23 licence booths had been established in the provincial capital, whereas smart licensing (24/7), a separate testing centre for women, was also set up in 2022, he concluded.

Several attempts of poll rigging foiled: PTI leader

LAHORE (PPI) PTI leader Musarrat Jamshed Cheema on Sunday claimed that several attempts of rigging were made unsuccessful last night, adding the people [of Karachi and Hyderabad] would never let such parties to hijack Karachi.

Taking to Twitter, she said several attempts of rigging were made unsuccessful last night,

adding the people [of Karachi and Hyderabad] would never let such parties to hijack Karachi.

She said the PTI would remain successful in the Sindh local government elections today, saying the people of Sindh had rejected the holliganism and blackmailing of the MQM.

In another tweet, the former spokesman of the Punjab chief minister said

the Punjab Assembly had stood dissolved and general elections would take place in next 90 days.

She said the PML-N couldn't compete with the PTI in political battle as their [PML-N] leader [Nawaz Sharif] is an absconder who would spend the rest of his life while playing ludo with Altaf Hussain. "Now the future of Pakistan is bright," she opined.

Over 43,605 law enforcers deployed for LG polls security

KARACHI (PPI): Over 43,605 law enforcement officials and personnel were deployed to perform duties under the Sindh government's security plan for LG polls in Karachi and Hyderabad division on Sunday.

According to the Sindh police spokesperson, 26,050 officers and personnel have been deployed on election duty at 4,997 polling stations in the city.

Apart from the law enforcement agency, the spokesperson informed that 200 Frontier Constabulary and 500 rangers personnel have also been deployed for election duty.

More than 43,605

Karachi police personnel performed security duty on the day of polling of which 17,588 have been posted in the East zone. Meanwhile, 6,533, 4,837, and 6,218 comprising officers, personnel and staff have been deployed in the District East, Malir, and Korangi, respectively.

The spokesperson added that 11,627, 2,155, 4,558 and 4,914 personnel have been stationed in the South Zone, District South, District Central, and Keamari, respectively.

Deployment of officers, personnel and staffers in the West Zone, District Central, and District West totalled 14,390, 9,672, and 4,718, respectively.

Around 3,800 traffic police personnel have also been performing their duties.

About 8,000 polling stations have been declared sensitive' or highly sensitive in 16 districts of Sindh as LG polls began in Karachi and Hyderabad.

In Karachi, as many as 3,415 polling stations have been classified as sensitive, 1,496 as highly sensitive and 79 as normal.

Out of 2,674 polling stations in Hyderabad division, 1,270 are sensitive, 779 are highly sensitive and 625 are normal. In Thatta and Sujawal all 1,008 polling stations have been declared sensitive and 185 highly sensitive.



LAHORE: Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council and Special Representative to PM on Interfaith Harmony addressing a press conference.—NNI Photo

Murtaza Wahab hopeful of PPP's win in LG polls

KARACHI (APP): Spokesman for Sindh Government Murtaza Wahab has expressed hope that the people of Karachi and Hyderabad divisions will vote in favour of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in the ongoing Local Government elections.

Talking to media persons here on Sunday, he said that the polling was going on in a peaceful manner. A few complaints had been received, and the provincial government would follow the directions of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in that regard, he added.

Murtaza Wahab appealed to the people to vote in favour of the PPP. He said that the purpose of holding the LG elections was to resolve the issues of people at their doorstep and to transfer the power to the grassroots level.

He also hoped that the elected Mayor would work for the welfare of the people of Karachi.

'PPP to fight every constituency in Punjab'

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Central Punjab acting president Rana Farooq Saeed has said that the party will contest elections from every constituency of the province.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday, he said the PPP would not contest elections from the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) platform.

He said that the party was contesting elections against wealth and hoped the party would win the elections. "We will form the next government in Punjab," he claimed.

He said a "Fitna" had defamed the country in the world but Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had proved himself a great leader by countering propaganda against the country.

He said that the PPP was a party which was not formed by any dictator and it gave constitution and nuclear programme to the nation.

CM approves uplift projects

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi on Sunday approved the construction of Multan-Vehari dual road project while presiding over 12th Public-Private Partnership & Monitoring Board meeting.

The CM apprised that in the first phase 39 km long dual road would be constructed from Multan to Tibba Sultanpur, adding that dual road from Multan to Tibba Sultanpur would be constructed under public-private partnership.

He said that dual road from Multan to Tibba Sultanpur would be constructed in one year, maintaining that 47 km long

dual road from Tibba Sultanpur to Vehari would be constructed in the second phase.

Communication & Works (C&W) department would construct dual road from Tibba Sultanpur to Vehari. Approval was also granted for the construction of Faisalabad-Chiniot-Sargodha dual road construction project during the meeting.

Chaudhry Parvez Elahi said that Faisalabad-Chiniot-Sargodha dual road would be completed in two phases under public-private partnership, saying that in the first phase Faisalabad to Chiniot dual road project would be completed.

Approval was granted

about a review of environmental and social management system during the meeting. The decisions being taken during 11th Public-Private Partnership and Monitoring Board meeting were endorsed during the meeting.

Chief Secretary Abdullah Sumbal, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Secretaries of P&D, Finance, Law, Housing, C&W departments, Member P&D, CEO Public-Private Partnership Authority and concerned officials attended the meeting. DG Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) attended the meeting via video link.

20 employed after Ombudsman Punjab's involvement

LAHORE (APP): On the orders of Ombudsman Punjab Maj (R) Azam Suleman Khan, twenty applicants from different districts were provided regular jobs in government departments under rule 17-A of the Punjab Civil Servants (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1974.

A spokesman for the Ombudsman Punjab office said here on Sunday that it came out during the hearing of the application of Muhammad Arsalan, who applied for appointment as a driver in the 5th scale in the office of the director fisheries aqua

tion authority Lahore under Rule 17-A, that 31 other applications were also under consideration for recruitment under the law.

He said that 16 candidates had been hired as junior clerks after passing the typing and aptitude test conducted by the district education authority on the order of ombudsman office.

In a similar development, the spokesman reported that Muhammad Azam had been appointed as a junior clerk by the fisheries department while Zeeshan Ahmad had been recruited as a driver in the 5th scale in the office of the director fisheries aqua

Punjab in Lahore after the intervention of the ombudsman office.

The spokesman further said the irrigation department had recruited Allah Ditta of Okara as a baildar while the son of Khushab-based plaintiff Shamim Akhtar had been recruited as Naib Qasid on the mediation of the ombudsman office.

On the order of ombudsman office, the University of Narowal appointed the alternative candidate Hasan Abdullah while reviewing the appointment process for the post of Additional Director Academics and Coordination in Grade-19.

US President urged for reunion of Aafia with her children on humanitarian grounds

KARACHI (NNI): Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor

here Sunday appealed to the US President Joe Biden to take steps of the reunion of Pakistani mother Dr Aafia Siddiqui to her children on humanitarian grounds. He said Aafia Siddiqui is the victim of Afghan War and now when the Afghan War is over, Taliban fighters pardoned, released from the US jails and NATO forces returned from Afghanistan what is the logic to keep an innocent mother still imprisoned in a US jail. He said meeting her children and family is the basic human right of Dr Aafia but she has been denied of this right for decades. He said the case of Aafia is the biggest violation of human rights of this century. He said it further compounds the gravity of the matter that this violation is committed non but the USA, the world champion of human rights, as well as, the rights of women and children. Altaf Shakoor said that sadly the Pakistani government is too afraid to raise the issue of Aafia, a noted woman scientist, with the US authorities due to its slave-master relations with the world power. He said human rights activists all over the world have been raising voice for the release of Aafia Siddiqui but their cried fall on deaf ears. He said the world history would depict the name of the US and Pakistani rulers in condemnable words for

their inhuman silence towards the plights of an

innocent woman and help-

less mother.

Four injured in cylinder blast

LAHORE (APP): Four persons were injured in a cylinder blast incident in a restaurant at Mini Market Gulberg, here on Sunday.

A police spokesperson said that the cylinder blast occurred in the restaurant kitchen. The victims were identified as Moamar (24), Shahid (53), Daniyal (24) and Saddam (24).

On receiving information, Rescue-1122 vehicles reached the site and started rescue operation. The rescuers provided the first aid to the injured and shifted them to Jinnah Hospital Lahore.

10 dead, 1,070 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 10 persons were killed and 1,070 others injured in 1,077 road traffic crashes (RTCs) in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 551 seriously injured people were shifted to different hospitals while 519 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 554 drivers, 33 underage drivers, 125 pedestrians, and 401 passengers were among the victims of the road crashes. The statistics show that 256 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 235 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 80 in Multan with 88 victims, and at third Faisalabad with 74 accidents and 67 victims.

According to the data, 954 motorbikes, 89 auto-rickshaws, 114 motorcars, 24 vans, 16 passenger buses, 27 trucks and 92 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road traffic accidents.

Quaid's leaders based on character, courage key to Pakistan's turnaround: speakers

LAHORE (NNI): The speakers at the Quaid-e-Azam leadership lecture organized by Pakistan's premier organization devoted to promoting the vision and philosophy of the Founding Fathers said that Quaid's leaders based on character, courage and commitment would be key to the country's turnaround in the future. The Nazriya Pakistan Trust (NPT), launched the Leadership Lecture with the first talk by former PAF head, Air Chief Marshal (ACM-R) Sohail Aman here on Sunday, a news release said. Termining ACM (R) Aman an 'authentic Pakistani hero', Chairman Senate Committee on Defence, Senator Mushahid Hussain, Vice Chairman of NPT, said the Quaid-e-Azam through his leadership based on 'character, courage and commitment' had set a unique example which inspired the Muslim masses and led to the struggle which created Pakistan.



LAHORE: Women selecting old books on a roadside stall at Provincial Capital.



Daughter of late Iqbal Ahmed Sethi (Sethi Mohalla, Peshawar)



Wife of late Sajjad Ul Hassan

In loving memory of

Najam-un-Nisa



Daughter of late Shafiqah Bano (Samman Burj, Wazirabad)



Sister of late Amir Ahmed Sethi

"May Allah grant her highest ranks of Jannat. Her presence will be truly missed. A beautiful, kind, witty, humorous and truly nurturing and caring soul. A true disciplinarian like there exist no more. A strong, fiercely independent lady. One who enjoyed all things classy and beautiful. A class apart."

Zaib-un-Nisa, sister, with daughters Adila, Yasmin, and Anna and her children Mariam, Shahryar and Mustafa.

WB to finance two hydropower projects of 245 MW in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: World Bank will provide financial assistance for beginning construction work on two hydropower projects of 245 megawatts in district Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa this year, the completion of which will generate an annual income of more than Rs.13 billion for the province.

It was also decided to add a security package by making quick amendments to the documents before starting these energy projects.

This decision was taken in a high-level meeting with the World Bank mission chaired by the Secretary Energy and Power Nisar Ahmad Khan. WB Senior Energy Specialist Muhammad Saqib, along with other members of the mission, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pakhtunkhwa

Energy Development Organization (PEDO), Engineer Naeem Khan, Chief Engineer of KHRE Program Shah Hussain and respective project directors also participated in the meeting, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

In the meeting, Chief Executive PEDO Engineer Naeem Khan, while giving a briefing, said that with the financial support of the WB, the construction work on 2 hydropower projects in Swat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be started this year, which include 157 MW Maidyen Hydropower Project and 88 MW Gabral Kalam Hydropower Project.

In this regard, a 450 million dollar agreement has already been signed between the WB and the provincial government. Moreover, these projects will be completed by 2027. Speaking on the occasion,

Secretary Energy KP, Nisar Ahmad Khan said that both power projects are very important for the development and prosperity of the province, the completion of which will start a new era of development in the province.

On one hand, the projects will bring huge investment in the province and on the other hand, new employment opportunities will be available, he added.

He assured the World Bank mission that the provincial government is making fool-proof arrangements for the security of the staff working on the energy projects and is in touch with the local police, administration and other security agencies.

He issued instructions to the officials that security package should be prepared and practical work may soon be started so that the people of the province can benefit from its fruits.

Governor KP felicitates TPC office bearers

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Sunday congratulated the newly elected cabinet of Tank Press Club (Registered).

The elections of the Tank Press Club were completed in which Noor Muhammad Barki was elected as the President unopposed, Sheikh Rehmatullah was elected as the General Secretary, Noor Alam Meh-sud Senior Vice President, Kafaitullah Paracha Vice President, Amanullah Marwat was elected as the Finance Secretary, Muhammad Rafiq Arain Pattern Inc-hief, Tanveer Shah Kundi Joint Secretary, Jawad Dilsoz Office Secretary and Zafraan Miani was elected Information Secretary.

Governor Ghulam Ali congratulated the newly elected Cabinet of Tank Press Club and expressed good wishes and hope to work for the betterment of people of the area.

Fire erupted in Pirpaii Patwar Khana

PESHAWAR (APP): A fire broke out in Pirpaii Patwar Khana due to unknown reasons, the official of Rescue 1122 said on Sunday.

He said on receiving the information about the fire, Rescue 1122, fire vehicles from Nowshera Station reached the spot. The young firefighters of Rescue 1122 responded to the fireplace within a few minutes and started extinguishing the fire on arrival.

According to the official, Pirpaii was stuck in the office building of Patwar Khana for an unknown reason due to which there was a risk of damaging all the official papers which were kept safe by the rescue personnel.

Rescue 1122 firefighters brought the fire under control and prevented it from spreading further by fighting fire continuously for one hour in a professional manner, the official informed.

He disclosed that 7 fire rescuers participated in this fire operation under the leadership of shift in-charge Zainul Abedin and used around 12 thousand liters of water with no casualty reported.

Police finalize security plan

PESHAWAR (APP): The Tank police have finalized a comprehensive action plan to provide fool proof security during the upcoming Census 2023.

DPO Waqar Ahmed chaired a meeting of police officers here at his office, in that regard. The meeting was attended by DSP Rural Circle, Alamgir Khan and DSP Sub Division Jandola, Syed Marjan Khan, all SHO's and staff concerned.

The DPO said that census was a national duty and it was the duty of police force to ensure its peaceful completion. He also requested the public to cooperate with the police for the purpose.

In the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding provision of fool-proof security for Census 2023, and steps to be taken to avoid any untoward incident during it. A comprehensive strategy was formulated after detailed deliberation.



PESHAWAR: IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Moazzam Jah Ansari with children of martyred policemen.

KP govt rejects so-called federal steering committee

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Sardar Faisal Amin Gandapur has strongly rejected the so-called steering committee established by the federal government for using development funds in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, calling it completely unconstitutional and blatant interference in provincial affairs. He regretted that the imported government sitting in Islamabad, after destroying the entire country's economy, is not stopping from its hypocritical politics, looting public money and pursuing anti-nation agenda.

Sardar Faisal Amin in an informal conversation with media representatives in Peshawar on Sunday, further said that if the central

government really wants to show sympathy to the people of the merged districts, it should immediately return the right of fifty billion rupees to them, which it has usurped, and despite all our efforts, out of the 55 billion rupees of AIP budget of former FATA, only 5 billion rupees were provided, which is like cumin in the camel's mouth, he added.

"Regrettably, health card funds of four and a half billion rupees also have been stopped of the merged districts whereas a significant cut of about five and a half billion rupees in the salary funds of ex-FATA employees has been imposed, which has also no guarantee from the center next month", he maintained adding that provincial government had to forthwith bridge all these financial difficulties and compensate them at the very cost of the

people of the rest of the province because all these tribals are our brethren and the people here cannot even imagine leaving them alone.

Faisal Amin Gandapur strongly condemned the negative role of Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in this context and said that as a representative of the federation, he should voice for the usurped funds of ex-FATA from the center instead of interfering in the affairs of the provincial government. He said our chief minister Mahmood Khan is right to say that the governor is just a puppet of the usurping government who has been apparently entrusted with the mission of spoiling the economic affairs of this province instead of improving it.

The Minister said that the ex-FATA employees' salaries have been reduced

by 50 to 75 million rupees and this reduction has also to be met by the provincial government's kitty.

Faisal Amin Gandapur demanded of the federal government to withdraw this notification immediately and instead release fifty billion rupees of the AIP budget. He however expressed the hope that despite the decision to leave the government and dissolve the provincial assembly, we are still worried about the people. I, hence the KP governor, for the sake of the zealous people of the province, especially the merged districts, will also add his voice to our voice and talk about the transfer of AIP funds from the federation so that the province and the people can be taken out of the quagmire of economic challenge and their future could be made bright, he concluded.



PESHAWAR: Additional Assistant Commissioner Ihsan Ali Shah inspecting Nanbais' shops during a visit.

SCCI organizes consultative session

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) conducted a consultative session titled "How to increase export to China" here at chamber house. The meeting was presided over by SCCI senior vice president Shahid Hussain, while the chamber vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi, member of executive committee Ms Qurtul Ain, former executive member Zahoor Khan, Vice Chairman, SCCI Standing Committee on Land Route Naeem ur Rehman, Coordinator of SCCI Research and Development Cell Ishtiaq Ali, and Research Officer Ms Sumaira, said in a press release issued here on Sunday.

The main purpose of the meeting was to hold discussions on several proposals regarding the increase of exports to the People's Republic of China.

In this study meeting, it was discussed in light of a research of the possibility

of enhancing export to China both through sea and land routes, especially through those provinces and areas proximity to Pakistan.

During the discussion, it appeared that the seaport is quite far away, and instead through the seaport, export to China of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab manufacturing products through sost route is very feasible and appropriate.

If a feasibility study would be prepared of various cities of KP and Punjab province in which comparative analysis regarding freights and fares, duration and expenses could be made so the export besides through seaport, would also be enhanced through land routes, the participants of the meeting said. In the meeting, it was also discussed about expenses, fares and freights and time consumption during export to China through seaport.

Shahid Hussain told the meeting import from Afghanistan and re-export to China is being carried

100 per cent through seaport route, while meeting discussed the enhancement of export of essential items and products import from Afghanistan and re-export to China through land routes, he informed.

The SCCI's SVP viewed that employment opportunities would be generated with promotion of economic and trade activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Balistan and Hazara division.

The meeting also discussed the enhancement of export with China through the sost border. The meeting noted that fares, freight, time and expenditures would be saved by export to China through land route along with seaport route.

Shahid Hussain said SCCI will also hold a comparative analysis of the export through land routes, how much it would bring positive impacts on the country's economy, exports, trade and businesses.

On the occasion, the participants presented various proposals and suggestions and agreed that weekly review meetings will be held and minutes of the meetings will be shared with federal relevant ministries and departments concerned.

Shahid Hussain said SCCI is conducting a comparative analysis on positive and negative impacts, angels and aspects of export to China through seaport and land routes.

Woman gives birth to child in ambulance

PESHAWAR (APP): A woman gave birth a baby in Rescue 1122 on Sunday when she was being taking to a hospital in Peshawar. Spokesman of Rescue 1122, said that they were shifting a woman resident of Jahangir Abad to hospital that on the way the health of her was felt severe and she gave birth a baby in their ambulance. The medical technician in the ambulance assisted the woman in the birth of her child. He said that the mother and her kid are in good health condition.

PTI using public resources for personal interests: Aimal Wali

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP) Aimal Wali Khan on Sunday alleged the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, including party's Chief Imran Khan were using public resources for personal interests.

In a press statement issued here by Bacha Khan Markaz, Aimal Wali

claimed that the ANP government, in its tenure, had cleared all foreign debts, while the PTI government in a 10-year tenure borrowed record Rs 987 billion. He alleged that despite taking huge foreign loans, the PTI government had failed to serve the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because of its incompetence, and by not utilizing the

resources for the welfare of the people.

"The BRT project is a proof of the PTI government's incompetency, as the project cost twice than it should have. This was a waste of public money and resources", Aimal Wali added.

"Now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was facing financial constraints, with the pro-

vincial government unable to pay the salaries and pensions of employees, for the past two months", he said.

He said that the projects launched by the PTI government, including Bus Rapid Transit and Billion Tree projects had irregularities. "These public projects speak volumes about KP government's corruption", he said.

Hundreds of illegal hoarded bags of flour recovered

PESHAWAR (APP): The District Administration Peshawar has recovered hundreds of illegally hoarded bags of official flour from godowns at Karkhano Market here the other day, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

On the directives of the provincial government, district administration has accelerated the pace of crackdown on hoarders and besides conducting raids on the shops of atta dealers and flour mills also monitoring flour supply to the market.

In this connection, on a tip, a team of the district administration headed by Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC),

Sumaira Saba conducted raids on three godowns at Karkhano Market wherein official flour was hoarded.

Expressing anguish over hoarding of official flour, the AAC ordered the arrest of three persons and took hundreds of illegally hoarded bags of official flour into possession.

Investigation from the arrested persons was continued and further legal proceedings would be initiated in light of information obtained from them.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar, Shafiullah Khan has directed the officers of district administration for inspection of flour mills, atta dealers and godowns on daily basis and initiation of legal

action over any illegal activity.

