

Fahd named as SAPM
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has designated Fahd Haroon as his Special Assistant on Public Communication and Digital Platforms with immediate effect. According to a notification of the Cabinet Division, the prime minister has been pleased to designate Fahd Haroon as SAPM on Public Communication and Digital Platforms, with immediate effect.

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Ned denies seeing BBC documentary on Modi's massacre in Gujrat

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: When asked by *The Frontier Post* about the recent BBC documentary on the 2002 riots in Gujrat, India, Spokesperson of the US State Department, Ned Price stated that he has not seen the said documentary yet but he counted the different strong bonds between India and the United States.

The Frontier Post again asked whether the President Biden's administration should condemn President Modi of India for the facts mentioned by the former UK Foreign Secretary Jack

Steward Who had prepared an investigation report back in 2002, which is now released by the BBC in one of its recent documentary. The said BBC documentary has been banned in India by Prime Minister Modi government and legal action has also been taken against BBC for this documentary. According to BBC documentary more than two thousand Muslims were killed in Gujrat, India in year 2002 and hundreds of Muslim women were taped. And Jack Straw in his report has directly accused the then Chief Chief of

Gujrat, Modi, who is now the Prime Minister. According to hundreds of credible reports, Modi's government in India is accused of ethnic violence against Muslims.

An Indian journalist asked about the economic woes of Pakistan and asked whether any delegation from the US was on its way to Pakistan to have strategic discussion with their counter parts in Pakistan; Ned Price replied by saying that he was not aware of any such delegation.

When asked whether the US is providing direct funds to the

Taliban regime in Afghanistan despite their inhumane treatment towards women and girls, Ned Price replied by saying that US is not directly providing the funds to the Taliban but rather a Trust Fund is created and payments are made through NGO's. Ned said that the US is the biggest humanitarian aid provider in Afghanistan and that the US will continue to effort the people of Afghanistan.

During lengthy back and forth questions by different foreign journalists with regard to Germany, Ned Price clarified

that Germany has so far provided tremendous amount of support to Ukraine against Russian aggression on Ukraine. Ned Price also confirmed US continuous support to Ukraine.

When asked by *The Frontier Post* whether Ukraine has asked China to play its role in bringing peace to the war between Russia and Ukraine, Ned Price stated that he was not aware of such request from Ukraine but he welcomed any positive role that China could play especially keeping in view Chinese influence over Russia. When asked

about the current Covid situation in China and if China has asked for any US made vaccines, Ned Price replied by saying that US has been the largest distributor of Covid vaccine around the world and it did ask China if they were in need of vaccination but China refused the US offer.

With regard to Sweden, Ned Price condemned the blasphemous acts and said that the Swedish government has also condemned these acts. Ned Price also stated that some acts are "Lawful but Awful." Ned dispelled the impression that



Sweden could gets into NATO membership without solving its issues with Turkey.

Shehbaz resolve to steer country out of challenges — launches Youth Business, Agri loans scheme

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday launched PM's Youth Business and Agri-loans scheme which would provide opportunities to the youth to earn their livelihood through different business and agriculture initiatives.

Addressing the launching ceremony, the prime minister said that Pakistan was passing through difficult times and resolved that he would sacrifice all his political career and life for the sake of the country. "I have served thrice as a chief minister of Punjab and now serving as an incumbent prime minister of the country, what legacy we will leave behind if these issues are not being addressed? It is clear that Pakistan is facing huge challenges, and if we have taken responsibility, we will make our all-out efforts to steer the country out of the difficulties," he stressed.

The prime minister said it was their collective responsibility as Pakistanis, politicians and the Muslims to respond to the difficult situation, and he would not even desist from sacrificing his life for the country. He said in this path, problems would spring up, but they would have to bear the pains. The people at the helms of affairs, politicians and rich have to set an example, as it was unfair to burden the poor with price hike and let the rich and elite to enjoy on the country's loans, he added.

PM Youth Business and Agri Loans Scheme is aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among youth by providing business loans on simple terms and with less markup through 15 Commercial, Islamic and SME banks. All Pakistani residents, aged between 21 and 45 years with entrepreneurial potential are eligible to apply for the loan. Loans provided under the scheme are segregated into three tiers. The prime minister, expressing his optimism, said that youth had the potential and talent and together, they would steer Pakistan out of the current issues.

He praised them as 'the shining stars on the horizon of the country'. The prime minister said the prime responsibility of addressing the country's issues rested with the government. They took reigns of the government under the most difficult times, but despite all these ordeals, their resolve grew stronger to make Pakistan stronger, he added. The prime minister also reiterated that the government had told the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that they were keen to complete the 9th Review Programme and wanted to conclude the terms through negotiations without any delay, so that Pakistan could move ahead.

He expressed the optimism that country's other multilateral and bilateral programmes would also move ahead. The prime minister mentioned that Pakistan was spending \$27 billion dollars on import of costly oil for energy generation and it could be reduced by half by taking practical steps. The prime minister, in apparent veiled reference to the former PTI's

provincial government of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said the federal government had announced steps over energy conservation, but unfortunately, one provincial government approached the high court for a stay order while another provincial government used delaying tactics.

To save Pakistan, they would have to sacrifice politics. The PML-N and other allied parties were committed to overcoming the current challenges, he added. Recollecting his tenure as Khadim-e-Ala of Punjab, he said there was a time when the provincial government utilized its resources for providing interest free loans to the youth while thousands of laptops were provided on merit. Through the Bank of Punjab, he said, different schemes were launched including the youth self-employment scheme, loans worth Rs40 billion had been distributed among the youth of the province with 99 percent recovery.

The prime minister said an amount of Rs40 billion was distributed as stipends among the students in Punjab, including orphans during his tenure as chief minister from 2008 and onwards, enabling them to pursue their educational career and accomplish their aims in life. He said it was the real investment for any nation. He opined that the youth of the country was committed, and if they were provided with opportunities, they could take the country forward.

The prime minister further said PM's Youth programme was also launched during former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's tenure at the federal level and Rs75 billion worth loans were provided to 5,400 youth which had not only benefited the youth, but also boosted the country's economy. Contrary to the criticism of political opponents, he said during the Covid pandemic, those laptops became a source of income for the youth and they served the country with their potential. The prime minister said considering the financial burden, the government in collaboration with the banks and financial institutions had launched this scheme.

Under the scheme, he said loans would be extended to the youth in different categories, thus providing them a springboard to excel in different fields. He further informed that the government was also mulling to initiate scheme for distribution of about 100,000 laptops on merit. Unfortunately, during the last 75 years, the prime minister regretted they all were responsible for the country's woes and stressed that they have to accept the past mistakes, and move ahead by learning from the experiences of the past.

He also expressed the optimism that the country would be soon out of the woods and cited examples of Japan and Germany. PM's Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja, on the occasion, also highlighted the key features of the scheme. She said the present government was committed to translating its vision for youth contrary to the hollow slogans of the previous government.

Latif murder case: ATC grants BBA to facilitator Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Anti-terrorism court has granted Bail before Arrest (BBA) to alleged facilitator Muhammad Adil Advocate and adjourned further hearing till 1st February, on Tuesday.

According to prosecution, Muhammad Adil Advocate was nominated alleged murder Adnan Afridi under 161 statement while alleged facilitator approached Anti-terrorism court for obtain BBA to avoid arrest.

Anti-terrorism court has stopped police from arresting Muhammad Adil Advocate and adjourned further hearing till 1st February while ordered to submit record in this regard. It is worthy to mention that Senior Lawyer and Former president Supreme Court Bar Association was shot killed by Adnan in Safer Ullah Hall at Peshawar High Court on 16th January while police has arrested alleged murderer from the crime scene.

AC reserves judgment in LNG reference

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): An Accountability Court (AC) has reserved its verdict over the LNG Reference filed by the NAB against former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and others. Former PM Abbasi and co-accused appeared before the court during the hearing.

The counsel of Abdul Samad Dawood, a co-accused in the case, in his arguments said that a board comprised of 13 members decided to give the tender. "The LSA process began after completion of the bidding," defense counsel said. "The cases were cooked up on political grounds," Shahid Khaqan Abbasi told the court. "See where the country is standing today," he said.

"I have filed petition in Islamabad High Court to know what charges are against me," Abbasi said. "Mr. Abbasi appeared before the court in each hearing and attend the proceedings," NAB prosecutor said. "No witness informed what allegations were against me," former prime minister said. "I have been dragged in the case for last four year," he lamented.

"I have sold a car a person four years ago but could not got time to transfer the vehicle on his name," Abbasi said. Ex-PM Abbasi, former finance minister Miftah Ismail, former managing director of the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) Sheikh Imranul Haq, ex-chairperson of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) Uzma Adil and others are named in the reference.

The court had indicted all the accused in the case. They pleaded not guilty and opted to contest the charges. Subsequently, the court directed the NAB prosecution to furnish evidence to back up the charges against them. Former PM Abbasi is accused of awarding an LNG Terminal-I contract to a firm at Port Qasim Karachi, at exorbitant rates.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif inaugurating the PM Youth Loan Scheme for Business and Agriculture.

Cabinet directs strategy to prevent recurrence of power outages

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Tuesday ordered the authorities concerned for formulation of a comprehensive strategy to prevent the recurrence of prolonged power outages in the future and to do away with the factors causing it.

The cabinet, in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, also approved a nationwide public awareness drive on conservation of power, water, gas and other resources to make the people develop such habits. The meeting also called for inclusion of the subject of best international practices on energy conservation in the educational curriculum.

It was told that energy conservation efforts at public, private, domestic and commercial level would help reduce the import bill of the petroleum products which had increased remarkably during last seven years. Besides, the behavioral changes would also save billions of rupees of foreign exchange and reduce the electricity bills of individuals by 30 to 40 percent. The prime minister, expressing annoyance over the widespread power breakdown on Monday, said the inconvenience caused to the people was unacceptable and would not tolerate such happenings in the future.

He called for fixing the responsibility of the power outage which had caused difficulties for the masses as well as the business community. He also instructed to identify the factors behind the power breakdown and take necessary measures to prevent its recurrence. The cabinet meeting was told that committee formed by

the prime minister in the power outage had started functioning which would furnish a comprehensive report after deliberating over all the factors.

The energy minister told the meeting that, as per initial report, the power supply tripped at 0734 hours on Monday, due to technical fault, voltage fluctuation and frequency disruption. It was told that as per prime minister's directives, all-out resources were used and power supply was restored in all main cities by 2200 hours.

Moreover, all major 1112 grid stations were also restored by 0500 hours on Tuesday morning to ensure power supply to the consumers. On the prime minister's directives, the gas-powered power plants have also been made operational to overcome the energy shortfall caused by the breakdown. However, the operations of nuclear and coal power plants would take another couple of days, though the power generation from rest of the power plants was in progress.

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb gave a detailed briefing to the cabinet on National Awareness and Communication Strategy for Energy Conservation under which a long-term awareness drive would be launched. She told the meeting that, prior to the drive, the information ministry carried out the first comprehensive survey to seek public opinion on the energy conservation. Considering the public behaviour, the ministry prepared an awareness drive which would focus on developing people's habits, lifestyle and behaviour for energy conservation.

The ministry would also seek the support from print, electronic and social media as well as the public opinion makers and experts for the awareness drive which would be run in collaboration with the public and private institutions. The awareness drive is aimed at guiding the citizens on energy conservation which would not only benefit them in person but also help reduce the economic burden from the country. The meeting was told that due to import of the petroleum products, the country's import bill swelled from 18% in 2017 to 29% in 2022.

The federal cabinet appreciated and approved the information ministry's awareness drive and instructed for its early launch, also asking other ministries to extend their support. The prime minister directed for taking the caretaker governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into confidence on the energy conservation plans to ensure their effective implementation. A comprehensive report of the inter-ministerial committee on Toshakhana was presented to the cabinet, besides a draft of the new Toshakhana policy. The cabinet members put forward their suggestions on committee's recommendations as well as the draft policy.

The prime minister asked the inter-ministerial committee to re-submit its report in the next cabinet meeting after incorporating the members' suggestions. The cabinet meeting also endorsed the Economic Coordination Committee's decisions taken in its meetings of January 3 and 11, 2023, as well as Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases's decisions taken on January 6, 2023.

NA Speaker accepts resignations of 43 more PTI MNAs

ISLAMABAD (INP): National Assembly (NA) Speaker Raja Pervaz Ashraf on Tuesday accepted resignations of 43 more PTI lawmakers a day after they announced the withdrawal of their resignations in a bid to bar opposition leader Raja Riaz, a dissident PTI leader, from negotiating with the government on caretaker setup in case general elections are announced.

The move has taken the tally of PTI resignations approved by the speaker to 124 as he approved 70 earlier this week and 11 in August last. The resignations were submitted by the PTI MNAs in April last in protest against the ouster of Imran Khan as prime minister through no-confidence vote.

The speaker has accepted the resignations of Riaz Fatyana, Sardar Tariq Hussain, Mohammad Yaqub Sheikh, Murtaza Iqbal, Sardar Mohammad Khan Leghari, Zile Humman, Rukhsana Naveed, Ghazala Saifi, Nousheen Hamid, Sobia Kamal Khan and others.

On Monday, 45 PTI MNAs tried to meet the speaker to withdraw their resignations but he was unavailable. Later, they staged protest outside the parliament and a sit-in outside the

official residence of the speaker in the federal capital.

The swift approval of the resignations came after Imran Khan-led party took U-turn on resignations and announced its return to the assembly and putting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to test through no-confidence vote. The general elections have become talk of the town since the dissolution of the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies. However, the government has been reiterating that the elections would be held on time. Mr Khan had repeatedly claimed that the general election could be held in March or April this year.

He had been calling for early elections in the country since his ouster through a no-confidence vote in April last year. It learnt that resignations of two members had not been accepted on Tuesday due to their leave request. The secretariat stated that the resigned members were called several times for verification.

While, the Assembly Secretariat sends the accepted resignations to ECP, to de-seat the MNAs. Now ECP is due to announce the de-notification of the PTI lawmakers. Once the members are de-notified, none of

the resigned PTI MNAs will remain part of the national assembly. The move came after the threats from the PTI to return to parliament only to foil a vote of confidence, which the party hoped President Dr Arif Alvi would seek from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, the PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry cried foul after reports regarding National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf accepting the resignations of more PTI lawmakers emerged on media. Reacting to the development, Chaudhry tweeted that the purpose of PTI members going back to the assembly was to oust Raja Riaz from the position of the opposition leader.

Otherwise, we have no reason to return to the National Assembly, he tweeted, adding: "Right now, Shehbaz Sharif and his government have lost the support of 172 lawmakers." He also pointed out that 40 per cent of seats in the NA were now empty. "The only solution to this crisis is elections." Today's development comes a day after 45 PTI MNAs sent their handwritten withdrawals to the speaker via email and demanded the nomination of a new opposition leader from among them.



Action against profiteers continues

KARACHI (APP): Action against profiteers during price checking on daily basis under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner South, Capt (ret'd) Muhammad Saeed Leghari, continued on daily basis.

In order to control the prices of daily use items and to fully implement the Commissioner Karachi rate list, the District South administration is continuously taking action against the profiteers on a daily basis.

Assistant Commissioner Lyari took action against the profiteers during price checking and imposed a fine of Rs 29,000 on four shops of milk and flour mills. While taking action against those who sell milk and wheat flour at excessive prices, fines of Rs 32,000 were imposed on five shops.

Assistant Commissioner Aram Bagh imposed fines of 26,000 on 4 milk and flour shops during price checking. Assistant Commissioner Garden imposed fines of 15,000 on 3 milk and flour shops during price checking. He also issued instructions that action should be taken against all general stores and mini markets that do not display price lists of general items including wheat flour, milk, rice, cooking oil.

Dacoit arrested in police encounter

KARACHI (APP): An injured dacoit has been arrested while his four accomplices escaped after a police encounter in the area of Iqbal Market (West) police station.

Police spokesman (West) said here on Tuesday, during the encounter a dacoit identified as Sadamk son of Yousaf was arrested while a police cop Muhammad Buksh sustained bullet injuries. The police also confiscated a car having registration No. BSH-996 was being used by the dacoits. Later, the police cop and the arrested dacoit had been sent to the hospital for medical assistance. Police started an investigation into the matter, he added.

AIGP Karachi pays surprise visits to checking points

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police Karachi Javed Alam Odho made surprise visits to snap-checking points and police stations of District East, District South after ordering a general hold-up late Monday night.

According to a spokesman for Karachi Police on Tuesday, at the snap checking point of Bahadurabad police station, Shahrah-e-Faisal near Lal Qila restaurant, the checking procedure was reviewed and further instructions were issued to the officers. During his visit to Shahrah-e-Faisal police station, he expressed his annoyance over the non-cleanliness of the police station and lock-up room.

The Station House Officer (SHO) Shahrah Faisal was suspended for not reporting the check-point on the police control and not following the snap-checking SOP of Karachi Police.

FJMCU VC calls on Caretaker CM

LAHORE (APP): Vice Chancellor of Fatima Jinnah Medical College University (FJMCU) Dr Khalid Masood Gondal called on Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at his office, here on Tuesday. He briefed the caretaker CM about the treatment facilities at FJMCU and Sir Ganga Ram Hospital and FJMCU's expansion plan.

The caretaker CM assured to resolve the problems of FJMCU and Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on a priority basis, saying that ensuring the best health facilities was a priority. The university's expansion plan would be decided in the public interest after a review, he added.

VC Dr Khalid Masood Gondal and Dean Basic Sciences Prof. Munazza Iqbal felicitated Mohsin Naqvi on assuming the office of the chief minister and expressed their best wishes.

Caretaker CM for early completion of CBD Punjab Boulevard project: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has issued instructions for the early completion of remodelling project of the

Central Business District from Kalma Chowk to Liberty (CBD Punjab Boulevard).

A deadline has been given to complete the remodelling project of the underpass from Barkat Market to Ali Zeb road and Kalma Chowk underpass by February 15, said a handout issued here on Thursday.

He directed that the contractor should complete the project as soon as possible so that the citizens could get convenience in their daily movements. Work should be done day and night to complete it as soon as possible, he added.

He further directed that two lanes should be made functional within 24 hours for the flow of traffic from Kalma Chowk to Liberty. There are transportation difficulties and two lanes would facilitate traffic flow, he noted and directed that he should be updated daily about the progress of the project.

It may be added that the deadline for the first remodelling of the Central Business District, Kalma Chowk to Liberty (CBD Punjab Boulevard) was May 15.

Faryal Talpur's message on Int'l Education Day

KARACHI (APP): PPP Women's Central President and MPA Faryal Talpur in her message on 'International Education Day' said that be it an individual, a family, or a nation, there is only one path to prosperity, which is the path of education and technology. She said that the role of teachers and social personalities in the promotion of education in Pakistan is a bright chapter of history.

Faryal said Pakistan People's Party leaders and governments have always included the promotion of education as one of their top priorities.

She said, "leader of the people, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and president Asif Ali Zardari's governments were golden eras

for the education sector. In order to develop the education system in Pakistan on modern lines, the entire nation needs to come on the same page", she added.

Faryal Talpur said: "Today the world is celebrating Education Day, but the educational institutions of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJ&K) have practically become Indian army cantonments."

Dozens of teachers and students in IIOJ&K are still forced to bear the hardships of imprisonment, she said. "The international community should think about the education and future of the children and youth of IIOJ&K the same way it thinks about its own children," she added.

New CCPO Lahore assumes office

LAHORE (APP): Additional IG Bilal Siddique Kamyana on Tuesday assumed the charge of the post of Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore after his notification was issued by the Punjab government the last day.

Bilal Siddique Kamyana, an old Ravian belonging to Sahiwal, has already worked as CCPO Lahore last year.

Additional IG Bilal Siddique Kamyana belonged to 24th Common of Police Service of Pakistan and has served at key posts as RPO Faisalabad and Sheikhupura regions, CPO Rawalpindi, DPO Sialkot, Narowal and Okara, DIG R&D CPO, DIG SPU, SSP CTD, Intelligence Bureau and other high ranks of Headquarters and field formations of Police department.

Bilal Siddique Kamyana, has also experience of working in provincial metropolis as SP in Operations, Investigation and Security wings. CCPO Bilal Siddique Kamyana on his arrival at Capital City Police Headquarters, was welcomed by SSP Admin Atif Nazir and other senior police officers who presented him bouquet. Bilal Siddique Kamyana was presented guard of honor by a fresh contingent of police personnel on his arrival.

After assuming charge of the post, the

CCPO has committed to resolve the problems of citizens by providing justice to them at Police Stations.

"Maintenance of law and order, free registration of FIRs, merit based transparent investigation along with crime control would be my top priorities", he added.

He said that he would take all possible measures for the welfare of Police officers and officials along with families of the martyrs.

He said, he would utilize all resources to give relief to the people along with chalking out a comprehensive plan to improve the morale of the Police forces and build positive image of the department as well as improve the conditions of the Police Stations. "It would be our mission to make Lahore the center of peace so that people could spend their life calmly with complete sense of protection" Bilal Siddique Kamyana vowed. The culture of public friendly police would be promoted so that people could visit police stations for the redressal of their grievances without any fear and hesitation, he added.

"Projects related to IT, public friendly approach of Police and community policing will be continued and further improved to ensure protection of life and property of people according to our agenda," he concluded.

Illegal constructions demolished

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Development Authority, Department of Town Planning Zone-V on Tuesday demolished structures and sealed several construction sites during an operation against illegal constructions. The operation against illegal constructions was held under the supervision of Director Town Planning V Muhammad Azhar Ali, says a news release.

The LDA team demolished illegal shops and sheds on Raiwind Road and sealed an illegal commercial hall near

Bhupatian Chowk.

Illegal restaurant established at Plot No. 1180 Block-J LDA Avenue-I was demolished while illegal shops established at Plot No. 136 Block-J, LDA Avenue-I were also demolished.

A construction at plot No. 30 LDA Avenue-I was demolished for violating approved plan.

Illegal shops were demolished in F-Block near the park, whereas eight illegal shops and properties at Main Boulevard LDA Avenue-I were sealed.



LAHORE: Students of Arts viewing artwork on the World Watercolor Day & IWS 11th Anniversary organized by the Lahore Arts Council at Alhamra.

CM Sindh, Minister Communication discuss ongoing NHA's road schemes

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday held a meeting with Federal Minister for Communication Asad Mahmood at CM House and discussed the ongoing National Highway Authority's (NHAs) road sector schemes.

Both were agreed to strengthen coordination between the provincial government and the National Highway Authority (NHA) so that ongoing road sector schemes of NHA in the province could be completed well in time.

The meeting was attended by Minister Works Zia Abbas Shah, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Chairman P&D Hassan Naqvi, SMRB Baqaullah Unar, PSCM Fayaz Jatoti, Secretary Works, Secretary Finance Sajid Jamal Abro while from the federal government Secretary Communication Cap ret'd Muhammad Khurram, Member Sindh NHA Munir Memon, Member Finance NHA Mohammad Tayab and others. The CM said that N-120 Hyderabad-Khokhrapar Via Mirpurkhas Road was 220 km, of which 120 km section from Mirpurkhas to Khokhrapar via Umerkot was under execution by NHA. Shah said that there were

another two sections of the road, including 80 km from Mirpurkhas to Umerkot and 40 km from Umerkot to Khokhrapar. Out of the 80 km road from Mirpurkhas to Umerkot, 60 km has been widened/reconditioned, whereas the work on the remaining portion from Umerkot to Khokhrapar (Raja Rasti) of 20 km has not been started as yet.

The CM said that the recent heavy rains have damaged the road from Umerkot to Khokhrapar. At this, the federal minister assured the chief minister that the work would be accelerated and also directed NHA to repair the damaged portions. The chief minister taking up the under construction Jamshoro-Sehwan road issue said that it has a length of 130 km being executed by NHA.

He said the work started in 2018-19. Though it was an asset of NHA yet his government has also contributed Rs 700 million in rehabilitation.

In the meeting, the issues raised by the CM said that work on the road from Khanote to Manjhand has not been started as yet. He pointed out that during rains-2022, the newly built track came under

water near Laki Shah Saddar, which required to be considered for its re-design or necessary. The federal Minister, Asad Mahmood said that the work has been accelerated and there were some land acquisition issues that needed to be settled. At this, the CM directed the chief secretary to settle the land issues to complete work.