Regional Police Officer visits police stations

PESHAWAR (APP): The Regional Police Officer Bannu Division Syed Ashfaq Anwar Sunday visited various Police Stations and outposts of Bannu to check the security arrangements to deal with terrorist attacks.

During his visit, Regional Police Officer Bannu Division Syed Ashfaq Anwar inspected security arrangements, Police Stations, and met with police personnel at checkpoints, besides checking the weapons and ammunition stocks.

He inspected Police Station Maryan, Police Station Hoyd, Kangar Pul, Fateh Khel, Mazinga, Sheikh Lundak, Dade Pul Police and check-posts established on various entry points and exit-point.

He directed the Police Force to remain vigilant and keep a close watch on the movements of suspicious persons in wake of the current increased wave of terrorist activities wherein terrorists attacked Police Stations.

Junk foods affecting human health

PESHAWAR (APP): Like pneumonia and diarrhea, overweight and obesity during childhood have increased manifold in recent years in developing countries including Pakistan due to excessive use of unsafe and substandard foods.

Therefore, it was need to the hour to impose ban on sale and purchase of junk foods at least in the educational institutions to safeguard health of the school-going kids.

The substandard food is considered one of the leading causes of diseases including overweight and obesity in children of poor and middle class of the society living in countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Brazil and Mexico etc.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), one out of 10 people in the world fall ill after eating

unhygienic and unhealthy food per year. The data revealed that the number of children aged five to 19 having symptoms of obesity and overweight had increased from 11 million in 1975 to 124 million in 2016 worldwide due to junk food consumption during schools' time.

"The cases of overweight and obesity have increased in Pakistan due to excessive consumption of unhealthy food, use of mobile phones and sedentary lifestyle," said principle medical officer and children specialist, Government Hospital Pabbi Nowshera, Dr Riaz Khan Malik while talking to APP.

Dr Riaz while citing the Pakistan Health Commission (PHC)'s 2018 report said that over 11% of children in the country were overweight and more than 5% obese, while according

to data of compiled through hospitals based studies and surveys revealed that 40% to 50% of children were either overweight or obese, which was a matter of great concern.

He said that the lockdown restrictions, schools and gyms closures, and limited sports events during the COVID-19 era, especially in urban areas, had resulted in the rise of obesity cases in the country. "Overweight and obesity was as injurious to health as pneumonia and diarrhea and if untreated can lead to serious health complications," he said, adding that overweight youth aged 20-25 years can easily develop diabetes, hypertension, metabolic syndrome, digestive disorders and many harmonic issues.

He said that burgers, shawarma, potato chips, snacks, beverages and open

sale of unhygienic foods in bazaars, markets and educational institutions were affecting children's health.

Dr Riaz Malik recommended daily exercise, healthy balanced diet, and avoidance of sugary drinks and dining out to reduce risk of obesity.

"My grandson Ismail Khan (4) was complaining about irritable bowel syndrome for the last couple of weeks and I brought him for medical checkup as he was fond of snacks and chips openly sold in our village shops and markets," said Misal Khan, a resident of Pabbi Nowshera while talking to APP. "The doctors diagnosed him with irritable bowel syndrome citing an excessive use of snacks and locally made chips besides high carbohydrate rich food and beverages," he said.

Qaiser Khan, Spokesman

of KP Food Safety and Halal Food Authority (KPFS&HFA) told the news agency that 158,481 inspections were conducted and 944,178 kilograms and litres of substandard food items discarded last year. The teams discarded 152,460 litres of counterfeit beverages, 41,678 litres of adulterated milk, and 122,128 kg of substandard bakery & confectionery items.

Similarly, various wholesale dealers were inspected, and 205,584kg of substandard items seized and discarded from such premises. The authority also discarded 35,662 kg of spices and 26,629 kg of unhealthy chips besides 20,790 kg of oil and ghee, and 19,314 kg of stale fish, among many other poor food items in the province.

"Most of these substandard food items were discarded in Peshawar, where

359,634 kg/litres of unhygienic items seized and dumped," he said, adding in Mardan and Nowshera districts, over 114,033 and 112,483 kg of substandard and unhealthy food items discarded.

He said that seven new mobile food testing laboratories were established in different divisions of the province to check quality of products in hotels and conduct crackdown against substandard and adulterated food items on the spot. Qaiser said that five more such laboratories would be established in the current fiscal year.

The Authority's director operations, Altaf Hussain said quality of food items in markets were being closely monitored and strict action are being taken against violators. A multi-pronged strategy has been adopted to counter food adulteration

with the help of mobile food testing laboratories. He said adulteration hubs and violators were caught red-handed and legal actions initiated and hefty fines imposed on them.

"We have banned junk food including carbonated and artificial beverages, chips and other unhealthy food items in premises of schools and colleges," said the Authority's Director Technical Dr. Abdul Sattar Shah. He recommended the use of fresh food in daily diet, especially in vegetables, fresh juices and dairy products for a healthy life.

Shah Rukh Ali Khan, Director General KP FS&HFA said that mobile food testing laboratories were equipped with high-tech testing equipment with an ability to test over 20 food items instantly.

"These laboratories are very effective in identifying

adulterants in food items, and for that reason, we are further increasing the number of mobile laboratories. The procurement process for five mobile food testing laboratories is in process and to be completed soon." He said the provincial government was also upgrading facilities in food testing laboratory at Hayatabad, Peshawar.

Shahrulkh Khan said the monitoring of food services in markets has increased and special focus was being paid to bring positive changes in behavior of food handlers and owners for better quality assurance.

The DG said over 7,000 food handlers were provided with food safety level training last year for better food processing besides regular awareness sessions conducted for promotion of healthy food practices in the province.



In brief

Landmine defused

SIALKOT (APP): The bomb disposal squad defused a high-intensity Indian-made anti-tank landmine, recovered from Mehtabpur Hanjili in the jurisdiction of Phalora police station. District Officer Civil Defence Sialkot Khalid Awan said that it was reported by the police that a landmine was found near Nullah Dek in village Mehtabpur Hanjili. The bomb disposal squad was called in, which defused it and took it along for further analysis. The District Head of Civil Defence Sialkot, the weight of the landmine including the fuse was 8kg.

Flour supply doubled

MULTAN (APP): The food department has doubled the flour supply at flour sale points to ensure the provision of cheaper flour to citizens across the district. The flour supply from flour mills has been made doubled due to the rush of people at sale points. District administration and food department have jointly raided flour hoarding and sealed a shop over misappropriation of flour and also launched action against flour mills. District Food Controller Omair Sagheer has raided and sealed a Godown by seizing 80 flour bags. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Tahir Wattoo said that the flour mills have been given the task of uninterrupted supply of flour and added that every grain of government-subsidized wheat would be delivered to the masses.

Two bodies found

FAISALABAD (APP): Two bodies were found in and around the city during the last 24 hours. Rescue-1122 spokesman said here on Sunday that some passersby spotted a corpse of a 25-year-old man lying near Novelty Bridge Samundri Road and informed the rescuers. The rescue team handed over the body to D-Type Colony police who started investigation for its identification. Apparently the corpse was of an addict person who might expired due to overdose of drugs. Meanwhile, a citizen reported the Dijkot police about the body of a young man near Rakh Branch Canal Chak No.242-RB Dasoha Bridge. The police rushed to the spot and shifted the corpse to mortuary for post-mortem. Investigation was underway.

AC Sambrial reviews training

SIALKOT (APP): Assistant Commissioner Sambrial Maheen Fatima on Sunday visited Govt Islamia High School Sambrial to review the training session of second batch for 7th population and housing census. She expressed his satisfaction over the arrangements regarding the training. Maheen Fatima said the 7th Population and Housing Census was starting soon across Pakistan. She said that like other parts of the country, Sambrial had also made training arrangements for supervisors and enumerators in connection with the census.

Police held one

BADIN (APP): Police have arrested a man possessing illegal weapons in violation of the code of conduct issued for the Local government election. According to detail SHO Kariyo Ghnwar police station Ashiq Ali Lund with his team arrested an accused Haji Abdul Karim Nizamani possessing illegal weapons including a Rep-eater gun, 2 pistols and ammunition while another suspect Sajjad Zangejo managed to escape from the scene.

District Tank gets Rs 150m for uplift projects, says DC

TANK (APP): Deputy Commissioner district Tank Hameedullah Khattak on Sunday said that no hurdles would be tolerated in the execution of different uplift projects in the area after the provincial government had released an amount of Rs150 million for these schemes.

Talking to APP, the DC said that the required funds would enable the district administration to ensure timely completion of these projects.

He said these schemes included construction of Tank main road and work on the project successfully moving ahead, which would be completed at a cost of about Rs 72.553 million.

Similarly, he said that

solar lights would also be installed at main places of Tank and the project would be carried out at a cost of Rs 6 million.

Khattak said it had been a long-standing demand of the city dwellers for installation of LED lights at key points in order to prevent possible criminal incidents.

Separately, Rs 3 million would be spent on installation of street lights at Tung bazaar.

He said that Rs 2 million were required for installation of sign boards in the main bazaar, adding rehabilitation and renovation of tehsil building and other related government offices would also be carried out, costing a sum of Rs15 million.

The Deputy Commis-

sioner said an effective monitoring mechanism had been put in place to ensure quality work and transparently utilize the funds on various segments of the projects which would ensure the development and prosperity of the district.

He said that the district administration was making all out efforts to provide relief to the people with improved facilities.

The DC said that the district administration had successfully tackled the decades-old encroachment issue which had been a bottleneck, demolishing illegal structures including shops, plazas, electric and PTCL poles during various anti-encroachment drives in the city.

Operation launched against hoarding of flour

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Following the directives of the government, district administration Abbottabad has launched operations against the hoarding of wheat flour and profiteers, canceled licenses of 42 flour dealers, sealed two shops, registered FIRs against 2 and imposed Rs. 230,000 fine for increasing flour prices.

According to the details, the administration also launched operations against flour mill owners, wheat flour dealers, and retailers for hoarding flour and sale of subsidized flour at more than fixed rates, not display-

ing banners, sale of standard flour and non-maintenance of flour records.

In this regard, the teams of Additional Assistant Commissioners under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Abbottabad Saqlain Salim, including ADC-1 Ali Sher, ADC-3 Zarak Yar Khan, ADC Revenue Arshad Mahmood, District Food Controller Shad Muhammad have been formed.

The teams inspected subsidized wheat flour dealers, general stores, flour dealers, and flour mills in Murree Road, Supply, Mandian, College Road,

Havelian Khokhar Maira, Salhad, Jadoon Plaza and other areas, the teams also checked the quality of wheat and flour and record.

District administration continued monitoring the sales of flour, reducing the prices of flour and ending the inflation.

They also requested citizens to contact the district control room phone number 09929310553 or the district food office Abbottabad phone number 09929310326 regarding irregularities in the sale of government flour so that action can be taken against the violators.

Fake lady doctor arrested for theft

FAISALABAD (APP): A fake lady doctor was arrested from Allied Hospital and a case was registered against her under theft charges.

A spokesman said here on Sunday that mobile-phone and wallet of a doctor went missing from his room in Allied Hospital. He complained to hospital management about the theft incident.

When the CCTV footage was checked, it was revealed that a lady doctor, identified as Rubab Zahra, had stolen both items.

When the hospital management interrogated her, it was also revealed that Rubab Zahra was a fake doctor, who had been stealing various valuables of doctors and paramedics.

The Civil Lines police was called in and the accused was handed over to

them.

Complete potato cultivation by Jan 31

The agricultural experts have advised farmers of irrigated zones to complete cultivation of potato in the Rabi crop by January 31 to get better yield.

According to a spokesman for the Agriculture (Extension) Department, potato is used largely in Pakistan because it is a rich source of proteins, carbohydrates, potassium and sodium, etc.

Therefore, farmers should cultivate potato over maximum space of land. They should also use approved varieties of potato for cultivation because its production would not only play a role in catering to domestic food requirements but also help growers mitigate their financial

issues, he said.

Among the approved varieties of potato included C-919, C-922, C-707, C-2115, C-9041, P-3163, P-3203 and Ghauri, he added.

Sweets shop gutted
Precious material in a sweets shop was reduced to ashes in the area of Civil Lines police station.

A police spokesman said here on Sunday that a fire erupted in the shop situated at Iqbal Stadium Area due to short-circuiting.

The fire engulfed the entire surroundings and burnt precious material present in the shop.

Receiving information, fire-fighters of Rescue-1122 rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after hectic efforts of many hours. However, no loss of life was reported in this incident, he added.

Maqsood elected DBA Sialkot president

SIALKOT (APP): Maqsood Ahmed Bhatti was elected as President District Bar Association (DBA) here on Sunday.

Bilal Ahmed Ghuman, Chairman Election Board said that Muhammad Qadeer Ahmed, Chaudhry Ahsan Ismail and Ejaz Ahmed Awan were elected as Vice President, General Secretary and Joint Secretary, respectively.

Maqsood Ahmed Bhatti

obtained 653 votes against his rival candidates Chaudhry Muhammad Asim Iqbal Deo who got 632 votes while Sarfraz Ahmed Ghuman secured 245 votes.

Mehr Qadeer was elected as DBA Vice President by securing 537 votes while his rival candidate Azam Ali Gillani obtained 536 votes, Rana Khurram Shehzad got 229 votes and Khawar Javed got 229

votes.

Chaudhry Ahsan Ismail was elected as General Secretary DBA with 601 votes, while Chaudhry Rahat Nazir Vance got 598 votes and Mian Faheem Altaf obtained 335 votes.

While Ejaz Ahmed Awan was elected as Joint Secretary DBA with 837 votes while his rival candidate Rana Irfan Manzoor bagged 642 votes.

Foolproof security being provided to foreigners

MULTAN (APP): City Police Officer (CPO) Shakir Hussain Dawar said that protection of foreigners was top responsibility of the police department and

foolproof security was being provided to them by the department.

During a visit to the Chinese camp in premises of the Muzaffarabad

Police Station here on Sunday, the city police officer said that the security of foreigners performing their duties in different development projects here, was top responsibility of the police department.

The city police officer directed police officials to remain alert while performing security duties at the Chinese camp and also asked the DSP concerned to conduct visit of the camps to monitor security arrangements.

He said that CCTV cameras had already been installed for tight monitoring of the security.



HYDERABAD: Security official standing high alert outside polling station during Local Government Elections.

3 including two girls abducted from Taxila

WAH CANTT (APP): Three persons including two teenaged girls were abducted in three different incidents in the limits of Taxila Police station on Sunday, police said.

According to police sources, Saddam Hussain has reported to Police that his 19 year old sister was abducted when she was alone at her house.

Jallal Hussain Shah has reported to Police that his 18-year-old sister was going to the local market when she was going to the local market.

Moreover, Fared Ullah has reported to the Police that he along with his nephew Zakir Ullah was present at his house when eight persons equipped with different weapons entered his house while scaling the wall and on gunpoint abducted him.

Taxila Police registered three different abduction cases and launched further investigations.

10kg bag of wheat flour being sold at Rs 648

BAHAWALPUR (APP): On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Zahid Parvez Waraich, the 10 kg bag of wheat flour is being sold at Rs. 648 in Bahawalpur under the special package.

The flour is available at designated grocery stores and sale points in the city. Talking to the media here Sunday, Assistant Commissioner Bahawalpur City Dr. Anam Fatima said that she herself and revenue staff were active in the field.

She directed the revenue field staff to ensure the availability of wheat stock as per quota in flour mills and deliver the flour bags to allocated grocery stores after grinding of wheat. The sales of wheat should also be ensured at the fixed rate, she said.

Tenders for 'My City Sialkot' projects soon

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Abdullah Khurram Niazi has said that the district administration will issue formal tenders for various projects, to be carried out under 'My City Sialkot' initiative, soon and people will see for themselves start of execution of these projects in next 15 to 20 days.

Talking to APP at his office here on Sunday, he said the district administration was tying its best to make the city of the Poet of the East Allama Dr Muhammad Iqbal the most beautiful city, and in this regard concrete steps were being taken.

He said some intersections of the city would be decorated and beautified aesthetically.

"The available government resources are being utilised judiciously and fairly, but it is also a responsibility of people to cooperate with the district authorities to make the city beautiful," the DC said adding that the public support was needed to highlight the names of their elders at these intersections.

Three dacoits killed in police encounter

SADIQABAD (PPI): Three notorious dacoits of Andhar Gang were killed in an alleged police encounter in Sadiqabad, police said on Sunday.

The station house officers of Bhong and Kot Sabzal police stations along with a heavy police contingent carried out an operation under the guidance of ASP Shahzaib Chachar in Ghari Bagh area.

According to police, the targeted action was taken after they received a tip

regarding presence of the dacoits in the area.

As the police party reached the place, a gunfight occurred. Three dacoits were killed in the trade of fire while his accomplices managed to escape.

The slain gangsters were identified as Sajawal, Ghulab and Gyandra Dashti, resident of Rajanpur. They were wanted by the police in the killing of a cop Akbar in September, shooting at police that injured four

police officials, kidnapping for ransom and several other heinous crimes.

Police recovered unlicensed weapons, three Kalashnikovs and several rounds from their possessions.

According to police spokesperson, the encounter took place in Ghari Bagh area in the vicinity of Bhong police station. A heavy contingent of police is continuing the search operation in the area to hunt down the fleeing accomplices of the dacoits.

47 flour sale points set up in Sargodha

SARGODHA (APP): The district administration has set up 47 flour sale points across the district aimed to provide flour to the masses on control rates.

Taking to APP here on Sunday, Deputy Commissioner Capt (R) Nadeem Nasir said the government was taking stern action against hoarders and illegal profiteers and would never allow anyone to create artificial shortage of flour across the district.

He said the district administration had set up 26 flour sale points in Sargodha, 6 in Kotmomin, 5 in Bhulwal, 4 in Sillanwali, 4 in Sahiwal and four in Bhera to facilitate the people. The flour sale points had been directed to provide flour to the people at cheaper rate.

The DC said that 9,118

flour bags would be provided to citizens in Sargodha, 1877 bags in Sillanwali, 1805 in Sahiwal, 1100 bags in Bhera, 4000 bags in Bhulwal, 4600 in Kotmomin and 1400 in Shahpur on daily basis and no negligence in this regard would be tolerated.

14 criminals arrested in Sargodha

Police claimed on Sunday to have arrested 14 alleged criminals and recovered narcotics and illegal weapons from them.

The teams of different police stations conducted raids and arrested Naveed, Mohsin, Adnan, Shaikat, Tufail, Ejaz, Liaquat, Noman, Bashir, Rashid, Umer, Amaan, Bilal and Azhar and recovered 1 kg hashish, 220 liters of wine and 15 pistols from them.

Cases were registered

against the accused.

In another raid, Sillanwali police arrested three alleged gamblers identified as Wahid, Ahmed and Nasir with stake money.

327 dumper drivers arrested in four weeks

Police arrested 327 dumper drivers on the charge of not possessing driving licenses and recklessly driving during the last four weeks.

On the direction of DPO Muhammad Tariq Aziz, the traffic police were taking action against dumper drivers who were not possessing driving licence and rash driving on roads.

The DPO Sargodha said that strict action would be taken against drivers who violate traffic rules on a daily basis, says a news release issued here on Sunday.

FESCO shutdown programme for today

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued its shutdown programme for today (Monday, 16th January), for necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines.

According to the programme, power supply from Risala Road, Jinnah, Ali Housing and Afghan Abad feeders linked with 132-KV Jhang Road grid station, Quadrat Abad, Taj Colony, City, new Jinnah Colony, Rasheed Abad and Saeed Abad feeders connected with 132-KV University grid station, GM Abad and Madina Abad feeders attached with 132-KV Narwala Road grid station, Chiniot Road feeder originating from 132-KV Aminpur grid station, Data Street feeder linked with 132-KV GIS grid station, al-Barkat feeder connected with 220-KV Samundri Road grid station, 466 Road

and Khiddarwala feeders attached with 132-KV Samundri grid station, Soondh, Noor Mehal, Aslam Shaheed and Torianwala feeders originating from 132-KV Mureedwala grid station, Lal Shah, Maqbool Pur, Mureedwala, Mochiwala and Eid Gah feeders linked with 132-KV Gojra grid station, Raza Abad and Bahlak feeders connected with 132-KV Tandlianwala grid station, Kot Fazil feeder attached with 132-KV Garh Fateh Shah grid station, Kallar Wala feeder linked with 132-KV Manjhala Bagh grid station, Imam Bargah Road feeder connected with 132-KV Factory Area grid station, 7-JB and Ramdwali feeders attached with 132-KV Chiniot Road grid station, Ashraf Abad feeder originating from 132-KV Nishatabad grid station, new Beeranwala feeder linked with 132-KV Kamal Pur grid station, Jhumra

Road/Raza feeder connected with 132-KV Chiniot grid station and Saeed Abad-I feeder originating from 132-KV Nia Lahore grid station will remain suspended from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. while Raja Road feeder linked with 132-KV Tariq Abad grid station will observe shutdown from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Monday (January 16).

Electricity supply from Sheeraza, Ravi, Pir Salah-ud-Din and TSMIL feeders connected with 132-KV Manjhala Bagh grid station will remain suspended from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. whereas Faisalabad Road, Badshahi Masjid, Beeranwala, Lahore Road, Ahmad Straw Board and Abdullah Fiber feeders attached with 132-KV Chiniot grid station will observe load shedding from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on January 16, 2023.

Blood donation camp held

SIALKOT (APP): A blood donation camp was organised at Sialkot Police Lines, under the auspices of Sundus Foundation. The district police officers, officials and citizens from civil society donated blood at the camp.

DPO Sialkot Muhammad Faisal Kamran told the media a camp was organised at the Police Lines every three months. He said that the Sialkot policemen, besides protecting lives and properties of people, were also saving lives of ailing people, especially children by donating blood for them.

Gang involved in street crimes busted

WAH CANTT (APP): The Taxila Police on Sunday claimed to have busted a gang involved in street crimes and arrested their two members besides recovery of looted booty and weapons utilized in the different crimes.

Talking to newsmen, Sub Divisional Police officer DSP Mian Afzal Shah has said that the gang known as Akash gang was

busted and arrested its two members identified as Akash and Izzat Ullah. He said that police recovered looted booty and weapons utilized in various crimes.

He further said that Wah Cantonment police during crackdown launched against kite sellers, arrested a shopkeeper identified as Naeem and recovered 300 kites and 50 string rolls from his possession.



Bomb kills at least five at DR Congo church

BENI (AFP/APP): A bomb killed at least five people on Sunday after detonating in a church in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the army said.

Details of the attack remain hazy, but military spokesman Antony Mualushayi said the "terrorist act" happened in a Pentecostal church in North Kivu province's Kasindi, a town on the border with Uganda.

Mualushayi later told reporters that at least five bodies had been taken to the morgue following the blast, in what he called a provisional death toll.

Joel Kitusa, a local civil society figure, put the death toll at eight and said 27 other people had been wounded. AFP was unable to independently confirm the toll.

It was not immediately clear who carried out the attack. Mualushayi said that one suspect -- a Kenyan -- had been arrested.

The DRC's communications ministry said on social media that the attack was apparently carried out by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) group. The ADF -- which the Islamic State group claims as its affiliate in Central Africa -- is

active in the Kasindi area.

It has been accused of slaughtering thousands of Congolese civilians and carrying out bomb attacks in Uganda.

The ADF has planted bombs in towns in North Kivu in the past.

Since 2021 a joint Congolese-

Ugandan military operation has been targeting the ADF in North Kivu and neighbouring Ituri province. Over 120 armed groups roam mineral-rich eastern DRC, many of which are the legacy of regional wars that flared at the turn of the 21st century.



Over 80,000 Israelis protest against Supreme Court reform

TEL AVIV (BBC): More than 80,000 Israeli protesters have rallied in Tel Aviv against plans by the new right-wing coalition government to overhaul the judiciary.

The reforms would make it easier for parliament to overturn Supreme Court rulings, among other things. Protesters described Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's proposed changes as an attack on democratic rule.

It follows the instalment of the most religious and hardline government in Israeli history.

Rallies were also held outside the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem and in the northern city of Haifa, local media reported.

One group of protesters

clashed with police while attempting to block a major road, Ayalon highway, in Tel Aviv.

Critics say the reforms would cripple judicial independence, foster corruption, set back minority rights and deprive Israel's court system of credibility.

Banners referred to the new coalition led by Mr Netanyahu as a government of shame. Among those opposed are Israel's Supreme Court chief justice, Esther Hayat, and the country's attorney-general.

The BBC's Samantha Granville in Tel Aviv saw protesters draped in Israeli flags, carrying posters in Hebrew, and pictures of Mr Netanyahu with X's over his mouth.

There was a group of

young girls with red-painted hand prints over their mouths. They wanted to tell the government they won't be quiet. One woman, who asked not to use her name, said through her tears she was a second-generation Holocaust survivor.

"My parents immigrated from non-democratic regimes to live in a democracy," she said. "They came from the totalitarian regime to live freely. So seeing that destroyed is heart-breaking." She and her friend said they expected Mr Netanyahu to try radical changes, but never thought they would come so fast.

These are the largest demonstrations since Mr Netanyahu's new coalition government was sworn in, in December.

Opposition parties had called on Israelis to join the rallies to "save democracy" and in protest at the planned judicial overhaul.

Under the plans announced by Justice Minister Yariv Levin earlier this month, a simple majority in the Knesset (parliament) would have the power to effectively annul Supreme Court rulings. This could enable the government of the day to pass legislation without fear of it being struck down.

Critics fear the new government could use this to scrap Mr Netanyahu's ongoing criminal trial, although the government has not said it would do that. Mr Netanyahu is being tried on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust - something he strongly denies. The reforms would also give politicians more influence over the appointment of judges, with most members of the selection committee coming from the ruling coalition.

If it passes into law, the plan could make it easier for the government to legislate in favour of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank without worrying about challenges in the Supreme Court. Israel has previously highlighted the power of the court to rule against it, as a way of blunting international criticism of such moves.



New storms hitting California as it faces already 'disastrous' floods

SALINAS (AFP/APP): The latest in a damaging succession of storm systems blew into California on Saturday, bringing heavy flooding to already waterlogged regions and threatening snowfalls of up to six feet (two meters) in areas.

The latest system was expected to bring "heavy lower-elevation rain, significant mountain snow, and strong winds," with "another surge of Pacific moisture" expected Monday, the National Weather Service (NWS) said. It predicted "disastrous flooding" across the lower Salinas River valley, an important agricultural region south of San Francisco Bay.

An AFP journalist saw the Salinas River overtopping its banks in many spots, at times covering farm fields for hundreds of yards, even as the rain continued under leaden skies. In Spreckels, a community a few hundred yards from the river, most residents had opted not to evacuate despite warnings from authorities.

"It looks like we might have missed kind of the worst of it," said Robert Zagajski, out walking his dog under a light rain.

A few miles away, 30-year-old farm worker Erick Diaz watched the flooded fields from his home near the river. Despite evacuation orders, he too had remained.

"I have nowhere to go and for the moment everything is fine," he said.

Governor Gavin Newsom, however, warned Californians that they were not in the clear yet: "We're not done," he said Saturday after visiting residents impacted by the storms.

Urging residents to remain vigilant, he said Californians should continue to exercise "common sense over the course of the next 24 to 48 hours."

Nearly 26 million Californians remained under a flood watch Saturday evening, according to the NWS, with tens of thousands ordered to evacuate.

The storms of recent weeks were originally welcomed -- coming after years of drought -- but by now have brought "disastrous" flooding, officials say.

Around 2330 GMT, there were approximately 20,000 homes without power, according to poweroutage.us.

At least 19 people are known to have died from storm-related causes.

"This place was hit hard by the drought over the past years," 58-year-old farmworker Manuel Paris told AFP near Salinas. "We're not used to this much rain anymore."

The NWS said an additional two to three inches of rain (5.0 to 7.5 centimeters) could cause new flooding and mudslides, with parts of the Sierra Nevada seeing three to six feet of snow, and heavy winds buffeting central and coastal California at

up to 50 miles (80 kilometers) per hour.

The most populous US state has been pummeled by near-record downpours over three weeks -- an average of nine inches of rain has fallen -- with the Salinas Valley among the hardest hit.

On Friday, forecasters warned that the Monterey Peninsula could be cut off and the whole city of Salinas -- home to 160,000 people -- could be hit by flooding.

But on Saturday, an AFP journalist said the city itself had so far been largely spared.

Between storms, workers have rushed to clear some of the mess, shoveling mud from roads even in the heart of Los Angeles and using heavy machinery to remove fallen trees or clear rockslides.

An AFP journalist saw tractors in fields near Salinas fighting to pump floodwaters back into the river. Newly falling rain was not helping the effort.

And forecasters say the

unsettled weather in the US West -- associated with what is called an atmospheric river pattern -- is not done.

Over the mountains, heavy snow was making travel dangerous or impossible on a three-day holiday weekend honoring civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

Amid the heightened risk of avalanches, officials urged people to stay home.

Authorities in the Lake Tahoe resort area posted pictures showing dozens of vehicles lined up on a road, stalled by a fierce blizzard.

Among those who have died in the last three weeks were drivers found in submerged cars, people struck by falling trees, and a husband and wife killed in a rockfall. Winter storms are not unusual in California. But global warming is making them wetter and wilder. At the same time, the western United States has been growing more arid for years.



Ukraine war: Chances of more survivors from Dnipro strike minimal: mayor

DNIPRO (BBC): The mayor of Dnipro has warned there may be no further survivors after Saturday's Russian missile strike on an apartment building in the eastern Ukrainian city. The attack left 25 dead while a further 43 are missing, city officials said.

Dnipro mayor Borys Filatov said there was "minimal" chance of finding anyone else alive. Speaking to state TV in Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted that military operations were going to plan. Kyiv, Kharkiv and Odesa were also hit on Saturday in attacks which Moscow said were targeted at Ukraine's military and energy infrastructure. The devastating strike in Dnipro hit the entrance of a nine-storey building, turning several floors into smoldering rubble.

Mr Filatov said the number of fatalities was expected to be in the dozens. He added that around 70 people required medical treatment and of those 10 were "in a difficult condition". Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki called the missile strikes "inhuman", adding that "Russia intentionally keeps on committing war crimes against civilians".

Speaking on state TV, Mr Putin said "everything is developing within the framework of the plan of the ministry of defence and the general staff".

In his nightly address on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said debris clearance in



Dnipro would continue all night: "We are fighting for every person, every life." It has been two weeks since the last wave of Russian attacks on Ukraine's power grid. In his address Mr Zelensky said energy infrastructure in the Kharkiv and Kyiv regions had been badly hit.

Following the attacks Ukrainian state energy company Ukrenergo temporarily imposed round-the-clock consumption limits for all regions. Ukrainian energy minister German Galushchenko said the next few days will be "difficult".

Western and Ukrainian officials have questioned whether Russia's "energy war" might be coming to an end, due to a possible shortage of suitable missiles and suggestions

that the strategy has yet to break Ukraine's spirit. Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg said on Sunday that Ukraine could expect more deliveries of heavy weapons from Western countries.

"Recent pledges for heavy warfare equipment are important - and I expect more in the near future," Mr Stoltenberg told German media.

Russia's missile barrage came on the same day that UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said his government would give Challenger 2 tanks to Kyiv's armed forces in a bid to help "push Russian troops back".

In response, Moscow said providing more weapons to Ukraine would lead to intensified Russian operations and more civilian casualties.

Mexico tightens ban on smoking in public places



MEXICO (BBC): Mexico has brought into force one of the world's strictest anti-tobacco laws by enacting a total ban on smoking in public places. The step, which was first approved in 2021, also includes a ban on tobacco advertising.

Several other Latin American countries have also passed legislation to create smoke-free public spaces.

However, Mexico's legislation is considered to be the most robust and

wide-ranging in the Americas.

It amounts to one of the most stringent anti-smoking laws in the world. Mexico's existing 2008 law - which created smoke-free spaces in bars, restaurants and workplaces - is now extended to an outright ban in all public spaces. That includes parks, beaches, hotels, offices and restaurants. There will also be a total ban on the advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products, meaning

that cigarettes cannot even be on show inside shops. Vapes and e-cigarettes are also subject to tighter new restrictions, particularly indoors.

Russia bans smoking on balconies

The Pan American Health Organisation has welcomed the step and applauded the Mexican government for implementing the ban.

The organisation says that tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the world, responsible for nearly a million deaths in the Americas each year, either through direct consumption or exposure to second-hand smoke.

However, some smokers are dismayed at the draconian nature of the new law. In essence, it means that many will only be allowed to smoke in their homes or other private residences. Others have raised questions about the practicalities of enforcing the law. With police corruption so rampant in Mexico, many fear that rather than issuing real fines or punishments for smoking in public, some officers will use it as a pretext for taking bribes.

Vietnam to cooperate with China to facilitate entry following reopening

HANOI (XINHUA/APP): Vietnamese local authorities are working closely with their Chinese counterparts to implement cooperation activities in the interests of both sides after China's optimization of COVID-19 response policies on Jan. 8, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Thursday.

Vietnamese nationals who wish to travel to other countries, including China, should follow the updates on visa policies, immigration and COVID-19 regulations of the countries, deputy spokesperson for the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pham Thu Hang told a press briefing.

Regarding collaboration between Vietnam and China to ensure the flow of goods, Hang said authorities of both countries have maintained regular exchanges and made efforts to ensure trade activities and supply chains are maintained smoothly while implementing a joint statement made during General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee Nguyen Phu Trong's visit to China last year and in the spirit of high-level discussions.

During the Lunar New Year, a number of Chinese border gates will apply measures to facilitate customs clearance including customs clearance by prior appointment, she noted.

Localities and local enterprises need to update themselves on this information, and work with their Chinese partners to develop a plan for transportation and customs clearance of goods, Hang said.

British woman dies in avalanche in French Alps

LONDON (BBC): A British woman, 45, has died after getting caught in an avalanche while hiking with two other people in the French Alps, rescue services have said.

The accident happened on Saturday on the Argentiére Glacier, one of Mont Blanc's biggest glaciers. The specialist high mountain search and rescue unit of the French police in Chamonix said it was alerted by a guide at around 17:00 local time (16:00 GMT). Rescue workers and a doctor were sent by helicopter to rescue her.

But they were unable to revive the woman, said

Colonel Bertrand Host of the mountain rescue unit.

Police have launched an investigation into the woman's death.

The local public prosecutor's office said the woman and her partner had been Nordic skiing with a high mountain guide and were going up the Col du Tour Noir when the avalanche happened.

The office confirmed there was an avalanche warning risk of three on a scale of five in place on Saturday.

The prosecutor has opened a manslaughter investigation to determine the circumstances of the

woman's death and has ordered a post-mortem examination.

Mont Blanc, western Europe's highest mountain at 4,810 metres (nearly 16,000 feet), attracts 20,000 hikers and skiers every year.

Warmer temperatures in recent years have melted permafrost - permanently frozen ground - raising the risk of rock falls on the most popular routes.

Last August, authorities closed down two popular mountain shelters used by Mont Blanc climbers because of potentially deadly drought-related rockfalls.

Indonesia on alert following frequent volcano eruptions

J A K A R T A (XINHUA/APP): Indonesia has recently raised its alert as the country's volcanology authorities have reported hundreds of volcanic activities during the past week.

As of Saturday, 17 volcanoes across the Southeast Asian country have been on level II alert status, according to the latest report from Indonesia's Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation (PVMBG).

Marapi volcano in West Sumatra, located on the island of Sumatra, erupted 191 times on Saturday, spewing 300-meter to 600-meter-high ash columns, the Marapi Volcano Observation Post (PGA) reported, he volcano has erupted for eight days." Coordinator of the observa-

tion post Ahmad Rifandi said in a written statement.

Java Island, the Semeru volcano erupted once on Saturday and twice on Friday. It spewed out 700 meters to one-kilometer-high white and gray ash columns with thick intensity, Mount Semeru Monitoring Post reported.

Recommend all people who live surrounding the volcano not to do any activities around and stay away at least 13 kilometers from the eruption range, because the volcano has the potential to throw hot stones and pour hot clouds and lava." Head of the monitoring post Mukdas Sofian said in a release. The highest mountain in Java, the Semeru volcano erupted in December 2021, ejecting volcanic ash into the sky and raining hot

mud on villages, killing at least 51 people and injuring 169 others.

Also on Saturday, The Ili Lewotolok volcano in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) erupted and brought a potential threat of lava, according to the PVMBG.

The authority also reported on Thursday that three volcanoes in the country -- Marapi, Kerinci on Sumatra Island, and Anak Krakatau in Sunda Strait -- erupted at almost the same time on that day.

Anak Krakatau, which means the Child of Krakatau, has been sporadically active since it emerged from the sea at the beginning of the last century. The volcano is located far from the densely populated Java Island and Sumatra Island.

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

Role of mercenaries in global rivalry

A Senior US official expressed strong concern about the activities of the Russian private military contractor Wagner Group and its alleged recruitment campaign in Serbia and other parts of the world. According to the reports, American officials voiced these concerns during talks with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic in Belgrade in recent days.

Founded by a close aide of Russian President Vladimir Putin and a Russian billionaire in early 2014, the Russian Wagner Group played an important role in Crimea's annexure with Russia. The highly publicized and most notorious Russian private military firm, suddenly became a great challenge for the western nations particularly the United States because of its effective presence, and secret operations in Ukraine, Central African Republics (CAR) and Mali in recent years. Wagner fighters took part in the battle of Danboss alongside pro-Russian forces in self-Declared Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics after Russia initiated its special military operation in Ukraine. Currently, the Wagner Group has over 50,000 mercenaries equipped with the latest arms and ammunition while a majority of them are currently fighting against the Ukrainian military on the Bukhmut and Soledar battlefronts.

Historically, the Russian private military Wagner Group is a Kremlin's well-thought response to the American private army Blackwater which is currently being known as Xi Services, Academi as well as Triple Canopy, which was established by a former US Navy SEAL nearly three decades ago. Over 20,000 strong Black water has played a crucial role in the US military campaigns abroad and global conflicts across the world including Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and Libya. The firm also generated lucrative business through its security and training contracts with the US military, the US Department of Defense, the US Department of State, other governments, and several multinational firms around the globe.

Presently, Putin's vanguard platoon had successfully expanded its presence in Kremlin's neighborhood including Ukraine, Belarus, and Central Asian States, while at the same time, the Russian Wagner Group is actively protecting Moscow's strategic interests in the most dangerous regions in Syria, Libya, and over a dozen African nations such as Mali, Nigar, Sudan, Congo, and Burkina Faso. Besides providing security consultancy and training to the militaries in host nations, the Wagner group is also involved in gold mining, oil and gas exploration, and other profitable businesses in the Middle East and Africa. Currently, the Russian FSB and the Wagner Group have endangered western interests in Africa and offered extreme resistance to Ukrainian forces during the war in Ukraine. Thus, the United States and its allies are struggling to impose global sanctions against the mercenary group to contain its outreach and reduce its effectiveness in the contesting regions.

The belligerent nations commonly face public criticism and legal complications due to the losses of their military personnel and the misconduct of their soldiers during foreign military campaigns. Thus, powerful nations used to hire private mercenary firms to undertake illegal and extra-constitutional activities to avoid public uproar and global criticism. Although, warring nations are equally hiring assassins, regularly violating global rulers, and unrestrictedly polluting the global environment through poisonous politics and war phobia, simultaneously squealing propaganda against each other. If world leaders pause their toxic politics the earth is no less than heaven.

What next after assemblies dissolution

Finally, the Punjab Assembly stood dissolved after the governor, Baligh Ur Rehman, refused to sign the summary sent by the Chief Minister Punjab for disbanding the legislature. However, the governor fulfilled its official obligation and issued a notification urging both the leader of the house and the leader of the opposition in the Punjab assembly to appoint a caretaker Chief Minister for 90 days, the term specified in the constitution for holding an election in the province.

The entire nation is passing through an era of political uncertainty after Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) was ousted from power through a no-confidence motion in April last year. There had been a disagreement between the PTI and PDM-led coalition government regarding the next general election in the country, as the PTI leadership wanted an immediate nationwide general election whereas a coalition of rival parties was of the view that the current assemblies must complete their term and the general election should be held as per schedule. This disagreement shaped into a tug of war between the warring groups, one party dragging the country toward election while the other group had been pulling the nation back toward. After Punjab, the KP assembly is already scheduled to be resolved, and the next elections are all set to behold in the coming months at least in Punjab and KP if not in the whole country.

The nation has witnessed the selfish politics of its leaders across the board and the country has faced irreparable financial and economic damages besides loss of national prestige and reputation. Both political groups should take full benefit of this opportunity and contest the course in good faith and must acknowledge the outcome of the election whatsoever it may be. The nation would not further tolerate such kind of selfish behavior and reckless politics, because politics, parties, and leaders are always for the nation and the state and no party or leader could ever be more important than the nation and the state. Thus every one must respect and uphold the law so the current disagreement comes to an end and our country moves toward stability and progress.

Quote of the day

People never lie so much as after a hunt, during a war, or before an election.

— Otto von Bismarck, 1815-1898, German chancellor.

MLK's critique of American militarism more than 50 years ago predicted the rise of US global adventurism

William Hartung

The birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. provides an opportunity to step back and reflect on the significance of his life and work. It is particularly important to do so this year, with unapologetic racism on the rise and a Cold War atmosphere permeating Washington.