The Garo-Keti Bunder Road, 95 km, also came under discussion in the meeting. The CM disclosed that the NHA had started work on the road in 2006 and then abandoned it in 2008. He added that out of 95 km, Triple Surface Treatment (TST) on 60 km has been made, whereas the remaining length of 35 km was abandoned.

Federal Minister Asad Mahmood asked the chairman NHA to get a detailed report on the work done so far and the reasons for leaving it incomplete.

He assured the CM that the matter would be resolved at the earliest. The Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway also came under discussion and the federal minister told the CM that work would be started shortly. The CM thanked the minister and his team for the visit and appreciated their commitment.

Federal Ombudsman office marks 40 years

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Addressing a widely attended Press Conference on the occasion the 40th year of the establishment of the Ombudsman institution in Pakistan, Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, the Federal Ombudsman stated that maladministration and bad governance are two sides of the same coin.

Both breed in an environment of favoritism, discrimination and corruption. Addressing maladministration, therefore, is essential for ensuring sanctity of human rights and achieving the ultimate goals of good governance and the rule of law. He added that the Office of the Federal Ombudsman was established vide the President's Order No. 1 on 24 January 1983 with the explicit objective to diagnose, investigate, redress and rectify any injustice done to a person through maladministration by the government agencies.

Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi stated that the institution of Ombudsman has evolved over the years and is recognized today as an essential feature of every modern democratic society. The structure, scope and powers of Ombudsman, however, vary from

one society to another and is directly related to the larger social, political and legal systems being followed in that country. The ombudsman institutions, around the world, act in support of supreme judiciary and contribute in making dispensation of justice more accessible and inexpensive. He added that the Wafaqi Mohtasib's institution is fundamentally the poor man's court. It is not an alternative to the supreme judiciary but plays a complementary role. The complainants are not required to hire the services of a lawyer nor have to face lengthy legal processes as the cases are disposed of within the prescribed limit of 60 days.

Reviewing the performance of the Wafaqi Mohtasib's institution during the last forty years, Mr. Qureshi stated that more than 1.9 million households have benefitted from the services of this Office since its inception. He recognized the services of his illustrious predecessors who have contributed in developing this institution into a premier institution of administrative accountability in the country. Comparing the number of complaints received during the year

2022, he said that the receipts rose from 110,405 in 2021 to the highest ever number of 164,174 (49% increase) and disposal reached an all-time high of 157,770, marking an increase of 47.7% over the figures of the year 2021. He said that 137,423 complaints of Overseas Pakistanis were resolved with the increase of 133% as compared to 2021. He further stated that people's trust has immensely increased resulting in a dramatic increase in the registration of complaints and complaints worth over Rs.3 billion of disputed amounts were addressed by this office during the last year, which otherwise would have added burden to the civil courts. He said that Government expenditure per complainant in disposing of complaint through Wafaqi Mohtasib construes negligible amount, thus it the most cost-effective way of providing relief to the common man.

Mr. Qureshi stated that the institution has expanded its operations by opening three regional offices in Mirpurkhas, Khuzdar and Swat and two Sub Offices at Wana (South Waziristan) and Sada (Kurram District) during the year 2022.

Commissioner reviews price control measures, flour availability

LAHORE (APP): Commissioner Lahore Division Muhammad Aamir Jan reviewed the price control measures and availability of subsidized flour in the division during a meeting at his office here on Tuesday.

Chairing a meeting, the commissioner directed the district officers to ensure 100 percent grinding of wheat given to flour mills, saying that all deputy commissioners should carry out a comprehensive inspections to expose hoarding of flour and wheat. He further said that trucks should be sent according to the needs of the area for delivery of subsidized flour.

The commissioner directed the authorities to continue crackdown on public and private bus stations for loading and unloading of subsidized flour. From where the complaint was received, Assistant Commissioner concerned would take immediate action, he said.

8207 patients treated during power breakdown at LGH

LAHORE (APP): The administration of Lahore General Hospital continued providing medical treatment to patients in all departments of the hospital uninterrupted during the technical failure in electricity transmission across the country.

As many as 8207 patients were treated in the emergency and OPD during this breakdown and 264 operations, 952 x-rays, 182 CT scans, 430 ultrasounds, 231 ECGs, 19 endoscopy and 5 stone dissolution procedures (Lithotripsy) were also performed in the hospital on January 23. Post Graduate Medical Institute (PGMI) Principal Prof. Dr. Muhammad Al-Fareed Zafar, while appreciating the high performance of LGH's administration, announced to award certificates of appreciation to MS Dr. Khalid Bin Aslam and Electrical Engineer Zafar Mukhtar. He praised the doctors, nurses and para-

medics for discharging their duties in a good manner and performing their duties with professional dedication, while 9 generators were continuously remained functional for 14 hours on Monday for the electricity supply. Prof. Al-Fareed said that there is no substitute of human life and all available resources must be used to save the precious lives of patients and the hospital administration and health professionals are able to achieve their goals which is a source of satisfaction for all of them.

MS Dr. Khalid Bin Aslam briefed the Principal PGMI that he himself supervised all the working of the hospital during this breakdown. He further maintained that through best team work they were able to continue in such an unusual situation and under his leadership, smooth and timely treatment to the patients will be ensured in future as well.

261,000 citizens registered through e-Auction System

LAHORE (APP): The e-Auction App and Web Portal, developed by the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) in collaboration with the Punjab Excise and Taxation Department, has so far registered more than 2.6 lakh aspirants since August 2020 to obtain attractive vehicle numbers.

This emerged during a progress review meeting chaired by PITB Chairman Faisal Yousuf here on Tuesday at Arfa Software Technology Park (ASTP).

It was informed during the meeting that applications of more than 1 lakh 74 thousand people have been approved while about 1 lakh 20 thousand vehicle numbers have also been sold under the system till date. On this occasion, PITB Chairman Faisal Yousuf said that the system has also been linked to e-Pay Punjab for the payment of fees while the department has so far collected more than Rs. 550 million in revenue.



LAHORE: A labourer on the way along with donkey loaded with bricks at inside the Kashmiri Bazar.



Arrangements for Livestock & Poultry Congress reviewed

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting held here with Secretary to KP Government on Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperatives, Mukhtiar Ahmad in the chair here on Tuesday reviewed arrangements for a two-day International Livestock & Poultry Congress scheduled on March 2-3, 2023.

Besides, Director General (DG) Livestock (Extension), Dr Alamzeb, DG Research Ijaz Ali, DG Fisheries Dr Khisro

Kaleem, officers of the department, representatives of livestock & poultry manufacturers and farmers attended the meeting at large.

Addressing the participants of the meeting, Secretary Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperatives, Mukhtiar Ahmad spoke on the importance of the livestock sector and role of the department in meeting food security.

He termed the holding of the International

Livestock & Poultry Congress a milestone towards the development of the livestock sector.

On this occasion, other speakers while stressing the importance of cooperation among the manufacturers' farmers and other organizations said that farms are playing a crucial role in the development of the livestock sector and standing beside the department for meeting food requirements of the people.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali presenting aid to welfare hospital officials.

Health Directorate to use social media for creating awareness against smoking

PESHAWAR (APP): The Directorate General of health has decided to use social media to create awareness among youth about harmful effects of smoking on health and related diseases.

Assistant Commissioner Peshawar Zainab Naqvi speaking during a conference at prevention of smoking, shisha, Hookah and all kinds of drugs at the directorate General of Health said, "children are our valuable asset and we will fight to the last extent to secure their health and safety in the future."

Smoking, drugs and all kinds of intoxication are forbidden, harmful to health and illegal, she said and called upon the concerned officers, scholars, teachers and police to

ensure its prevention.

Consultant Umair Khan, DHO Muhammad Idris, DSP Riazullah Khan, Project Coordinator Ajmal Shah, Assistant District Coordinator Muhammad Ayaz and EDO of Education Department Sakhawat Ali Shah participated on this occasion.

In the meeting, the harms of smoking and other drugs that smoking causes deadly diseases like cancer, heart diseases and stroke were discussed and preventive measures were highlighted.

It was decided in the meeting that social media would be used for awareness campaigns about controlling smoking and other drugs around important public places including schools, colleges, universi-

ties and entertainment places and special attention would be given to protect students from drugs.

The participants of the meeting emphasised that the health department should strengthen mutual relations in this regard and run a campaign against smoking on Facebook, social media and pages of all educational institutions.

In addition to creating awareness in the form of drama and walks, messages should be given about the harms of addiction.

It was told in the meeting that steps should be taken to celebrate smoking and drug addiction in all educational institutions and students should be told that addiction is a curse and health should be valued.



PESHAWAR: A view of participants of "Innovations For Higher Productivity & Quality" workshop organized by National Productivity Organization.

'Needed facilities to be provided at local level'

PESHAWAR (APP): Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali has said that the district government would try its best to provide all needed facilities to its people at their doorstep.

Talking to a gathering after inaugurating work on street drains and pavement of streets in Muhallah Muhammad Dad in NA-31, PK-78 here, he said provi-

sion of amenities of life to the people was the topmost priority of the district government.

He said practical steps were underway to enhance the life standard of the local people adding that new BHUs were being constructed to provide healthcare facilities to the people at their doorstep. Besides, he said embroidery centers

were being set up on mohallah-level to facilitate and train the local women for earning respectable livelihood.

Locals of the area thanked the Mayor Peshawar for prioritizing development works in their locality and eulogized the services of the mayor for the people of Peshawar.

2 held over money laundering, counterfeit travel documents

PESHAWAR (APP): FIA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here on Tuesday arrested two persons over money laundering and bogus travel documents.

In the first raid conducted near Pak-Afghan border, Torkham, FIA foiled an attempt to illegally transfer

huge amounts of US dollars to neighboring countries and arrested a person identified as Junaid.

It was revealed that the accused had transferred more than 1.5 million US dollars to foreign countries during the last two years.

Meanwhile, an accused

identified as Imran Khan was arrested from Bacha Khan International Airport in an attempt to travel Turkey on counterfeit documents. Both the accused were booked under relevant act and handed over to FIA Circle Peshawar for further investigation.

Governor inaugurates conference room

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Tuesday visited Naseerullah Khan Babur Memorial (NKBM) Hospital and inaugurated Conference Room.

Addressing the ceremony, he assured cooperation to provide necessary assistance and facilities to patients and said that facilitation of ailing community is foremost responsibility of government.

He also appreciated services being provided to patients in the hospital and praised staff for offering dedicated services to people.

Earlier, he donated medicines to Ittefaq Kidney Welfare Hospital in a ceremony at Governor House. Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali was also present on the occasion. On the occasion, he also urged affluent to provide help to kidney hospital that is helping out ailing community of the city since long time.

PHC grants bails to three alleged culprits

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) granted bails to three alleged drug-smugglers in different cases and ordered their release, on Tuesday.

The counsel Liaqat Ali Afridi Advocate informed that petitioner Shera Khan resident of Speen Dandh was arrested from Bara while 12 kilograms hashish was recovered from secret cavities of the vehicle.

The counsel added that other petitioner Faqir Shah was arrested by Michini police and claimed that the accused was carrying three-kilogram drugs in shopping bag.

Meanwhile, Malik Nasru Minallah advocate appeared before court and argued that Adnan was arrested by Chamkani police on 11 September 2021 while after two years the trial didn't concluded and requested for release on bail. PHC has granted bails to alleged culprits over lack evidences and witness along with contradiction in the cases.

PESCO restores electricity

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Executive Officer PESCO Arif Mehmood on Tuesday said that the company has restored electricity supply to all the grid stations and its affiliated area after the breakdown.

In an official communique issued here, he said that the company restored power supply to 80 per cent areas till 11 p.m. at the day of breakdown, adding electricity supply was restored to all grids by the next day.

He said that PESCO was providing uninterrupted power supply to all industries however due to load management the loadshedding was being observed at a very limited scale for which he sought cooperation of the consumers.

Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Tuesday notified that due to the maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Shahi Bagh Grid Station on 25th January from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Dilazak and Sarbulandpura feeders will face inconvenience.

It said that power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV R.B. Turbela Grid Station on 25th January from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Sino Hydro 1, 2 feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will remain suspended from 220KV Oghi-Mansehra Transmission Line on 25th January from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. resultantly consumers of 132 KV Oghi and Battal 11 KV feeders will face inconvenience.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a meeting regarding law and order situation in province.

No shortage of petrol in City: Chairman Tankers' Association

PESHAWAR (APP): Chairman PSO Tankers Association, Muhammad Irshad on Tuesday categorically said that there was no shortage of petrol in Peshawar and news circulated in this regard was totally baseless.

Talking to media here, Muhammad Irshad said people have nothing to worry about petrol availability in Peshawar adding there was no need to pay heed towards such rumors.

He said the district has

sufficient stock of the petrol that was being provided on a regular basis to the vehicles. Though, he said petrol pumps were witnessing people's rush however all the consumers were being provided the commodity.

He said we have sufficient stock of petrol and more tankers were on the way to supply petrol to the gas stations in Peshawar. He informed that some of the oil tankers were facing delay in reaching Peshawar

however the situation with petrol was totally under regard to availability of control.

DC takes notice of artificial fuel shortage

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Shafiullah Khan has taken notice of the reports of the suspension of the sale of petrol and diesel and conducted late night raids on petrol pumps, said a press release issued on Tuesday. On the directives of the DC, the officers of district administration inspected filling stations across the district and opened the sale of petrol and diesel. The district administration has also arrested the managers of six filling stations for intentional suspension of the sale of petrol and diesel and overcharging from the consumers.

International Education Day observed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: International Education Day observed at Institute of Education and Research, University of Peshawar with collaboration of Dosti and Rang Geet Art organization, on Tuesday.

Director Institute of Education and Research welcomed participants and throws light on importance of observance of International Education Day while stressed upon knowledge-oriented industry for socio-economic development.

Director NCHD Khyber Pakhtunkhwa addressed the participants and stressed upon importance of educa-

tion. Director ESEF Zarif-ul-Mani also addressed the ceremony and hopeful that educated youth will overcome current situation.

Chief Guest Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Department, Executive Director Dosti Asif Riaz and Professor Tasbi Ullah also addressed the participants while appreciated the organizers of the event. During International Education Day ceremony Art exhibition was established for participants while the artwork appreciated by the members.

Executive Director Rangeet Art Foundation Jalwat Huma said that the foundation has established

with the aim to promote art among youth especially at elementary level to uphold creativity among students. She claimed that Rangeet Art Foundation will increase its domain to provide facilities to more children in the discipline of art.

The ceremony was comprised of community-based education, role of education for peace and development, prioritizing girl's education, alignment of existing landscape of education with post 18th constitutional amendment scenario, education through art and an investment in knowledge pays the best interest discussion penal on the eve of International Education Day.

NCDs responsible for 50% of all deaths in KP



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting was held at Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar under the joint chairmanship of vice-chancellor Prof. Dr Zia ul Haq and Special Secretary Health Abidullah Kakakhail, in which Dr Shaukat Ali, Director General of Health Services Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr Akram Shah Chief HSRU Department of Health, Dr Nadeem Akhtar Chief Executive Officer, Healthcare Commission, Dr Riaz Tanoli Chief Executive Officer Health Card Plus, Center of Impact, World Bank and representatives of other relevant stakeholder organizations participated

was informed that 50% of deaths and 40% of all disability-adjusted life years lost in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were due to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular, diabetes, chronic respiratory disorders, cancers, and common mental disorders.

The NCDs epidemic risks crippling the already overburdened health system & fragile economy of the province. There is a time-critical need to identify and implement affordable effective solutions to address NCDs.

The meeting was informed that to meet this need, a new Global Health Research Centre called Centre for IMPACT has been launched in Pakistan, recently.

The Centre is the result of collaboration between seven leading universities, four in Pakistan including KMU and three in the UK. Prof. Dr Kamran Siddiqui and Prof. Dr Najma Siddiqui overall lead from York University UK. In KP, the Centre is led by Prof. Dr Zia ul Haq, VC & Dean of Public health KMU.

After a long deliberation and discussion in the meeting, it was unanimously decided that a comprehensive action plan will be prepared soon in consultation with all stakeholders to deal with the challenge of NCDs and it will be submitted to the provincial government for approval.

AD&SJ convicts murderer for death sentence

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Additional District and Session (AD&SJ) Peshawar Aftab Iqbal has convicted murderer for three times death sentence for killing three persons including Masjid's Imam in Jirga while three other co-accused were acquitted, on Tuesday.

According to prosecution, the murderer Fazal Rabi has opened firing on Jirga in Madani Masjid in which three persons were killed including Imam Masjid. The deceased were identified as Qari Muhammad Younas, Javeed and Adil over land dispute.

Police has arrested Fazal Rabi from crime scene and submitted complete challan before court.

AD&SJ Peshawar Aftab Iqbal has convicted Fazal Rabi for three times death sentence along with Rs6 lakh fine while acquitted Shah Syed, Amjad Ali and Shah Faisal over lack of evidence.

Rains, snowfall predicted

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Tuesday predicted that moderate to isolated heavy rain with moderate to isolated heavy snowfall over the hills is likely to occur over Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Bajaur, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi and Khyber districts.

In the rest of the province, very cold, dry and partly cloudy weather conditions are likely over rest parts of the province.

During the last 24 hours cold and partly cloudy weather prevailed over most parts of the province, while very cold in upper parts/hilly areas. However, rain with snow over the hills occurred in Kohistan, Swat, Chitral, Khyber and Abbottabad districts.

Rain Recorded (in mm): Pattan 27, Kalam 20, Malam Jabba 14, Mirkhani 05, Khyber (Tirah 03), Chitral & Drosch 02 (each) and Kakul 01. Snowfall recorded (in inches): Kalam 12, Malam Jabba 07, Mirkhani 02, Chitral 01 & Drosch Trace.

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 17/04, Chitral 04/-1, Timergara 14/02, Dir 05/-1, Mirkhani 03/-2, Kalam 01/-06, Drosch 02/-1, Saidu Sharif 12/01, Pattan 06/04, Malam Jabba 01/-6, Takht Bhair 18/03, Kakul 09/01, Balakot 09/03, Parachinar 06/-5, Bannu 18/02, Cherat 19/01, D.I. Khan 20/06.

The lowest temperatures recorded in the province were -10°C in Tirah valley of Khyber and -06°C in Malam Jabba and Kalam.



PESHAWAR: Visitors taking keen interest in paintings during Art Exhibition organized by Dosti Welfare Organization at UOP.



In brief

Dacoits' gang busted

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): Local police have busted a gang of criminals wanted in 40 cases of looting people after they withdrew cash from banks, police spokesman said on Tuesday. According to Police the accused arrested as the ring leader Imtiaz Alias Blackberry, and two gang members Mustaqeem and Noor, the accused were wanted by Rahimyar Khan, Multan, Muzaffargarh and other districts' police in over 40 cases. The accused used to target people after they would come out of banks and would deprive them of valuables and cash at gunpoint. Police spokesman Waseem Khan Gopang said, the ring leader Imtiaz was also involved in the murder of a man and his son as he considered them police informers. DPO Ahmad Nawaz Shah has announced cash awards and cash awards for SHO City Iftikhar Malkani and his team.

16 abducted for ransom rescued

GHOTKI (INP): As many as 16 robbers were killed and 16 people abducted for ransom were rescued during operation in Kacha area of Ghotki. The police also protected kidnap of 66 people at Sindh-Punjab police check post. District Police Officer (DPO), Farooq Akhtar said that the police launched crackdown for recovery of people abducted for ransom in Kacha area of Ghotki during which exchange of fire took place between law enforcers and culprits. In cross firing 16 robbers were reported killed and 16 people abducted for ransom were rescued. Meanwhile, the Sindh government to deal with criminals in Kacha areas of various districts of provinces has consulted Pakistan Ordinance Factory for purchase of modern weapons including drone, armored vehicles and fire power weapons. On the other hand, the provincial government was also importing modern rifles, telescopes having capacity to work in dark besides command and control vehicles from Armenia.

NCHD observes Education Day

F.P. Report

BANNU: National Commission for Human Development and the Department of Education observed International Education Day, on Tuesday. Deputy Director NCHD Mehmood presided over the event while Rehman Shah of Education Department was the chief guest. Maulana Mufti Mutasim Ba Allah, Maulana Hafiz Sher Ajab and Qari Hafiz Gul Tiaz Fariqi, Farmanullah Khan Wazir also addressed on this occasion. The speakers informed the participants about the importance of education while giving a detailed briefing on the day. He said that we are celebrating this day with the support of NCHD and Dosti. The speakers while addressing the participants said that the development of the nation depends on education, therefore, positive steps need to be taken to provide quality education. Our aim is to make education universal. He urged the parents to encourage their children to get education in order to create a good society because education is the guarantee of the development and prosperity of the country and the nation. Finally, NCHD District Bannu Deputy Director Mehmood presented the shield to the chief guest Rehman Shah and appreciated his services.

RPO orders investigation into custodial murder

F.P. Report

MALAKAND: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Malakand, Sajjad Khan has ordered investigation into the under-custody incident of a youth and formed a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) for the purpose, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

According to detail, an incident of the gruesome killing of an under-custody youth (Obaid) has occurred in Police Station Bandr, district Swat and taking notice of the incident the RPO Malakand Sajjad Khan formed a JIT headed by SP Investigation (Swat), Shah Hassan Khan.

Other members of the JIT include SP Lower Swat, Raheem Hussain, SP Special Branch Pir Zar Badshah, DSP Investigation Afsar Zaman, DSP Lower Dir Farooq Jan, Investigation Officer (IO) Mohammad Anwar, Incharge DSP Swat Imtiaz

Khan and Technical Team Incharge ASI Gohar.

The RPO has directed the JIT for conducting transparent investigation into the murder case of the youth and utilizing modern scientific technology to initiate legal proceedings to bring the involved police personnel to justice.

He termed the incident sorrowful and pledged to take action against those involved in it and prove that all are equal before the law. He said that members of the raiding team have been arrested and JIT will complete its investigation as soon as possible to award exemplary punishment to the real culprit.

Floods destroy 235 trout hatcheries in Swat: Last year's floods destroyed 235 hatcheries of trout fish in different areas of Swat district, inflicting a loss of around Rs 1100 million to the business of one of favorite menu items in the region.

President of Swat Trout Fish Farm Association, Mutawakkal Khan while talking to media on Tuesday said, the floods in Swat, totally destroyed 200 trout fish farms and restaurants attached with this business while 35 farms sustained heavy damages.

He said hundreds of workers of trout fish hatcheries were rendered jobless due to flood devastations while people associated with supply of the fish to the other districts also lost their jobs. He said from these hatcheries trout fish were being supplied to the markets in the rest of the country however due to destruction of the trout fish sector in Swat, the supply of these fish has reached a minimum level and its price skyrocketed. He demanded the government and international institutions to help the trout farm owners in reestablishing their fish hatcheries and businesses to save this important sector.

Family seeks Sindh govt's help to get release a youth

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The family of one Zakirullah 26 son of Khan Lali, a resident of Chamiarano Banda in Mayar Lower Dir here on Tuesday demanded the federal and Sindh governments to help the family release the youth from the dacoits in Hyderabad Sindh. Talking to local journalists at Timergara here the relatives of Zakirullah said the Kacha dacoits trapped him in the Gulshan e Iqbal area of Karachi and held him hostage.

The relatives said that the kidnapped youth in a video released by the dacoits had also appealed for his release. They said the dacoits were demand-

ing Rs 5 million as ransom. The relatives said that Naseeb Zada, one of the victim's brothers had registered a case about the incident at the Gulistan e Johar police station, Karachi on Jan. 20. According to the FIR registered at the Gulistan e Johar police station Naseeb Zada, brother of the kidnapped youth, told police that his brother went missing from Hyderabad where he had gone to find a job. He said that two days later some unknown persons called him and demanded Rs 5 million as ransom for the release of his brother.

In a video that went viral on social media here on Saturday, the youth

Zakirullah in chains is heard seeking help for his release. "I will be killed if not released soon", he says. The family members said the dacoits had been demanding Rs 5 million. They said the victim lived with his brother and worked at Karachi as a labourer.

Meanwhile social and political activists threatened to launch a protest campaign against the Sindh government if it failed to recover the abducted youth from the Kacha dacoits within a week. They also warned to hold hostage the Sindhis living in parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa if the matter was not taken seriously.



QUETTA: People sitting around burning woods to warm themselves during chill weather.