Dr. King had a deep understanding of the links between America's domestic and foreign predicaments, expressed most clearly in his speech against the Vietnam War, delivered at New York's Riverside Church on April 4 1967, one year before he was assassinated.

King understood that Vietnam was not an isolated case of U.S. military adventurism:

The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality... we will find ourselves organizing "clergy and laymen concerned" committees [like the one against the war in Vietnam] for the next generation. They will

be concerned about Guatemala — Guatemala and Peru. They will be concerned about Thailand and Cambodia. They will be concerned about Mozambique and South Africa. We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end, unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy.

King's predictions about where the United States would intervene were not accurate, but the process he described has all too sadly played out, from Afghanistan to Iraq to Libya to Somalia to Syria and beyond.

These direct interventions don't take into account America's role as the world's leading arms trading nation, supplying equipment to countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that have been used in a brutal war in Yemen that has led to direct and indirect deaths approaching 400,000 people. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,

the United States supplied weapons to 103 nations between 2017 and 2021 — more than half the countries in the world. For many citizens of the world, their first association with America is a U.S. soldier or a U.S.-supplied weapon in the hands of their government or one of their adversaries.

This U.S. record of wide-ranging military intervention and runaway arms sales is a far cry from the "diplomacy first" foreign policy that the Biden administration has pledged to pursue. To its credit, the administration stuck to its commitment to get the United States out of its disastrous 20-year engagement in Afghanistan. And in some cases, as in Ukraine, U.S. arms have been supplied for defensive purposes, to help Kyiv fend off a brutal Russian invasion. But on balance, the United States still adheres to the kind of militarized foreign policy that Dr. King warned us about well over 50 years ago.

Quincy Institute non-res-

ident fellow and Tufts University professor Monica Toft has noted the broader impacts of America's addiction to military force in a recent piece in Foreign Affairs:

This is an unfortunate trend. For evidence, look no further than the disastrous U.S. military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. The overly frequent resort to use of force also undermines U.S. legitimacy in the world. As the U.S. diplomatic corps and American influence abroad shrink, the country's military footprint only grows.

Toft also points to the impact on U.S. interventionism on the reputation of America in the world. A Pew research poll conducted between 2013 and 2018 found that the number of foreigners who considered the United States a threat nearly doubled over that time period, from 25 percent to 45 percent.

King also underscored the domestic consequences of rampant interventionism:

A few years ago there was a shining moment in that struggle. It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor — both black and white — through the poverty program. There were experiments, hopes, new beginnings. Then came the buildup in Vietnam, and I watched this program broken and eviscerated, as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube.

The domestic costs of militarism are painfully present today.

The budget signed by President Biden last month provides \$858 billion for the Pentagon and related work on nuclear weapons at the Department of Energy. That's well over half of the federal government's entire discretionary budget — the portion that includes virtually everything the govern-

ment does other than mandatory entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare: environmental protection, public health, administration of justice, job training, education, and more. Meanwhile Congress has resisted the administration's attempts to get additional funding for Covid relief, and terminated the Child Tax Credit, one of the most effective means of eliminating poverty.

King understood that the roots of the warfare state run deep, driven by the "giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism." Groups like the Poor People's Campaign, co-chaired by Rev. William Barber and Rev. Liz Theoharis and inspired by Dr. King, have taken up the call to address these issues. More groups and individuals need to do so if we are to foster a genuine "diplomacy first" foreign policy, with the immense benefits for American and global security and prosperity and equality at home that would entail.

Myanmar regime's isolation is growing in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Nicholas Farrelly

Myanmar's abject deterioration since the February 2021 military coup accelerated through 2022, with more violence, retribution and pain spread across the rapidly impoverishing country of 55 million people. The military regime spent the year trying to reinforce its positions on the battlefield and its claims to institutional legitimacy. It is failing on both fronts.

For the generals in Naypyidaw, the current battles are, first and foremost, about personal survival. They have invested heavily in security precautions, but many officers tasked with frontline combat and policing roles have not fared well. Since the coup, thousands of the regime's troops and officials have died at the hands of resistance forces. The army struggles to replenish its ranks. The limited life expectancy of junior soldiers only saps any lingering morale.

Opposition forces have grown in number, size and sophistication under the umbrella leadership of the National Unity Government. These forces also pay a heavy price for

their resistance to military rule, with mounting battlefield losses. In July 2022, four activists, including prominent leaders Ko Jimmy, a long-time democracy activist and writer, and Phyo Zeya Thaw, a former National League for Democracy (NLD) Member of Parliament, were executed.

Many villages and towns have also suffered atrociously at the hands of the coup-makers. In one particularly egregious airstrike, 80 people died at a concert organised in a Kachin independence stronghold. Much of the country, perhaps half, is not currently under regime control.

Through these turbulent conditions, the economy has spluttered. Families struggle with galloping inflation and a devalued Myanmar kyat. The erratic availability of many supplies weighs heavily on a traumatised population. The economy's estimated 16 per cent contraction in 2021 is further complicated by inflation of around 16 per cent in 2022, according to the Asian Development Bank.

Internationally, the regime relies on Russia and

China for diplomatic and military support. Russia's aggression in Ukraine has fused the relationship between Moscow and Naypyidaw. Yet it would be an exaggeration to suggest the two countries have a deep affinity. The Myanmar regime's isolation is growing in ASEAN, where powerful regional voices are no longer reluctant to denounce the regime.

In Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, but also in Singapore and Cambodia, there is deep concern about the damage the coup has done to Myanmar's standing and its future in ASEAN. Discussion of expulsion, while still an unlikely outcome, is in play because Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his key lieutenants are so unpopular across the ASEAN capitals.

Yet NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi is still locked up — sentenced to 33 years' imprisonment by military courts since the coup. Many other key figures in the NLD government, such as President Win Myint and various former Ministers, have joined

thousands of other activists and resistance fighters in jail. The self-serving secrecy of the regime's judicial proceedings means nobody gets a fair trial.

In one of the only bright spots in 2022, the regime released a large number of Myanmar and foreign detainees. Late in the year, Australian economics advisor Sean Turnell, former British Ambassador to Myanmar Vicky Bowman and her husband, artist Htein Lin and other Japanese and American detainees were all released. While Canberra, London, Tokyo and Washington welcomed their freedom, the reality is that Myanmar has no friends these days among the Western democracies that once so heavily backed the political shifts that brought Aung San Suu Kyi to power.

The questions that now confront Western policymakers are different ones. They require careful calculations about the prospects of anti-regime forces toppling the generals in Naypyidaw, about the internal stability of the regime itself and about the dire

realities of a further spiral into a wider war. The same questions are of concern in Bangkok, New Delhi, Beijing, Singapore, Jakarta and many other places because the unpredictable regional consequences will be felt for many years to come.

As the second anniversary of the coup looms, the next phase of political and military confrontation is crucial. The generals aim to convince the Myanmar people and leaders across the Asian region that the best bet is for a managed electoral process, far short of a democratic one, to repopulate the country's shuttered legislatures with regime-aligned figures and opportunistic ethnic leaders. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing guesses that other geostrategic priorities mean Myanmar's military hardmen will again get their way, especially with China and Russia still in Myanmar's corner.

What has changed in the past year is the broader landscape of plausible external responses. Western democracies have shown themselves willing and able to support Ukraine's armed struggle against the Russian

invasion. Circumstances in Myanmar are not analogous, and yet the years-long anti-coup resistance has demonstrated, in case anybody doubted, the deep commitment of the Myanmar people to their own democratic ideals. The forces opposing the coup call for more support — in terms of military training and equipment, and also heavier humanitarian relief.

They want weapons that can shoot down regime aircraft and request access to the other tactical advantages that have made Ukraine such a miserable battlefield for the Russian army. What remains to be seen is if their calls for greater support lead to any material change in policy from the democratic West. The most likely outcome in Myanmar is that longstanding hesitation about entanglement in a wider war will discourage foreign players from taking more aggressive, interventionist approaches. Yet the policy calculations could look different later this year, especially if the battlefield momentum swings further behind the National Unity Government and the anti-coup forces.

The distinction is crucial, but will voters accept it?

Niall Stange

It's a controversy that erupted out of nowhere to dominate the headlines.

On Monday, CBS News revealed that documents marked as classified had been discovered in an office used by President Biden after he left office as vice president.

Subsequent days brought disclosures of a second batch of documents discovered in the garage of Biden's Wilmington, Del., home; one more sheet of paper found elsewhere in the residence; and then an admission that an additional five pages bearing classified markings had been found.

The revelations have pushed Biden and the White House onto the defensive. They've also lifted Republicans' political spirits after the bruising fight to elect Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) as Speaker.

There are a number of unanswered questions. Here are five of the biggest.

Why wasn't the public told sooner?

The timeline regarding the documents is one of the most mysterious — and politically damaging — elements of the controversy.

The first batch of documents was uncovered on Nov. 2 in Biden's old office at a University of Pennsylvania facility in Washington.

This appears to have precipitated a search of other locations, which led to the

revelation of the Wilmington garage documents by Dec. 20.

Another document came to light only on Wednesday. But hopes among Biden supporters that this would be the final revelation were dashed by a Saturday statement from White House lawyer Richard Sauber, noting that there were "five additional pages with classified markings" uncovered by him on Thursday.

Crucially, there was a long stretch when the whole issue remained unknown to the public. The first CBS story came almost 10 weeks after the initial discovery.

Politically speaking, the problem is not only the passage of time in itself. It's that the first documents came to light six days before the midterm elections.

Republicans including incoming House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) have seized on that point, insisting that the American people had a right to know about the matter when they were on the cusp of casting their ballots.

Finally, on Saturday, the president's personal attorney, Bob Bauer, made a counterargument.

In a statement, Bauer asserted that "limitations necessary to protect the investigation's integrity" had militated against public disclosure.

Much will depend on whether voters buy that

argument or see it as a convenient excuse.

What did Biden know and when did he know it?

The president has said that he was surprised to learn about the documents.

Biden also contends that he does not know what exactly they contain — and says that his lawyers have advised him against asking.

There was one further, odd comment in an exchange with Peter Doocy of Fox News.

Doocy asked Biden what he was "thinking" by having classified documents "next to your Corvette."

Biden shot back that he would speak more about the matter soon and added, "By the way, my Corvette is in a locked garage. OK? So it's not like it's sitting out in the street."

The apparent implication — that measures sufficient to secure a sports car would also be adequate for classified documents — was not helpful to Biden's cause. In any event, Biden was, at the very least, apprised of what was going on with the documents as it was happening.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, who came under sustained pressure from reporters at several briefings this week, said that Biden "has been kept informed by his counsel throughout this process."

The president is sure to face more questions soon

on the specifics.

What is in the documents?

Perhaps the biggest question of all.

So far, Biden's defenders have taken heart from the fact that the whole matter seems to focus on a modest number of documents.

The initial batch, in the University of Pennsylvania office, reportedly numbers less than a dozen.

CBS News reported early Saturday that "the total number of known documents marked classified is roughly 20, between the two locations." This count came before Sauber's statement referencing the five additional pages, however.

Much will hinge on the sensitivity of the information contained in the documents.

CNN reported on Tuesday that some documents from the office included intelligence and briefing materials on "topics including Ukraine, Iran and the United Kingdom."

That seems bad news for Biden. If the documents open him up to the accusation of jeopardizing the national security of the United States or allies such as the U.K., it would be potentially grave.

How broad does the special counsel's probe become?

Attorney General Merrick Garland has appointed Robert Hur as special counsel to look into

the matter.

Garland has said that a special counsel is necessary to reassure Americans about the probity of the investigation.

But presidents dislike special counsels for a reason — they are typically given very wide-ranging powers.

The order appointing Hur notes that he can look into the documents and "any matters that ... may arise directly" from them.

No one is expecting Hur's probe to resemble the most famous special counsel investigation of recent years, headed by Robert Mueller. But by way of illustration of a special counsel's powers, Mueller's probe into allegations of collusion between Russia and former President Trump's 2016 campaign lasted from 2017 to 2019 and involved the issuance of around 2,800 subpoenas.

It would be amazing if Hur's probe lasted more than a fraction of that time. But there is always the possibility that the special counsel, who was nominated by Trump to be the U.S. attorney for Maryland, could uncover new and damaging information.

Will voters grasp the difference between his case and Trump's?

Republicans wasted no time in using the Biden matter to try to neutralize criticisms of Trump for his conduct in relation to documents marked as classified and discovered at Mar-a-

Lago.

The comparison works at a headline level: Both men are now subject to investigation for their handling of classified documents.

But there is at least one huge difference.

In Biden's case, the documents were promptly returned to the National Archives upon being discovered.

In Trump's case, the fate of those documents was subject to a long battle.

The National Archives requested documents that it believed were in Trump's possession in May 2021. The FBI did not raid Mar-a-Lago, search warrant in hand, until August 2022.

During the intervening 15 months, there appear to have been two occasions on which the Trump team said or implied it was handing over all relevant documents while not actually doing so.

It's this chain of events that many legal experts believe puts Trump at real risk of obstruction charges from the special counsel in his case, Jack Smith.

Nothing comparable, so far, has been discovered in Biden's case.

But politically, much will depend upon whether the White House can persuade the American public that Biden or his staff committed an inadvertent error, whereas Trump was involved in something more nefarious.

The distinction is crucial, but will voters accept it?

Asians are buying up Russian Arctic oil

India and China have begun to purchase rare grades of Arctic oil from Russia. Analysts do not rule out that the desire of the largest importers to diversify purchases will push out Middle Eastern competitors and bring additional profit to Moscow.

Purchased in full
The price ceiling introduced on December 5 by the G7, the European

International Energy Agency (IEA), since February, India has increased purchases 36 times - from 30,000 to 1.08 million barrels per day. And even ahead of China (830 thousand per day). The total flow of fuel to Asia has tripled to 2.5 million barrels. According to S&P Global Commodities at Sea, the share of China and India in offshore exports of crude oil from Russia has reached 68%.

Natalia Dembinskaya

lars to Moscow. India was especially distinguished, having raised imports from 0.66 million tons to 8.42.

Asians do not hide: they are taking advantage of the situation. Their ports and coastal refineries are much closer to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates. But Russia gives a good discount.

Special varieties

"Arctic grades have been refocused," confirms Kpler's lead crude oil analyst Victor Katona. As traders note, they are also given a discount.

Diversify purchases

China wants to diversify purchases against the backdrop of the current price ceiling in the West for Russian energy resources, says Leonid Khazanov, an industrial expert.

"For Beijing, this is also

ter quality.

"China is ready to take more light varieties, and demand for them will continue to grow," says analyst Dmitry Adamidov.

Squeeze out competitors
India purchased 6.67 million barrels of Arctic oil in November. This is a record, Khazanov notes.

Middle Eastern varieties, in particular Basrah Heavy from Iraq, will have to make room.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), since February, India has increased purchases 36 times - from 30,000 to 1.08 million barrels per day. And even ahead of China (830 thousand per day). The total flow of fuel to Asia has tripled to 2.5 million barrels. According to S&P Global Commodities at Sea, the share of China and India in offshore exports of crude oil from Russia has reached 68%. "Asian giants swallowed up European barrels almost completely," analysts stated. The main jump in Asian imports came in the second quarter of 2022: Beijing and Delhi purchased 11 million tons of oil more than in the first quarter. This added nine billion dollars to Moscow. India was especially distinguished, having raised imports from 0.66 million tons to 8.42. Asians do not hide: they are taking advantage of the situation. Their ports and coastal refineries are much closer to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates. But Russia gives a good discount.

Union and Australia has had no effect on Russia's Asian partners. India and China have previously received oil at a discount, cheaper than \$60 a barrel.

But Russia is also beneficial. Record deals with Beijing and Delhi largely offset losses in Europe.

According to the

"Asian giants swallowed up European barrels almost completely," analysts stated.

The main jump in Asian imports came in the second quarter of 2022: Beijing and Delhi purchased 11 million tons of oil more than in the first quarter. This added nine billion dol-

According to Vortexa and Kpler, China recently purchased three shipments of oil from the Arctic: the lighter Novy Port, the crude Varandey, and the sour and dense Arco.

Previously, Arco was mainly shipped to the UK and the Netherlands. Now the Europeans will get nothing,

an instrument of pressure on Middle Eastern suppliers: it is possible to achieve more favorable conditions. And increase the supply of gasoline and diesel fuel to Europe," he adds.

Oil from Eastern Siberia and the Arctic has less sulfur than the Urals export blend. Diesel fuel is of bet-

"Sour oil is a raw material for organic synthesis. Of course, our supplies will be reduced by the Middle East," said Stanislav Bovt, financial analyst at the CMS group of companies.

Arctic grades offer a number of benefits and can be used in rubber and some high-tech industries.



“We perish by the sword”

What is happening in the world, that is, in the world as a whole, and what will happen next? Here, the clearest answers, of course, are given by astrologers, not forgetting to recall that everyone has predicted for a long time: where will you go from the Age of Aquarius. But there are other people who offer their versions of the general diagnosis to the world and humanity, people who are inclined to see this world not even from a bird's eye view, but from the level of the stratosphere.

And one such person once again reminds us : do you still think that you live in the age of globalization? Yes, for many years now, everything has been the other way around - deglobalization is taking place, and something needs to be done about it.

We are talking about the Indian, the former head of the Reserve Bank of the country, Raghuram Rajan. He has been promoting his idea for a long time and once again reminded us: since 2008, the share of exports of goods and services in the formation of world GDP has gone down. And back in 2007, the curve of foreign investment broke - then 5.3 percent of global GDP was invested outside their economies, then less and less, and in 2020 - only 1.3 percent.

He is echoed by a multi-

Dmitry Kosyrev

oped ties with someone more distant, and sometimes more for ideological reasons. True, the powerful merger of the American and Chinese economies turned out to be an exception, but America did not like this much, and the crazy idea of \u2020b\u2020breaking this alliance and creating two separate world economies - ideologically correct and incorrect (Chinese) - began to play with all colors. But real globalization will eventually build up anyway (albeit in competition between two economic poles instead of domination by one), and this is good.

This is strongly reminiscent of the article that has already appeared in Russian translation by two doves of the world from the United States - Monica Toft and Sidita Kushi, who, in fact, are promoting a book they wrote together under the beautiful title "We perish by the sword." The point is that America is carried away by military interventions around the world, which undermines its prestige and position in the family of peoples, and at the same time its own economy, not to mention the world economy. And the conclusion from all this is again "Chinese": I would like to believe that now that there are two superpowers in the world again, Washington will return to the almost lost skills of

In particular, if you go through the subheadings, the process of rapprochement of economies, countries and peoples will go on without a single hegemon or leader who will drag this process along. That is, globalization awaits us not under pressure from above, but in the form of the development of horizontal ties. Further, this process will not have a center and periphery, its goal will be not so much the growth of global GDP, but the sustainable development of everyone and everyone - justice. Not only states will participate here, but also private corporations, industry interests and many other non-state players. The axis of tension will not be "East-West", but rather "North-South", that is, countries that are too developed and too poor.

Here we can add that from the very beginning the idea of globalization smelled of ideological theft. It was just a beautiful word, invented at that very moment of the "end of history", in the 90s, to impress on all of us the inevitability of what is happening and the senselessness of resistance.

But after all, no fundamentally new processes began precisely in the 90s. Mankind, due to unhealthy curiosity and healthy adventurism, has always integrated tirelessly. How about the era of the Great Migration of Nations on the

And what happened in the 90s is a typical information phantom, such a thing when you see the facts, but do not draw obvious conclusions from them, because someone tried to draw the conclusions for you. But in fact, at first the West tried to secure for itself the role of a dictating rule in the long, centuries-old process of communication between peoples - that is, by new means to prolong the era of its colonial conquest of the world. Then it turned out that the same West was upset by the result, and tried to stop the centuries-old process. But then they began to explain to him: guys, give it up. And what happened in the 90s is a typical information phantom, such a thing when you see the facts, but do not draw obvious conclusions from them, because someone tried to draw the conclusions for you.

national chorus about who is to blame and what to do. But for the time being, for the beginning, we note: the music did not play for long. It was only in the 90s that they explained to us that the world has become one forever, saturated everywhere with the same goods and universal ideas (mandatory for everyone), there are no longer any borders, and this is excellent, and this is forever, if you please obey. But it turns out that this holiday lasted only ten or fifteen years?

The most interesting thing in the ongoing disputes, of course, is who is to blame for what is happening, that is, who made the wrong globalization, which not everyone liked. And here there are unexpected opinions, for example, this one: it was not so global, this globalization. If we talk only about the economy, then something else happened: the strengthening of economic integration within large regions. But if you look at how goods and investments move between regions, then everything is not so cheerful.

And it turns out to be an anomaly, you won't believe, the USA, which has fallen out of regional integration within the Americas. The states, if you look at the statistics, showed little interest in their neighbors, and devel-

diplomacy, instead of terrorizing everyone. He will return simply because he will learn again to be afraid of a serious collision - already with Beijing.

And one more publication during this discussion: it is about the results of 2022, when at several international meetings (the "Group of Twenty" in Indonesia and others) the world told the West: there must be some limits to confrontation. Let's urgently end this deglobalization of yours and return to relative normality.

It's all about sanctions. That is, about artificially imposed rules of trade and everything else under whatever pretexts you like, but after all, sanctions are reduced to the same deglobalization.

What happens together? The story with the "end of history" according to Francis Fukuyama: it turns out that it did not so much end as it went the wrong way the West wanted.

And here we must proudly say that our experts also took part in this conversation, and this happened quite a long time ago: we are talking about the material from the spring of 2021 by Andrey Kortunov, CEO of the Russian International Affairs Council. And there appear simple and understandable thoughts.

Eurasian continent, which mixed cultures and technologies in the most radical way? How about the Great Silk Road across Eurasia, that is, the centuries-old logistical trade link between the two great empires of that time - Roman and Chinese? And there was also the era of Spanish galleons crossing the Pacific Ocean from Acapulco to Manila and other smaller trade routes. Or (if we are only talking about the exchange of ideas) you can long and joyfully figure out what ancient religions the current ones have developed from: what, for example, reminds us of Isis with the baby Horus on her knees.

And what happened in the 90s is a typical information phantom, such a thing when you see the facts, but do not draw obvious conclusions from them, because someone tried to draw the conclusions for you. But in fact, at first the West tried to secure for itself the role of a dictating rule in the long, centuries-old process of communication between peoples - that is, by new means to prolong the era of its colonial conquest of the world. Then it turned out that the same West was upset by the result, and tried to stop the centuries-old process. But then they began to explain to him: guys, give it up.

What more could you want?

At the end of 1941, when the end-edge of the war was not in sight, the song "Let's smoke, comrade, one at a time" sounded, full of faith that the hour would come:

"When there will be no fascists in sight

And we will come to our loved ones again."

And then they said that the Russians took Berlin twice - they will take it a third time. So talk about what will happen after the NWO has the right to exist. If the campaign is for some significant geopolitical realignment, it is natural to

because a terrible reserve for the future has been created. New generations, undergoing ever more intense Ukrainization - can we expect some kind of sociability from them?

It was customary to laugh (or cry) at Ukrainian textbooks. Indeed, Aryan physics, as well as Aryan history, were presented there in all their glory. The ability for critical thinking (and even for any kind of thinking) among those who passed such a school was significantly reduced. But it was still half the trouble.

The paramilitary training of minors in special camps

Maxim Sokolov

United Nations. Similar fears are expressed about post-war Ukraine. If the maidens and lads become vovkulaks and unleash terror against the "occupiers" and the population loyal to them, appeasing Ukraine will be very difficult.

In 1945, the Allies (mostly Western) were seriously afraid of werewolves, who seemed to them at every step. However, a pleasant surprise awaited them. When Germany was defeated and "hour zero" came, there were no hunters to fight and die for

ka (rather, even a drug addict like V.A. Zelensky) from the station's premises, shouting: Weg! Man muss arbeiten! ("Out! You need to work!"). Frau was under sixty, that is, in 1945 she was 16 years old, she went through the entire valley of tears with Germany. And now I taught the idle beggars.

This was already a departing nature, familiar Germans noted that the generations coming to replace were no longer so firm in the old German labor virtues. And indeed: that Frankfurt barmaid and the green activist Annalena

Many reflections on post-war Ukraine are downright pessimistic. Not so much even because of its catastrophic achievements (and even before the start of the NWO) in the field of industry, the social sphere, population, etc., but because a terrible reserve for the future has been created. New generations, undergoing ever more intense Ukrainization - can we expect some kind of sociability from them? It was customary to laugh (or cry) at Ukrainian textbooks. Indeed, Aryan physics, as well as Aryan history, were presented there in all their glory. The ability for critical thinking (and even for any kind of thinking) among those who passed such a school was significantly reduced. But it was still half the trouble. The paramilitary training of minors in special camps frankly resembled the similar education of the pupils of the Hitler Youth.

reflect on what will be rebuilt and how.

And first of all, we are talking about the former Ukrainian SSR, whose thirty-year independence showed a sad lesson to the world: how can one, starting from very good positions, lose all the polymers and turn into an absolute ruin.

Many reflections on post-war Ukraine are downright pessimistic. Not so much even because of its catastrophic achievements (and even before the start of the NWO) in the field of industry, the social sphere, population, etc., but

frankly resembled the similar education of the pupils of the Hitler Youth. Tactical exercises, walking with torches and portraits of Bandera, choral chants about Muscovites and Gilyaks - the training of young attack aircraft was put on stream.

A similar training of youth in the Third Reich inspired the leaders of the NSDAP with the hope that even with the defeat of Germany, properly trained young people would become werewolves (werewolves) and the earth would burn under the feet of representatives of the

the Great German idea.

Furthermore. When Germany did not perish, but showed the world an economic miracle, who carried the economic revival on their shoulders, who went out to build? The same generation of the Hitler Youth. It was prepared for a mortal battle with the enemies of the Reich, but it worked - and how it fit! - for post-war peaceful construction.

Thirty years ago, I went to drink coffee at a buffet at the Frankfurt station and could watch how an elderly barmaid drove out a hanyg-

Burbock seem to belong to different peoples. Nevertheless, the Germans had enough labor and creative beginning for half a century after the war. If such a transformation for fifty years happened to today's young Bandera - what more could you want?

Of course, Ukraine is not quite Germany. President L. D. Kuchma can even write another book about this. And there were serious problems with the OUN/UPA vovkulaks in Western Ukraine for at least ten years after the end of the war. Although here, per-

spoiled and that no good can be expected there in principle. The younger generation of Germans was spoiled with no less zeal, but, as it turned out, they were still not completely spoiled.

And again, we must remember the words of Muller's cinematic fatter: "Those who are now ten do not need us - neither we nor our ideas; they will not forgive us hunger and bombing." This is reassuring. Perhaps the great ukrofuhrer Zelensky - or his bright image - will also turn out to be unnecessarily.

“Hoovered up classified docs”

Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed former DOJ official Robert Hur as special counsel on January 12 to handle the investigation into classified documents from Joe Biden's days as vice president, found at his Wilmington, Delaware home, in addition to papers discovered in November 2022, at the Penn Biden Center, a Washington-based think tank.

News that a fresh discovery of five pages of classified documents had been made at Joe Biden's Wilmington, Delaware, home prompted Republicans to erupt in indignation over the perceived "double standards" at play. Some questioned why the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had not yet raided his home, like was the case with former President Trump.

They also lambasted the Democratic president's Department of Justice (DOJ) as a "corrupt mess."

Republican Congresswoman Lauren Boebert went on Twitter to point out that the new batch of sensitive information

was found after White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that "the search of Biden's home was complete."

"Looks like they've got documents coming out of the woodworks over in Wilmington. Still no FBI raid..." Lauren Boebert queried.

Texas Republican Senator Ted Cruz similarly tweeted to ask when a "full FBI raid" would happen.

Tom Fitton, the President of Judicial Watch, a public interest group that investigates and prosecutes government corruption, also tweeted that Biden White House Counsel had traveled to the president's Delaware home along with officials of the DOJ to look for more classified docs only after a Special Counsel had been appointed. He slammed Biden's DOJ as a "corrupt mess."

US reporter Mollie Hemingway also hit social media, underscoring that the FBI had eagerly raided Trump's Mar-A-Lago while not even noticing VP Biden "hoovered up classified docs."

Joe Biden, who has now

Svetlana Ekimenko

found himself in the crosshairs over the classified documents row, had been quick to rip into the ex-POTUS Trump over the sensitive papers that were being housed at his Mar-a-Lago estate which prompted a raid by the FBI.

"How that could possibly happen, how one anyone could be that irresponsible," Biden fumed on 60 Minutes in September 2022, adding:

"And I thought what data was in there that may compromise sources and methods. By that, I mean, names of people helped or et cetera."

In August 2022, the FBI conducted a raid on Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence as part of a probe into his post-presidential handling of classified documents.

Now, Donald Trump, who has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing in the matter, and slammed the "unnounced raid" on his home as "not necessary or appropriate," took to his social platform Truth Social to question whether the Federal Bureau of Investigation

(FBI) will react similarly to the Biden discovery.

"When is the FBI going to raid the many homes of Joe Biden, perhaps even the White House? These documents were definitely not declassified," the former US president wrote.

The current developments come amid the discovery of several batches of classified documents at the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement think tank in Washington, and in filing cabinets, a private library and a locked garage Biden's Wilmington, Delaware, home dating to his tenure as Barack Obama's vice president.

On January 14, presidential counsel Richard Sauber announced that Joe Biden's lawyers had discovered five additional pages marked classified, saying:

"Because I have a security clearance, I went to Wilmington Thursday evening to facilitate providing the document the President's personal counsel found on Wednesday to the Justice Department. While I was transferring it to the [Department of Justice] officials who

Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



Gwadar port receives another DAP fertilizer vessel under APTTA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Gwadar Port, being operated under the flagship China Economic Corridor (CPEC), has received another bulk vessel of DAP fertilizer under the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement, and will discharge approximately 28,000 metric tons.

An official of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives told APP that the DAP fertilizer received on the port would be transported via Chaman and Torkham. The official added that entire East Bay Express Way in the port city had been filled with trucks waiting to enter the Gwadar Port. The port has also started receiving government

imports of bulk cargoes as three consecutive vessels carrying 90,000 MT of urea have already arrived at the port and clocked the fastest discharge rate.

This was made possible due to the efforts of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority, Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) and Pakistan Customs, the official added.

These bulk cargoes were discharged and after bagging at the port, will be transported from Gwadar to other destinations in Pakistan. Next month, the Gwadar Port will start handling 450,000 MT of TCP wheat. The TCP on behalf

of the government decided to handle the import of urea and wheat through Gwadar Port. This movement will ease the huge congestion at other ports of Pakistan due to the high traffic of vessels carrying bulk cargoes, which results in delaying the operation and transportation of shipments; thus, disturbing the entire supply chain mechanism.

Import of these government cargoes offers substantial benefits to locals and will generate various economic activities and employment opportunities for locals in terms of 100% shipping agencies services by locals.

Gwadar Port is the industrial nerve center of Gwadar Free Zone and

offers substantial economic benefits to importers in terms of highly efficient operations, advanced cargo handling, vast storage areas for all types of cargo, extensive ancillary facilities, and faster turnaround time and delivery. The port due to its unique geographical position makes it a fast-economical link between land-locked Central Asian states and the rest of the country. Gwadar port and Freezone are all set to become the hub of international trade which will help the country earn much-needed foreign exchange in the near future, which is in line with the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to promote regional economic integration.

Need stressed for collectively evolving charter of economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis Sunday vehemently urged the government, all mainstream national political parties and chambers of commerce and industries to evolve a collectively viable charter of the economy with consensus to put the country on the track of uninterrupted economic development.

Chairing a seminar on "The need of Charter of Economy" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, here today he said at this critical juncture of time since inception there is a dire need for drastic economic reforms for the revival of the economy. He said Pakistan has suffered severely from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, floods havoc, and the Corona pandemic, as have most other countries.

But Pakistan has also been confronted with a chronic economic crunch, even before the pandemic,

for decades. He said low growth rates, high levels of debt, spiraling inflation, low productivity and poor competitiveness have, among other factors, contributed to widespread poverty and slowed down the pace of economic growth and development in Pakistan.

He said addressing the responsible key factors required to do with the economic calamities Pakistan has been facing for too long. He said not a single political party alone can introduce genuine reforms that involve taking difficult bold policy decisions. If a political party or coalition in power does that, it will have to face bitter opposition and fierce resistance from influential quarters including capitalists and feudal lords.

Hence he added all stakeholders and political parties and chambers must be on one page in the larger national interests for long-term result-oriented far-reaching policy decisions.

Meher Kashif Younis who is also Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House categorically said now the future of the country, will mainly depend on overcoming the economic turmoil, which has been aggravated due to reasons best known to all. He said turning the economy around is nothing new, but up to now has resulted in little success. He said Pakistan, with all its resources and opportunities, cannot afford to continue to muddle through economically any longer but needs a better, functioning, and prosperous economy. Adding he said, freeing the country from its economic calamities should not be a matter of party affiliation, but a common task for all political actors who want to see Pakistan flourish. There is a dire need for a functioning economic strategy, and for continuity in its implementation, if Pakistan's economy is to be dynamized he concluded.

WCCIS providing conducive environment to women entrepreneurs

SIALKOT (APP): Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) President Dr Mariam Nouman said on Sunday that WCCIS had been serving women entrepreneur with the mission of assisting them in commercial sector and creating a conducive environment for all working women at all levels.

In a press statement, Dr Marian Nouman said that

being a WCCIS President, it gave her immense pleasure to announce the launch of a mega event called "We-Exhibit 2023" which would be an excellent opportunity for women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and bring up their businesses to next level.

She said, "We-Exhibit 2023" was very first local exhibition for women

entrepreneurs of Sialkot and its surrounding cities to showcase their potential and excellence.

She said the exhibition was the mega event first time in Sialkot that was going to be held on March 11, 2023 at Family Park, Sialkot Cantt. The WCCIS President said that application forms were also available in WCCIS Office and could be sent via email.

APTMA chief urges US to finance Pakistan's cotton import

KARACHI (PPI) All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) Patron-in-Chief Gohar Ejaz has written a letter to the American ambassador in Islamabad requesting him to arrange loan of two billion dollars for Pakistan to import cotton.

Gohar Ejaz also urged the US government to announce concessional loans for Pakistan's textile industry.

Moreover, the US government should devise a strategy to provide easy credit for importing cotton from the US since the textile industry in Pakistan is facing a shortage of 10 million cotton bales this year due to country's economic slowdown, the letter says.

Gohar Ejaz also mentioned that letters of credit (LCs) of textile industry were not being opened for

cotton import. Pakistan had imported cotton from the United States last year for a total of \$1.48 billion and orders for 1.2 million bales of cotton import from US have been booked so far this year, he added. In addition, the Patron-In-Chief of the APTMA stated that 3.5 million cotton bales from the US might be imported with a two-billion-dollar loan.

Pak delegation leaves for Morocco

MULTAN (APP): A 30 members delegation of industrialists and investors under Pakistan-Morocco Business Forum left for Morocco to participate in International Business Conference on Sunday.

Renowned businessman Shahbaz Mahmood Sheikh while talking to media before departure said that the purpose of the visit was to give investors and industrialists access to the international market for their domestic agriculture products, textile, surgical instruments, sports equipment, auto parts and other domestic products to enhance the country's export. The Conference would continue by January 19. Pakistani delegation would take steps to promote foreign investment in Pakistan and to increase domestic exports, he concluded.

Iranian oil exports end 2022 at a high, despite no nuclear deal

LONDON, Jan 15 (Reuters) - Iranian oil exports hit new highs in the last two months of 2022 and are making a strong start to 2023 despite U.S. sanctions, according to companies that track the flows, on higher shipments to China and Venezuela.

Tehran's oil exports have been limited since former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 exited a 2015 nuclear accord and reimposed sanctions aimed at curbing oil exports and the associated revenue to Iran's government. Exports have risen during the term of his successor President Joe Biden, who had sought to revive the nuclear deal, and hit the highest since 2019 on some estimates. This comes despite headwinds such as a stall in those talks and competition from discounted Russian crude.

Energy consultant SVB International said Iran's crude exports in December averaged 1.137 million barrels per day, up 42,000 bpd from November and the highest 2022 figure SVB has reported based on estimates given earlier.

"In comparison to the Trump administration, there hasn't been any serious crackdown or action against Iran's oil exports," said Sara Vakhshouri of SVB. "January exports were so far strong like previous months." "Lower Chinese demand and Russia's supply to China have been a major challenge for them. Most of its oil still goes to the Far East, ultimately China. Iran also helps Venezuela to export its oil."

Adrienne Watson, a National Security Council spokesperson at the

White House, said the administration's enforcement of the sanctions is robust, and "Iran's macroeconomic figures clearly bear this out."

"We have not and will not hesitate to take action against sanctions evaders, together with sanctions against Iran's missile and drone trade, and human rights violations against the Iranian people," Watson said. The Treasury Department imposed sanctions late last year on an oil smuggling ring linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC).

Consultant Petro-Logistics, which tracks oil supply, said it was also seeing an upward trend in Iranian crude exports which, in its view, in December reached their highest level since March 2019.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor busy in frying fish for customers at his shop at Khanna Pul as fish's demand increased during winter season.

PCMEA urges govt to help explore markets abroad

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) Sunday urged the government to help the carpet industry explore new markets abroad as it would lead to jack up overall exports of the country.

Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf told media here that international exhibitions like 'Domotax' were a major source of effective marketing and export promotion of Pakistani products but unfortunately they were unable to utilize such opportunities as per

requirement of the economy.

Despite all odds, Pakistan's exporters tried to represent their country in the "Domotax" exhibition but this number was very less compared to other countries including the neighboring country. In the exhibition, meetings were held with delegates from different countries and they had been invited to visit Pakistan.

Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf mentioned, that he also talked to PCMEA members Riaz Ahmed, Saeed Khan, Ejaz-ur-Rehman and others

who were on a business trip to Germany.

He said that those members informed him that Pakistan's hand-woven carpets have managed to attract the attention of visitors to the exhibitions due to their excellent quality and ornate designs and in the meantime, there have been agreements for the export of Pakistani carpets.

He said that if the government provided financial support to the exporters and gave them a subsidy in the cost of freight charges and booking stalls, they would set

up stalls compared to other countries from which extensive export contracts were expected.

He said that meetings had also been held in the context of searching for new markets in the "Domotax" exhibition and will return to Pakistan and send suggestions in this regard to the government.

Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf appealed to the government to make a policy to ensure participation in all international exhibitions, which would have a very positive impact on overall exports.

Higher growth crucial for mounting productivity: study

ISLAMABAD (APP): The growth of productivity is a crucial determinant of an economy's growth that has to be pushed higher to over 3% to achieve the targets of raising the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to over 7-8% on a sustainable basis.

A study titled "Sectoral Total Factor Productivity in Pakistan," conducted jointly by the Planning Ministry and Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) shows that in Pakistan, average productivity growth has been 1.5% from 2010-2020.

However, 1.5% productivity growth is not enough if Pakistan wants to achieve GDP growth of around 7-8 percent. The study reveals that economies that had total factor productivity (TFP) growth of more than 3 percent had a GDP growth rate of 8 percent or more, whereas, the TFP growth of less than 3 percent was associated with a GDP growth rate between 3 and 7 percent, enunciating a positive correlation between productivity growth and GDP growth.

Having higher factor productivity, or simply productivity, is a key building block for global competitiveness, without high productivity, we cannot compete at the international

level, said Asim Saeed, a Member of Private Sector Development and Competitiveness at the Planning Commission of Pakistan. Asim being a key player behind this study noted that the only sustainable way for Pakistan to rid itself of the perplexing macroeconomic woes was to substantially substitute foreign currency refinancings and more foreign debt with a foreign currency stream of export dollars.

"This is possible only if we wholeheartedly embrace productivity as our national emblem," he remarked.

The study used unique listed and non-listed data from 1,321 firms divided into 61 sectors, to estimate the productivity growth in Pakistan. According to the study's results, high-productivity growth sectors are mostly services-based or tech-based, whereas most of the sectors that have medium to low or negative productivity growth are in manufacturing.

The study maintains that one plausible reason for the afore-stated sectors could be greater competition in services. The study further finds states, "the manufacturing sectors are protected in Pakistan, which insulates them from the competition; protecting a sector retards any incentive to improve

efficiency."

It is noted that since the incumbent government came into power in April last year, Planning Minister Prof Ahsan Iqbal has been constantly emphasizing adopting export-oriented policies for the public and private sectors to accelerate export-led-growth.

The Planning Ministry has recently launched the Champions of Reforms (COPs) network to bring together professionals from different sectors to contribute towards the socio-economic development of the country.

The analysis also shows that export-designated sectors (not export-oriented firms in a sector) have either low or negative productivity growth. Moreover, sectors that are the recipient of subsidies also have low to negative productivity growth.

It further highlighted that productivity growth turned negative around the time of elections thrice and once during the COVID period. This, perhaps, suggests that the overall macro environment and political transitions casts significant impact on productivity and GDP growth.

The study's results further furnish some serious implications. One of such implications is that the neg-

ative productivity in the subsidy recipient sectors is essentially a deadweight loss to the economy. It also acts as a barrier to private sector development. Meanwhile, the below-average performance of the export-designated sectors is a wake-up call for all because it implies that Pakistani exports are not competitive compared to its competitors' exports.

The study further concludes that to move the country towards a higher growth trajectory, solid measures and the right steps are inevitable to improve productivity. In Pakistan, episodes of liberalisation and market-friendly policies are key to ensuring high productivity and increasing GDP growth on sustainable grounds, urges the study.