Workshop held on 'Industrial processing of dairy products'

F.P. Report

MARDAN: A one-day workshop on "Industrial Processing of Dairy Products" was held at Department of Food Science & Technology of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan in collaboration with ORIC, on Tuesday.

Prof. Amjid Iqbal, Chairman Department of Food Science & Technology and Dr. Tariq Mehmood, Director ORIC welcomed the speaker and participants. The speaker, Shahzad Shah from Gourmet Food Industries spoke about the aim and importance of the dairy processing. He elaborated that milk and dairy products are

in their value and variety, a very special and precious food.

Due to the high water and protein content of dairy products they are highly susceptible to rapid spoilage if not properly handled. Manufacturers carry out various tests to ensure that milk and dairy products reach consumers in their optimal condition, he added. Prof. Amjid Iqbal highlighted the importance of Food in general and the role of Technology specifically. He said that Food is the basic necessity of people all around the world.

However, the highly nutritious foods, like milk deter more quickly, so various technological steps need to be taken to increase

the shelf life of the milk and milk products. Prof. Iqbal also stressed on the development of Food labs and Processing Hall at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, which will provide the opportunity for the students to learn the basic principles of Food Safety and Preservation practically.

Also, the development of well-established Food processing hall and labs will generate significant revenue to support the financial needs of the University. A large number of students from FST and other departments attended the workshop. Dr. Zia Ullah Khan, Dr. Sadiq Shah, Mr. Fawad Ahmad and Mr. Syed Umair Shah were also present on the occasion.

Extension of NPC cabinet declares unconstitutional

Syed Wali Ullah Shah

NOWSHERA: The unopposed cabinet of Nowshera press club was declared constitutional and legal while extension granted to previous cabinet on 12th January set-aside, on Tuesday.

According to details, Deputy Commissioner Nowshera conducted inquiry against provision of extension to previous cabi-

net while ordered them to deposit Rs6 Lakh 75 thousand in press club's account. In this regard new cabinet has filed complaints before Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer to conducting enquiry into the matter.

Both inquiries had declared new cabinet comprising of Jahan Zeb Khan as president, Syed Wali Ullah Shah as general secre-

tary along with Syed Saqim Shah, Fida Muhammad, Zahoor Ahmad, Muhammad Shah, Peer Taj Mir Shah and Nasir Khan. It is worthy mention that Former Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmoody Khan took oath from the new cabinet while previous cabinet of Hafiz Tafhim-ur-Rehman didn't participate in the Nowshera press club election 2023.



BARA: Officials carrying the coffin of martyred army man for burial, who embraced Shahadat after IED explosion in Jani Khel area of Bannu. - F.P. photo

Wheelchairs among special persons distributed

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Wheelchairs were distributed by the Al-Khidmat Foundation, district chapter among 19 special persons in Landi Kotal on Tuesday. In this connection a simple gathering was set up in Al-Khidmat hospital, Landi Kotal that was attended by vice-President, Khyber of the Foundation Murad Hussain Afridi as chief guest, Syed Shah, senior Jamate Islami (JI) workers, Zameer Afridi, Abdurrauf Shinwari beside numbers JI volunteers and special persons.

Speaking on the occasion Murad Hussain Afridi said that Al-Khidmat Foundation was active enough to serve human beings round the clock. Wheel chairs would be phase wise provided to special persons in Landi Kotal and not a single incapacitate would be deprived of the facility, he added and said they would strive hard to ease hardship of the special persons being faced by them. Prior to it, the chief guest handed over wheel chairs to 19 special persons of the area who thanked the Foundation for the generous assistance.

Restoration of electricity demanded

F.P. Report

SHANGLA: Residents argued competent authorities to restore electricity on priority basis because heavy snowfall has turned whole valley into darkness.

According to details, heavy snowfall has distributed every segment of life while local power station supply lines were also damaged which had turned Shangla district into darkness. They claimed that suspended power supply had made further miserable the livelihood in the premises. The speakers requested competent authorities to restore electricity on priority basis because the residents are facing shortage of water.

One robbed in Larkana

LARKANA (PPI): Two major criminal incidents were reported here on Tuesday in which Zafar Brohi lost cash, gold and a mobile phone in the limits of Rahmatpur Police Station whereas Shahzor Khuhro was robbed of Rs364,000 cash outside a private bank by armed looters in the limits of Hyderi police station.

According to details, unknown armed thieves entered into the house of Zafar Brohi late last night in Shahu Boraho village and stole Rs8 lac cash, 4 tola golden ornaments and a cellular phone after making the inmates captive. Police were informed, they arrived, acquired details and started an investigation.

Brohi, a trader of Flour Chakki, alleged that over ten criminals wearing police uniforms and having government rifles crossed his wall during darkness, made men, women and children captive, looted the costly goods and fled. He said police were informed timely but they have failed to either chase the gangsters or to recover the stolen material.

In another incident, vegetable trader Shahzor Khuhro was robbed of Rs364,000 when he brought the cash in a bag to deposit in a private bank in Sabzi Mandi. As soon as he reached outside the bank unknown armed looters deprived him of the cash bag, and fled on a bike without fear of law.

Doctors call for awareness about Cervical Cancer

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: A symposium held titled with "Early Screening of Cervical Cancer" at Saidu Medical College, organized by the Department of Gynecology, Saidu Group of Medical Teaching Hospitals, Swat, on Tuesday.

The aim of the symposium was to raise awareness among women about screening for the disease while reviewing the complications caused by cervical cancer. Commissioner Malakand Division Saqib Raza Aslam participated as the chief guest in the symposium.

Commissioner Saidu Group of Teaching Hospitals Prof. Dr. Israrul Haque, Prof. Dr. Surya Halimi, Prof. Dr. Sana Tanveer Khattak and others addressed the symposium and shed light on cervical cancer diagnosis and other aspects. A large number of experts and doctors from different fields of teaching and treatment participated in the symposium. The participants of the symposium called cervical cancer a



Hospitals in a short span of time has introduced quality healthcare services and modern medical facilities which have made diagnosis and treatment of complex diseases like cervical cancer possible in Swat.

Chief Executive Officer Saidu Group of Teaching Hospitals Prof. Dr. Israrul Haque, Prof. Dr. Surya Halimi, Prof. Dr. Sana Tanveer Khattak and others addressed the symposium and shed light on cervical cancer diagnosis and other aspects. A large number of experts and doctors from different fields of teaching and treatment participated in the symposium. The participants of the symposium called cervical cancer a

challenge for women and emphasized the need for its timely screening.

The speakers said that there is a lack of awareness among women for timely diagnosis for which measures are needed. On this occasion, Professor Dr. Israrul Haque said that the hospital will provide cervical cancer screening facility to the women who come to its OPD. At the end of the symposium, Commissioner Malakand Division Saqib Raza Aslam distributed certificates to the participants, while hospital management presented shield to Commissioner. It is to mention here that January is cervical cancer awareness month.

Long-term reforms key to resolve economic crisis

Saqib Mushtaq

BAHAWALPUR: A seminar on reforms agenda for long-term economic development organized by Islamia University Bahawalpur and Pakistan Institute of Development Economics Islamabad at Bahawalpur Campus, on Tuesday.

The seminar was presided over by Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob and the chief guest was Vice Chancellor Pakistan Institute of Development Economics Islamabad Prof. Dr. Nadeem ul Haq. Commissioner Bahawalpur Raja Jahangir Anwar participated as the guest of honour in the concluding session.

President Bahawalpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chaudhry Zulfikar Ali Mann, Pro Vice Chancellor Pakistan

Institute of Development Economics Islamabad Dr. Durr-e-Nayab, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences Prof. Dr. Rubina Bhatti and Chairman of the Department of Economics Dr. Abid Rasheed Gill and faculty members were present on this occasion.

The participants said that universities provide the blueprint and framework for social and economic development. Research in universities can actually play a key role in social and economic development, policy-making institutions should consult the experts in universities to deal with the existing social, especially economic problems. Pakistan is a country rich in natural resources. Pakistan needs the best economic road map for which universities can play a pivotal role.

Pakistan needs long-term and short-term planning for sustainable devel-

opment. All the social and political circles of the country should agree on the charter of economy for the economic development of Pakistan. The economic reform agenda can be formulated with the help of experts and researchers in universities.

By following which, Pakistan can get rid of the economic crisis. Pakistan is rich in manpower and natural resources. What is required is proper planning and execution. During the seminar, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Pakistan Institute of Development Economics Islamabad for mutual cooperation and collaboration. Later, the participants of the seminar discussed in separate groups on the topic of social attitudes, social capital, institutional reforms, role of community in policy making.

Musicians hold protest in favor of demands

F.P. Report

PARCHINAR: Parachinar Musicians skilled union arranged protest in front of the press club in favor of their demands, on Tuesday.

According to details, a protest demonstration was held in front of the Parachinar press club in front of the talented musicians' union in favor of their demands. Addressing the protestors, President Jabbar Hussain, Rashid Hussain, the head of the

skilled workers, said that in today's modern era, an artist, musician, skilled worker has been left behind in all basic resources and welfare works in the society.

And the current governments have not even bothered to take any positive steps Just as one day's labor is not enough for a laborer, it is not possible for them to live in 800,000 because inflation and unemployment have taken away the option of living from the

poor.

We have a destiny on which living is very difficult but not impossible. We all musicians talented union demand the government to constitutionalize artists musicians talented legal powers should be provided, but a practical university strategy is needed on a serious basis for the future of artists, musicians and talented people in our country. So that circumstances do not deprive any talented person of his rights.

Depts directed to focus on resolving public grievances

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Deputy Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Muhammad Qaiser Khan has instructed officers of all departments to pay attention to solving public complaints and ensure the provision of best facilities to the citizens.

He stated this while reviewing over a performance review meeting of the district administration which was also attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Tariq Mehmood, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning

Muhammad Arshad Abbasi and all Assistant Commissioners. Deputy Commissioner annoyance over the unsatisfactory performances of some departments and issued strict instructions to them to improve their performance.

All the Price Control Magistrates should continuously inspect the markets regarding prices and quality of food items, he said. He issued instructions to all officers of District Administration to ensure regular inspection of schools, health facilities, development schemes and

Patwar Khanaas. He directed that illegal billboards and speed breakers should be removed immediately. The legal action would be taken against violators, he warned. The deputy commissioner asked all the assistant commissioners to make an encroachment plan for their areas, and directed that the actions against illegal encroachment should be accelerated. Deputy commissioner said that the provision of relief to the people was the top priority of the administration which should be ensured at any cost.



Marcos seeks foreign minister talks with China on sea feuds

MANILA (AP): Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he has proposed to China that the two countries hold talks between their foreign ministers to quickly resolve any new conflicts in the disputed South China Sea, and blamed Chinese actions for the disagreements. Marcos told Philippine TV networks in an interview that Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to his proposal in their talks in Beijing early this month and the two sides are ironing out the details of such an arrangement.

There was no immediate reaction from Chinese officials. China and the Philippines, along with Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in an increasingly tense standoff over their overlapping claims in the busy and resource-rich waterway, which is regarded as a potential Asian flashpoint.

In 2017, the Asian neighbors launched regular diplomatic talks called the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism to discuss incidents in the disputed waters and prevent any escalation while discussing other aspects of their relations. Despite the talks, conflicts have persisted, including a recent incident reported by Filipino fisher-

men who accused the Chinese coast guard of driving them away from Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal, which Beijing also claims, and then shadowing their vessel as it left the disputed area on Jan. 9. The incident occurred a few days after Marcos made a visit to China and met Xi.

The Philippine coast guard said it deployed more patrol ships to protect the Filipino fishermen after the incident. Marcos said he proposed to Xi in their meeting in Beijing that their top diplomats lead the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism, which is currently handled by mid-level diplomats, to allow a more rapid response to future conflicts in the disputed sea.

"My proposal is that we bring that bilateral group to a higher level," Marcos said, adding that he would also ask the Philippine ambassador to China to be part of the higher-level talks. "I guarantee you that if there is any decision that needs to be made, either of those gentlemen can pick up the telephone and talk to me and within five minutes we will have a decision," Marcos said. Xi agreed to his proposal and asked the Chinese foreign minister to discuss the new arrangement with Philippine officials.

"I think that if the president, President Xi, puts out an order that 'we will not do that anymore, we will do something else,' then I think it will be. I think the chain of command is fairly solid," Marcos said.

"We will be able to report any violation of whatever agreement we come to." It remains to be seen whether China will ease its increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed waters and back off in any fresh conflict. Beijing has dismissed and continues to defy a 2016 ruling by a UN-backed arbitration tribunal that invalidated its vast territorial claims on historical grounds in the South China Sea.

Marcos suggested that China needs to change its actions to prevent future conflicts. "I think the actions that are needed are really from the Chinese side because we do not send coast guard boats into what we consider their waters or international waters. They stay within Philippine waters." "What they do is they shadow our fishing boats," he said. The Philippines, he added, will continue to exercise its right to file diplomatic protests against China despite his proposal for higher-level talks that aim to rapidly address future conflicts at sea.

Myanmar Opp attacks mil's population survey

BANGKOK (AP): Myanmar's pro-democracy resistance forces have attacked military government personnel conducting a population survey, in an attempt to disrupt preparations for an election later this year that they consider illegitimate. Units of the People's Defense Force, the loosely organized armed wing of the main opposition group, the National Unity Government, have claimed responsibility for several attacks in the past few weeks. At least two police officers have been killed, along with other local officials.

The NUG was established by elected lawmakers who were prevented from taking their seats when the army seized power in 2021 and serves as an underground parallel national administration. Since the population survey began on Jan. 9, at least 13 people have been killed and four government workers have been detained by the resistance, according to pro-military and independent media and statements issued by resistance groups. It was impossible to verify details of all the incidents.

The state-run Myanma Alinn newspaper reported on Jan. 14 that survey activities were attacked seven times and two policemen were killed by "terrorist" groups between Jan. 9 and Jan. 13. Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the country's military ruler, said in a Jan. 4 Independence Day speech that free and fair elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution after the end of a state of emergency that was declared when he led the February 2021 takeover that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. The emergency decree is expected to be lifted at the end of this month.

Critics say this year's election cannot be free and fair because there is no free media and most of the leaders of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, which won a landslide victory in 2020, have been arrested. Suu Kyi, 77, is serving 33 years' imprisonment after being convicted in a series of politically tainted prosecutions brought by the military. The military justified its seizure of power by claiming massive fraud in the 2020 general election, though independent election observers did not find any major irregularities. The takeover was met with massive resistance which has since turned into what some UN experts have characterized as civil war.

'Serbia faces int'l isolation over Kosovo'

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP): Serbia could face international isolation and economic decline if it rejects a new Western plan for normalizing relations with its former wartime foe Kosovo, the Balkan country's president Aleksandar Vucic said, in what appeared to be a shift from his previous hardline rhetoric.

Serbia received that warning last week during a visit by a group of US and European envoys who have stepped up efforts to defuse longtime tensions in the volatile Balkan region amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Serbia must talk, take part in dialogue and continue its European road," Vucic said. "We would be economically and politically lost without it and, as a president, I would not agree to lead the country that is alone and isolated."

The dispute between Serbia and its former province of Kosovo has remained a source of instability in the Balkans long after the 1998-99 war, which ended with a NATO intervention that forced Serbia to pull out of the territory. Kosovo in 2008 declared independence from Serbia, which Belgrade has refused to recognize, relying on Russia and China to help Serbia maintain its claim over the territory. The US and most EU nations have recognized Kosovo, while Russia and China have not. The new Western plan for normalizing Serbia-Kosovo relations has not been officially made public. Vucic said in his televised address that the plan stipulates that Serbia would not be against membership of Kosovo in international organizations, including the United Nations.

US proposes once-a-year COVID shots for most Americans

WASHINGTON (AP): US health officials want to make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the annual flu shot. The Food and Drug Administration proposed a simplified approach for future vaccination efforts, allowing most adults and children to get a once-a-year shot to protect against the mutating virus.

This means Americans would no longer have to keep track of how many shots they've received or how many months it's been since their last booster. The proposal comes as boosters have become a hard sell. While more than 80% of the US population has had at least one vaccine dose, only 16% of those eligible have received the latest boosters authorized in August. The FDA will ask its panel of outside vaccine experts to weigh in at a meeting Thursday. The agency is expected to take their advice into consideration while deciding future vaccine requirements for manufacturers.

In documents posted online, FDA scientists say many Americans now have "sufficient preexisting immunity" against the coronavirus because of vaccination, infection or a combination of the two. That baseline of protection should be enough to move to an annual booster against the latest strains in circulation and make COVID-19 vaccinations more like the yearly flu shot, according to the agency. For adults with weakened immune systems and very small children, a two-dose combination may be needed for protection. FDA scientists and vaccine companies would study



vaccination, infection rates and other data to decide who should receive a single shot versus a two-dose series.

FDA will also ask its panel to vote on whether all vaccines should target the same strains. That step would be needed to make the shots interchangeable, doing away with the current complicated system of primary vaccinations and boosters. The initial shots from Pfizer and Moderna — called the primary series — target the strain of the virus that first emerged in 2020 and quickly swept across the world. The updated boosters launched last fall were also tweaked to target omicron relatives that had been dominant.

Under FDA's proposal, the agency, independent experts and manufacturers would decide annual-

ly on which strains to target by the early summer, allowing several months to produce and launch updated shots before the fall. That's roughly the same approach long used to select the strains for the annual flu shot. Ultimately, FDA officials say moving to an annual schedule would make it easier to promote future vaccination campaigns, which could ultimately boost vaccination rates nationwide.

The original two-dose COVID shots have offered strong protection against severe disease and death no matter the variant, but protection against mild infection wanes. Experts continue to debate whether the latest round of boosters significantly enhanced protection, particularly for younger, healthy Americans.

Italian police arrest man whose ID helped fugitive mobster

ROME (AP): Italian police in Sicily arrested the man whose identity was used by a convicted Mafia boss who had been Italy's No. 1 fugitive for 30 years, authorities said.

Carabinieri police said that Andrea Bonafede had been arrested on a warrant issued by judicial authorities in Palermo. Investigators contend that Bonafede received 20,000 euros (\$22,000) money from Mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro to buy a house in western Sicily that served as one of the fugitive's hideouts.

When Messina Denaro was captured last week at a Palermo clinic where he was receiving chemotherapy, he was using an official identity card with Bonafede's name but with his own photo. During the arrest, police also took into custody another man who had driven him to the clinic. Police have searched at least three homes in the town of Campobello di Mazara, in western Sicily, near Trapani, which they

say Messina Denaro had been using as hideouts over the last several months. It was one of these homes that was purchased by Bonafede, investigators said.

In issuing the warrant for Bonafede's arrest, Judge Alfredo Montalto said Bonafede was suspected of being a member of Cosa Nostra, as the Sicilian Mafia is known, and helping Messina Denaro to carry out his role as a major mob boss. Thanks to Bonafede's allowing Messina Denaro to use his identity, the fugitive was "able to move on the territory (of Italy), eluding law enforcement, as well as to access National Health Care without revealing his real identity," according to the accusations in the warrant. The fugitive had been receiving cancer treatment for months at the Palermo clinic as an out-patient registered as Andrea Bonafede, authorities said.

Messina Denaro had been convicted in absentia while he was on the lam of

several of the most heinous Mafia crimes and given multiple life sentences. He was convicted of being one of the masterminds of the 1992 bombings one of attacks killed Italy's top anti-Mafia magistrate, Giovanni Falcone, along a highway outside Palermo and the other killed a fellow magistrate, Paolo Borsellino two months later that shocked Italy.

Also killed in those bombings was Falcone's wife and bodyguards of both magistrates. Bonafede was arrested after nightfall in a small town just outside Campobello di Mazara, according to police video footage released by the Carabinieri.

In their searches of the three houses allegedly used by Messina Denaro, authorities said they found airline ticket receipts indicating he had traveled abroad at times, receipts from pricey restaurants, jewelry and posters from films, including "The Godfather" and "Joker." A few days after the Jan. 16 arrest of the

fugitive, police found in a private parking lot in Campobello di Mazara a black Alfa Romeo Giulietta sedan they said Messina Denaro used to drive himself around, with Bonafede's identification documents, the arrest warrant for Bonafede said. Investigators allege that the fugitive personally bought the car, used, at a Palermo dealership, an indication the convicted mobster felt a certain level of confidence he wouldn't be recognized in Sicily's main metropolis.

The parking spot is allegedly owned by the son of the suspect who was arrested after driving Messina Denaro to his medical appointment. Investigators allege that Messina Denaro could count on a network of accomplices, drawn from his power base in western Sicily, to help with logistics. Hours after his arrest, Messina Denaro was flown to a maximum security prison in central Italy to begin serving his sentences.

Moroccan lawmakers denounce European Parliament criticism

RABAT (AP): The Moroccan Parliament decided to reconsider its ties with the European Parliament and subject them to a comprehensive evaluation after the EU legislature criticized the state of press freedoms in Morocco. The decision followed an extraordinary joint plenary session of Morocco's two houses of Parliament in Rabat that was convened to address the European Parliament's resolution from last week.

The Moroccan legislators called the resolution an unacceptable attack on the kingdom's sovereignty and the independence and sanctity of its judicial institutions, according to a joint parliamentary statement read out by the speaker of the House of Representatives, Rachid Talbi Alami. Last week, EU legislators approved a non-binding resolution calling on Moroccan authorities to improve their respect of freedom of expression and

media freedom.

The resolution said press freedom in the North African kingdom has been "continuously deteriorating" and called for "a fair trial with all due process guarantees" for imprisoned journalists, including Omar Radi, Soulaymane Raissouni and Taoufik Bouachrine. Such resolutions do not force EU member states to act, but are a broad indication of how the bloc of 450 million people feels about certain issues.

The vote was 356-32 with 42 abstentions.

The Moroccan Parliament said the resolution broke trust and hurt progress that had been made over many years. It described Morocco as a long-standing and trustworthy partner that plays a major role in protecting rights and freedoms and defending regional and international peace and security, according to the statement. It added that the kingdom will never accept

guardianship or lessons from anyone.

The Parliament defended judges' decisions in the cases mentioned by the European resolution, saying they had nothing to do with journalism or freedom of speech but were about crimes such as sexual assault and taking advantage of people's weaknesses. Radi, a prominent investigative journalist and activist, was convicted in 2021 on charges of espionage and sexual assault and sentenced to six years in prison. Radi denies wrongdoing, and rights groups say the charges were politically motivated.

Radi was the subject of an Amnesty International report in June 2020 that said Moroccan authorities had unlawfully spied on the journalist through his phone by using sophisticated surveillance software. The Moroccan government disputed the claim. Raissouni, also mentioned in the European resolution,

was sentenced to five years in prison for sexual assault, and Bouachrine has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for sexual offenses, according to media watchdog Reporters Without Borders.

The EU resolution condemns what it calls Morocco's "misuse of allegations of sexual assault to deter journalists from performing their duties," warning that such misuse "endangers women's rights." It also raised concerns about allegations that Moroccan authorities sought to bribe European Parliament members as part of a broad influence-buying scandal also involving allegations against Qatar. Belgian prosecutors are investigating the allegations, part of a sweeping corruption scandal that has deeply shaken the EU. The United States, a Moroccan ally, has in the past also voiced concerns about Morocco's treatment of journalists.

Kenyan opposition leader says Ruto's govt is illegitimate

NAIROBI (Reuters): Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga has called on his supporters to resist the government of President William Ruto, saying its disputed election last August had robbed it of legitimacy. Ruto's Kenya Kwanza coalition eked out a narrow victory over Odinga in the election, whose result announcement was accompanied by chaotic scenes at the national tallying centre, and his victory was upheld by the Supreme

Court.

Both leaders, who have dominated politics in East Africa's biggest economy for decades, settled into an uneasy calm after the electoral contest, but Odinga's coalition said last week it had found new evidence of rigging. "We cannot and will not recognise the Kenya Kwanza regime and we consider the Kenya Kwanza government illegitimate," Odinga told a rally in the capital, adding that the government should

resign.

The August vote was watched closely due to disputes in past contests that led to bloodshed. More than 1,200 people were killed following the 2007 election and, in 2017, more than 100 people were killed after the Supreme Court quashed the initial result over irregularities in the electoral process. Ruto, who says the Supreme Court's ruling vindicated his victory, has accused Odinga of planning to sab-

otage his administration by calling for protests.

The president has moved to set the stage for the reconstitution of the election commission, IECB, after the retirement of its chairman and two loyal commissioners this month, and the resignation of the majority of the others. He formed a panel to investigate the conduct of four election commissioners who rejected the outcome of the election saying Ruto had not won.

WHO urges 'action' after cough syrup deaths

LONDON (Reuters): The World Health Organization has called for "immediate and concerted action" to protect children from contaminated medicines after a spate of child deaths linked to cough syrups last year. In 2022, more than 300 children - mainly aged under 5 - in Gambia, Indonesia and Uzbekistan died of acute kidney injury, in deaths that were associated with contaminated medicines, the WHO said in a statement.

The medicines, over-the-counter cough syrups, had high levels of diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol. "These contaminants are toxic chemicals used as industrial solvents and antifreeze agents that can be fatal even taken in small amounts, and should never be found in medicines," the WHO said. As well as the countries above, the WHO told Reuters that the Philippines, Timor Leste, Senegal and

Cambodia may potentially be impacted because they may have the medicines on sale. It called for action across its 194 member states to prevent more deaths.

"Since these are not isolated incidents, WHO calls on various key stakeholders engaged in the medical supply chain to take immediate and coordinated action," WHO said. The WHO has already sent specific product alerts in October and earlier this month, asking for the medicines to be removed from the shelves, for cough syrups made by India's Maiden Pharmaceuticals and Marion Biotech, which are linked with deaths in Gambia and Uzbekistan respectively.

It also issued a warning last year for cough syrups made by four Indonesian manufacturers, PT Yarindo Farmatama, PT Universal Pharmaceutical, PT Konimex and PT AFI

Pharma, that were sold domestically. The companies involved have either denied that their products have been contaminated or declined to comment while investigations are ongoing.

The WHO reiterated its call for the products flagged above to be removed from circulation, and called more widely for countries to ensure that any medicines for sale are approved by competent authorities. It also asked governments and regulators to assign resources to inspect manufacturers, increase market surveillance and take action where required. It called on manufacturers to only buy raw ingredients from qualified suppliers, test their products more thoroughly and keep records of the process. Suppliers and distributors should check for signs of falsification and only distribute or sell medicines authorised for use, the WHO added.

UN chief insists on special armed forces as Haiti spirals

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP): UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres insisted on the deployment of an international specialized armed force to Haiti and called on governments to consider halting deportations as the country's situation spirals. The recommendations were issued as part of a report on the UN Integrated Office in Haiti, with Guterres noting that gang-related violence and human rights violations have reached a critical level.

"The people of Haiti are suffering the worst human rights and humanitarian emergency in decades," he wrote. Guterres noted that while last year's gang-led siege at a main fuel terminal has ended, a special force is still needed to ensure that key infrastructure remains unobstructed and that people are able to safely vote in a general election whose date has not been set.

The number of reported killings soared by 35% last year compared with the previous year, with more than 2,100 slain. In addition, kidnappings more than doubled last year, with more than 1,350 victims. Meanwhile, Haiti's National Police is underfunded and under-resourced, with only some 9,700 active-duty officers in a country of more than 11 million people. "There are also allegations that a significant number of national police...may be associated with gangs," Guterres said.

In recent months, coun-

tries including Canada and the US have offered training and resources including armored vehicles, but police remain largely out-matched by gangs whose power and territorial control have expanded since President Jovenel Moise was slain at his private residence in July 2021. Haiti also is struggling with a deadly cholera outbreak worsened by gang violence and a spike in the number of people who are starving as countries including the US and the Dominican Republic have deported tens of thousands of Haitians in the past year.

The report was released a day before the UN Security Council is scheduled to meet and talk about Haiti. Late last year, the council imposed sanctions on individuals and groups that threatened peace in Haiti, including a powerful gang leader, but it did not vote on the deployment of armed forces as requested by Haiti's top officials in October. With no democratically elected institutions left in Haiti after the terms of the remaining 10 senators expired on Jan. 9, Prime Minister Ariel Henry has pledged that he is working to hold general elections as soon as possible.

Last week, Henry's administration published a decree with the names of the three members appointed to the High Transition Council, which will be responsible for choosing the provisional electoral council, the first step in prepar-

ing for elections. The decree stated that the council also will push economic and human rights reforms, create and execute a public security plan and establish milestones and deadlines for the transition period. "We will move forward with all those who wish to do so," Henry said earlier this month.

Venezuela calls off Maduro meeting with Lula

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters): Venezuela has decided to call off a previously arranged meeting between President Nicolas Maduro and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Lula's press office said. The Brazilian government had announced earlier in the day the two leaders were set to meet in Buenos Aires this afternoon as they attend a summit of Latin American and Caribbean countries in Buenos Aires.

Later, however, Lula's team released a new update of his agenda saying the meeting would no longer take place as Venezuela canceled it. Lula, who took office on Jan. 1, asked his foreign relations minister to restore relations with Venezuela. Diplomatic relations between the countries were broken in 2020 by Brazil's former far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

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Power shutdown, a cyclic ignominy

A massive electricity breakdown hit the country Monday morning disrupting life in all major cities including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta. According to reports, the transmission lines of the Tarbela and Mangla dams were tripped and all power plants in Guddu, Jamshoro, Muzaffargarh, Haveli Bahadur Shah, and Balloki shut down at the same time. The authorities claimed that the NPC fuse was switched off to save the system, however, the power supply went off while IESCO, LESCO, MEPCO, SEPCO, QESCO, and K-Electric were the most affected.

A sudden and prolonged power breakdown occurred across the nation that not only plunged the entire country into darkness and abrupt halt but also clearly exposed the reliability and untrustworthiness of the national institutions. Awfully, such incidents are a recurrent phenomenon in the country while the high-ups of the WAPDA, the NTDC, GINCOs and DISCOs are used to every day negligence of their institutions, however such nationwide mishaps brought their internal malfunction to the nation.

Realistically, technical faults and line tripping is not unusual and can happen anytime but mostly such problems damage a specific system/ region because of circuit breakers/ fuses and other protective gears but no safety arrangements were in place or worked and a countrywide power shutdown collapsed the entire nation even communication system and air operation chowked for hours due to electric failure . Unfortunately, there was no alternative arrangement with WAPDA, NTDC or NPC to provide energy to highly sensitive aviation sector, Federal capital and other defense/emergency services during this period.

Ironically, after occurrence of a huge blunder, the resorted to the several times used strategies and abhorrent tactics, the power division baselessly claimed that an irreparable loss averted by safety measures and timely response of the authorities. In fact, people are used to and utterly annoyed with such policies of its rulers, which never worked in the past. Currently, the public demands a stern accountability and strictest measures to stop such shameful recurrences and national losses in the future.

Africa, next battlefield for competitors

ACCORIDNG to the media, the US Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield has kicked off her 10-day long Africa tour as part of President Joe Biden's big push to engage with the world's second-largest continent. According to the details, Ambassador Greenfield is scheduled to visit Ghana, Mozambique, and Kenya to affirm and strengthen US partnerships with key current and former UN Security Council members. As said, she will engage with women and civil society leaders, UN officials, entrepreneurs, US alumni, and international relations students in Ghana and Mozambique while her focus of the visit would be on humanitarian programs, food security, and the regional response to drought and assistance to refugees in Kenya.

The African continent has become a future battlefield between global competitors after China has surpassed the United States in trade and is aiming to increase its military presence in multiple African destinations, while the Russian Federation has forged military ties with the authorities in Mali and Central African Republic. At the same time, Putin's vanguard, the Wagner Group has successfully pushed back France by expanding its presence in over a dozen African nations including Mali, Nigar, Sudan, Congo, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, and others, that not only seriously hurt western interests in Africa but alarmed the bell in western capitals over rapidly advances of their adversaries in the resource riched poor continent. The changed regional dynamics sensitized the US Strategists and currently, the US State Department diverted all its energies toward the cultivation of ties with African nations.

The recurrent French retreat in various African nations and the gradual widening cooperation between multiple African states and the Russian government and private military the Wagner Group sensitized the United States and its allies over the past one and a half years. President Biden conceived a plan to reengage Africa by hosting US-Africa Leaders Summit in December last year. During the Summit, Biden set the stage for broader US-Africa cooperation in the coming years and urgent American shuttle diplomacy started to engage nearly 49 African states to realize the shared objectives in the region.

Interestingly, the importance of the issue and the haste of American Strategists in launching a diplomatic offensive against Russian and Chinese ingress in Africa is clearly evident that the American UN mission also gets involved in African affairs and the present US Permanent Representative to the UN is currently overseeing American public diplomacy, food security, regional peace, and security matters in Africa beside managing global affairs at the United Nations.

Ostensibly, the latest development in global politics and US diplomatic outreach will surely lead to economic, defense, and security realignment in the region that will prompt new rivalries and competition in Africa as several nations including Nigar, Mali, Sudan, Congo, Burkina Faso, and Central African Republic had recently tightened their knot with Moscow while some others are home to Chinese investment and military basing. Asia, Europe, Oceania, and Latin America were already suffering outcomes of global rivalry, now this curse has renewed its presence in Africa. Apparently, the hegemony is on the way to destruction, hence world's future is vague and uncertain until the UN plays the role of regulator and peace broker in the world.

Quote of the day

The goal of the future is full unemployment, so we can play. That's why we have to destroy the present politico-economic system.
— Arthur Clarke, British Sci-Fi writer.

IN the United States, a scandal is growing around the illegal storage of classified documents by President Joe Biden. His house was searched. About how the American society reacts to this and what threatens the head of state - in the material of RIA Novosti.

Already the third episode

Last weekend, the Department of Justice and the FBI conducted a 13-hour search of the Biden mansion in Wilmington, Delaware. This was agreed with the president's lawyers. He himself went to another residence for the weekend.

At least six state documents with different categories of secrecy were seized. Including received by Biden when he was a senator (1973-2009) and vice president (2009-2017), lawyer Bob Bauer said.

He did not specify what was the immediate reason for the search. According to him, Biden's representatives themselves insisted on "the most expeditious progress in the process."

This is the third time that secret papers have been found in the president's

possession. For the first time - in November 2022, at the think tank in Washington. The White House admitted: Biden used these premises for work. In Wilmington, there were also searches before, but not in a residential building, but in a garage and outbuildings. And they found some confidential material there.

Republican pressure
Biden's legal team reached an agreement to inspect the Delaware mansion with John Lausch, the U.S. attorney who led the original investigation last year. His successor, Robert Hur, who was permanent special counsel on the case, will soon take over and continue his work.

Both of them are close associates of former President Donald Trump, who helped them in their careers. In the summer, documents were also confiscated at his Florida estate, which, according to investigators, he had no right to take out of the White House.

Trump called the story a Democrat-led witch hunt. Biden found himself in exactly the same situation. Of course, the Republicans

will take advantage of this. They have already demanded full details of the documents and their potential impact on national security.

Rep. James Comer, in a letter to the White House chief of staff, said Biden must report to Congress. "It is alarming that classified documents were improperly stored in his house for at least six years (after leaving the post of vice president. - Approx. ed.). This raises questions about who could get acquainted with them," the congressman said..

In a microblog, he added: "The White House said that all classified materials have been returned. The Department of Justice has discovered more. Americans need answers right now." Comer is chairman of the House Oversight Committee, where the Republican Party has a majority. He may initiate additional proceedings. But not only "telephants" put pressure on Biden. Some Democrats also oppose it.

"Donkeys" are tired
The Senate (the upper house of Congress) is still under the control of the don-

Renat Abdullin

keys. However, Democratic Senators Joe Manchin and Tim Kaine called for an investigation into Biden's "improper handling" of documents of national importance. As they told FoxNews, a thorough review is needed. "The appointment of a special prosecutor for this case is the right move," Kane said. In the fall, shortly before the midterm congressional elections, many Democrats did not want to see the head of state at campaign rallies. His steadily falling ratings cast a shadow over the entire party. After the defeat of the Republicans in the Senate, Biden seemed to have regained the confidence of his fellow party members. However, opinion polls show that more than half of Americans do not approve of his work in the White House. It becomes toxic to "donkeys".

It was also influenced by the fact that Biden was accused of the same thing as Trump six months ago. The president's supporters justify themselves: since he is now the head of state, it means that the situation

with the documents is not so dangerous.

Society reacts

According to an ABC News / Ipsos poll, 64% of respondents disapprove of Biden's actions with state materials, 77% of Trump - 77%. The White House stubbornly insists that the two scandals cannot be compared.

Trump, without actually denying the illegality of the export of documents, skillfully presented himself as a victim of the current government. Biden, declaring his readiness for an open investigation, insisted that they would not find anything on him. And now he reacted extremely indistinctly: "I was informed. I am very surprised that there were any government records."

A recent Yahoo News/YouGov study found that about two-thirds of Americans are in favor of a full-scale investigative action against Biden. Only 16 percent (27 among Democrats) are strongly opposed.

Welcome to the club

A peculiar trend has developed in the recent history of the United States. Since the Watergate scan-

dal, which ended in the resignation of President Richard Nixon in 1974, only one American leader has gone without a special investigation associated with him or his associates: Barack Obama.

Everyone else dealt with prosecutors in one way or another. Gerald Ford was suspected of money laundering, Jimmy Carter got into trouble because of the inappropriate behavior of assistants. Ronald Reagan and his associates sold missiles to Iran and used the proceeds to illegally finance rebels in Nicaragua. The echo of this scandal haunted George W. Bush. The Bill Clinton administration has been accused of kickback deals. Bush Jr. has been held accountable for the invasion of Iraq, and Trump for ties to Russia.

Of course, Biden is not in danger of impeachment. But running for a second term will become more problematic. The Democrats, meanwhile, have no real alternative. And this strengthens the Republicans, many of whom, as before, are betting on the "victim of the regime" - Trump.

Russia is eager to fill the gap in Sahel

Ben Armbruster

THE Sahel entered 2023 in bad shape.

The kidnapping of more than 50 women near Arbinda, Burkina Faso, on January 12 and 13 is just one indication of how insecure many parts of the region are. (The women were subsequently freed, although much about the episode remains unclear.)

There are no easy fixes for the Sahel. Even the occasional bright spots, such as the signing of a peace agreement between different ethnic communities in part of western Niger on January 21, underscore the region's many vulnerabilities. Peace, where it occurs, often proves fragile and patchy.

Politically, meanwhile, American and other international policymakers can already look ahead to difficult dilemmas in 2024. Next year, three ongoing political transitions in the region will come due as military regimes in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad face deadlines to organize elections and hand power back to civilians.

Each transition, however, confronts threats from at least three directions — military regimes' propensity to extend their own power, the possibility of coups from the junior ranks, and the challenges posed by armed rebels. Meanwhile, relatively peaceful and stable Senegal will hold a

presidential election, with incumbent President Macky Sall potentially seeking a controversial third term. Niger — the hub for much of the French and American military presence in the region — will likely face increasing strains.

Amid the turbulence, Washington needs a strategy that keeps the door open, diplomatically, without inadvertently abetting military regimes or enabling civilian overreach. Washington also needs to continue to differentiate itself from France, which is increasingly loathed across the region. For the moment, American diplomats are charting a balanced course by neither embracing nor antagonizing the Malian and Burkinabe juntas, but there does not appear to be a robust strategy for the medium term.

In Mali, a group of colonels seized power in 2020, then staged a second coup in 2021, and ultimately refused to honor their initial 18-month timetable for returning power to civilians. That deadline would have landed in February 2022, but the Malian junta defied the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the region's diplomatic bloc. In late 2021, Mali's military rulers floated the idea of a transition that would have lasted through 2026 — ECOWAS balked and imposed sanctions, and the two sides ultimately

compromised on a transition lasting through 2024.

But Malian authorities are already suggesting that the current calendar is not sacrosanct, beginning with the possible delay of a constitutional referendum planned for March.

In Burkina Faso, another colonel conducted a coup in January 2022, and ended up agreeing with ECOWAS on a transition timetable running through 2024. That colonel was in turn overthrown in September 2022. Burkina Faso's new ruler, Captain Ibrahim Traoré, has promised to respect the 2024 timeline. Traoré has proven popular with many ordinary Burkinabe citizens, but an alleged coup plot against him, revealed by his government in December, shows how shaky his position is. And should his position solidify, Traoré could well follow his Malian peers in asserting that exceptional circumstances require him to postpone elections.

In Chad, the military regime that came to power in April 2021 has been cozier with Paris and Washington than have the regimes in Mali and Burkina Faso; Chad's regime took power unconstitutionally, but it is effectively a continuation of the system established by Idriss Deby, who ruled Chad from 1990 to 2021; the current

regime is headed by his son Mahamat, who organized the 2021 coup immediately upon Idriss Deby's death in a fight against rebels.

The transition in Chad, initially slated to expire around October 2022, has already been extended. Meanwhile, Chadian authorities have cracked down on dissent, including in an October 2022 massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators. Chad has had its own murky alleged coup plot, also this past December, although authorities asserted that the reported plot was led by a prominent human rights activist, a story that bears greater scrutiny.

In all three countries, the transitions scheduled for 2024 could be delayed, placing ECOWAS, the African Union, and others back at square one. Sanctions have borne few fruits, and there is limited regional and international bandwidth for sustained and cohesive diplomatic pressure. Meanwhile, "transitions" could turn out to be superficial — there is a high probability that Mahamat Deby will run in the eventual elections in Chad, and a similar scenario is quite possible in Mali as well.

Judicious American pressure could help to signal to the three juntas that Washington cares about the

quality and outcome of the transitions — a message that is likelier to land if Washington rhetorically de-emphasizes the question of combating jihadists and refrains from too much lecturing about Russia and China. The Sahel's political and security problems are so intermeshed now that a straightforward fight against al-Qaida and Islamic State affiliates is no longer possible; the road to solving the region's crises runs first through sorting out politics at the center of each country, while supporting localized peace-making efforts as a placeholder and a harm mitigation strategy.

France and, ironically, Russia are now both learning that a counterterrorism-centric strategy is ultimately unsustainable in the Sahel. For France, eight years of a Sahel-wide counterterrorism mission called Operation Barkhane yielded a list of "eliminated" jihadists — but also yielded substantial unpopularity in Mali, Burkina Faso, and beyond.

Juntas have taken advantage of ordinary citizens' suspicions of French motives and activities (suspicions partly fueled by Russian disinformation, but predating and extending well beyond Russia's propaganda efforts) to pose as populists by expelling French forces and tearing up military accords, as

Burkina Faso did just this week.

Russia is eager to fill the gap, including through the deployment of the Kremlin-backed Wagner Group mercenaries (present in Mali, and possibly soon present in Burkina Faso, although the topic is hotly debated inside and outside the latter). Yet Russia is already discovering that the Sahel is challenging terrain, militarily and politically: Wagner Group personnel are killing a lot of civilians, but they are not making gains against jihadists.

In the long term, Wagner's abuses and predations are likely to take the shine off Russia's image, in some Sahelian citizens' minds, as an anti-imperialist partner and an alternative to France; Russia is ultimately just another imperialist force in the region.

The United States will put its best foot forward in the Sahel if it functions not as a kind of "France lite," offering military training without any accompanying political strategy, but instead concentrates on finding political openings in the region. That means convincing the civilian-led governments of the region not to inflame domestic tensions in ways that might lead to coups or unrest, and it means incentivizing the military regimes to give up power sooner rather than later.

‘Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness,’ can only be realised by individuals since they are individual and not ‘common’ goods

Jeffrey Bristol

THE telos, or final cause of the American regime, according to the prophets of the Common Good, descends like a vision from God, telling us precisely how our society ought to be ordered. They invoke telos to justify transformative arguments about the American Constitution, using broad language in the Preamble to interpret and circumscribe the document. Telos's power, they argue, derives not just from words, but from intellectual tradition. Telos is important for Aristotle and Aquinas; a classical provenance for "classical lawyers."

When scrutinizing arguments about telos, we find something missing: a definition. Thinkers throw the term around casually, as if it were self-explanatory. The final cause is unfortunately not self-explanatory. It's not even the only cause. There are four causes in Aristotelean philosophy. This omission is serious, for when analyzed properly, it's far from clear that our constitutional order bends towards the Common Good writ large, but rather enables individuals to realize it on their own. This distinction contains a serious difference.

To understand the error, we must review Aristotle's whole concept. Aristotle asserts in Posterior Analytics that knowing a thing is knowing its causes, for causes make a thing itself and none other. Knowing a thing's uniqueness is essential lest we confuse one thing

for another, blunting both use and analysis.

Aristotle explains the causes in his Physics and Metaphysics. They are: (1) Material Cause, the elements comprising a thing; (2) Formal Cause, the design/schema shaping a thing; (3) Efficient Cause, the agent whose change of state brings a thing into being; (4) Final Cause, the purpose a thing fulfills. We demonstrate with a wooden table. The table's Material Cause is its wood. Its Formal Cause is its plan. Its Efficient Cause is its carpenter. Its Final Cause is why the table exists, to support things.

The final cause gets pride of place not just among Common Gooders. Aristotle spends considerable time discussing it for two reasons. First was the concept's novelty: previous to Aristotle, Greek philosophy lacked the idea of an end to which things moved, recognizing only the immediate causes. The second was that in analyzing phenomena, the final cause helps to predict the others since they work to realize it. In terms of the thing itself, all four causes share equally in its being. In the theological terms popular among the new conservative movement, the causes function as hypostases underlying a thing's existence.

When our would-be Aristotelians discuss only the final cause, we get short shrift. Fortunately, we can correct their error, demonstrating how mistaken they are about the American Republic's final cause.

The American Republic's four causes are:

1. Material Cause: The government acting on behalf of the state; Congress, the Presidency (including the Cabinet and administrative state), and the Judiciary.

2. Formal Cause: The Constitution of the United States providing the government's blueprint.

3. Efficient Cause: The people as the sovereign.

4. Final Cause: Most controversial. Ordered Liberty enabling people to achieve the Common Good (only the people themselves can achieve the Common Good, no one can achieve it for them).

I don't think the first two will be controversial. The third might but won't affect my argument. The rub lies in the final. To understand why ordered liberty is our Republic's final cause, not the Common Good, we review the causes.

The American state exists only insofar as its institutions and people do. Its active component, which gives it tangible existence, is government. Unlike a table, one cannot point to a physical manifestation of government, so its materiality is different. Government consists of individuals acting through institutions bound into formal arrangements giving the whole cohesive reality, enabling its wielding power as a unit. Such substantiarity, insofar as it exists, doesn't emerge alone. It requires cooperation among its

members, which only a plan can facilitate. That plan is the Constitution, which forms the government by outlining its bodies and delineating its power.

The Republic is far more than just a government. It's the "public thing" supported by and comprised of the people. If it were a direct democracy, with all the people participating in government, its Efficient and Material Causes would be the same, but they aren't. Its Efficient Cause is broader than the Material because people vote to select their leaders while not themselves governing. Similarly, the government doesn't derive sovereignty from itself. The American state is truly a res publica, a "commonwealth" (literally translated), meaning that the people share it in common and care for it together, its qualities emerging from the people's qualities, for good or ill. They, as our Preamble indicates, "ordain and establish" it, moving the Republic from nothing into something. They also renew it through their participation in it; not just as electors, but as civil servants, members of the military, taxpayers, and in all their other roles as members of the great national, public body.

This final point, that our government is one "of the people, by the people and for the people," is important. While such a government may achieve the Common Good, it won't do so necessarily. Its ends rely on the

people's will. This limitation is obvious considering the Republic's structure was planned by the people, built by the people, and works for the people's interests. The people-centered rather than "goods"-centered nature of the government is the clearest thread running through its four causes.

This popular-orientated design resulted from the American Revolution's political nature. The Revolution's primary political goal was establishing a government enabling its constituents (states or citizens) to self-order, hence the initial confederacy.

The Revolutionaries' actions couldn't have more firmly rejected the Common Good orientation of government since the Common Good was the aim of the British monarchy (the king was, after all, the head of both church and state; the integralist dream). Had the revolutionaries objected simply to the Crown's implementation of the good, either the Revolution wouldn't have been necessary, or they wouldn't have preserved the British form of government rather than creating something radically different and new.

The colonists' rejection of this model of government is clear in the Declaration of Independence's List of Grievances and the General Statement whose three famous concerns, "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," can only be realized by individuals since they are individual and not "common" goods.