High productivity and GDP growth in Pakistan are also correlated with better macroeconomic fundamentals, structural reforms, institutions, governance, and private sector dynamism. "Providing discriminatory incentives to certain sectors and firms retards competition in the economy, which eliminates the need to improve efficiency and hurts the private sector's development," said Omer Siddique, Senior Research Economist at PIDE.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors waiting for customers to sell oranges at Fruit and Vegetable Market in Federal Capital.



In brief

Annual Cycling Challenge 2023

B A H A W A L P U R (APP): The 16-kilometers long Annual Cycling Challenge 2023 was held here on Sunday in which races of three categories were held. The race was started from Dera Bakha and concluded at Farid Gate. The first category was of cyclists aged between 14 years to 45 years. A s s i s t a n t C o m m i s s i o n e r Bahawalpur Saddar Faisal Ahmad flagged off the race. The second category comprised on cyclists under the age of 14 and the third category was of cyclists above 45 years of age. The races of these two categories started at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and concluded at Farid Gate. A s s i s t a n t C o m m i s s i o n e r Bahawalpur City Dr Anum Fatima flagged off these races. According to the result, Waseem Iqbal won the first category race. Muhammad Khalid was the winner of the Under-14 category and Zafar Abbas won the first position in the above 45 years category. C o m m i s s i o n e r Bahawalpur Division Raja Jahangir Anwar gave away prizes to the race winners. Deputy C o m m i s s i o n e r Bahawalpur Zahid Pervez Warraich was also present at the occasion.

Whirlwind Burl knock wins series

H A R A R E (Agencies): A whirlwind unbeaten 30 by Ryan Burl, better known as a leg spinner than a brisk batsman, lifted Zimbabwe to a 2-1 Twenty20 series victory over Ireland in Harare on Sunday. Ireland were put in to bat and made 141-9 with Harry Tector top scoring on 47 as they sought to buck a trend in this series of the side fielding first winning. Captain Craig Ervine scored 54 to lift Zimbabwe to 116-5 with three overs remaining and Burl then became the unlikely hero, hammering two sixes and three fours off 11 deliveries. Another bowler, Luke Jongwe, won the match and the series, hitting a four off the last ball of the penultimate over to take Zimbabwe to 144-6, and a four-wicket triumph. It was a dramatic end to a series that began with a five-wicket win for Zimbabwe on Thursday, followed by a six-wicket victory for the tourists two days later. After the cheap loss of opener T a d i w a n a s h e Marumani (5), Ervine took charge, with his 65-minute stand including six fours. His knock ended when caught by Chris Campher attempting a cover drive off a short-pitched ball from Mark Adair. Spinner Ben White (2-26) and fast-medium pacer Barry McCarthy (2-32) were the most successful Irish bowlers. Batting at No. 4, Tector rescued the tourists, who had slumped to 19-3 having faced just 23 deliveries. He put on 70 runs before being separated from Campher, the second highest Irish scorer with 27, including two fours. Tector departed next, adding a further six runs before his middle stump was uprooted by off spinner Wesley Madhevere, the most successful Zimbabwe bowler for eight runs. The batter faced 38 deliveries and struck three fours. Mark Adair was the only lower-order Irish batsman to reach double figures with his 14 off 10 balls contributing to a 31-run seventh-wicket stand.

Eyman Fatima shows her class and talent in ICC Women's U19 T20 WC

POTCHEFSTROOM (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan U19 Women's made an impressive start to the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2023 when they defeated Rwanda U19 Women's by eight wickets here on Sunday.

Chasing 107 runs for victory, Pakistan were struggling at 42 for two at the halfway stage. However, they resumed the run-chase following drinks break with intent and purpose when they scored 17 runs in the 11th over that gave their innings the impetus and helped to reach the target for the loss of two wickets with 13 balls to spare.

Pakistan teenagers scored 66 runs in the last 47 balls.

Eyman Fatima showed a lot of

class, talent and promise when she scored 65 not out with 11 exquisite fours from 60 balls to spearhead Pakistan's chase. Eyman, after losing Shawaal Zulfiqar (1) in the first over, put on 34 runs for the second wicket with Warda Yousaf (16) before adding 72 runs for the unbroken third wicket with skipper Syed Aroob Shah.

Aroob returned unbeaten on 20 from 21 balls with two fours.

Earlier, Rwanda hit six fours in their 106 for eight that revolved around Gisele Ishimwe's 40 and Cynthia Tuyizere's 20. The two batters added 52 runs for the second wicket after Areesha Noor had taken a wicket on the fifth ball of her first over. She later added the wicket of Rwanda

wicketkeeper Henriette Isimbi to finish with figures of 4-0-19-2.

Zaib-un-Nisa, Anosha Nasir and Aroob took a wicket each, while three Rwanda batters were run-out.

Pakistan will play England here on Tuesday, while their last Group B match will be against Zimbabwe on Thursday.

Scores in brief:

Rwanda Women's U19 106-8, 20 overs (Gisele Ishimwe 40, Cynthia Tuyizere 20; Areesha Noor 2-19) Pakistan Women's U19 108-2, 17.5 overs, (Eyman Fatima 65 not out, Syeda Aroob Shah 20 not out, Warda Yousaf 16)

Player of the match – Eyman Fatima (Pakistan).



POTCHEFSTROOM: Eyman Fatima made 44 of her 65 runs in boundaries.

Axelsen secures Malaysia Open title

KUALA LUMPUR (Agencies): Danish ace Viktor Axelsen stormed to victory in the final of badminton's Malaysia Open on Sunday, successfully defending his title by outgunning Japan's Kodai Naraoka.

The world number one only needed 40 minutes in Kuala Lumpur to secure his first trophy of the year, displaying top form to walk away with the match 21-6, 21-15. Wasting no time in the first game, Axelsen immediately went on the offensive, raining his signature pinpoint smashes on a defenceless Naraoka. He then kept up the pressure in the second game against a visibly exhausted opponent to clinch the win.

Axelsen conceded fatigue may have been a

factor in the match, with Naraoka having played a mammoth 113-minute semi-final just a day earlier. "He looked stiff-legged due to the long matches he's played. For me, that was a good thing," Axelsen told reporters.

"I just tried to play consistently at a high pace, and not give him many chances. If he wanted to win, he had to work really hard." The reigning Olympic champion has been badminton's standout performer over the last year, winning eight titles in 2022 including the All-England and World Championships.

But he said Sunday there were many strong players capable of overtaking him, though he declined to give names. "You cannot predict who

will do well. For me it's just about minding my own business, trying to do what works for me and keep improving," he said. Naraoka, who played 362 minutes in the tournament before his showdown with Axelsen, said the run had taken a toll on his body.

"I did feel tired coming into this game, but I still did my best. But he used his height well, and his smashes were too powerful for me," said the world number seven.

Their match-up followed a hard-fought semi-final between the two at the World Tour Finals last month. In the women's final, Japanese player Akane Yamaguchi took the title by beating South Korea's An Se-young 21-12, 21-19, 21-11.

Azharuddin says Babar deserves 'some more time' as captain

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Indian cricket great Mohammad Azharuddin on Sunday expressed support for Babar Azam, saying that the under-fire Pakistan captain has had a short sting at the helm of affairs and deserves some more time.

Azam's position as the skipper has been under threat after the home side's loss to New Zealand, with speculation rife that he could be replaced — possibly by Shan Masood.

Speaking exclusively to Dawn.com on the sidelines of the International T20 league in the United Arab Emirates, Azharuddin reminded that Azam has been in charge of the national team for a mere year and a half.

He also offered the elegant batter some advice, "Babar Azam's natural game is not slogging. If [some day] he can't score runs as an opener, he can also play further down the batting lineup."

Commenting on fast bowlers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah, the cricketer-turned-commentator said, "Pakistan fast bowlers are good but should pay more attention to their fitness".

Earlier this week, former Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja extended support to national captain Azam, saying that he was doing a "good job".

"Under the captaincy of Babar, Pakistan's performance in white-ball formats remained good whereas in Test cricket more good work needs to be done for improvement," Raja had added.

Kohli's 166 helps India crush Sri Lanka by record 317 runs



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (Agencies): Virat Kohli smashed an unbeaten 166 to help India beat Sri Lanka by 317 runs and record the highest ever victory margin in a one-day international as they swept the series 3-0 on Sunday.

Kohli's third century in his last four matches and a 116 by opener Shubman Gill powered India to 390-5 in Thiruvananthapuram.

Fast bowler Mohammed Siraj then returned impressive figures of 4-32 as India bowled out the tourists for 72 in 22 overs as India went past New Zealand's 290-run thrashing of Ireland in 2008. A 131-run second-wicket stand between Gill and Kohli stood out after India elected to bat first.

Gill put on 95 runs for the opening wicket with skipper Rohit Sharma, who made 42, to set the tone for the team's batting domination. Rohit missed out on a fifty after he fell to Chamika Karunaratne

but Gill kept up the attack with Kohli and raised his second ODI hundred, celebrating it with a fist bump.

Gill smashed Jeffrey Vandersay for four fours in the over after the ton, but was soon bowled off a slower delivery from Kasun Rajitha. "King Kohli" put on another century partnership with Shreyas Iyer, who hit 38, and went on to record the ton with his arms and bat raised to an applauding crowd.

The ball before Kohli got his hundred saw a nasty collision at the square-leg boundary between Vandersay and Ashen Bandara, with both fielders stretched off. Dunieth Wellalage came in as a concussion substitute for Vandersay and batted for the tourists at number eight.

Kohli changed gears after his 46th ODI century — three behind Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record of 49 — as he smashed

Karunaratne for two successive sixes. Kohli, who surpassed Sri Lankan great Mahela Jayawardene's 12,650 ODI runs to enter the top five all-time run getters, reached his 150 in 106 balls and finished off with 13 fours and eight sixes.

Sri Lanka were never in the chase after Mohammed Siraj struck thrice in his first five overs including the wickets of Avishka Fernando, for one, and Kusal Mendis, bowled on four. The tourists kept losing wickets to Siraj's pace and swing and the quick also ran out Karunaratne with a direct throw that caught the batsman off guard and out of his crease at the striker's end.

Mohammed Shami and Kuldeep Yadav picked two wickets each to flatten Sri Lanka's batting with 28 overs to spare, with the tourists losing nine wickets and injured Bandara not batting.



LONDON: Kai Havertz of Chelsea scores the team's first goal past Vicente Guaita of Crystal Palace during the Premier League match.

Havertz earns narrow win for Chelsea against Palace

LONDON (Agencies): A thumping header from Kai Havertz earned Chelsea a narrow victory over Crystal Palace to ease the pressure on manager Graham Potter.

Havertz met Hakim Ziyech's cross shortly after an hour as the Blues ended a run of three successive defeats in all competitions.

The Germany striker should have doubled Chelsea's advantage but could only flash a header wide from close range from Mason Mount's cross.

Palace came close to equalising late on when Cheick Doucoure's long-range volley was spectacularly tipped over by Kepa Arrizabalaga. Chelsea stay 10th despite the win, just their second in 10 Premier League games, but are now level on points with ninth-placed Liverpool. Palace are 12th after a fifth defeat in six games in all competitions.

Nervy Blues end losing run

This was far from a convincing performance by Chelsea but the relief was palpable at the final whistle as they avoided the ignominy of losing four successive matches in all competitions for the first time in 30 years.

The goal arrived when Palace lost concentration from a corner allowing Conor Gallagher to play the ball short to Ziyech, whose curling cross was buried past Vicente Guaita by Havertz for his sixth goal of the season. Chelsea had struggled for many clear-cut openings up to that stage, with Havertz heading over and Lewis Hall flashing a first-time shot across goal during a tame first half. Havertz glanced wide from Mount's danger-

ous cross and substitute Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang shot straight at Guaita as Chelsea threatened a second.

Thiago Silva then made several key defensive headers in stoppage time as the Blues clung on during nine nervy minutes of stoppage time. The west London club have also been boosted by the arrival of Ukraine forward Mykhailo Mudryk, who was paraded on the pitch at half-time after confirmation of his transfer from Shakhtar Donetsk.

Chelsea splash out to beat Arsenal to 100 million euro Mudryk: Chelsea swooped to beat Arsenal to the signing of Ukrainian international winger Mykhailo Mudryk from Shakhtar Donetsk for a fee that could rise to 100 million euros (£88 million, \$108 million) on Sunday.

Shakhtar confirmed that Mudryk will cost the Blues an initial 70 million euros with a further 30 million in performance-related add-ons. The 22-year-old has signed an eight-and-a-half year deal at Stamford Bridge. A long-term target for the Gunners, Mudryk looked set to join the Premier League leaders but Arsenal refused to match Shakhtar's 100 million euro valuation.

Chelsea had no such reservations as another huge deal takes their spending on transfers in the first season under the ownership of Todd Boehly's consortium above £400 million. "We are delighted to welcome Mykhailo to Chelsea," said Boehly and Chelsea co-owner Behdad Eghbali in a club statement.

"He's a hugely exciting talent who we believe will

be a terrific addition to our squad both now and in the years to come. "He will add further depth to our attack and we know he'll get a very warm welcome to London."

Mudryk was in attendance at Stamford Bridge for Chelsea's clash against Crystal Palace. He scored 12 goals in just 44 first team appearances for Shakhtar, including three in the group stages of this season's Champions League.

"I'm so happy to sign for Chelsea," said Mudryk. "This is a huge club, in a fantastic league and it is a very attractive project for me at this stage of my career. "I'm excited to meet my new team-mates and I'm looking forward to working and learning under Graham Potter and his staff."

Potter is under huge pressure to turn Chelsea's investment into results on the pitch after a run of six defeats in eight games. The London side have already added Benoit Badiashile, David Fofana, Andrey Santos and the loan signing of Joao Felix in the January window. In a statement, Shakhtar confirmed the deal is a record sale for a Ukrainian club.

"I have mixed feelings: in order to win European trophies, I should invite such footballers as Mudryk to our club, to our Ukrainian league and not send them to the best championships and the best clubs in the world," said Shakhtar president Rinat Akhmetov. "However, I am sure that Mykhailo will win respect, sympathy and love of all connoisseurs of world football with his speed, his technique, his impressive and beautiful play."



BRISBANE (PPI) Bismah Maroof-led Pakistan women's side will take on Australia in the first of the three ICC Women's Championship ODI's at the Allan Border Field, Brisbane on Monday. The second ODI scheduled on Wednesday, 18 January is also at the same venue, while the third ODI will be played at the North Sydney Oval, Sydney on Saturday, 21 January.

The ODI series will be followed by three T20Is to be played from 24 to 29 January in Sydney, Hobart and Canberra. Before coming to Australia, the women's team held their practice camps in Lahore and Karachi where they also featured in various intra-squad matches.

Since arriving in Brisbane last week, the Pakistan team have conducted extensive practice sessions which include a 50-over match against the Governor General's XI at the Allan Border Field on

Friday. Even though the tourists lost the game, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana and Nida Dar showed their skills in the bowling department, while Bismah Maroof scored a half-century, showcasing her batting form ahead of the ODI series.

Australia hold the top position in the ICC Women's ODI rankings, while Pakistan are positioned on the ninth spot. In the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25, Pakistan after winning five of their six outings are second in the table behind India, whereas Australia will play their first Championship match on Monday against Pakistan.

Pakistan will be eyeing to carry forward the momentum after they clinched a 2-1 win over Sri Lanka in Karachi in June last year and later achieved a 3-0 sweep over Ireland in Lahore in November.

While talking to PCB Digital on the eve of the

series, captain Bismah Maroof said: "We had good practice sessions here at the venue. The pitches here have different bounce as compared to Pakistan and it took us time to adjust to the bounce."

"We are fortunate enough to get a practice game at the same venue where our opening two matches of the series will be hosted. This will help be familiar with the conditions. The fast bowlers bowled well in the practice match, and they will have a key role to play in these conditions. The spinners on the other hand will need to adjust their line and length as required here."

"The batters need to get set on the wicket, and once they are set, it will be easy for them to score runs. We have prepared ourselves well and will try to execute our plans to give better results in the series."

"We have done really well in the ICC Women's Championship matches so far, the upcoming series

against Australia is also very important. We will try to stick to our plans in the series."

The toss will take place tomorrow at 0435 (Pakistan Standard Time), while the first ball will be bowled at 0505 (Pakistan Standard Time).

Pakistan ODI squad for Australia series:

Bismah Maroof (c), Aliya Riaz, Ayesha Naseem, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Kainat Imtiaz, Muneeba Ali (wk), Nashra Sandhu, Nida Dar, Omaira Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Sidra Amin, Sidra Nawaz (wk) and Tuba Hassan.

Traveling Reserves: Aimen Anwar and Javeria Khan

Player Support staff: Ayesha Ashhar (team manager), Saleem Jaffer (bowling coach and interim head coach), Taufiq Umar (batting coach), Mauhtashim Rashid (fielding coach), Yasir Malik (strength and conditioning coach), Muhammad Zubair Ahmad (analyst), Syed Nazir Ahmed (media and digital content manager) and Rifat Gill (physiotherapist).

Australia series Itinerary 16 January – First ODI at Allan Border Field, Brisbane

18 January – Second ODI at Allan Border Field, Brisbane

21 January – Third ODI at North Sydney Oval, Sydney

24 January – First T20I at North Sydney Oval, Sydney

26 January – Second T20I at Blundstone Arena, Hobart

29 January – Third T20I at Manuka Oval, Canberra.



In brief

Capital Book Fair underway in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): Three-day 'Capital Book Fair' organized by Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration is underway here at the Art and Craft Village, Islamabad. The book fair, being arranged in collaboration with Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) and the Department of Libraries, would offer a variety of books at discounted prices at Art and Craft Village Islamabad, said a press release issued. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Irfan Nawaz Memon visited the book festival reviewed arrangements and said that objective behind this festival was to encourage book reading among the young generation. "In the age of the digital era, the ICT administration would encourage young writers, poets and intellectuals to adopt book reading", he added. Talking to APP spokesperson ICT Abdullah Tabbasam said that the book festival would continue till January 16 (Sunday). He said the purpose was to revive the book reading habits among the public, preserve literary cultural heritage and bring back the culture of books in society.

IRSA releases 25,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 25,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 43,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1497.64 feet and was 99.64 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 17,200 cusecs while outflow as 8,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jehlum at Mangla Dam was 1122.25 feet, which was 72.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 8,700 cusecs and 100 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 19,600, 17,800, 4,100 and 4,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Musical show held at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): A variety musical show was organized to nurture talent in Punjab Arts Council (PAC), in which singers from across the province participated. Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed was the special guest of the musical show. Speaking on the occasion, Waqar Ahmad said that songs have their unique place in the country's culture in which the traditions, simplicity and sincere love of the people of Punjab were hidden. "We are lucky that our culture has its example which is loved all over the world," adding, "our culture is our identity; the nations that do not have any recognition, history forgets them." He said that the artists of Punjab had preserved their folk songs, tunes and unique expressions in a rich way and today's young generation was also benefiting from this. Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman said that artists were considered to be messengers of peace around the world. In the atmosphere of depression, the arrangement of musical nights was welcome. There was no talent shortage among Pakistani artists, adding Pakistani singers in classical music have performed worldwide.



ISLAMABAD: CDA sanitary workers busy in sweeping along Islamabad Expressway in Federal Capital.

Belgium delegation to visit Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): On the special invitation of National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Belgium parliamentary delegation led by Senator and Chairperson of Pakistan-Belgium Parliamentary Friendship Group, Allesia Clots is officially visiting Pakistan from 16 to 21 January. This visit will serve as a tool to strengthen bilateral ties between both nations and further strengthen parliamentary cooperation between the two countries. Furthermore, new avenues of cooperation in trade and business would be also explored during this visit.

Belgium parliamentary delegation comprises Allesia Claes, Karl Vanlourve, State Senator Philippe Courard, PS, State Senator Georges Dallemagne, Les Engages, Member of the Belgian Chamber of Representatives and Senior officers of Belgium Parliament. Besides having call on with National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, the Belgium parliamentary delegation would also held meeting with Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani. The delegation would also held meetings with Convener of

Parliamentary Task Force on Sustainable Development Goals and chairperson of Women Parliamentary Caucus in the Parliament House.

Furthermore, the delegation would also call on Governor Punjab in Lahore besides visiting the Texpak, a Belgium Company in Lahore and Badshahi Mosque. Later on, it would visit Karachi where it will have call on meeting with the Chief Minister of Sindh. The delegation would also visit Leprosy Centre of MALC Karachi and flood affected areas in Sindh to express solidarity with the marooned people.

IESCO notifies power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Monday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to an IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM. Islamabad Circle, Bani Gala, Imran Khan, Punjab House, Zia Masjid, Tufail Shaheed, G-8 Center, Chhata Bakhtawar, Highway, F-8/2, G-10 Center, I-8/2, I-10/1, G-14/4, Shahpur, Sunny Bank, Cecil, Kohala, Pearl Cantonment, TDCP, PAF, Shahdara, Angori, NCP, Munigyal, Iqbal Street, Peer Suhawah, Quaid-e-Azam University, Buri Imam, Mandala, Athal, Mangat, Desto, T&T, Treat, Bhara Kaho.II, Golf Club Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Syedpur Road, T&T, Sadiqabad, Khurram Colony, Khanna Road, Tariq Shaheed, Dhok Hakmdad, Iqbal Road. II, Major Masood, Sarafa Bazar, Janah Road, Subhanuddin, Gulzar Shaheed, Asghar Mall, Kayani Road, Askari XI, Officer Colony, Bhandana, Noon, Mohanpura Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Mall Road, Dhok Farman Ali, Bustan Khan Road, FECHS, Park View, National Park, Humayun, Shahpur, Chahan, Qureshiabad, Chongi No.22, Sehala College, Kahota City.II, Color City, Nara Matur, Hamid Jhang, Jhatta Hatial, Sukho, Nishan Haider, Mahuta, Shahekan, Adiala Jail, Shahpur, Khassala, Reliance Weaving Mill, Jarrar Comp, Lab.I&2, Bhal, Islamabad Feed Mill, Jhatta Hatial, Feeders, Attock Circle, Taxila, Margalla, Nawababad, Wahadat Kal Wini, Kala Khan, MVHS D-17, Gulistan Sehat, Pind Padian, New City Block. I, A, N & G, New City Arcade, Burhan Industrial, Ghor Ghishti, Shamsabad, Dar es Salaam, Kamra Rural, Mari Darya Sharif, Soni, Azeem Shaheed, Qutbal, Pari.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia ink agreement for arrangements of Hajj 1444 AH

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah welcomed the Pakistani delegation led by Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufi Abdul Shakoor and signed an agreement with regard to the arrangements for the Hajj season 1444 AH.

On the occasion of Hajj Expo 2023, the Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah signed several collaboration agreements with various countries while meeting with their delegations, an official informed APP on Sunday. These agreements come under the development initiatives offered by the Kingdom to improve the experience of pilgrims during Hajj, Umrah and Ziyarat. The agreement with Pakistan includes the allocation of Hajj quota, airports and means of arrival and departure as well as

the organizational guidelines that are related from the beginning of the trip to the pilgrims' return from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), as they are the guarantors of their safety and comfort.

Hajj Expo 2023 is the largest gathering related to Hajj and Umrah, as it brought together over 60,000 visitors from more than 57 countries, besides 81 speakers from the public and private sectors from inside and outside the Kingdom, and 200 companies specializing in the field of Hajj and Umrah. This large gathering was an opportunity to exchange concepts, ideas, inventions and experiences, and it also provided a platform for all the countries to sign their agreements and discuss the affairs of their citizens before the Hajj and Umrah season.

Health specialists urge to take precautionary measures to save from viral infections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health specialists have strongly recommended the people of the twin cities to take precautionary measures so that they can be saved themselves from the viral infections which are on the rise these days.

According to them, as the intense cold persists in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi due to which viral infections are on the rise among people including flu, cough and fever and other respiratory diseases. They warned that a

large number of patients have been admitted to various hospitals in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi thus witnessing an increase in cases of common cold, cough, sore throat, chest infection, fever and pneumonia.

Instructions are being issued to people to protect themselves from cold and wear warm clothes and use soup and coffee to keep themselves warm, they added. Talking to a private news channel, Medical specialist Dr Asif Hassan said that viral infections

are spreading rapidly.

He said that parents should not send their sick children to schools so that other children can be protected from catching the viral infection adding he said the citizens should wear masks when leaving home. In the OPDs, he said patients were being urged to sit at a distance and wear masks to prevent the spread of viral infections. He said that patients were being instructed to use medicines regularly and take precautionary measures.

ANF seizes over 110 metric tons drugs in 2022; arrests 1505

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan seized 110,467 metric tons drugs and registered over 1560 cases besides netting 1505 drug smugglers in 2022.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, the force recovered over 13626.818 kg opium, over 2990.882 kg morphine, over 86,000 kg crystal, over 9165.474 kg heroin, over 19,395 kg cocaine, over 155.135 kg amphetamine, 2624.993 kg meth, 7.167 kg ecstasy tabs, 25,420 kg aximas tabs, 168,016 kg xanax tabs, 25.665 kg valium diazepam tabs, 14,577 kg roxitrol tabs, 14,150 kg rochi-2, 1,310 kg pinix tabs, 0,600 kg hyrica tabs, 0,811 alprazolam tabs, 27850 kg poppy straw, 22,470 kg cannabis/marijuana, 2400.190 kg ketamine, 9743.000 kg AA, 13167.000 liters HCL, LSD Sticker 25,000, 4.192 kg weed, 1,300 kg intoxicating tabs, 4405.940 kg other substance.

He informed that the force rounded up 1505 smugglers including 276 in KP, 454 in North zone, 274 in Punjab, 226 in Sindh and 131 in Balochistan. All cases were registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 (Amended 2022).

The spokesman informed that to protect the youth, the ANF was working tirelessly in coordination with other law enforcing agencies of Pakistan. He said the department was also playing a leading role in mass awareness and community participation programs to educate the people against drug abuse. He said, "We are constantly putting our efforts at the national and international level."

He stressed the concerted efforts by all the quarters concerned to fight the menace of drug addiction, particularly among youth. The force was sparing no effort in

carrying out its duties and protecting the young generation from the dangers of drugs, he said adding, "We pledge to carry forward our manifesto with utmost determination, sincerity, and devotion."

Initially, drug addiction either begins for fun, for momentary pleasure, or just to get acceptable in a particular social circle, but it surely ends up to devastate the ill-fated individual as well his/her family.

Experts believe that Pakistan's goal to become a drug-free society can be achieved through creating awareness at the grassroots level against deadly addiction.

It is possible to achieve the goal when people get the ability to understand the repercussions of addiction to save the future of the coming generations. Therefore, Pakistan is striving hard to eliminate drugs to achieve the set goal of a "Drug-Free Society" besides vigorously executing its globally assigned tasks with utmost dedication and determination. For this purpose, nationwide "Anti-Drug Awareness Campaigns" are launched across society in collaboration with public and private educational institutions to keep the younger generation safe and away from the curse. "The campaigns are aimed at creating awareness among students and citizens about the lethality of drugs and measures for its prevention," a senior ANF official told APP.

He said the youth was Pakistan's greatest asset, which constituted 66% of the population. They are our future and we have to protect them from the harms of drug addiction. Protecting the country's youth and the future generation from the menace was inevitable for the prosperous future of Pakistan, he added.

Police bulldoze 4,000 pressure horns and fancy number plates

ISLAMABAD (NNI): In a bid to curb noise pollution and ensure public safety, the Islamabad Capital Police bulldozed over 4,000 pressure horns and fancy number plates, a police public relations officer said. He said that, Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad, SP (Traffic) and other senior police officials witnessed the bulldozing process at Traffic Police Office (Faizabad).

Following the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, efforts are underway to ensure a safe road environment and disciplined traffic system in the city.

Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad said that, the traffic police was striving to

make the capital "noise-free". Islamabad capital police has constituted special squads to check the noise pollution, which takes action against installation of pressure horn in Public Service Transport and small as well as on heavy vehicles. The Chief Traffic Officer said that to make Islamabad a noise free city, strict action is being taken against pressure horn users while special directions have been issued to transporters in this regard. He appealed to transporters to cooperate with Islamabad capital police to check noise pollution.

The use of fancy number plates is also a security risk and prohibited, he added.

No shortage of subsidized flour in Islamabad: DC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Irfan Nawaz Memon on Sunday refuted rumors regarding supply disruption of subsidized flour saying sufficient stock of the edible

was available at different 82 sale points and 27 utility stores of the city.

"Nine hundred flour sacks are available with every sale point and it is very easy for the public to purchase 10kg wheat flour bag for Rs 648," he said in

a news statement.

However, he added that one person only can buy a bag of 10 kilograms (kg) at one time.

Deputy Commissioner of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Irfan Nawaz Memon further said that the ICT administration had increased the number of sale points to 109. The DC said he had directed Assistant Commissioners to ensure an adequate and smooth supply of subsidized wheat flour sacks at every

sale point.

Meanwhile, on the directives of the Deputy Commissioner, AC Secretariat visited BaraKahu areas including Gul town, Col Amanullah Road, Pak Town, Muhallah Tower Gali, Al-Haq School Nai Abadi and Qazi Abad UC-9 and ensured the availability of government subsidies flour sacks. During one of the visits, the AC Secretariat directed the staff to maintain discipline and smooth sale of the stock.

Improved governance critical to end country's water woes

ISLAMABAD (APP): After the catastrophic year of 2022, the country witnessed a unique pattern of natural hazards that seriously impacted its economy, livelihoods, lifestyle and social fabric also posing challenges of water and food security.

The miseries that people suffered in flood and drought-hit areas are eye-openers for the policymakers and call for devising prudent strategies to conserve its resources, especially the rapidly declining water resource.

Experts believe that time was ripe to work out a well-thought-out plan to roll out a water pricing regime with an improved governance model to address the water scarcity issue spiking up in the country.

The situation is alarming as 5600 cubic meter per capita water availability in 1951 has presently declined to 908 cubic meter making the country water stressed. With our population already estimated to crossing 220 million from 34 million in 1951, it is feared that the country would soon fall into the water scarce category.

"Around 29 million acre-feet (MAF) water was being wasted every year in the country due to poor storage facilities and accumulation of silt in main water reservoirs of Tarbela and Mangla," remarked former WAPDA Chairman Shams ul Mulk. "This water wastage costs our economy in billions of rupees every year."

"Unchecked population growth and lack of water conservation and storage facilities would be bringing about much harder days ahead," he warned.

As our current Rabi crop is facing 38 percent water shortfall, it is evident that in near future, on one hand we shall be fast losing our water reserves and on the other hand spending our precious foreign exchange on the import of food items.

Shrinking river water resources and massive pumping out of groundwater is another challenge as mentioned by Pakistan Water Gateway, a non-governmental water-research portal.

"If groundwater depletion continues at the current rate, we shall face widespread water

poverty in the next few years," the portal recorded and recommended that efficient water management should be at the heart of our policies in developing agricultural and industrial sector projects.

"Water scarcity is affecting almost every continent with around 1.2 billion people, or almost one-fifth of the world's population living in areas of physical scarcity," commented Water expert Arshad Abbasi.

"Moreover, around 500 million people are approaching this situation with another 1.6 billion people, or almost one-quarter of the world's population facing economic water shortage," he added and warned that Pakistan was also not an exception.

As the respective government strived hard to cope with looming water scarcity challenge, the desired results are yet to be achieved.

"We need timely steps to ensure water management in agriculture, domestic and industrial sectors through an awareness campaign, adoption of technology and imposing restrictions," said Chairman Pakistan

Council of Research in Water Resources, (PCRWR), Dr. Muhammad Ashraf.

"Most of the water wasted during irrigation can be saved by using the latest technologies", he said. "If our population continues to grow at the same pace and water resource remains constant, we would be touching absolute water scarcity level by 2025 (below 500 cubic meter per capita)."

He said that PCRWR Water Report had issued a detailed report in 2018 that led to the approval of the National Water Policy the same year after a pendancy of 30 years.

"PCRWR, on its part, has played the role of a whistle-blower warning that if population continues to grow at current pace, construction of a single dam that needs at least 10 years to complete, would not be sufficient to cater our water needs," Dr Ashraf said.

"Widespread urban sprawl and erasing water shed areas was also resulting in diminishing rains and urban flooding."

In this scenario, he not only stressed strict water conserva-

tion strategies but also water metering and charging the consumers as per water usage. "For me, water is gold. Everything has an alternate but not the water. Therefore, we shall have to conserve it today for our better tomorrow."

He said 60% of our population lacks access to quality drinking water with the country fearing 30% further water downfall by 2030. "PCRWR samples from rivers at certain levels had zero dissolved oxygen indicating that no aquatic life can survive in this water which is another alarming indicator."

Dr Ashraf recommended to developing agricultural zones for irrigation, improve on-farm water usage efficiency, governance and legislation, site-specific solutions and mainstreaming of youth.

"Engaging youth in water conservation initiatives is critical for an overall behavioral change," he said and suggested more research on waterfront and share knowledge with all stakeholders on efficient water management.

The latest IPCC Report's

message on climate change and the environment is also very clear as it highlights increased frequency of natural disasters and is feared to cost the vulnerable countries in billions as witnessed during our recent floods.

"National water security is based on urban, economic and other securities and Pakistan has the lowest water security in all five sectors," noted Country Representative, International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Dr Mohsin Hafeez. "We need to ponder why 90 percent of our water is used only for agriculture and develop water sharing arrangements for rivers water."

IWMI Board member Simi Kamal believes that engaging youth in water conservation practices would be beneficial for their being technology savvy, entrepreneurial and peering approach.

"Let us make them our lobbyists for spreading water conservation message across the country and to fill the government-citizens gap," she said.

2 gangs of robbers arrested

KABUL (Agencies): The police arrested two groups on charges of robbery in the 11th police district of Kabul. A spokesperson for the police commander of Kabul, Khalid Zadran, told the media, that their officers in the 11th police district of Kabul have arrested two groups of robbers. 6 people were arrested on charges of robbing money and other goods from citizens and four others were arrested for robbing mobile phones.

Outdated medicines disposed

LAGHMAN (Agencies): 364 components of medicine were collected from the center and districts and disposed after. The drugs were collected from drug stores in the center and districts by the monitoring team of the Department of Public Health, the outdated medicines value was said to be over 1 million Afghanis. These outdated and low-quality medicines were disposed, while the Laghman Governor Qari Zain ul Abedin Abid called on all vendors to stop selling outdated medicines.

Greenhouses owners suffer \$3m losses in Farah, says officials

FARAH (TOLOnews): Local officials in the western province of Farah said that owners of greenhouses have suffered more than \$3 million loss due to cold weather in the province.

Owners of greenhouses said they are unable to continue their business due to recent financial losses that they have suffered over cold weather.

"All the plastic layers of my greenhouse have been destroyed. Approximately, I may suffer 1,200,000 to 1,300,000 Afs every day. For example the investments that I made on fertil-

izers, seeds and other materials," said Humayon, owner of a greenhouse.

"The expenses of the workers, fertilizer and other facilities, is now on us," he said. The provincial agriculture and irrigation department said that the harvests of nearly 3,000 acres of agriculture greenhouses have been wasted.

"Based on initial information, cucumber and tomatoes greenhouses on 3,000 acres of land have been destroyed, which is estimated to cause \$3.5 million losses," said Nooruddin Anas, an official of

the provincial department.

"These losses are irreparable due to two issues. First is the expenses that have been spent so far. You know that the seeds that they cultivated which are fertilized seeds and are expensive," said Abdullah Ali Zai, an economist.

According to the statistics of the provincial department of agriculture and irrigation, 85% of Farah's residents are engaged in farming and agriculture.

Many of the farmers have recently established greenhouses, aiming to earn good harvests.

Paralysed siblings set up small soap factory

ASADABAD (Pajhwok): Four physically-challenged siblings, a brother and three sisters, have established a small soap factory in their house in the Sarkano district of eastern Kunar province.

Parween, suffering from paraplegia, said: "We are five siblings and my youngest brother alone is physically sound. My three sisters and one brother are paralysed." The 36-year-old woman said they had consulted many doctors on treatment for their problems. However, doctors said they could not be treated.

"I'm annoyed seeing myself and my siblings disabled. But it is pleasure that we are not needy and eke out a living for ourselves," she remarked.

Her brother Mohammad Omer, 30, has a similar disability. He said a charitable organisation taught him soap-making skills. Now he has set up a small soap factory in their house.

Omer, who brings raw materials from neighbouring Nangarhar province, said: "I'm married and have five children. Thank God, they are all fine and we make a living by producing soaps."

Although the factory's production level is low, he sells soap to consumers in the village. "This profession is good for us, otherwise we would have been needy, looking to people's assistance."

Sulaiman, the father of the siblings, told Pajhwok the condition of his children had bettered his life. However, he is worried about their future.

"The hope of every parent is to have healthy children and comfortable life. But unfortunately, my four children are disabled," he commented.

He has shown his children to a number of doctors for treatment. However, doctors told him their conditions were incurable.

nice, and peaceful life, Pompeo stated.

Prior to this, political experts, analysts, commentators, and Afghanistan's general public harshly criticized Ghani for taking such a cowardly decision by fleeing the country and leaving his people behind. May believe he could have stepped down and compromised with the Taliban and other stakeholders on a peaceful transfer of power instead of landing the Afghan people in such a desperate situation, where hunger, poverty, and unemployment have forced people to even sell their children to survive.

Others believe that Ashraf Ghani's name will be recorded as a "traitor" in the modern history of Afghanistan for what he did to his people at the very end of his tenure.

Drug factory discovered in Farah

FARAH (Agencies): The counter-narcotic department officials of Farah say that the officers of the department have discovered a drug production factory and shut it down in that province. The provincial counter-narcotic department officials said that a drug production factory was discovered and shut down. A quantity of Row material has been confiscated which has been utilized in the production of drugs.

Turkish Ambassador meets Afghan Foreign Minister

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi met with the Turkish Ambassador, Cihad Erginay, on Sunday in Kabul.

Ambassador Erginay expressed his deep condolences to the affected Afghan families of the late terror attack that took place near the entrance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, resulting in the death and injury of scores of innocent civilians. He prayed for the souls of the deceased ones and wished speedy recovery for the injured people, said a statement released by this ministry.

"His country will deliver seven cargos of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in the next couple of days, and the series of aid will continue in the future as well," Erginay said.

For his part, Muttaqi hailed Turkey's continued support and the delivery of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan during these difficult economic times. Muttaqi called for further strengthening



of political ties between the two countries.

Turkey is one of the few countries that maintains close relations with the Taliban administration in Kabul since the withdrawal of American and international forces in August 2021. Ironically enough, Turkish forces alongside the then-Afghan military personnel who fought

against the Taliban fighters over the past two decades in Afghanistan, now sit with the same group and express their condolences.

To achieve certain interests and have their stake in the matters of Afghanistan, the game of politics makes old rivals new friends and vice versa under different circumstances.

Meanwhile, despite

threats of terror incidents and growing insecurity in Kabul, the Turkish government has kept its Diplomatic Mission functional in Kabul. Turkish diplomats have been meeting with the Taliban de facto authorities on a regular basis and striving for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

Announcements by non-UN entities about cash shipment misleading

KABUL (Khaama Press): The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) says that announcements by non-UN entities about cash packages are misleading and unhelpful.

Following the announcement of "Da Afghanistan Bank" the country's central bank, UNAMA clarified in a series of tweets that cash package shipped to Afghanistan is deposited in UN accounts in a private bank.

UNAMA has also reiterated that the amount of cash dispatched to Afghanistan directly depends on the humanitarian aid programs of this institution.

This comes as Afghanistan's central bank on

Saturday announced that a \$40 million fresh aid package had been shipped to the country. This cash aid arrived in Kabul after weeks of silence and rumors that the international community had intentionally ended the aid package in response to the latest restrictions by the Taliban authorities barring women from university education and employability at government and non-government aid organizations.

According to the central bank, so far, 22 \$40 million and 30 \$32 million aid packages have been dispatched to Afghanistan. After the return of the Taliban to Power in August 2021, the international

community's cash aid packages reach a total of \$1.833 billion.

The United Nations transports cash into Afghanistan for use by UN agencies. The UN uses the funds to conduct its work in Afghanistan, primarily in providing critical humanitarian assistance to millions of Afghans requiring support. A central reason the UN brings cash into Afghanistan is due to the disruption to international banking transfers and liquidity issues since August 2021.

All cash brought into Afghanistan is placed in designated UN accounts in a private bank for use by the United Nations.

All these funds are then

distributed directly to the United Nations entities, as well as to a small number of approved and vetted humanitarian partners in Afghanistan.

None of the cash brought into Afghanistan is deposited in the Central Bank of Afghanistan nor provided to the Taliban de facto authorities by the UN.

The controversy comes following the Central Bank's claim that it had deposited the transferred money into a private bank, rejected by the UNAMA Afghanistan – stating that the international community's cash aid is directly deposited in UN accounts, not giving the Taliban de facto authorities.

Mike Pompeo blames Ghani for landing his people in trouble



KABUL (Khaama Press): Mike Pompeo, the former United States secretary of state has blamed Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan's former president for failing the US-led peace process and putting Afghan people in immense trouble.

While speaking at the University of Chicago earlier in the week, Mr. Pompeo explained how the US wanted its negotiations with the Taliban to have led to a peaceful transfer of power in Kabul, but it did not happen because the then president Ashraf Ghani did not want it to succeed.