The Founders' emphasis on citizens' right to organize themselves rather than on a joint common good derived from their knowledge of history and human nature. Particularly, they learned from the previous several centuries of European and English conflict that too many conflicting versions of the common good existed (which was central to their concern about expansive republics). Thus, if one were to create a society where the Good could be realized, that society's political order would have to be flexible to accommodate a range of activities, i.e., it would have to protect liberty. The fact that different people and even different groups have differing goods shouldn't be surprising. Though Common Gooders reject it on principle (e.g., Vermeule), Aristotle proves the truth of the matter.

In his Ethics, Aristotle makes clear that happiness is the greatest good, for it's the only thing people choose for its own sake. He further demonstrates that happiness is "activity in accordance with virtue" while highlighting that different people can act in accordance with virtue to different capacities and in different ways, thus different modes of life and activities are required for any given person to be happy (while the virtues themselves remain constant). Thus, our Founders realized that people require liberty to

(Continued on Page 7)

Tyrannophobia?

IN the United States, the study of little-c constitutional law is generally taken to be synonymous with the study of big-C Constitutional law. We have our written document, upon which we have built a vast doctinal edifice over the centuries that one can spend a lifetime studying. Be that as it may, the country's little-c constitution can best be understood by those who are willing to zoom out from the case law and bring into view the more tectonic aspects of American political culture.

A new book, No Blank Check, from political scientists Andrew Reeves and Jon C. Rogowski tells readers ponder one of the most important such features: Americans' suspicion of an unchecked president. Of course, the big-C Constitution itself contains mechanisms that ensure the president cannot operate autonomously, but a more elemental sort of restraint—a "latent force," as the authors call it—continuously operates in the background of our political dramas. In short, Americans resent leaders who get too big for their britches. They consistently exhibit a "deep-seated skepticism about presidential power" and a reverence for the separation of powers.

That shouldn't sound too surprising, and yet, both among world-weary political commentators and political scientists, the conventional wisdom is that regular people care about policy choices (or perhaps only outcomes) rather than the processes by which they are made. Pundits also sometimes assume the public wants to see the president-as-fearless leader deal with every imaginable problem. Reeves and Rogowski provide a treasure trove of data to show that neither process neutrality nor a preference for presidential heroism is the norm. Instead, throughout the whole history of opinion polling dating back to the 1930s, the American public has been consistently and decisively opposed to the president acting alone on just about every subject about which it has been asked. (The exceptions are an interesting bunch: the line-item veto consistently polled well from the 1970s through the 1990s, there was strong support for the president rationing gasoline in 1979, and there was modest net positive support for presi-

dents making trade agreements in the late 1990s.)

Reeves and Rogowski build on this historical data by adding their own contemporary surveys from the end of the Obama administration to the beginning of the Trump administration. They poke and prod at citizens' views about the rule of law, unilateral presidential actions of various sorts, policymaking under gridlock, and many other factors to tease out people's aversion to unilateral policymaking. By using a wide variety of clever experimental designs (in which different respondents are asked slightly different questions), their approach minimizes response bias and precludes the possibility that they are merely getting respondents to agree to some desirable-sounding proposition.

Their methodical efforts pay off: they convincingly demonstrate that the public has stable "preferences over how presidents wield power" that are not mere emanations of partisan proclivities. Even when people like the policy that a president implements unilaterally, they are likely to penalize the president for having failed to cooperate with other political actors—although if the poll stipulates that Congress is gridlocked on an issue, or that the nation's security is at stake, that somewhat diminishes this effect. Because some respondents are asked about policies without any indication of unilateral action, while other respondents are asked about the same policies but with various specifications of the processes that produced them, we can be confident that the tendency to judge unilateral action less favorably is real.

Perhaps counterintuitively, low-political-knowledge voters penalize presidents for unilateralism most evenhandedly. While not all of the members of this group are strongly committed to the rule of law, those who are show a consistent aversion to presidential unilateralism. By contrast, higher-information voters are more likely to show partisan opportunism in their assessment of process issues. Intriguingly, older survey respondents were also more likely to keep consistent views about unilateralism during the change from Obama to Trump.

How Strong is Public Constraint?

Reeves and Rogowski

Philip Wallach

are impressively persuasive when it comes to debunking the idea that the mass public is process-indifferent. But they are somewhat less forceful on the practical significance of this bottom-up aversion to unilateral action. After all, even if the public is less sympathetic to a policy implemented unilaterally than to the same policy implemented through the full legislative process, it is far from clear what difference that will make.

Reviewing several recent unilateral actions, including Obama's adoption of the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and Donald Trump's reallocation of funds for the southern border wall, the authors note that each president experienced some significant process-specific pushback for having relied on unilateral action. They then observe, "What stands out is not that they eventually exercised their powers, but how long it took them to do so." It is certainly noteworthy that presidents hesitate before deploying unilateral powers, favoring cooperative action with legislators. But if a bit of reluctance is all that is entailed, it seems that this is something less than a fundamental limitation on the presidency's power.

Reeves and Rogowski conclude, "Our research suggests that presidents should not merely justify the policy merits of their unilateral actions, they should also emphasize their commitment to defend the US Constitution." Again, we must wonder if this advice has bite. If a president can get away with unilateral action by paying only a modest political price—and can get a discount by waving the Constitution around while doing it—that hardly seems definitive. For instance, when President Biden unilaterally extended the COVID-19 eviction moratorium in the summer of 2021 and pushed forward massive student loan forgiveness in the summer of 2022, his legal justification amounted to little more than a wink. But even if we suppose that many members of the public were less sympathetic to these actions because of their unilateral nature, it is hard to prove that Biden paid a significant political penalty in either case. His base was enthused by these actions,

and it seems doubtful that many citizens cast their votes against Democrats in the 2022 midterms as a protest of these actions.

What is clear is that those actions subsequently ran into trouble in the courts—as did a large share of the Trump administration's unilateral actions in the preceding years. Judges, however, are limited in the remedies they offer to litigants. They may knock out misuses of power, but they cannot take on public policy problems themselves. The branch best able to do that is, of course, the legislature. Congress has sometimes proved quite willing to translate skepticism of an overbearing executive into hard checks on the president and executive branch more generally. Think of the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, or the Administrative Procedure Act, both engineered by a Congress distressed by Franklin Roosevelt's high-handed unilateralism.

The old-fashioned checks and balances entailed by our system of separated powers provide the operative constraints to presidential overreach, not the more diffuse anti-unilateral political culture that Reeves and Rogowski reveal. The authors sometimes seem keen to emphasize that the force they are exploring operates independently of formal institutional checks; it is the citizenry itself which refuses to "provide a blank check for presidents to exercise power as they see fit." Politics alone may make it unwise for the president to be too cavalier with unilateral actions—but in those cases where presidents do overdraw their accounts, the public possesses no particularly effective way to discipline them, especially in the near term. But why make this an either/or choice in the first place? The political culture that fears overbearing presidents creates the appropriate incentives for other actors to counteract them.

Tyrannophobia?

The public's skepticism of the president may best be understood as a modest constraint, growing more formidable as the issues involved grow more salient. That is nevertheless a good news story—or is it?

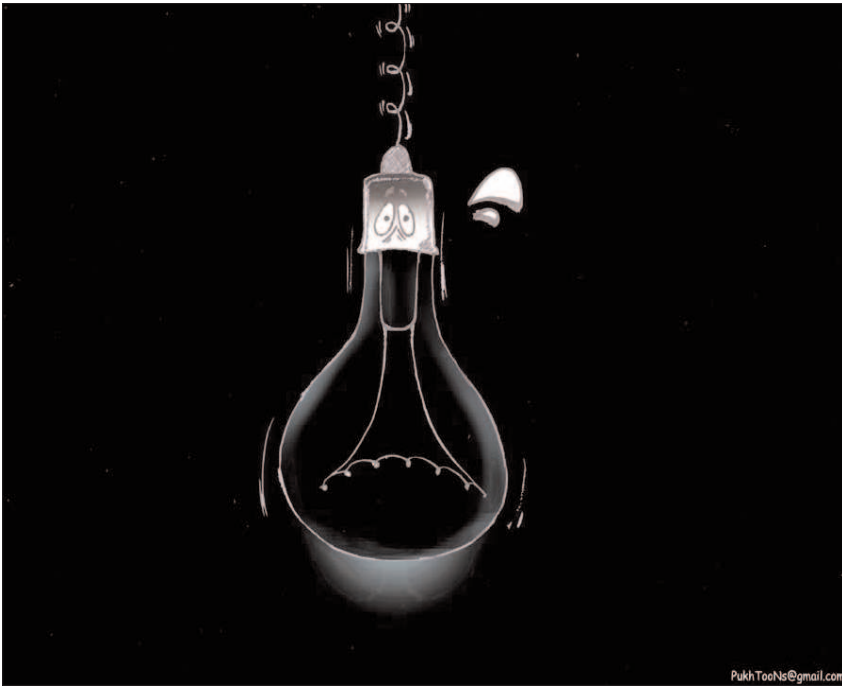
Skepticism is certainly possible. Eric Posner and Adrian Vermeule have made the case that "tyrannophobia" is an irrational and unfortunate

aspect of the American political system, "a historical relic that interferes with beneficial institutional change." In their judgment, the costs of boxing in the executive are real while the benefits are entirely imaginary.

To attempt to demonstrate this, in the late 2000s they undertook a brief study of the relationship between country-level support for "strong rulers" (as expressed in international opinion surveys) and countries' realized democratic values (including the extent of "executive dominance"). They found no correlation and concluded that any "psycho-cultural hypothesis," in which fear of tyrants creates a culture that prevents tyranny, was likely false.

Posner and Vermeule's analysis coexisted rather strangely with their larger argument about the inconvenience of American tyrannophobia for this country's governance because by the measures they employed the United States was rather less tyrannophobic than most wealthy countries. But, in any case, it seems that their non-finding was a function of a limited dataset. Reeves and Rogowski use a larger dataset that covers more countries over a longer period of time (as well as relying on a newer measure of commitment to rule of law from the 2020 Varieties of Democracy Project). They find that the more skepticism of "strong leaders" that a country's citizens express, the more reliable the nation's observance of the rule of law tends to be. They judiciously admit that the limitations of their study should make us cautious about making any strong causal inferences on this basis. Still, at the very least, they provide evidence that fear of tyrants is often a part of a well-functioning democratic culture—and it is no great leap to think it is a healthy part.

The genius of the framers was to create an institutional framework within which their young nation's tyrannophobic impulses could help keep the country's politics in balance, expressed in an institutional framework that could make good use of them without paralyzing the federal government. Their handiwork will stand us in good stead even today, with ambition counteracting ambition, if we direct our still-present fear of tyrants into the right institutional outlets.



NATO to adopt an openness policy

LAST week saw widespread media coverage of the meeting in Germany to discuss U.S. and allied arms supplies to Ukraine. Meanwhile, in Brussels, NATO generals held a series of important meetings regarding Ukraine, the future of transatlantic security, and ongoing missions in Kosovo and Iraq — but they were closed to the public, and the media didn't cover them.

This lack of transparency is bad for open debate and could lead to poor policy outcomes.

NATO's most senior generals, the Chiefs of Defence, or CHODs, meet twice a year at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. They also meet once a year in one of the 30 member states. These three meetings, in a format known as the NATO Military Committee, provide NATO's political leaders (the North Atlantic Council) with consensus-based military advice on how the alliance can best meet global security challenges. On a day-to-day basis, their work is carried out by the permanent Military Representatives at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Two military concepts set the direction for NATO's ongoing adaptation: the Concept for Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA) focuses on force employment "to deter and defend today," while the NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept is meant to offer "a vision to guide the Alliance's long-term warfare development to remain militarily strong now and in the future." The details of both documents remain classified.

On January 18 and 19, the NATO Military Committee met in Brussels to discuss the strengthening of NATO's military posture.

Over two days of sessions, NATO officials held important meetings about the alliances ongoing work in Kosovo, Iraq, and Ukraine. Member states discussed the NATO's strategy and war-fighting concepts, as well as how those had been affected by Russia's invasion. A few non-member states — including Armenia, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Moldova, Sweden, Switzerland, and Ukraine — joined for one of the conversations.

But the takeaways from those conversations are shrouded in secrecy. None of the sessions were open to the public or media, and the

Ian Davis

only details that were made publicly available were included in two NATO news briefs (available here and here), as well as the transcript of some brief opening remarks by the Chair of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Rob Bauer (a Lieutenant admiral in the Royal Netherlands Navy), and Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoana at the start of the sessions.

In addition, there was a closing joint press conference by Bauer, U.S. General Christopher Cavoli, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), and General Philippe Lavigne, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT). No details were provided on the two plenary discussions.

Apart from a brief report by Reuters, there was no significant media coverage of the Military Committee meeting. The lack of transparency, coupled with the wordy and generally unintelligible military jargon from some of the participating military leaders, makes the Military Committee one of the opaque processes within NATO.

Why is this a concern? First, it is part of a wider democratic deficit within NATO. And second, it could be disguising mistakes and inefficiencies, and certainly encourages "group think." The bottom line is that the vital habits of democracy are based on the availability of reliable sources of information, followed by deliberation and debate.

At a time when NATO is focusing back on collective territorial defense (having, for many years previously, focused on crisis management and out-of-area operations), such deliberation and debate is crucial. According to General Cavoli, NATO is now in the process of "implementing and developing a family of plans that describe 'how' the Alliance operates in peace, crisis, and war to provide for collective defense."

He added that, "National military plans will be interlinked again with Alliance plans and all thirty NATO Allies will have a harmonized planning blueprint that will incorporate National forces and capabilities into our deterrence posture for the entire European Area of Operations." Finally, he stressed that this strengthened posture represents "the most significant rein-

forcement of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War."

Clearly, the alliance's conceptual decision-making has significant policy and budgetary consequences. It needs to be open and visible, with the reasons for outcomes clearly outlined. This would enable greater accountability of the military decision-making within civilian parliaments of member states.

The lack of information on the impact of the NATO missions in Kosovo and Iraq is particularly worrying. Tensions in Kosovo have been growing in recent months, but it is unclear what, if any, changes in the KFOR mission to address these tensions were discussed by the Chiefs of Defence. Similarly, in Iraq it is unclear the extent to which that mission is adapting to the deteriorating security situation. The country is still living with the legacy of internal conflict after the U.S.-led invasion of 2003, and the transnational jihadists of Islamic State after 2014. The multiple challenges further include sectarian violence and Kurdish separatism.

Given the complex security situations in both countries, the level of disclosure is clearly inadequate. NATO should be required, at a minimum, to provide an annual report on the progress of its various missions, including overviews of recent developments and the risks and challenges that they face. In addition, the missions should be required to provide regular open briefings, as is the case with the UN Security Council missions and OSCE missions.

Decision-making in NATO has not attracted the same degree of critical attention as that of other institutions, such as the EU or the UN. There remains a transparency and accountability deficit at four levels in NATO: 1) within the closed inner workings of the alliance, including the Military Committee; 2) as a result of Cold War legacy secrecy and classification rules; 3) through poor budgetary controls and non-existent performance metrics; and (4) weak parliamentary and public oversight.

National parliaments in member states need to sharpen their scrutiny of NATO affairs, and NATO needs to adopt an information openness policy consistent with the access to information laws already in place in the alliance's 30 member countries.

How could such a huge geopolitical capital be squandered so quickly and mediocrely?

EITHER a thriller or a farce with the supply of German tanks to Ukraine continues to develop.

As you know, the German chancellor unexpectedly showed character and refused to provide German Leopards to Kiev, which caused a serious squabble at the Friday NATO summit at the Ramstein airbase, after which the Western media began to persuade Olaf Scholz in every way.

However, further events took an even more interesting turn. On Sunday, German Foreign Minister Annalena Berbock said that Berlin is ready to respond positively to requests from third countries to supply Ukraine with German-made tanks, if such requests are received. It is worth recalling that Burbock is a representative of the "greens" - stubborn Atlanticists and the most uncomplaining vassals of the United States among the political forces of Germany.

Berlin's attempt to smooth over the scandal somewhat caused the most boorish and insulting response of the Poles performed by both the Prime

Minister, the Foreign Ministry, and the Office of the President - and, frankly, this looks absolutely natural. And even fair.

The times of sitting on two chairs are finally over, and Germany, now trying to stuff toothpaste back into a tube, is at the moment a frankly pitiful sight and at the same time a very inst-ructive lesson for the whole world - it was necessary to manage to lose a huge potential literally in a year, over which the country worked for many decades.

This is all the more striking since the German elites (that part of them that is oriented towards the country's national interests) have demonstrated strategic insight and well-thought-out policy all this time. As a result of their work, Germany has become the economic powerhouse and geopolitical leader of Europe. Plus, they skillfully negotiated preferences and benefits from the States, at the same time placing the burden of military spending on the defense of the Old World on Washington.

The question arises: how could such a huge geopolitical capital be squandered so quickly and mediocrely?

Irina Alksnis

No doubt part of the answer is to be found in Germany's essentially occupied status. Washington managed to nurture and keep under control a part of the German ruling elites, who act as the conductors of their will - these are some political parties, and key media, and part of the business. In addition, it seems that the Americans managed, if not to break, then to significantly suppress the German spirit. Hence the extreme caution of Berlin in actions with a constant eye on the overseas overlord.

However, it was not this at all that was fatal for Germany, but the revealed deep Russophobia of its elites, including that part of it that we used to consider, if not friendly to us, then as pragmatic as possible and aware of all the benefits of cooperation with Russia. It seems that they did not forgive us either the victory in World War II, or the capture of Berlin, or the desire for an equal partnership.

After all, the current geopolitical and economic impasse into which the FRG has driven itself arose

solely because almost a year ago all its elites, both pro-Atlantic and nationally oriented, merged into a fierce anti-Russian unity. That is, even among representatives of the industrial sector, the seemingly real chance to finally crush Russia beat off the sense of self-preservation, and they enthusiastically cut down the branches under them. Exceptions like Gerhard Schroeder, who tried to get through to the minds of his colleagues, can be counted on the fingers.

Now we are witnessing the return of Berlin's balanced and sensible policy, which it has adhered to since 2014: the Atlanticists have been somewhat squeezed, the authorities are trying to maneuver and play their own foreign policy game, working primarily in the interests of the country. The only problem is that it's too late.

Sometimes you can hear opinions that the Germans will still show Kuz'kin's mother to everyone, outplay the Americans, put the presumptuous Poles in their place, again command Europe and generally restore full-fledged sovereignty. They say that the last year was an inconspic-

uous fluctuation, from which Berlin will come to its senses - it has almost come to its senses - and everything will be as before.

But in this very year, Germany lost the most important source that fueled both its development and ambitions: cooperation with Russia. In some ways - like the destruction of the Nord Streams - she was "helped", but basically she did everything herself, and, so to speak, with German quality.

And that's all. Now you can demonstrate your great power and desire to defend national interests as much as you like. This does not change the reality in which, at a critical moment in world history, Germany geopolitically turned into a doormat on which all and sundry wipe their feet, and economically it is doomed to slaughter in the name of American interests. After all, the "fattest bull" among the vassals of Washington. Berlin simply no longer has the resources - Russian resources - to resist this scenario. So the intrigue around the Leopard tanks lies solely in how quickly the Germans will be broken.

‘Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness,’

(Continued from Page 6)

achieve whatever measure of happiness they can.

Montesquieu, one of the Founders' favorite thinkers, explains the need for a republic to give liberty in L'Esprit des lois when he discusses the relationship between a republic's size and its ability to apprehend what is the common good, arguing that larger republics apprehend that good more poorly than smaller ones because of the diversity of their population. The pseudonymous Founder Cato hit this concern squarely on its head when writing that "government, to an

American, is the science of his political safety," meaning that government exists to protect an individual's liberty from predation, including from the government, while supporting those private institutions that allow them to flourish.

Instead of common good by diktat, early Americans believed that a minimalist set of laws focused on ensuring a basic set of rights within society would allow civil society to order itself into appropriately arranged groups and thereby achieve whatever measure of good it could. They predicated this plan upon the people's ability to exercise self-

restraint in following the law and wisdom in drafting it and dedication to the principle of self-government (both of the literal self and community), which was the challenge (still highly controversial as the Common Gooders demonstrate) of popular sovereignty. The coordinated functioning of this ideal is ordered liberty.

How do we know the above story is correct? Beyond history and primary-source indicators, the Republic's four causes demonstrate it. The government is a restrained body, with governing institutions possessing increased authority, not as one ascends the federal

system, with most power concentrated in the fewest hands, but as one goes down to the lowest levels. That is the doctrine of delegated powers where states, the smallest sovereign unit, are left to manage their individual common goods. This structure is opposite to what we would expect from a government oriented toward the Common Good, which should be strong to support those policies. One that merely orders liberty, however, should be weak so as not to overwhelm its citizens.

The fact that the Constitution speaks of limitations and is short, separates rather than concentrates powers;

makes legislation difficult and forces compromise; reinforces federalism; restricts the power of judges from making decisions through recognizing juries; forces the Executive to consult the Senate and approves only the House to create budgets, indicates weakness rather than strength. If the state were a crusading agent of goodness, this is the opposite structure one would create. If one wished to create a power that could only draft broad laws, would allow citizens to resolve conflicts on their own, and only enact decisions after consensus, it is ideal. That ideal is ordered liberty.

The fact that the people ratified the Constitution, as indicated by the Preamble; elect their representatives through its power; can change the Constitution; there aren't distinctions in power or dignity among the citizenry; there aren't qualifications for office based on virtue or even knowledge; the poorest or the richest, the most vile or the most virtuous, remain eligible for office, are proofs that the A-

merican government isn't itself a steward of the good but a protector of the interests of the people to achieve (or not) that good for themselves, which is ordered liberty.

That all of these things added up, when exercised by a virtuous citizenry, to the common good, despite none aiming directly at it. This is the final proof that our order's end, its final cause, isn't that good itself, but the

Important Notice

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PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 612 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 612.06 points, a positive change of 1.59 percent, closing at 39,055.65 against 38,443.59 points the previous day.

A total of 179,760,927 shares were traded during the day as compared to 81,287,333 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 6.368 billion against Rs 2.809 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 326 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 225 of them recorded gains and 74 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 27 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Pak Petroleum with 13,159,970

shares at Rs 78.15 per share, Maple Leaf with 12,487,144 shares at Rs 20.50 per share, and WorldCall Telecom with 11,869,660 shares at Rs 1.14 per share.

Pak Services witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 146.67 per share price, closing at Rs 2,130.00, whereas the runner-up was Reliance Cotton with a Rs 48.75 rise in its per share price to Rs 698.75.

Sapphire Tex witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 82.00 per share closing at Rs 1,018.00, followed by Wah-Noble with Rs.11.45 declines to close at Rs147.50.

Rupee extends losses against dollar

The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee depreciated by 25 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs 230.40 against the

previous day's closing of Rs 230.15.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 237.75 and Rs 240.25 respectively.

The price of the euro decreased by 17 paisa and closed at Rs 251.01 against the previous day's closing of Rs 251.18, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen gained one paisa to close at Rs 1.77, whereas an increase of 30 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs 285.95 as compared to its last closing of Rs 285.65.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal increased by 06 paisa and 08 paisa to close at Rs 62.72 and Rs 61.36 respectively.

Gold prices up by Rs 1,150 to Rs 189,300 per tola

The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed an increase of Rs 1,150 on Tuesday and was traded at Rs189,300 against sale at Rs188,150 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 986 to Rs 162,294 against Rs161,308, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat increased to Rs148,770 from Rs147,866, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of one tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs 2,100 and Rs 1,800.41 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$14 to US\$ 1,938 as compared to its sale at US\$1,924 on the last trading day, the association reported.



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing second hand clothes at Karachi Company.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, MSC Madhu B, MSC Iris, Lisa, Greener VI, Clearocean Mesquite and Al-Maha carrying Containers, Palm oil, Mogas and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, FOTCO Oil Terminal and SSGC LPG Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile four more ships, GSL Ningbo, Hafnia Excelsior, AAI Prelude and White Purl carrying Containers, Mogas, Wheat and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hour.

A total of 11 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them 04 ships, MSC Iris, Lisa, Elpida GR and Al-Areesh left the Port on Tuesday morning, while 02 more ships, MSC Madhu B and Al-Maha are expected to sail on today in the afternoon.

A Cargo volume of 149,701 tonnes, comprising 110,239 tonnes imports cargo and 39,462 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 4,713 Containers (2,480 TEUs Imports and 2,233 TEUs export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are 19 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, 02 ships, Nordtigris and GSL Ningbo & another ship 'Maersk Columbus' carrying Steel coil and Containers are expected to take berths at MW-2 and QICT here on Tuesday.

Caretaker CM congratulated

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Tuesday congratulated Mohsin Raza Naqvi on his appointment as caretaker chief minister of Punjab. LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zafar Mahmood and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt said, in a media statement here, that the caretaker chief minister would design a comprehensive strategy with the consultation of the business community to flourish trade and economic activities in Punjab.

They said that Mohsin Naqvi was a renowned journalist having vast experience and grass-root information to promote exports of Pakistan. The LCCI office-bearers expressed optimism that Naqvi would enhance liaison with the business community.

They said the caretaker chief minister had a track record of great service for the economic sector of Pakistan and familiar with trade and industry and had comprehensive understanding of the issues encountered by different sectors of the commerce & industry for finding appropriate solutions.

Tentative target of Rs1,819b agri- loans set for FY 2023-24: Jameel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmed on Tuesday said the tentative target of agricultural loans was likely to be set at Rs 1,819 billion in the coming financial year 2023-24.

He said this while addressing the launching ceremony of 'Youth Business and Agri-loans scheme', here, adding in the ongoing financial year 2022-23, the target of agricultural loans was set at Rs 1,419 billion.

The governor said that 64 percent of the total population in the country consisted of young people aged up to 30 years.

The governor SBP expressed his determination to make the country's youth "economically independent".

Jameel Ahmed said that the government and the State Bank had designed a program for the youth loan scheme, which included the special efforts of Federal Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar.

He said that transparency and easy processing were an important part of this program so that more and more people could benefit from it.

He said that under this scheme, a target of Rs 30 billion had been set for loans in Small and Medium

Enterprises (SMEs) and the agriculture sector.

The governor SBP said the banks had to fulfill the target of this scheme by June 30 this year.

He said that till now 14,600 applications had been received through this scheme in which there was a demand for loans worth Rs 17 billion.

Jameel Ahmed said that a loan of at least Rs 500,000 would be obtained without any pre-condition of furnishing guarantee.

The governor said that in this regard, instructions had been issued to provide timely loans to women for their "economic empowerment".

'Live in Concert' latest music platform launched

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: BBPR kicked off the New Year with its latest music platform, Live in Concert with the heartthrob Hasan Raheem. The event was hosted at District 19 and was nothing short of a star-studded event. The event was a trip into the world from the perspective of Hasan Raheem. Hasan Raheem launched his latest album. This song's music video was also premiered during the launch. The underlying notion and creative spun came from the concept that all creativity originates from the bathroom!

recorded in Nautanki is for you to interpret. I hope that they remind you of love stories of your own. How does the concept of change relate to how we label love? We must be aware of our feelings and senses in order to truly offer our minds to one another. Many people and things move me. Therefore, I continue to create music."

'Live In Concert', a new and dynamic platform was launched by BBPR as an initiative to showcase phenomenal artists' experiences with the world with the sensational Hasan Raheem being the first spotlight talent. BBPR is the largest corporate PR agency in Pakistan. They celebrated their 15 years which was commemorated through the launch of this event as well as the attendance of Sanam Saeed, Mohib Mirza and Patangeer.

"We, as a nation, have immense talent and a long-standing connection with music. BBPR as a company wants to acknowledge these musicians, young and old, by promoting them and giving them a platform where they can showcase their talent to the rest of the world!" Expressed Hasan Rizvi regarding his new platform.

Music is a universal language and concerts have changed the face of the live music industry and become an essential source of revenue for the music business. Pakistan lacks premises and platforms that can encourage and help artists launch their music albums which gave birth to this concept. "Live in Concert with Hasan Raheem" is just the beginning and many more will follow, building a path for the rest to follow and shine through in the future.

PCJCCI celebrates Chinese new year

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) on Monday arranged an exclusive new year celebration ceremony for felicitation of Chinese businessmen, entrepreneurs and investors associated with the platform of the joint chamber.

Two friendly nations. He said that the decision of Pakistan to join hands with China for the remarkable projects such as CPEC, One Belt-One Road, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS for building economic and political linkages with neighbors and Asian countries had truly been commendable.

He added that this year the PCJCCI had taken special initiatives to bring investment from China in the eight potential industrial sectors, including furniture, handicrafts, textiles, fertilizer, cement, glasswork, energy and pharmaceuticals.

While expressing his goodwill to the Chinese friends, Hamza Khalid said that he was confident that the strong bond of Pakistan and China would set a prolific example before the world. He added that the joint efforts of Pakistan and China for prosperity of both nations had really set a good precedent.

Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General said that Chinese would make more contributions to a better Pakistan by keeping in view friendly traits between the two friends. The Chinese new year celebration was followed by cake cutting and heartfelt blessings were delivered to the Chinese people from the members of the PCJCCI.

Mobile phone industry to get boost under CPEC: Murtaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Industry and Production, Makhdoom Murtaza Mahmud on Tuesday said that the mobile phone manufacturing industry would flourish more under the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He said that the country was passing through a hard time, but it was everyone's responsibility, including politicians, the private sector and stakeholders to work together, adding that mobile manufacturing was a new industry, therefore, they were facing difficulties.

He was addressing a summit titled "Mobile Device Manufacturing" organised by the Engineering Development Board (EDB) and Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturing Association

(PMPMA).

Mahmud said that by improving the mobile industry, the country's needs could be fulfilled from domestic production.

He said that the devaluation of the rupee had reduced labour costs and added that the export could be increased by enhancing mobile manufacturing.

He said that Pakistan will come out of these situations in the short term, but "we have to make a long-term policy".

Meanwhile, Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Production Imdadullah Bosal highlighted that in 2020, a policy was launched to increase the production and half the journey had been completed while half was left.

He said, "We need to upgrade technology, boost productivity to increase labour market, and the poli-

cies that work in Vietnam and Malaysia may not work here."

Senior GM Policy Engineering Development Board Asim Ayaz said that friendly policies had been introduced for the mobile phone industry.

He said that local production of mobiles in Pakistan was "continuously increasing", except for one company, all major brands of mobiles were made in Pakistan.

Around US\$ 2.6 billion had been invested in the local mobile manufacturing industry in the country, Ayaz highlighted.

Vice Chairman Mobile Manufacturing Association Muzzaffar Piracha said that if the government provides enabling environment for mobile manufacturers, the exports in the industry could "cross the \$14 billion mark within three years".

He said that the industry could bring Pakistan out of deficit as the government is able to meet 95% of Pakistan's local mobile demand in two years. However, he said the mobile manufacturers want support from the government to enhance the export.

Piracha said that due to government policy, all mobiles were now being manufactured in Pakistan. "We have created 40,000 employment opportunities, and more than 20,000 retailers are associated with this business."

Vice President of Mobile Manufacturing Association Aamir Aallwala underlined that people "want to invest" in the mobile industry but they need continuity of policies.

He said the Chinese industry was willing to come to Pakistan for local parts manufacturing.

NCHR launches campaign for women property rights



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Even after the amendment of the Prevention of Anti Women Practices Act in 2011, which gives women equal rights in inheriting property, over 80 per cent of women report not receiving their legal share in inheritance. To raise voice against this injustice, the NCHR among other forms of legal redress, including writing to Federal Ombudsman, has also joined a social media campaign with LAS.

The campaign highlights the case of Tahira Sultana, 91-year-old widow who has

been waiting for the implementation of Supreme Court orders regarding her property share since last 22 years. She has now reached out to the Commission to tell her story to the world.

"I have no more stamina and strength in me but God willing I still hope that someone will come and end my story of woe," the campaign quotes Tahira Sultana in one of the Tweets shared through the NCHR Twitter handle.

The campaign also shares her photographs of today, comparing that with the photographs of the age when she started her struggle. The photographs cap-

ture a widow's 53 years journey for justice and access to rightful share in her deceased husband's property.

Tahira's husband Major S.S Rashidul Hamid passed away on October 16, 1964 leaving behind a widow Tahira Sultan and three children -all children were minor at the time of his death.

Tahira's father tried to negotiate for her share in the inheritance but talks remained unsuccessful.

After that, Tahira Sultana went to court and got decisions in her favor. Till now, even with two Supreme Court Judgments in her favor, the lack of implementation has denied Tahira her inheritance.

"I started this journey in strength and youth at 33, believing that my battle for haq would eventually be victorious. One step at a time, I attempted to secure financial stability through my due share in my husband's property, yet the very state that my husband served his life for, failed my children and his widow," mentions the letter

written by the widow to the Commission. The letter also makes part of the NCHR social media campaign.

"I have lost my daughter who had a disability as I could not provide for her medical needs, I had lost the little money I had, in litigation and beyond everything I have lost my faith and pride in Pakistan's ability to deliver justice," says the letter.

On September 26, 2022, she lodged a campaign before the Ombudsperson, Punjab, under Section 7 of the Punjab Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act 2021, for the implementation of Supreme Court orders. The next hearing regarding the plaintiffs right to their inheritance is scheduled for January 26, 2023.

The story of Tahira Sultana highlights the fact claiming property rights through court is a hard journey for a woman but for a widow, the journey is much tougher. The campaign also pays tribute to Tahira for keep fighting for her rights and not giving up.

Stocks mixed as traders balance recession risk, China reopening

LONDON (AFP/APP): Stock markets traded mixed Tuesday as investors weighed the chances of a global recession this year.

With China's economy reopening from strict lockdowns, coupled with easing energy prices, there is hope that a severe downturn can be averted even if inflation remains stubbornly high and interest rates look set to keep on rising, albeit at a slower pace.

The eurozone economy grew in January for the first time in six months, a closely watched survey showed Tuesday, raising hopes that Europe will avoid a recession this winter.

The S&P Global Flash Eurozone purchasing managers' index (PMI) rose to 50.2 in January from 49.3 in December. A figure

above 50 indicates growth.

At the same time, heavy fallout from lingering high energy costs was further evidenced Tuesday with data showing UK government debt ballooning further in December as it subsidises gas and electricity bills for households and businesses.

"Lower energy prices are helping consumer confidence rebound," noted Susannah Streeter, senior investment and markets analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown.

"It's another positive sign for companies fearing the effects of well-flagged interest rate rises, indicating that consumers are showing resilience, but they are still likely to stay cautious."

Tokyo stocks led gains

in another day thinned by the Lunar New Year break, with sentiment boosted once more by a surge Monday on Wall Street.

Tech firms provided the support in New York as traders gear up for the release of earnings from big-ticket firms including Microsoft and Intel.

Hopes that the Federal Reserve will slow down its pace of interest rate hikes have also given investors optimism that the US economy could avert a recession, or at least suffer only a mild contraction. The gains come after markets suffered a wobble last week on worries about a downturn caused by a series of interest rate hikes last year aimed at bringing inflation down from decades high.

While the year has start-

ed on a positive note, BlackRock Investment Institute warned that markets were "vulnerable to negative surprises -- and unprepared for recession".

Oil prices were barely moved after jumping last week to their highest point since November, on demand hopes fuelled by China's reopening. "Crude prices are wavering as the dollar stabilises and over-exhaustion from China reopening headlines," said Edward Moya, analyst at OANDA trading group.

"This week will learn a lot about the crude demand outlook after we hear earnings from the airlines and Chevron. Oil should be stuck in wait-and-see mode until we learn more about the health and outlook of the US economy."

SECP holds premier ESG symposium

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) held a premier environmental, social, and governance (ESG) symposium to facilitate sustainable investment.

The SECP in collaboration with UN Women held a premier ESG symposium to keep the momentum of discussion on ESG practices and facilitate sustainable investment, said a press release issued here

on Tuesday.

The symposium was a full-day event attracting dynamic representation from the private sector presenting their success stories, high-level plenary discussions with key institutions, and working session with key stakeholders providing aspirations and pledges for strengthening the ESG ecosystem.

Ms. Musarat Jabeen, the executive director said in

her opening remarks that the ESG considerations are gaining traction as investors and companies are seeking long-term value and alignment with sustainability and climate-related objectives.

Ms. Sharmela Rasool, Country Representative UN Women, Pakistan emphasized the significance of Women's Economic Empowerment Principles leading to inclusive economic

growth and the need for benchmarking best practices.

Ms. Sadia Khan, Commissioner of SECP gave a detailed technical presentation on the evolution of the concept of sustainability, key initiatives of SECP, and feedback on the ESG roadmap by SECP. Representation from companies of diverse sectors highlighted their journey in adapting ESG best practices.



In brief

PCB writes to 27 leading departments

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board has formally written to 27 leading departments, seeking their interest in participating in the PCB Domestic Cricket Season 2023-24, which will start in August. The letters were dispatched to the departments on behalf of Mr Najam Sethi, Chair of the PCB Management Committee, in accordance with the PCB Constitution 2014 and on the specific instructions of PCB's Patron, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is keen to see return of the department to play their integral role in the growth and development of Pakistan cricket. In the letters, the PCB has not only invited the departments to confirm their participation in the upcoming season at their earliest convenience that can help them prepare the season's calendar, but have also encouraged to set up strong cricket sides, assuring them maximum coverage and publicity through the traditional and new media. Some of the prominent departments, who have been sent letters for participation in the PCB Domestic Season 2023, include: Ghani Glass, Income Tax, K-Electric, Karachi Port Trust, Khan Research Laboratory, National Bank of Pakistan, Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Omar Associates, Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan International Airlines, Port Qasim Authority, Pakistan Television Corporation, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), Pakistan Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited (TZBL).

Basketball Championship

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inter-departmental National Basketball Championship would start on January 27 at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex. Talking to APP, Associate Secretary Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBFF) Ouj-e-Zahoor said that all arrangements have been finalized to hold the five-day championship. He said that seven teams including defending champion Pakistan Army, Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF), Railways, Navy, Pakistan Air Force, Wapda, and Police teams would participate in the tournament. Ouj-e-Zahoor said that the inaugural match of the championship would be played between the defending champion Pakistan Army and Navy. The semi-finals are to be played on January 30 while finals would be played on January 31, he added.

Rohit, Gill power India

INDORE (Agencies): Skipper Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill hit attacking centuries to help India sweep the one-day international series against New Zealand with a 90-run victory in the third match on Tuesday. Rohit (101) and Gill (112) put on 212 for the opening wicket in Indore to guide the hosts to 385-9 after being invited to bat first in Indore. In reply, Devon Conway's 138 was in vain as India bowled out New Zealand for 295 in 41.2 overs for their second successive 3-0 white-wash and go top of the ODI rankings. Rohit, who recorded his first ODI century since January 2020, and Gill stood out in the highest opening partnership by any team against the Kiwis in the 50-over format, surpassing the 201-run stand of Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir in 2009.



MELBOURNE: Victoria Azarenka of Belarus waves after defeating Jessica Pegula of the U.S. in their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship.

Babar Azam gets a place in ICC's Test XI of the Year 2022

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan skipper Babar Azam has been included in the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Test team of the Year 2022 for his sterling performances in the calendar year.

This is the first time that the Pakistani batting maestro has made it to the ICC Test XI of the Year, said a statement of the International Cricket Council (ICC) here on Tuesday. He is the only Pakistani player to make it to the XI this year.

Pakistan skipper scored 1184 runs at an average of 69.94 in the nine matches he played in the year. Babar also scored four centuries, one each against the four opponents he faced, in 2022.

Babar scored a total of 390 runs in the long-awaited home series against Australia. The run machine did not stop against England too and amassed 348 runs when England visited later in the year.

Babar's gritty 196 against the Aussies in Karachi in March was, and still is, his highest individual score in Tests.

The Pakistan skipper was also the only Pakistani player to make it to the ICC's ODI Team of the Year for 2022 and was named the captain of the side for leading Pakistan to 3 series wins in 2022.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), on the announcement, shared a message on Twitter stating, "Babar Azam has been selected in the ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year for the fourth

time since 2017 (second time as captain) and first time in the ICC Men's Test Team of the Year."

The year's top XI includes four Aussies, three Englishmen, one West Indian, South African, Indian and Pakistani each. Here are all the 11 players who made the selection for the ICC's Men's Test XI of the year.

The ICC team includes Usman Khawaja (Australia), Kraigg Brathwaite (West Indies), Marnus Labuschagne (Australia), Babar Azam (Pakistan), Jonny Bairstow (England), Ben Stokes (England), Rishabh Pant (India), Pat Cummins (Australia), Kagiso Rabada (South Africa), Nathan Lyon (Australia), and James Anderson (England).

Australia beat Pakistan by eight wickets in the first T20I

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia women beat Pakistan women by eight wickets to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match T20I series at the North Sydney Oval in Sydney on Tuesday afternoon.

Chasing 119 to win, the home side achieved the target in the 14th over with eight wickets in hand. Opening batter Ellyse Perry top-scored for her side with an unbeaten 57 off 40 balls, hitting seven fours and one six. Ashleigh Gardner coming to bat at number four returned undefeated on 30 off 19 balls, which included three fours and one six. The pair added an unbroken 64 runs for the third wicket.

For the visiting team spinners Nida Dar and Sadia Iqbal bagged a wicket each. Earlier, after opting to bat first, Pakistan were bowled out for 118 on the final ball of the 20th over. Opening pair of Javeria Khan and Muneeba Ali provided a 27-run start before Muneeba (eight, 12b, 1x4) was bowled by Perry on the second ball of the fifth over.

Captain Bismah Maroof (one off two) was caught behind playing on the leg side off Megan Schutt in the final over of the batting powerplay. Sadaf Shamas making her T20I debut couldn't make it a memorable one as she returned back to the hut for naught in the same over.

Experienced Javeria playing her 109th T20I match completed her 2,000 T20I runs but perished for 16 in the seventh over of the innings with Pakistan struggling at 32 for four. Nida Dar (eight off nine, 1x4) was next to go with leg-spinner Alana King taking a brilliant one handed return catch off her own bowling as Pakistan were five down with 57 runs on the board in the 11th over.

That Pakistan managed to score 118 – their second highest total against Australia in Australia was largely due to Omaira Sohail (30, 36b, 2x4) and Ayesha Naseem (24, 20b, 1x4, 3x6). The pair knitted a 37-run partnership for the sixth wicket. For Australia, Schutt took her maiden five-wicket haul in the T20Is, with match figures of 4-1-15-5.

Pakistan's ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup journey ends with loss to New Zealand

POTCHEFSTROOM (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Women's U19 team bowed out of ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup with a defeat to New Zealand in a Super Six stage Group-2 clash here on Tuesday.

Set a daunting target of 179, Pakistan finished with 75-7 in their 20 overs – 103 runs short of New Zealand's first-innings total. The colossal win for New Zealand confirmed their spot in the semi-finals as they continued their unbeaten run in the tournament.

Pakistan's chase was beset by a top-order collapse that left them reeling at 17-4 by the end of the Powerplay. Openers Shawaal Zulfiqar and in-form Eymen Fatima were both dismissed for ducks while Warda Yousaf lost her wicket from a miscommunication with her skipper Syeda Aroob Shah resulting in a run out. Aroob was the fourth batter to fall when a leading edge induced by Natasha Codyre was pounced by the fielder at mid-off.

Laiba Nasir was soon run out with half the side out for 19 before Areesha

Noor and Aliza Khan stitched a partnership of 32 runs for the sixth wicket. Pakistan managed to score a total of only four boundaries over the course of their innings with top-scorer Areesha (24) striking two fours while Aroob and Anoosha Nasir smacked a boundary apiece.

In the bowling front, Anoosha claimed three wickets for 32 runs, extending her tally of wickets in the tournament to ten in five games – leading the charts at the moment. She broke the brisk opening stand between Emma McLeod (32) and Anna Browning (31), who added 47 runs in 29 balls and later snaffled the wickets of Georgia Plimmer (53) and Paige Loggenberg (0) in the final over of the innings.

Skipper Aroob also bowled a sharp spell, giving away just 22 runs in her four overs and outfoxing Tash Wakelin (8) with a googly that rattled the stumps.

In contrast to Pakistan's inability to hit boundaries later in the game, New Zealand's aggressive stroke-play yielded a total of 19

fours and two sixes as they raced to 178-7. Plimmer was the standout batter for her side as she continued the rapid start from the openers by scoring a 38-ball 53 studded with five fours.

New Zealand and England are the two teams in the Super Six Group-2 advancing into the semi-finals while the remaining two spots from Group-1 will be decided tomorrow.

Pakistan's campaign in the inaugural ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup saw them put up good performances to clinch wins against Rwanda, Zimbabwe and Ireland, whereas they faced defeats against England and New Zealand.

Scores in Brief:
New Zealand Women's U19 178-7, 20 overs (Georgia Plimmer 53, Emma McLeod 32, Anna Browning 31; Anoosha Nasir 3-32, Mahnoor Aftab 2-46)

Pakistan Women's U19 75-7, 20 overs (Areesha Noor 24; Natasha Codyre 2-14)

Player of the match – Georgia Plimmer (New Zealand)



POTCHEFSTROOM: Isabella Gaze of New Zealand celebrates the wicket of Laiba Nasir of Pakistan during the ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup.

3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament: two matches decided

LAHORE (APP): Remington Pharma and Diamond Paints won the opening day matches of the 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament sponsored by Lahore Smart City here at the Jinnah Polo Fields on Tuesday.

The first match of the day proved a one-sided affair, where Remington Pharma outclassed BN Polo by 10-27. Hamza Mawaz Khan played the hero's role in his team's triumph with a phenomenal contribution of eight excellent goals while Basel Faisal Khokhar and Ahmad Bilal Riaz struck one goal each. From BN Polo, which had a half goal handicap advantage, Baber Naseem and Haider Naseem converted one goal each.

Remington Pharma were off to a flying start as they

banged in a brace to gain 2-0 lead but BN Polo struck one to reduce it to 2-1 but in the dying moments of the first chukker, Remington Pharma converted one more to stretch their lead to 3-1. The second and third chukker was fully dominated by Remington Pharma as they slammed in two and three goals respectively in both the chukkers. The last chukker saw both the sides scoring one goal each with Remington Pharma emerging as winners by 10-27.

John Fisher and Ahmad Khan officiated the match as field umpires.

The second encounter proved a thrilling one as Diamond Paints defeated Inara Polo/Black Horse Paints by a narrow margin of 4-3. Nico Roberts was the hero of the day from the winning team as he thrashed

in three tremendous goals while the remaining one came from Bilal Hayat Noon. From Inara Polo/Black Horse Paints, Hissam Ali Hyder smashed in all the three goals.

Inara Polo/Black Horse Paints started the match well by firing in a field goal and converted one more in the beginning of the third chukker as no goal was scored in the second chukker. Diamond Paints then made their presence felt and dominated the third chukker with three back-to-back goals to gain a slight 3-2 lead. The decisive fourth chukker saw both the teams scoring one goal apiece, thus Diamond Paints emerging as winners with a close margin of 4-3. John Fisher and Raja Jalal Arslan supervised the match as field umpires.

Australian Open: Victoria Azarenka beats Jessica Pegula, Elena Rybakina knocks out Jelena Ostapenko

MELBOURNE (Agencies): Victoria Azarenka continued her quest for a third Australian Open title – a decade on from her last – by knocking American third seed Jessica Pegula out in the quarter-finals.

The 33-year-old Belarusian, seeded 24th, made a confident start and used the momentum to win 6-4 6-1. Pegula was the highest seed left but must wait for a first Slam semi-final.

Azarenka faces Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina in the last four after the Kazakh beat Jelena Ostapenko 6-2 6-4. Rybakina, 23, fired 11 aces and 24 winners as she claimed a dominant victory over Latvia's 17th seed Ostapenko. The Kazakh, who is seeded 22nd, wrapped up victory in one hour and 19 minutes following a lengthy rain delay on Rod Laver Arena.

"I'm super happy to be in the semi-finals for the first time," said Rybakina, the youngest player left in the women's draw. "Of course I was nervous, especially in the last game. I'm super happy I managed the

emotions and I played really well today."

Azarenka 'creating new memories' by not looking back

Having won back-to-back titles in 2012 and 2013, Azarenka is a player who thrives in Melbourne and showed it once again as she dismantled a below-par Pegula. The former world number one was back in the quarter-finals for the first time since she became a mother – having given birth to son Leo in 2016 – and reached the last four for the first time since her last triumph.

Despite her rich pedigree at Melbourne Park, Azarenka says she does not "really look back and think about" what she has achieved. Instead she prefers to "create new memories" and applying this forward-thinking approach before the new season is paying dividends. "I felt last year my tennis wasn't bad but I was not mentally ready and played with fear and anxiety. It was difficult to play brave," she said.