Mike Pompeo served as the US secretary of state in the Trump administration and closely supervised the US-Taliban talks that began in Doha in 2018.

In his remarks, Mr. Pompeo said that it took us

some time to eventually get all Afghans to the negotiation table, and yet it was Ghani who did not like that the US convened with the Taliban and that's why he opposed the deal as well.

"The US succeeded in bringing all Afghans together, including the Northern Alliance, women's rights group, and the human rights group. We were quite an optimist that we had begun to head down the road, but it was going to take some American presence there to do it," Pompeo said.

However, President Ghani was not up for it, which is why the peace process ended in a complete failure. Unlike Zelensky, who chose to stay with his people and fight the Russian aggression, Ghani fled the country in safety, now living a very

Kabul residents concerned over sudden rise in onion prices

KABUL (TOLOnews): Kabul residents said they are concerned about a sudden rise in onion prices in local markets that they say have increased three times over the past week.

The residents said they cannot afford to pay the high prices. Shopkeepers said the price for seven kilograms of onion is 400 Afs.

"The price of onion is very high. The people are poor and unemployment is rising every day. They cannot afford to buy onions. This has been problematic for the poor people," said Torialai, a resident of Kabul.

"With my job, everyone knows that I cannot afford to buy onions for 400 Afs. I

may be able to buy one kilogram or something like that," said Barialai, a vendor.

Shopkeepers said the floods flowed across Afghanistan last summer as the reason for the rise in prices of the onions. According to them, the floods have damaged many harvests of onions and other vegetables in the country.

"If they used to take 3,500 kilograms of crops, this year they took 1,400 kilograms. This year, all the onions were damaged due to heavy rains that also caused diseases," said Abdul Shakur, a shopkeeper.

This comes as the Afghanistan Chamber of

Agriculture and Livestock (ACAL) said that Afghanistan's onion was exported to Pakistan during the current solar year and that it affected the prices.

"The main issue for the rise in onion prices is that Pakistan's harvest was hit by floods. The demand for onion was high in Pakistan. All onions from Afghanistan were exported to Pakistan but today the demands are high in the market," said Mirwais Hajizada, the deputy head of the ACAL.

This comes as the Ministry of Industry and Commerce said that efforts are underway to solve the issue of high prices of onions in the country.

Economy Ministry's

spokesman Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad said the import of onions from Central Asian countries will increase.

"Onions are brought here from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan because the Salang Pass is closed due to snowfalls. We had the imports of onions from Pakistan but due to the problems which exist now, the imports have faced challenges. The problems will be solved and onion prices will be reduced," he said.

Based on ACAI statistics, due to the lack of refrigerators, Afghanistan's products, including onions, are sold at low prices in their seasons but the prices increase in the winter.

KABUL (Pajhwok): The prices of Kazakh flour and Indian sugar had declined while Arabic gold rate surged and Afghani depreciated against dollar in Kabul markets during the outgoing week.

Zmarai Safi, head of the Food Traders Association in Kabul, said the price of 49-kilogram of India sugar declined from 3,000 afs to 2,900 afs while the rate of 49-kilogram of Kazakh flour declined from 2,150 to 2,100 afs.

He added the rates of some items remained unchanged such as 24.5-kilogram of Pakistani rice 3,000 afs, 16-litre of Malaysian cooking oil 1,800 afs, one kilogram of black African tea 400 afs and one kilogram of green Indonesian tea 350 afs.

Hamid Sufizada, one of the retailers at Dabni Bagh Market, said the retail price of 49-kilogram of Khazakh flour was 2,150 afs, 24 kilogram of Pakistani rice 3,050, 49 kilogram of Indian sugar 2,950 afs, 16-litre of Malaysian cooking oil 1,850 afs, one kilogram



of black African team 450 afs and the same quantity of green Indonesian team 400 afs.

Gold price Mohammad Fawad, the owner of Haji Mohammad Salehzada Jewellery shop, said the price of one gram of Arabic gold Ayaar 750 surge from 3,450 to 4,400 afs.

He said the price of one

gram of Russian gold Ayaar 585 was 3,450 afs same as last week.

Fuel rates An employee of the Ahmadyar Group Petrol Station said the price of one litre of petrol was 73 afs while one litre of diesel accounted for 93 afs.

Mohammad Sharif, one of the gas seller, said the price of one kilogram of

gas was 64 afs same as last week.

Currency rates Haji Hussain, the owner of Sadaqat Money Changer, said that one US dollar was accounted for 90.10 afs whiel 1,000 Pakistani rupee accounted for 360 afs.

Last week one US dollar was accounted for 89 afs while 1,000 Pakistani rupees accounted for 340 afs.

Development projects completed

NANGARHAR (Agencies): Tens of development projects in Nangarhar have recently been commissioned, said local officials of the province.

44 projects have been completed through the laborer works against the food program in the Khogiani district of the province, according to local officials of the Nangarhar.

These projects include the cleaning of canals and the reconstruction of roads. Laborer work was provided for over 11 thousand people, who received 10kg of wheat daily in exchange for their work.

Thousands of Afghans evacuated by UK still remain in hotels

BIRMINGHAM, England (Agencies): Thousands of Afghan citizens who served Britain in its army and other bodies were evacuated with their families from Afghanistan in what was reported as the biggest British military evacuation in over 70 years.

Although the majority of more than 21,000 refugees have now been placed in accommodations, almost half of the evacuees are still stuck in hotels. According to the latest figures provided by the Home Office, 9,242 individuals are placed in 63 hotels across the UK, and "around half" are children.

The UK evacuated about 18,000 people, including more than 6,000

British nationals, in the two weeks following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in mid-August 2021. But after the evacuation ended, thousands continued to flee the country and applied for the Afghan Citizen's Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP).

Some made it to the UK on their own and applied to one of those schemes, while others submitted their applications through British diplomatic missions in neighboring nations. Fahim Zazai, the founder of the Afghan Community and Welfare Centre in Walsall, said those who remain in hotels were not all evacuees but also

included many who arrived in later months.

Zazai was 20 years old when he made it to the UK from Afghanistan in 1999. He has since dedicated himself to help refugees settle in the community with the charity he founded 15 years ago. Now that the Taliban is back in power, he spends long hours each day to help those who have been evacuated by the British army.

Many refugees reach out to Zazai, seeking help in finding housing. "A person has recently contacted me from Preston, saying it's been almost two years since him, his wife, and their six children are stuck in a hotel. I told him that all we could do is to look for

private housing, which then needs to be approved by the Home Office. This person has developed mental health issues. It's devastating for them," he said.

Settling into the country to have an ordinary life is not easy, Zazai says, pointing out that those placed in hotels could be accommodated anywhere in the country, where they have no connection to family or friends. "They have no support in terms of language or a social circle. So basically, they are completely isolated in a random location," he said, adding that his charity has managed to help several families in Halifax, York, and Scotland, relocating them elsewhere.

Refugees told not to talk to media

According to the British media, these Afghan refugees are being housed in British hotels at a cost of about £1 million (\$1.2 million) a day. Since the UK is going under a cost of living crisis, many question why the government is not doing more to get these families out of hotels.

Zazai said that dozens of refugees told him that either their case workers or Home Office officials told them not to talk to the media about their predicament if they want to receive a council house. In addition to verbal warnings, an email was also reportedly sent to the refugees, telling them to

avoid speaking to the press. "That's why many journalists contacted me, but I wasn't much help since I could not get those in hotels to talk as they were scared of the authorities, although this is a free country and they shouldn't be feeling uncomfortable when talking to journalists," Zazai said.

The pressure on refugees is not limited to those in hotels, with many families placed in a home also feeling it. Recalling one incident he personally experienced, Zazai said a BBC crew had reached out to him to interview a family, but subsequently faced obstacles while trying to film the interview inside the family's new home.

"The case worker who is supposed to support the family got involved, opposing the interview. Then, he called his office, who then contacted the council about it and they reached out to the Home Office. We were shocked by their approach. We finally went to our charity's office to film the interview. The officials probably want to cover up their failures," Zazai said.

The housing crisis may yet worsen as hundreds of Ukrainian refugees, currently being hosted by their British sponsors, may add additional burden on local authorities who already complain about not having enough homes to meet demand.

Summary to be sent to governor tomorrow: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has said that, as per the instructions of party Chairman Imran Khan a summary regarding dissolution of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly will be moved to the Governor on Tuesday. He also said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf will form government with two third majority in entire country in the next general elections.

In a statement issued here on Sunday from the

Chief Minister's Secretariat, Mahmood Khan said that PTI is heading towards elections adding that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf will sweep the polls in the upcoming election.

The Chief Minister said that Imran Khan is a true leader and PTI has become the most popular political party of the country. He remarked that PTI's competition is with selfish mafia and we will defeat it with the public support and trust. Mahmood Khan maintained that Chairman Imran Khan has sacrificed

his governments for the sake of country and nation and very soon he will be the Prime Minister of Pakistan again.

He went on saying that the journey of development started under the visionary leadership of Imran Khan will be resumed shortly by ousting the imported setup. It is pertinent to mention here that Chairman Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf Imran Khan addressed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet via video link on Sunday at the Chief Minister House, Peshawar.



PESHAWAR: Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Imran Khan chairing video link meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet.

Imran refuses to meet disgruntled PTI members

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan on Sunday refused to meet estranged leaders of the party and directed them to respond to the show cause notice served to them for voting in vote confidence of Punjab Chief Minister Parvez Elahi, at Central Secretariat.

The PTI chairman directed the disgruntled party members in front of party general secretary Asad Umar.

It should be remembered that Faisal Cheema, Monia Waheed and Khurram Laghari were absent in Punjab Assembly at the time of vote confidence for CM Parvez Elahi.

The party had served show cause notices to these leaders and summoned an explanation. The disgruntled PTI members contacted Imran Khan to explain their position.

It should be noted that PTI workers expressed resentment against defected members and also staged protests in the constituencies of defected members.

'Zardari settling old scores with PML-N'

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rashid said on Sunday Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari was settling old scores with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Taking to Twitter, former interior minister Sheikh Rashid said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), instead of running away from elections, should face them head on. He said Imran Khan has changed politics of the country, predicting the schedule of next general elections would be announced by April 15.

Criticizing the finance minister, Mr Rashid said people were withdrawing funds even from foreign commercial accounts after recent statement of Ishaq Dar. There would be long queues for flour while banks would also be closed, he predicted.

The AML chief further said the PPP and the MQM were old foes and urged the latter to quit the ruling alliance too after boycotting second phase of the Sindh local government elections.

He claimed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would be asked to seek vote of confidence from the National Assembly while PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif would not return.

date Hilal Rehmani during the polling process of the local government elections in Karachi.

PTI injured Hilal Rehmani, the PPP candidate from Union Council Gulshan Mimar in an attack on Sunday. Hilal Rahmani is the son of MNA Shahida Rahmani and a candidate for the PPP.

As per the report, PPP's UC candidate Hilal Rahmani was seriously injured and shifted to the hospital for medical treatment. Sindh President Nisar Khoro, General Secretary Waqar Mehdi, and Karachi Division President Saeed Ghani strongly condemned the attack and said the PTI goons who injured Hilal Rahmani should be brought to justice.

Another clash between two political parties occurred at Nasira School in the limits of Al-Falah Police Station in Karachi and a political activist named Osama Yusuf was injured who later shifted to the hospital for medical assistance.

Vote of confidence: PPP will fully support Shehbaz

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said his party will fully support Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif if the president asks him to take a vote of confidence.

Foreign Minister said that he did not see an environment where the president would ask for a vote of confidence from the prime minister and if such a situation arose, the "PPP will complete the numbers".

He said that they are

ready for the local government elections. The PPP has appointed its representative in each union council, he added.

"The mayor of Hyderabad will be from the PPP, while there is a desire to bring a mayor from Karachi too. If there are provincial elections, new governments will be formed there," he added. Bilawal remarked that separation from the Federation would not be in favour of the Muttahida Qaumi

Movement (MQM).

He said that it would be better, in fact a "major success" for democracy if the governments completed their term.

To a question about Punjab and the general elections, the PPP chief said that the parties in the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) might make seat-to-seat adjustments in the elections.

He also said that as a political party, the PPP was always ready for elections.

ECP directs Pemra to put a stop on govt ads

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Committee of Pakistan on Sunday directed Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) to take concrete steps to stop airing govt ads on television channels.

Taking notice of the advertisements being aired on different TV channels including the development schemes being run by the provincial government, the ECP spokesman said that the polling for the second phase of the LG polls in the

province is underway in the province and running of advertisements during the polling is a violation of the code of conduct.

The Commission has asked the provincial government to immediately stop airing advertisement campaigns.

Meanwhile, the polling is going smoothly in seven districts of Karachi and nine districts of the Hyderabad division. Strict security measures have been taken to ensure fair

and transparent elections in both divisions.

Nearly 8,000 polling stations have been declared 'sensitive' or 'highly sensitive' in 16 districts of Karachi and Hyderabad.

In Karachi, as many as 3,415 polling stations have been classified as sensitive, 1,496 as highly sensitive and 79 as normal.

Out of 2,674 polling stations in Hyde-rabad division, 1,270 are sensitive, 779 are highly sensitive and 625 are normal.

Sharjeel condemns act of terror of PTI goons

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has strongly condemned the act of terrorism by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf goons on the day of polls in Karachi.

In a statement, provincial minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that PTI goons committed worst terrorism to spread horror so as to stop the voters for casting their right in local body's

elections in Karachi.

He said that everyone has seen that PTI member of Sindh Assembly Firdoss Shamim Naqvi was found removing the seals of ballot box in a polling station which is sheer violations of election commission code for conduct.

He said that they condemn the act of Firdoss Shamim Naqvi and demand Election Commission of Pakistan to initiate action against him.

The minister added that

PTI goons attack son of Pakistan People's Party MNA Shahida Rehmani and tortured his accomplices. 'Local leader of Pakistan People's Party Shahzad Memon's vehicle was also attacked by PTI workers and brooked it's windscreens,' he added.

The minister said that they strongly condemn such acts of terrorism of PTI. The minister warned Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf to stop the politics of violence and terrorism.

Petroleum products prices to remain unchanged

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar here on Sunday said that the government has decided to keep the existing prices of petroleum products unchanged for next 15 days to facilitate the masses in the country, particularly to provide relief to lower-income people during intense winters.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said that these prices would be applicable from January 16, 2023 and would remain in force for next 15 days to

January 31, 2023.

He said that the decision for keeping the existing prices of petroleum products unchanged in local market was taken under the special directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to provide relief to common man, particularly the lower income groups and ensure provision of fuel at household level on affordable prices to meet the winter requirements.

The price of diesel will remain unchanged at current level and it would be available on existing price

of Rs 227.80 per liter, petrol Rs 214.80 per liter, kerosene oil Rs 171.83 per liter and light diesel oil at Rs 169.00 per liter, he added.

Due to movements of petroleum prices in the international markets, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has recommended Rs 8.76 per liter increase in kerosene oil and Rs 7.73 per liter of light diesel oil.

However, the government has decided again to keep the existing prices of other oil products unchanged.

Rana condolees with Maulana Saeed family

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah has expressed deep sense of sorrow and grief over the sad demise of renowned religious scholar Maulana Saeed Ahmad.

He visited Jamia Ameenia Rizvia Sheikh Colony here on Sunday and condolored with the family members of late Maulana Saeed Asad. He also paid rich tributes to the services of Maulana Saeed Asad, rendered for the cause of Islam. He prayed for the departed soul.

He also offered 'Fateha' and prayed patience and courage for the bereaved family. Maulana Abdul Karim Sultani, Maulana Masood Ahmad Hassan, Maulana Zeeshan, Maulana Ashraf Saeed and others were also present on the occasion.

Pakistan, China vow to support each other

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani has said the people and the government of Pakistan acknowledge the active contribution of China to the relief and rehabilitation efforts during the recent floods in the country.

This was stated by the Chairman Senate during a farewell dinner in honour of outgoing Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong in Islamabad.

He said that the relations between the two friendly countries are based on mutual respect and trust and China has supported Pakistan in every difficult time. He said that the

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project is a gift from China to the people of Pakistan.

On the occasion, the outgoing Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong appreciated the comments of the Senate Chairman and said that the government and people of China are also proud of their everlasting friendship with Pakistan.

He said that China will continue to cooperate in the development of Pakistan and both the countries will continue to support each other's position at regional and global forums.

6 including kids burnt to death in house fire

QUETTA (INP): Six of a family including children were burnt to death in a fire at their house in Quetta on Sunday.

According to details, the rescue sources confirmed the death of six people of a family including children in Quetta's Sat elite Town due to gas leakage.

The fire erupted as the family tried to on the heater to fight cold weather but due to gas leakage the house exploded.

The bodies of the deceased have been shifted to the hospital, while the identification could not be ascertained as per initial reports.

Earlier in 2021, two elderly women were burnt to death after a fire broke out in a house in Lahore.

Rescue sources said that a house caught fire near Lahore's College Road Township in which two women lost their lives in the incident.

Pakistan logs another 16 coronavirus cases

ISLAMABAD (INP): The positivity ratio of coronavirus infections showed an uptick with 16 positive cases and no fatality reported during the last 24 hours, showed the statistics released by the National Institute of Health (NIH) on Sunday morning.

According to the NIH data, the death toll in the country remained the same i.e. 30,640 whereas the number of total infections now soared to 1,576,069 after adding the fresh 16 cases.

During the last 24 hours, 3,637 tests were conducted throughout the country whereas the positivity ratio stood at 0.44 percent. The number of patients in critical care stood at 14.

Britain to send 14 of its main battle tanks

LONDON (INP): Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's office said late on Saturday that Britain would send 14 of its main battle tanks along with additional artillery support to Ukraine, disregarding criticism from the Russian Embassy in London.

A squadron of 14 Challenger 2 tanks will go into the country in the coming weeks and around 30 self-propelled AS90 guns, operated by five gunners, are expected to follow, the British prime minister's office said in a statement.

The UK will also begin training Ukrainian forces to use the tanks and guns in the coming days.

"As the people of Ukraine approach their second year living under relentless Russian bombardment, the Prime Minister is dedicated to ensuring Ukraine wins this war," a spokesperson for the prime minister said in a statement.

"Alongside his closest military advisors, he has analysed the military picture, looked at the strategic impact of the UK's support and identified a window where he thinks the UK and its allies can have maximum impact."

The announcement follows a phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy earlier on Saturday during which, Sunak "outlined the UK's ambition to intensify our support to Ukraine, including through the provision of Challenger 2 tanks and additional artillery systems."

Sunak's office said earlier this week that Britain would coordinate its support with allies.



HYDERABAD: A woman casts her vote in polling station during Local Government Elections.

PPP wins all eight wards in Sehwan

(Cont: from Front Page)

people were riding vehicles with the PPP flag.

A heavy contingent of police and rangers reached the spot and controlled the situation, but no accused was arrested.

In another incident, a clash broke out at Mir Gulam Muhammad Talpur, Tando Bagu Union Council 37 of Badin district where an opposing candidate tortured polling agent Abdul Qadir Anwar who alleged that he was later kicked out of the polling station by the supporters of a PPP candidate.

Another incident took place at the polling station of Ward 13 in Dadu district where the PPP and PTI workers exchanged words. The PTI workers prevented PPP MPA Mueej-ul-Haq and his supporters from entering the polling station. The PPP activists raised slogans. Later, policemen reached the spot and brought the situation under control. Workers of political parties clashed at a

polling station in Gulberg Town UC 2, broke into the polling stations and broke the ballot boxes.

ECP takes notice against Shamim Naqvi for opening ballot boxes

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has taken notice against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MPA Firdous Shamim Naqvi for breaking the ballot box seals during the Sindh local government polling.

As the voting began, he visited four polling stations in Soldier Bazaar UC ward 4 where he tried to spoil the polling process by breaking the seals of the ballot boxes. A video showing him opening ballot boxes went viral on social media.

Subsequently, ECP took notice against Naqvi, calling it an illegal act and a violation of the code of conduct. The commission gave the order to evict him from the polling stations.

However, the PTI member of Sindh Assembly MPA Firdous Shamim Naqvi has clarified about his act of breaking the seals

of ballot boxes, video of which went viral and forced the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to take notice.

A video clip, posted on social media and made its way to national mainstream electronic media went viral showing Shamim Naqvi breaking the seals of ballot boxes in at a polling station in UC2 Tehsil Municipal Committee Jinnah in Karachi. Taking notice of the video clip, the Commission ordered to expel Shamim Naqvi from the polling station, declaring his action as illegal and violation of code of conduct.

PTI MPA, workers arrested for injuring PPP poll candidate

Law enforcement agencies arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MPA Rabistan Khan along with his workers from Gulshan-e-Maymar area of Karachi on Sunday.

According to a report, PTI's MPA was arrested on the charges of attacking and injuring the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candi-