"I worked a lot on my mindset in the off-season, challenging

myself on things I wouldn't really do before. "When you have achieved great success, you can become conservative and and hesitant to try new things."

"I tried new things, put my head down and worked hard." An aggressive start full of clean hitting enabled Azarenka to move into a 3-0 lead and, after being unable to convert four set points and losing serve for 5-4, she broke again to clinch the opening set.

The second set was even more one-sided. Azarenka, playing at a consistently high level reminiscent of her best, broke three times and conceded just 13 points as a despondent Pegula fell at the quarter-final stage of a major for the fifth time.

"I don't think I was thinking about that [quarter-final record] at all," said 28-year-old Pegula. "Once you're out there it's another match and you're trying to win. Losing sucks but I don't think that had an effect on me."

Stefanos Tsitsipas and Karen Khachanov to meet in semi-finals: Stefanos Tsitsipas defeated Jiri Lehecka in straight

sets to set up an Australian Open semi-final with Karen Khachanov.

Greek third seed Tsitsipas reached his fourth Melbourne semi-final in five years with a 6-3 7-6 (7-2) 6-4 win. Lehecka, of the Czech Republic, had been one of the surprise pack-ages of the tournament having beaten two top-12 seeds to make the quarter-finals. The 21-year-old had previously never won a Grand Slam match.

Earlier on day nine, Russian Khachanov progressed to the final four of the Australia major for the first time when his quarter-final opponent Sebastian Korda was forced to retire with a wrist injury with the score at 7-6 (7-5) 6-3 3-0. The other semi-final will be decided on Wednesday, when Ben Shelton and Tommy Paul contest an all-American quarter-final before nine-time champion Novak Djokovic faces Russian Andrey Rublev.

'A fair dinkum performance' Battling wins over 11th seed Cameron Norrie and sixth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime had catapulted Lehecka into the spot-

light over the past week, but the world number 71 looked nervy in the opening exchanges with Tsitsipas.

Tsitsipas, ranked fourth in the world, dominated the first set after breaking his opponent's serve early on but was pushed hard by Lehecka throughout the second. Forced into a tie-break, Tsitsipas took control, racing into a 4-0 lead before comfortably seeing it out.

The 24-year-old faced further challenges in the third set when he saved three successive break points at 3-3, before making his move on Lehecka's serve at 5-4 down to wrap up the win on his first match point. "It was a fair dinkum kind of performance," said Tsitsipas, who added he felt like the Australian Open was his home Grand Slam.

"It felt different this time than any other match, the most important thing is that I found a solution. "It was a very difficult three-setter, one of the most difficult so far in the tournament."

"Jiri has had a very good tournament, I wish him the best

for the future because he's a great player."

Tsitsipas has never lost to semi-final opponent Khachanov in five meetings, and should he go all the way at the Australian Open and win a first Grand Slam title, he would become world number one.

"Not the way you want to finish"

In Tuesday's earlier quarter-final, American Korda was growing into the match when he began to struggle with his right wrist, taking a medical timeout midway through the second set. Visibly disappointed, he lost seven straight games on his return before retiring, walking over to shake Khachanov's hand.

Korda, the son of 1998 champion Petr, then left the stadium to a standing ovation.

"Obviously it's not the way you want to finish the match," Khachanov said.

"Until a certain point it was very competitive. Sebastian beat one of my friends, Daniil [Medvedev] in three sets and [Hubert] Hurkacz in five. He's playing great tennis."



In brief

Four drug dealers arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police arrested four alleged illegal arm holders, drug dealers and recovered arms, ammunition from their possession during a crackdown here on Tuesday, said police spokesman. According to details, the Pirwadi Police recovered a 30 bore pistol from Abdul Rahman and recovered 600 grams of hashish from Shahab. Similarly, the Chontra Police held Wasim and recovered a 30 bore pistol from his possession. Meanwhile, the Morgah Police recovered 160 grams of hashish from Fahad. Police have registered separate cases against the accused arrested and started further investigation. SSP Operations appreciated the performance of police teams adding that strict action will be continued against such elements. Also, the Rawalpindi police arrested 39 professional beggars during crackdown. According to the police spokesman, the professional beggars were held from different areas of the city.

MNC to launch PMS system

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Narcotics Control (MNC) to launch the automated Precursor Management System (PMS) for registering and applying 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)' for importing controlled precursor chemicals by the industry on 25 January (Wednesday). Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shazain Bugti will be the chief guest of the ceremony. The event will be attended by the federal secretary of Ministry of Narcotics Control, the chairman of Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA), representatives of UNODC Country Office Pakistan (COPAK), counterparts, senior government officials, experts from the international community, representatives of private sector associations, development partners, academia, ambassadors, diplomats, and colleagues from UN agencies. The PMS will improve Government of Pakistan's precursor control regime. It is a part of a broader vision to automate the entire process of registration and issuance of NOC to the industry for controlled chemicals. It will also help the private sector to receive responses in an efficient and reliable manner. The system will also significantly improve transparency and improve trust among all stakeholders. The system can be accessed via internet and replaces the manual process currently in practice. The requests for NOC can be generated through the system electronically and all steps including document submission, utilization details and import licenses are automated.

83 pc progress achieved

ISLAMABAD (APP): About 83 per cent of progress on improvement, upgradation and expansion of the 167 km strategic road Skardu-Jaglot Road (S-1) has been achieved so far, an official of National Highway Authority told APP on Tuesday. The official said ECNEC had given the approval of the project on July 10, 2017, and its revised cost would be established as 32.325 billion. During the present fiscal year, Rs 2 billion have been allocated for the project in the PSDP 2022-2023, he said. The official said the project has been assigned to Frontier Works Organization (FWO) which had laid the initial track in 1984.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony Maulana Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing a press conference at Jamia Masjid Maaz Bin Jabal.

Mushaal blasts kangaroo court for denying Yasin right to cross-examine witnesses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has fired a broadside at fascist Narendra Modi-led government and Indian kangaroo courts for denying Yasin Malik his fundamental, legal and constitutional rights to be presented physically in Jammu courts to cross-examine witnesses in IAF case.

Mushaal, who is wife of Yasin Malik, said in a statement on Tuesday that notorious Indian kangaroo courts had once again proven that Kashmiris had no rights in Indian Courts, as the CBI court passed a black order denying Hurriyat leader fundamen-

tal legal right to be presented physically in Jammu courts for cross examination. It is pertinent to mention here that the special court in Jammu "closed" JKLF chief Yasin Malik's right to cross-examine a prime witness in a 1990 case related to the killing of four IAF personnel after he refused to do so through video conference.

Mushaal went on to say that Yasin Malik had been jailed in notorious Delhi's Tihar Jail in a fake and fabricated case and the shameful occupied authorities resorted to all unlawful and inhuman actions to silence the most powerful voice of the Kashmir freedom struggle. She lamented that

despite RSS-inspired government all illegal and brutal measures to deny justice and fair trail to Yasin, the UN bodies and human rights organizations observed criminal silence on this world worst barbaric act. Mushaal expressed her apprehension that Yasin Malik's life was at risk as he was kept in death cell and did not provide him the much-needed life saving medicines despite fast deteriorating health condition. The chairperson urged the world's powers, UN bodies and so-called human rights organizations to shun the duplicity and take tangible steps to ensure Yasin's release from jail immediately.

Kashmiris to observe India's Republic Day as Black Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and the world over will observe India's Republic Day, the 26th of January, on Thursday as Black Day to impress upon the world to take notice of New Delhi's continued denial of right to self-determination to the Kashmiri people.

Call for the observance of the Black Day has been given by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, according to the Kashmir Media Service (KMS).

The day will be marked as a black day in occupied Kashmir, Azad Kashmir and abroad with anti-India demonstrations and rallies being held in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan and world capitals to give a strong message to the world that India is a usurper in the occupied territory.

People through statements, massage and posters, by Sadai Mazloom, Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Movement, Tehreek-e-Azadi Jammu and Kashmir, and Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Alliance, Jammu and Kashmir Political Resistance Movement and Youth Freedom Fighter in Srinagar, and others areas of the valley asked to boycott all Indian official celebrations and hoist black flags on the rooftops of their houses, shops and other buildings. The posters continue to surface since last one

week in different places of the territory.

The APHC reiterated its call for imposing civil curfew in every nook and corner of the territory. It castigated India for unleashing a reign of terror, repression, frequent cordon and search operations, random arrests and restricting businesses and social activities.

Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party led by jailed leader Shabbir Ahmed Shah also appealed to the Kashmiris living all over the world to observe Indian "Republic Day" as Black Day. "The country that is grossly involved in death and destruction in Kashmir and holding millions of Kashmiris hostage at the gunpoint has no right whatsoever to observe Republic Day, while on the other hand India government has deprived Kashmiris of their basic rights," the DFP said.

Other Hurriyat organizations including Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League and Democratic Political Movement said that the presence of Indian troops in IIOJK is illegal, illegitimate and unconstitutional and is clear violation of International Law. Therefore, by no law all over the world or morals can justify the presence of Indian troops in IIOJK, they argued.

Education ministry making all-out efforts to promote skills education: Tanveer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain said on Tuesday that the ministry was making all-out efforts to popularize skills education in the country.

He said this while presenting "The Future of TVET – A scenario-based study of the trends and future strategic directions driving the sector's evolution" report to Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal.

He said that aligning with the slogan of International Day of Education 2023, "to invest in people, prioritize education," short-term skills training programs, particularly benefitting youth for earning their livelihood are being prioritized.

In this regard, the contribution of several entities from the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, mainly HEC, NAVTTC, IBCC, and the Federal Board of Education, are praiseworthy. This report has been prepared through collaborative efforts of well-reputed technical institutes from New Zealand, Philippines, Sweden, Tanzania, the United Arab Emirates, and the National Skills University Islamabad team. Rana Tanveer praised the contribution of all involved in developing this report from the Pakistani side.

This report is being translated into sev-

eral languages and will set the scene for futuristic Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) across the globe.

Earlier, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal discussed the importance of celebrating the International Day of Education.

He particularly outlined Vision 2025, prepared in 2013, including skills education as a major component under his guidance. If that had been implemented faithfully, Pakistan's education system would have gone much further, he added.

Meanwhile, Rana Tanveer urged that while celebrating International Day of Education 2023, the urgency of the situation must be kept in mind.

"We have youth looking for opportunities inside the country and abroad. A timely investment in strengthening the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and all skills education-providing institutions across the country must work to their full capacities", he maintained.

The ceremony to celebrate the International Day of Education 2023 at the National Skills University Islamabad was attended by dignitaries across the country, including the Chairperson Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Secretary IBCC, students and faculty members from various universities from Islamabad-Rawalpindi region, senior media officials including national and international organizations.

IESCO issues power suspension programme

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

According to 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, Melody, Shaheed Millat, Pandorian, Athal, PHA Flat, UC Road, F-10/2, G-9/2, H-8/2, I-10/1, G-13/2-1, Railway Road, Shahpur, Pindi Point, Kohala, Pearl Continental, Kotli Sattian, Balawara, Treat, Suhadran Road Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, T&T, C-Block, Khurram Colony, APHS, Muslim Town, Zafarul Haq, Dhok Khaba, Fawara Chowk, Iqbal Road, Ahsanabad, Sardar Bagh, Azizabad, Officer Colony, G-15, G-15/1, G-15/4, Bhadana, Lakho Road, NRC, BB Shaheed Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Bank Road 2-, Bustan Khan Road, PWD.II, Model Town, Topi Pump, Lala Zar, Adiala, Murt, UC Lakhon Chowk Pandori, Hanif Shaheed, Ghazan Khan, Sehala College, Nar, Dobiran, Panjar, Hamid Jhangli, Jhta Hatial, Bengali, Syed Kasran, Gagan Feeders, Attock Circle, Jalala, Sher Shah Suri, Margalla, Ghazi Kohli, Museum, Nisar, Shaheed, Paswal, Kohistan Enclave, Mix Industrial, Kashif Gul Shaheed, Model Town, Brahma, Shadi Khan, Sirka, Air University, Gondal, Tin Mela, Darya Sharif, Bara Zee, Malhwali, Kasran, Sajjad Shaheed, Fateh Jang City, 2, Pari, Dharnal, Gagan Feeders, Chakwal Circle, from 10:00 am to 03:00 pm, Kariala, Line Park, Megan, Kher, Pur, Islamia Chowk, Daulatala, Dhadiyal Express, Mulhal Mughlan, Sarkal, Bisharat, Duffer, Toba, PD Khan, Abdullahpur, Kursal, Dharnal, Sukhu, Dharabi, Jatla, Pera Fatial, Tau Muharram Khan Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Abbas Pura, Zubair Shaheed, F-3 Gul Afshan, Bolani, Fatehpur, F-6 Machine Mohalla, F-9 Chak Daulat, M Riaz Shaheed, Deena, Thakra, Kangar, Thatti, Ajmal Shaheed Feeders, GSO Circle, From 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, GOI, Sarsaw, Sarda, DHQ.

Ashrafi decries desecration of Holy Quran on pretext of 'freedom of expression'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, on Tuesday, said desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden was not freedom of expression, but it was an attempt to disrupt world peace.

Addressing a press conference flanked by a couple of Ulema and Mashaykh, here, Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council, said the Swedish government should take action against the perpetrator and award him an exemplary punishment to stop the re-occurrence of such disgraceful incidents in the future.

He said the desecration of the divine command in Sweden had hurt the religious feelings of almost 1.5 billion Muslims across the world.

"We must register our protest before the international community in a good and peaceful manner so that the world realizes that it is not an issue of freedom of speech but a serious matter of faith of the Muslim Ummah," he added.

He urged the world community to take adequate measures against Islamophobia.

Seconding the religious decree of renowned scholar Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani and other Ulema and Mashaykh against the rebellious activities of outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, he said the terrorist attacks on the national security institutions were not acceptable anyway and they were against the Islamic Shariah.

He said any kind of armed activity in the pretext of Jihad was not permissible both in the Shariah law and the Constitution. Clearing the misconception of a particular segment, he said Ulema and Mashaykh of all schools of thought had categorically stated in the national conference that their religion, country, army, and

security agencies were redlines for them.

Ashrafi quoting Mufti Taqi Usmani said that the Constitution of Pakistan was purely based on Quran and Sunnah.

He said, "Pakistan is an ideological state which came into existence in the name of Islam and the Constitution of Pakistan provides protection to every citizen living in the country whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim."

He said, on coming Friday, the joint declaration issued by the Ulema and Mashaykh would be highlighted and resolutions would be adopted to condemn the abhorrent incident of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

Ashrafi said peace and security were two main components to get the country out of the prevailing economic crisis.

He urged the political and religious leaders to reach a consensus for the economic development of the country just as the Ulema and Mashaykh had united against extremism and sectarianism with the help of Paigham-e-Pakistan.

He said it was crucial to sit together at one table to strengthen Pakistan socially and economically. It was not possible to conduct the elections from time to time as the country was facing a severe financial crunch these days, he added.

Ashrafi, on behalf of the Ulema and Mashaykh, appealed to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chief Imran Khan to resolve issues through dialogue, also adding that there was a dire need of 'Charter of Pakistan' which should be on social and economic affairs as "the solution of all issues lies in the economic pact".

In the end, he urged the philanthropists to financially support the impoverished segment of society as they were living below the poverty line due to the rapid inflation in the country.

BISP beneficiaries can receive cash on 24/7 basis

ISLAMABAD (APP): In pursuance of the directions of Chief Justice Lahore High Court, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has taken up the matter of the unavailability of biometric ATM cash withdrawals to BISP beneficiaries with HBL.

As per directions, it has been ensured that all 149 HBL ATMs in the Multan region are biometric-enabled and operational 24-hour basis to provide cash withdrawal facility to BISP beneficiaries.

Besides, a massive crackdown against the delinquent mafia, who are found involved in malpractices and illegal deductions from BISP beneficiaries through ATMs and POS agents, has been taken, in

order to ensure transparent disbursement of BISP funds among beneficiaries, said a news release.

The Director General BISP Punjab, Zonal Director of South and other officials are personally paying field visits to monitor the smooth distribution of BISP funds under the directions of the court.

As per recent report from BISP Punjab dashboard till date, the Punjab Region has blocked 312 POS agents on account of established embezzlement complaints, wherein 30 FIRs have been lodged in local police stations and 01 case has been referred to FIA Cyber Crime Circle Lahore, while 19 POS agents have been put behind bars.

The Director General BISP Punjab, Arshad Liaquat Chaudhary urged the BISP beneficiaries to receive their full amounts from HBL ATMs through biometric verification.

Furthermore, in case of any complaints, they must visit the nearest BISP office for complaint lodging and immediate redressal.

The DG Punjab further added that stern legal action would be taken against anyone who was found involved in malpractices. He also added that an exclusive control room has been established for BISP beneficiaries where their complaints and queries will be addressed on WhatsApp number Punjab 0325-5365520 or BISP Zonal Office complaint cell number 061- 6214200.

Minorities demand parliamentary representation through direct vote: J. Salik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Convener World Minorities Alliance, former Federal Minister for Population Welfare, and veteran human rights defender, Julius Salik also J. Salik on Tuesday said the minorities in the country demand the government to ensure their representation through the direct vote in the general elections.

Addressing a news conference here, the former Federal Minister said it was the need of the hour and important for Pakistan as it is a signatory to the UN Minorities' Rights declaration and protocols to provide fundamental rights to the

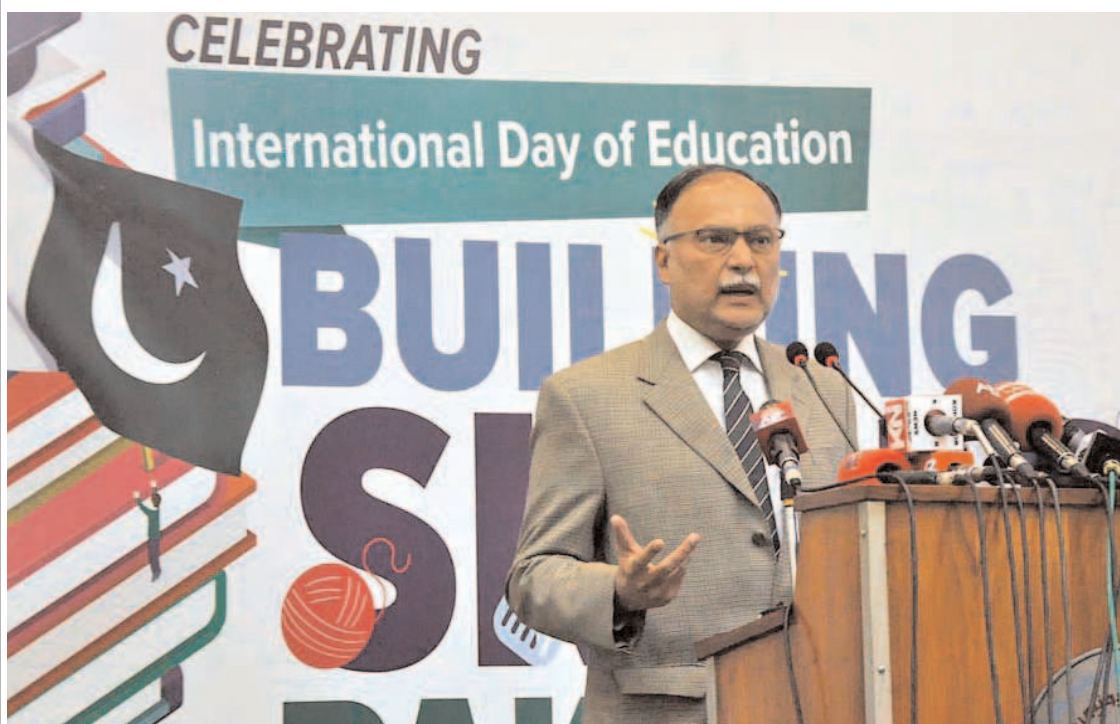
marginalised segments of its society. Salik said, "the Article 226 of the Constitution has been violated in all of the elections leaving every parliament elected as unconstitutional."

He underlined that there were some 60 seats of the National Assembly reserved for women and 10 for minorities who were elected through proportionate representation which was unconstitutional.

The human rights defender mentioned that the Supreme Court's full bench comprising 17 judges back on August 5, 2015, in their dissenting notes and directed the federal government to

fill reserved minority seats by direct election and through minorities' votes.

"Throughout my political career, I contested elections and won from all federating units. There are no corruption or misappropriation allegations levelled against me. I started my journey from the grassroots level. I got detained for seven times during Zia's dictatorship for restoration of democracy," he added. J. Salik demanded that the coming elections should be held as per the constitution, whereas it was his responsibility through the platform of the Minorities' Alliance to guide stakeholders to ensure minorities' rights.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiative Ahsan Iqbal addressing to the seminar during celebration of International Day of Education at National Skill University.

Hundreds of cattle killed

BALKH (Agencies): To prevent further losses of livestock local officials held meetings. The provincial head of agriculture and livestock of Balkh, Mawlawi Shamsullah Khalid, shared details about the situation of Balkh farmers, said: In the past days, due to severe cold and lack of fodder, huge damage was caused to farmers and agriculture. Balkh workers have arrived, which has caused the loss of 32 thousand four hundred and forty head of cattle in the center and districts of that province.

The Frontier Post

Rajab 02, 1444 — Wednesday, January 25, 2023

Group of robbers held

KABUL (Agencies): The commander police of Kabul arrested 13 people on charges robbery from 11th police district. The police of the 11th district of Kabul arrested a group of 13 robbers, the Kabul police in a statement. According to the statement, these robbers stole fifty thousand dollars from a businessman. The police sources, said that the suspects will be introduced to judicial organs after police investigation.

Kabulis criticize power shortage

KABUL (TOLOnews): Residents in the nation's capital city Kabul criticized the electricity shortage and said that power shortages create many challenges.

They called on the Islamic Emirate to strive to provide sustainable electricity to the people.

"Each day electricity is not supplied for even 20 minutes at a time, we can't even charge our phones," said Kazim Ali, a Kabul resident.

"Everyone has children, the weather is cold, and the lack of electricity is a big challenge for people," said Ahmad Shah, a Kabul resident.

Meanwhile, the head of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat said that the Islamic Emirate has paid more than half of the debts

of the previous government to the Uzbekistan government, and, according to the recent agreement, the Uzbekistan government must export electricity to Afghanistan.

"The previous government's problems with Uzbekistan mean debts--we solve the problem and paid the debt," said Hekmatullah Akhon Zada, head of Da Breshna Sherkat.

Political analysts shared different views about the power outages in Uzbekistan.

"These days Uzbekistan cannot supply power to its citizens, and, meanwhile, the use of the water of the Amu Darya for Qosh Tepa Canal makes Uzbekistan's government worry. In this regard, there should be negotiations with Uzbekistan again," said Tariq

Farhadi, a political analyst.

"Power outages from Uzbekistan are not technical problems, because the problems of the lines are solved; maybe it a political issue, and Breshna Sherkat must solve it diplomatically," said Amanullah Ghalib, former head of the Breshna.

"It's so soon to talk about this issue, whether it's a political problem or not, the contract that was renewed and signed must be implemented," said Akhon Zada.

According to available statistics, Afghanistan needs nearly 2000MW of power and only 400MW of it is provided by the country's resources.

Nearly 800 MW of power is imported from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Iran.

Report about death of 50 sick children not true

KABUL (Agencies): Local Public health officials of Baghlan rejected the report of the death of 50 children suffering from various diseases in that province.

The provincial head of public health of Baghlan called the reports that fifty children have died from various diseases in the last month in Baghlan provincial hospital baseless.

He said that in the past month, 23 children have died due to diseases in the provincial hospital.

Dr. Shah Wali Ahmadzai, the manager of Baghlan provincial hospital, admits that the cases of pneumonia or respiratory diseases have increased among children in Baghlan compared to the previous months, but the figures presented by the pediatric specialist a few days back are wrong.

Dr. Ahmadzai assured the commitment of the provincial hospital staff to provide better health services for patients, especially the pediatric department.

He asked the residents of Baghlan to keep their children warm in the cold season and give them more fluids.

AKDN to take charge over 82 hospitals

BAGHLAN (Agencies): 82 hospitals and health centers in Baghlan, which the health services provided by the Bakhtar Development Network for years, have recently been handed over to the Agha Khan Development Network.

The provincial head of the Public Health department of Baghlan, Dr. Masood Ahmadi, said that for years health services in this province were provided by Bakhtar Development Network, recently handed over to Agha Khan Development Network.

Two hospitals in central Baghlan and Nahreen districts and 80 health centers in this province are included in this series, based on which health services will be provided by the Agha Khan Development Network, he added.

The head of the financial and procurement department of the Agha Khan Development Network, Naveed Seddiq said that the Agha Khan Development Network is striving with full commitment to provide standard health services to the residents of Baghlan.

Mazloun met with army officials

KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Defense Minister, Mullah Mohammad Fazel Mazloun, met with the officials of the 313th Central Army Corps.

In a meeting, the deputy of the Ministry of National Defense stressed on modifications to army ranks from abusers, said the Ministry in a statement.

Meanwhile, Mazloun committed to cooperation to address the problems and consider their suggestions.

Taliban discuss restoration of historical sites with UN

KABUL (Khaama Press): Mawlawi Atiqullah Azizi, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information of Afghanistan met with Brendan Cassar, UNESCO Culture Program Officer to discuss the restoration of historical sites.

During the meeting, Mr. Azizi shared his concerns with Brendan about restoring historical sites and ancient reservoirs in some provinces of the country, which are on the verge of collapse.

The deputy minister said that Ghor Jam Minar, Mirwais Nika, and Ahmad Shah Baba shrines in Kandahar, the walls of Bost Fort in Helmand, and some historical buildings and academic centers in Ghazni and Bamyan provinces are being protected. He added that UNESCO's urgent assistance in constructing and restoring certain historical places is required now more than ever before as the country is faced with a massive economic crisis amidst other significant challenges.



For his part, Brendan deemed it necessary to carry out these works and said that UNESCO is ready to assist in restoring the historical sites in Afghanistan. This comes as the Taliban blew up the giant statue of Bamyan, also known as the "Buddhas of Bamyan" during their previous spell in 2001. The act drew widespread condemnation from the international community, describing it

as a complete cultural tragedy and disrespectful against global Buddhism.

Following the Taliban's return to power in August 2021, they are accused of disrespecting cultural values in the war-torn country.

The de facto authorities have renamed universities and educational institutions, venues, airports, hospitals, and cities throughout the country-- arousing the anger of the general public.

Meanwhile, the caretaker regime is also accused of implementing an anti-Farsi/Dari policy in the country as they have already erased Farsi from the billboards of certain government institutions.

The ruling regime's emphasis is on using Islamic terms instead of the individual's names or modern terminologies while naming educational institutions, schools, avenues, and more.

Uzbekistan to supply electricity amid energy crisis in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's Ministry of Energy and Water announced that Uzbekistan has assured to resume supplying electricity to Afghanistan after weeks of complete blackout.

Authorities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan have acknowledged that they will resume supplying power to Afghanistan from January 25 onward according to the Ministry of Energy and Water.

Reportedly, the power supply stopped on January 14 due to extreme cold,

causing problems in the gas supply to thermal power plants (TPPs), which run on this type of fuel and provide 90% of electricity generation in the country.

Meanwhile, Zabiullah Mujahid, Chief Spokesperson on Taliban said on Twitter that the electricity import contract for the 2023 year was signed by Mula Muhammad Hanif Hamza, CEO of DABS and Chairman of Turkman Ergo in the presence of Mula Abdulatif Mansur, Minister of Energy and Water in capital Ashgabat.

Kabul and several other

provinces were in complete blackout over the last two weeks, with only two hours of access to power in 24 hours.

Uzbekistan has announced that 250-megawatt electricity will be supplied to Afghanistan within the next 24 hours, while Kabul alone needs 700-megawatt power to illuminate the city. Kabul residents have had a major power outage over the past couple of days.

Amid the harsh winter hitting Afghanistan, the worst, energy crisis is a new addition to the many challenges the caretaker

government is dealing with. Mostly, the required energy is imported from Iran and the Central Asian countries including Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

Due to the extreme cold and weather conditions, technical issues do occur, causing disruption in the supply of power to Afghanistan. However, Taliban de facto authorities have called on the Uzbek government to adhere to the terms and conditions of the contract signed between the two governments, and avoid preventing such disruptions in the future.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation distributes aid

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in collaboration with the Afghan Red Crescent Society and King Salman Charity Foundation distributed aid to 500 needy families in Kabul on Tuesday.

Muhammad Saeed Al-Ayash, Head of the OIC office in Kabul said that the humanitarian aid would reach at least 280,000 people in 25 provinces of Afghanistan within a year.

Irfanullah Sharafzoi, the spokesperson of the Afghan Red Crescent Society said that of far aid has been distributed to some 500 vulnerable families in Kabul the capital city. According to the OIC representative, the aid package

Irfanullah Sharafzoi, the spokesperson of the Afghan Red Crescent Society said that of far aid has been distributed to some 500 vulnerable families in Kabul the capital city. According to the OIC representative, each aid package is 62 Kilograms and includes flour, rice, beans, sugar, cooking oil and dates.

"We wholeheartedly thank the OIC and affiliate international aid organiza-



tions for assisting the Afghan people during these difficult times. Our lives greatly depend on the delivery of such essential humanitarian aids," said a Kabul resident.

Since the overthrow of the previous government by the Taliban in August 2021, Afghanistan is going through major challenges including a dire economic situation, extreme poverty, hunger, unemployment, energy, and humanitarian crisis.

The war-torn country needs immediate humanitarian aid during these difficult economic times.

Thousands of families are on the verge of losing their lives due to the extreme weather conditions throughout the country.

Following, the recent bans restricting Afghan women and girls to attend educational institutions and workplaces, aid delivery had been slowed down, which adversely affected

the living conditions of needy families across the country.

With the resumption of aid distribution in different parts of the country, the concerns of vulnerable families can be mitigated to some extent to fight the extreme cold and hunger, and be optimistic for a better future.

618 projects conducted in Nangarhar

NANGARHAR (Agencies): Local administrative officials of Nangarhar sharing a report of their achievements with the media during a press conference says that 618 projects conducted in the province.

The provincial head of Rural, Reconstruction and Development of this province Mawlawi Qasmatullah Mobarez said that last year, 394 projects in this province, conducted, which most of projects were in remote areas.

According to him, most of the projects has been included, providing clean water to 1085 families.

In some districts, hundreds of projects are under construction based on

people's demand, he added.

Mawlawi Aminullah Sharif, another official of the province said that in addition to reducing poverty and strengthening the private sector, a 5-year development program for Nangarhar has been drafted, in which 12 billion dollars will be spent, 495 big and small projects have been designed.

According to him, 222 projects have been conducted to the people through various sectors, most of which are educational.

He said 225 organizations are registered with Economy department of Nangarhar, of which 174 are domestic and the rest are international.

Official: UN continues to support Afghan women



KABUL (TOLOnews): The United Nations deputy chief, Amina Mohammed, in an interview with TOLOnews said that her organization will continue to support women in Afghanistan.

Mohammed said she would put pressure on the Islamic Emirate together with a number of countries to respect Afghan women's rights.

"Before coming to this country, we visited a number of countries and had consultations to bring momentum and the pressure and the consensus to this government to speak to women to give them hope

that we have not left," she said.

She said the delegation's visit to Kabul was aimed at meeting with officials in Kabul to discuss the removal of restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan.

"First, I have been to Afghanistan before. This is my second time, but this visit is very special. It is special because the intention of the secretary general in sending this high-level delegation, myself and the head of UN Women, is to come and meet with the de facto authorities to engage with them on the two bans that they had edict on the

prohibition of women in the workplace and in education and to really see how we can reverse those bans," she said.

The high-ranking UN representative said she will keep negotiating with the Afghan government until women's rights are protected.

But Islamic Emirate's spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said the current government will make an effort to address the issue of restrictions on women's education and employment.

"They have expressed their concerns in meeting with the officials, and the Islamic Emirate officials have told them that we will take steps in all possible cases that are in accordance with the Islamic Sharia," Mujahid said.

This comes as women and girls have been banned from attending schools and universities and from going to amusement parks, baths, sports clubs, traveling without a male guardian, and working for non-governmental organizations. The decisions have triggered global reactions.

Families leave homes in over lack of schools



FARAH (TOLOnews): Many residents of the Farahrud district in the western province of Farah have left their homes and moved to the provincial center due to the lack of schools for their children in their villages.

The residents said local officials so far have not paid attention to the matter.

To enroll his five children in school, Rahmuddin

Akhundzadah, a resident of the Farahrud district, has moved from Robat Turkan in the district, to the city of Farah.

"I came from the district to the center because there wasn't any school for my children," Rahmuddin said. "I moved here so that my children can go to school."

Some Farahrud residents said that despite repeated requests from the local

authorities, the district's schools have remained inactive for an unknown reason.

"Our youth are so illiterate that they cannot write their names. When they go to the doctor, they cannot differentiate between a pharmacy and a repair shop," said Sayed Daud, a resident of Farahrud.

But officials in Farah's education department said they will open at least 15 schools in the district the next school year.

"We are trying to activate fifteen schools for them, which will include high schools and primary schools," said Akhtar Mohammad Zaeem, head of the education department in Farah.

According to local officials, there are more than 130 villages in the Farahrud district, but only six of them have schools.

Afghanistan faces unprecedented humanitarian crisis: UN agency

KABUL (TOLOnews): The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in a report said that Afghanistan is facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis with "a very real risk of systemic collapse and human catastrophe."

According to OCHA, in addition to unimaginable human costs, this humanitarian crisis is reversing many of the gains of the last 20 years, including women's rights. The report said that 17 million people will face acute hunger in 2023, including 6 million people at emergency levels of food insecurity.

"Deterioration is expected in the first quarter of

2023 due to the simultaneous effects of winter and the lean season, sustained high food prices, reduced income and unemployment and continued economic decline," the report reads.

Extreme cold amidst harsh winter has created many concerns about the challenging conditions of Afghans.

"I earn 100 Afs every day and it cannot meet any demand. I have not bought anything for the winter so far," said Ahmad, a Kabul resident.

"I have only four blankets. There is nothing to eat or wear," said a Kabul resident. This comes as the head of the Swiss development

agency said his country remains committed to humanitarian work in Afghanistan despite the ban on women working in NGOs.

The office of the Swiss development agency in Kabul was closed after the Islamic Emirate swept into power in August 2021. It is currently operating from Pakistan.

The director of the organization, Patricia Danzi, said in an interview with the NZZ said that the SDC is assessing how to use the CHF30 million (\$33 million) budget effectively.

"Lack of economic infrastructure and investment are the main reasons for the increasing poverty

and humanitarian crisis over one and half year," said Shabir Bashiri, an analyst. This comes as the Minister of Economy, Abdul Latif Nazari, said that efforts are underway to spend the aid in infrastructure projects.

"We will use the aid for development activities and addressing of fundamental needs," Nazari said.

The OCHA report said that the collapse of the previous government resulted in the suspension of direct international development assistance, which previously accounted for 75 percent of public expenditure, including the maintenance of the public health system.

Caretaker CM to take up KP issues with Premier

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chaired an important meeting to review the overall law & order situation, economic conditions and financial issues of the province. Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Shehzad Bangash, IGP Muazzam Jah Ansari, Principal Secretary to CM Amjid Ali Khan, administrative secretaries of concerned departments and other relevant police officials attended the meeting.

The caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan decided to take up the financial issues and matters related to the law & order situation of the province with Prime Minister of Pakistan and said that he would have formal meeting with the Prime Minister in the next couple of days to apprise him of the aforesaid issues of the province.

He termed the current law & order situation and financial issues of the province as of concern and added that his government will go all out to resolve these issues on priority and every possible effort would be made to get the cooperation of Federal Government in this regard.

Muhammad Azam Khan also termed the prevailing law & order situation in the province especially the increases attacks on police as a matter of great concern, and said that the caretaker set up of the province will pay special attention to law & order situation and all available resources would be utilized to improve the situation to the desired level. He said that in view of the prevailing law & order situation of the province, the matter regarding strengthening of police department specially the Counter Terrorism Department would be taken up with the federal government. The meeting decided in principle to review the existing mechanism of deployment of police guards with ex-public representatives, ex-bureaucrats and other individuals and the quarters concerned were directed to come up with proposals to this effect to be presented to the caretaker cabinet for approval. It was told in the meeting that currently, more than 4000 police personnel were deployed as security guards with various individuals including ex-public representatives and ex-bureaucrats.

The caretaker Chief Minister made it clear that in view of the current law & order situation, the provincial government would not afford to spare such a huge number of police for the security of individuals, however, police guards would be provided to those who really need it, he remarked.

He appreciated the role of KP Police in maintaining law & order in the province and said that police are fighting against militancy on the front line and they have rendered huge sacrifices for this purpose. He urged upon the public to have close eyes on anti-social elements around them, and to extend support to police in this regard.

Meanwhile, the participants were briefed in details about the overall law & order situation in the province, initiatives so far taken by the police department to maintain law & order and future course of action to deal with the situation. It was informed that during the year 2022, a total of 494 terrorist incidents had been reported across the province. As many as 119 police personnel were martyred and 112 injured in terrorist attacks during the last one year.

Briefing about the actions taken by the police department during the last one year, it was told that more than 21000 search and strike operations were conducted and over 33000 suspects were detained. Similarly, during the snap checking, over 125000 suspects were arrested. It was further informed that during search operation of houses, residential apartments, hotels, public transport terminals and other sensitive and vulnerable places, over 15000 FIRs were logged against the suspects.

The forum was further informed that during the last one year, 812 terrorists were arrested in anti-terrorist activities by the counter terrorism department. Similarly, more than 62000 weapons were recovered during the year 2022. It was informed that the KP Police Department is taking every possible step to deal with the challenges adding that the coordination with law enforcing and intelligence agencies is being enhanced whereas steps are also being taken to enhance the police visibility, community mobilization and installation of CCTV cameras at vulnerable places in order to effectively deal with the situation.

Karachi Mayor's election likely to take three months

KARACHI (INP): The election commissioner (EC) Sindh stated that the election of Karachi mayor is likely to take two to three months as the commission is still compiling the final results of the Sindh local government (LG) polls.

While talking to a news channel EC Sindh Ejaz Anwar Chauhan said that the compilation process of the Sindh LG polls is completed up to 80%. He added that the final party position will be completed by today. He said that the party position will be finalised after removing the flaws and the recounting of seats. Chauhan said that the commission held polls on 235 out of 246 union councils (UCs).

The provincial election commission said that the

new schedule for the elections on the remaining UCs will be announced soon. He said that the elections for the mayor and deputy mayor will be held after the completion of the quorum. He said that the Karachi mayor's election would take two to three months. The second phase of local government elections in Sindh was originally scheduled for July 24, 2022, but was delayed thrice due to floods, and later due to the unavailability of security officials to perform election duty. However, the Election Commission did not accede to the Sindh government's request to further delay the election on the pretext of change in the number of union councils in Karachi and Hyderabad Divisions that required fresh delimita-

tion. The Commission's refusal led to the polls' boycott by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQMP), which expressed dissatisfaction over the quality of electoral rolls and delimitation. "Controversies over the quality of electoral processes do not augur well, particularly when the political parties are preparing for General Elections that are constitutionally due by October 11, 2023," the report stated. The FAFEN regretted that many of these controversies stem from weaknesses in the legislative framework that governs elections, "which need to be rectified through wide-ranging negotiations among all political actors coming together for electoral reforms".

ECP restores membership of 13 more MPs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday restored the membership of 13 more members of the Parliament (MPs) after filing their statements of assets and liabilities.

Those whose membership had been restored included senators Kamran Michael, Saifullah Abro, Mohsin Aziz and Sania Nishtar, members of the National Assembly Chaudhary Abid Raza, Chaudhary Khalid Javed, Noor Ul Hasan Tanvir, Syed Mubeen Ahmed, Muhammad Shabbir Ali, Asmat Ullah and Lal Chand, and provincial assembly members Muhammad Shahryar Khan Mahar and Syed Muhammad Rashid Shah, an ECP official said. The ECP had suspended the membership of some 271 parliamentarians for non-submission of their annual statements of assets and liabilities till January 16.

IHC seeks ECP's record

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday sought a complete record from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding scrutiny of the funding of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) leader Farukh Habib seeking early scrutiny of the two parties. The petitioner's lawyer, Aima Anwar Khan, stated that the court had sought the record from the ECP during the last hearing. The ECP's Director General Law prayed the court to grant more time for the purpose as the Commission was engaged in the election matters.

The chief justice questioned what were the engagements of ECP as it was not even holding local government elections in the Federal Capital. The DG Law replied that the ECP was making preparations for LG polls in the Capital, while three National Assembly seats from Islamabad had also been vacated. The court then adjourned the case till February 7, instructing the DG Law to come up with the complete record of the two parties funding on that date.

SC terminates NHA's appeal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Tuesday terminated the appeal of the National Highway Authority (NHA) challenging the decision of the Peshawar High Court for the increasing of the land price for the Peshawar motorway.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial heard the NHA's appeal. The petitioner adopted the stance that it had purchased the land against Rs35,000 per marla but the PHC had increased the price to Rs70,000. The chief justice remarked that the NHA had purchased the land in 2006 but had yet to pay the money to the people. He remarked that compensation for forcibly depriving the citizen from their lands couldn't be made even after paying the money.

The CJP remarked that the affectees of Mangla and Tarbela were shifted to Lodhran where the whole families were separated from each other. Justice Athar Minallah remarked that the graves of forefathers were also important in our family system and making the people distance themselves from this was also meanness. The court directed the NHA to pay the compensations to the land owners and upheld the verdict of the Peshawar High Court.

MNAs call on PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) Ch. Shahbaz Babar, Azhar Qayyum Nehra and Sajid Mehdi separately called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Tuesday.

During the meetings, the overall political situation in the country as well as matters of their relevant constituencies were discussed.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a follow-up meeting on mental health, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Entire power system fully restored in wee hours: Khurram

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Engineer Khurram Dastgir on Tuesday said that the entire power system was fully restored at 5.14 am across the country. Addressing a press conference here, the minister said despite restoring the system, there would be a shortage of electricity for the next two days as the nuclear power plants required 48-72 hours to start supplying electricity to the system. Similarly, the coal power plants required around 48 hours for synchronization, he said.

He said yesterday one unit of each Sahiwal and Engro Coal Power plant has also started work. There would be a shortage of electricity for the next 48 hours and limited power load-shedding would be carried out, he added. However, he made it clear that industrial consumers would be exempted from the power load-shedding as per the policy of the incumbent government.

Khurram Dastgir said yesterday there was a "delay in synchronization between Tarbela and Mangla power plants but with the support of the Power Division, WAPDA and Water Resource Ministry, they fixed the technical problem after which power systems across the country were restored. He said the entire transmission system remained safe and no incident of any damage was reported during yesterday's country-wide power breakdown. While dispelling the rumors about the shortage of fuel, he categorically said that there was no fuel shortage in the country.

Alvi for integrated efforts on mental health initiatives

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday stressed the need for integrating the initiatives taken by various public departments to address the challenges pertaining to mental health. Chairing a follow-up meeting on mental health, he said the initiatives on mental health taken by the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Planning and Development as well as the President's House, which showed the focus and importance being accorded to providing mental health services to the target population to reduce stress levels in society. This, he said, was paramount for a healthy society and for the progress and development of the country.

He said the financial needs may be determined by the relevant stakeholders keeping in view the technical requirement, hiring of expertise and setting up of required essential physical infrastructure. The president said that available psychiatrists and psychologists of the Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom and in other countries should be integrated into the system to provide quality, authentic and professional advice.

He noted that there were around 2,000 psychiatrists of Pakistani origin in the UK, who could be integrated into the system. He said that mental health service provider systems should be integrated with the existing resources available in health institutes, both public and private, and should have a futuristic outlook to allow for expansion, modification, alteration and improvements in the system to fully exploit opportunities which come to light during its operation in future. The president said the artificial intelligence-based system should have the capabilities to cater to the entire target population and the ability to filter out the number of patients, which need expert advice according to the available psychiatrists and psychological resources.

Dr Alvi said that suicide was now distinguished from crimes in Pakistan and considered a mental health issue, which has opened up new avenues to provide mental health advice to prevent suicide. He said that a comprehensive media campaign would be needed after testing and making the mental health providing system fully functional to ensure its credibility and advocacy. He said that the system should have an integrated mechanism to record the calls to ensure consistency, accuracy and effectiveness of the advice rendered by the experts with the permission of the help seekers regarding respect for the patient privacy.

SC judge recuses himself from hearing cipher matter

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Supreme Court of Pakistan judge Justice Sardar Tariq Masood has recused himself from hearing the chamber appeals related to the cipher matter. The Supreme Court heard the chamber appeals for cipher investigation involving an alleged international plot to topple the Imran Khan government.

As the hearing started, Justice Masood recused himself from hearing the case sending the appeals back to Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial. He requested the CJP to appoint another judge who could hear these appeals.

Petitions seeking a probe into the cipher matter were filed in the Supreme Court

Sufficient fuel was available in the country and it was used to restore the power system, he added.

The minister said, "We are considerate of the electricity bills people have to pay and try not to unnecessarily use power plants that require a lot of energy." He said, in January, there was the lowest power demand in the country and on Monday night it stood at 8615 MW. Despite the extensive breakdown, there were some areas in the federal capital and Peshawar where the electricity remained available all the time, he said, adding that similarly, there was no disruption in power in the flood-hit areas of Sindh and Balochistan.

Khurram Dastgir said the Prime Minister has set up three-member under the headship of the minister of state for Petroleum Division Dr. Musadik Malik to probe the incident. He said the government suspected foreign intervention such as hacking of systems. "But its chances are very less. There have been incidents previously and we have to rule out this thing," he added. To a question, he said no investment was made in the transmission and generation system during the last four years by the PTI government. The PTI government did not work for the up-gradation of the transmission system as per the increasing demand, he added.

A few months ago, some parts of the country witnessed limited power breakdown due to the installation of 20 years old conductors in sensitive power plants during the PTI government tenure. He said HVDC Matiari-Lahore Transmission Line which was

completed under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has only some protective mechanisms. They were working to bring innovation to ensure safety mechanisms in the transmission system, he added.

Replying to another question, he said that the power supply has also been restored to Quetta Electric Supply Company and only routine load-shedding was being carried out. Nuclear power plants at Karachi and Chashma have not yet started work and it would take 48-72 hours, he added. The minister said the incumbent coalition government laid the foundation for many grid stations and transmission systems worth Rs 80 billion in the last few months.

The PM would lay a foundation of a mega grid station in Mansehra in the next few weeks which would ensure smooth transmission of electricity generated through Diamer Basha and other such mega projects. He said these new grid stations were part of the expansion plan but unfortunately the past government did nothing in this regard. The minister said the country's infrastructure including road network, ports, power generation and transmission was indebted to Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) led by former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. The foundation of nuclear power plants K-2 and K-3 in Karachi and HVDC Matiari-Lahore Transmission Line was laid by Nawaz Sharif, he added. To a query, the minister said NTDC has the latest water cannon to clean conductors installed at various transmission lines.

Nawaz to nominate next candidate for PM: Sana

ISLAMABAD (INP): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has said that Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) Supremo Nawaz Sharif will himself nominate next candidate for the premiership.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, he was of the view, "Next prime minister will be recommended by Nawaz Sharif." Rana Sanaullah said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chief, Imran Khan will refuse to accept his defeat, if as per his desire early elections were held in the country. He alleged that Imran Khan don't hesitate to put the country's destiny at stake if he did not get opportunity to rule. The Interior Minister claimed that the PTI chief will devastate the country if he gets opportunity to rule the country again.

Zardari challenges Park Lane reference

LAHORE (INP): The former president and PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday challenged the Park Lane reference under the new Amendments in the NAB law.

As per details, the petitioner filed by the former president states that the case is not in the jurisdiction of the accountability court after the amendment in NAB laws. The court should either send the reference back to NAB or acquit it, the petitioner told the court. PPP co-chairman Asif Zardari has already got relief from AC in Thatta Water Supply and Rs8 billion transaction references. Earlier, the accountability sent back the Thatta water supply reference against former president Asif Ali Zardari to the National Accountability Bureau.

The court announced its verdict reserved in the Thatta water supply reference. Accountability Judge Rana Nasir sent back the reference to the NAB as "the case does not come in the jurisdiction of the court".