

PM hails security forces
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday appreciated the security forces for their successful operation against terrorists at the office of Karachi Police Chief. The prime minister expressed his condolences to the bereaved families of police, Ranger personnel and a civilian who embraced shahadat during the incident, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

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US flays terror attack
WASHINGTON (INP): The US has strongly condemned the Taliban terrorist attack on the Karachi police office which left four people dead. The US condemnation came after Karachi police spokesperson said all three terrorists who attacked the KPO had been killed in the operation. The police spokesman said that this was a "major operation" in which senior police officials had participated alongside the Army and the Rangers.

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COAS says terrorists have no religious or ideological moorings

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir Saturday asserted that terrorists have no religious or ideological moorings, but only misguided conceptions forced through coercion or inducement.

The army chief's remarks, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations, came during his visit to the metropolis where he arrived to meet the injured of the Karachi Police Office (KPO) attack on Friday night.

On his visit, General Munir — who was accompanied by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and received by Commander Karachi Corps — praised the bravery, morale and sacrifices of the army, police and Rangers in the line of duty.

"No nation can overcome such challenges with kinetic actions only. It needs mutual trust, the will of the people and synergy between all stakeholders. Pakistanis have always rejected and defeated terrorism and extremism in all its manifestations," COAS said while hoping for a united nation to prevail upon the menace of terrorism for a "shared prosperous future".

The military chief and CM Murad were later briefed about the KPO incident at Corps Headquarters. The two also visited the site of the attack, which was cleared last night following a successfully coordinated CT operation involving the Pakistan Army Special Service Group (SSG), Pakistan Rangers Sindh and Sindh Police while "sending all terrorists to hell". Also speaking at the occasion, Sindh chief minister said that the state acknowledges and salutes the innumerable sacrifices rendered by law enforcement agencies and the nation's unbreakable resolve against terrorism.

Funerals of KPO attack martyrs offered: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah attended the funerals of two police constables, Ghulam Abbas Leghari and Mohammad Saeed, and sweeper Ajmal Masih,

Five-member body to probe attack

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Inspector General of Police (IG) Ghulam Nabi on Saturday constituted a five-member committee to probe the terrorist attack on the office of the Karachi police chief a day earlier. Three militants were killed and four people, including two policemen and a Sindh Rangers sub-inspector, embraced martyrdom in the nerve-racking operation that lasted for nearly four hours on Friday evening. Flaws have been identified in security arrangements at the Karachi Police Office (KPO) — a centrally located building on the city's main artery — Sharea Faisal.

Sources privy to the matter said that intelligence agencies had already expressed their concerns over the security arrangements at the CPO. "A committee with the following composition is hereby constituted to enquire into the incident of attack on Karachi Police Office and supervise the investigations of the case," according to a statement issued by the office of the Sindh IG. Sindh Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Zulfiqar Ali Larik will head the committee while other members of the body include Karachi South Zone DIGP Irfan Ali Baloch, Crime Investigation Agency DIGP Muhammad Karim Khan, Karachi CTD Operations Senior Superintendent of Police Tariq Nawaz and Karachi CTD Investigation Incharge Raja Umer Khitab. The chairman of the committee can co-opt any other member required for conducting investigations, read the statement.

who laid their lives while fighting the terrorists at the Karachi Police Office (KPO) on Friday evening.

The funerals were held at the Central Police Office (CPO) on Saturday afternoon and were attended by Minister Labour Saeed Ghani, Corps Commander Karachi, Lt Gen Babar Iftikhar, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Home Secretary Saeed Mangijeo, Additional IG Karachi Javed Odho and other Additional IGPs, DIGs, SSPs, Rangers officers, family members of martyrs, and members of civil society. The funerals were organized with official protocol and the coffins of the martyrs were draped with the national flag.

The CM, Corps Commander, Chief Secretary, and IG Police carried the coffins in the funeral procession. Murad Ali Shah met with the family members of the martyrs and gave them consolation while assuring them that they would be looked after properly. The CM sent the flag-draped coffins of martyrs, Ghulam Abbas, Mohammad Saeed, and Ajmal Masih, to Larkana, Korangi, and

Faisalabad, respectively for their burial.

Murad Ali Shah said the policemen, rangers, and the Pak Army fought bravely with the terrorist who attacked KPO and killed them. "Their sacrifice would be remembered in history." He added that the sweeper of KPO, Ajmal Masih, also laid his life and proved that there was no need for any designation or responsibility to fight against the enemy but every citizen and official needed to fight in his personal capacity against the enemies of the state and the people.

Earlier, the CM also offered funeral prayers of Rangers Sub-inspector Taimur who also embraced martyrdom while fighting against the terrorists at KPO. His funeral was held at Rangers Headquarters at 5:30 am. The CM also visited JPMC late Friday night where the injured policemen and Rangers officials of the KPO operation were shifted for treatment. He went from bed to bed, personally interacted with every injured, acclaimed their bravery, and termed them heroes. He was accompanied by his advisor, Murtaza Wahab.



KARACHI: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Sindh enquiring after the health of Police and Rangers officials, who got injured in Police Office terrorist attack.

Pakistan to send 171,000 tents to Turkiye: PM

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said Pakistan would send 171,000 tents for the earthquake affectees of Turkiye. During a meeting with a delegation of tent manufacturers, here, he said it should be ensured that tents which would be sent to Turkiye were of international standards.

Consultation should be held with the Disaster Management Presidency (AFAD) of Turkiye on the specifications of the required tents, he added. The prime minister also constituted a committee headed by Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal to determine the quality of the tents. The PM said in order to meet the immediate needs of Turkiye, tents should be sent via the air route.

He said a third-party validation should be conducted to ensure the quality of tents before sending from Pakistan. He asked the tent manufacturers to fully take part in the relief efforts for brothers and sisters in Turkiye and provide tents at lower rates. He said Pakistan was sending food, warm clothes and dry milk for the earthquake victims in Syria. The prime minister said the rescue teams from Pakistan were fully taking part in activities in the earthquake-affected areas in Turkiye.

Pakistan and Turkiye had longstanding ties spread over decades, and despite its economic difficulties Pakistan would wholeheartedly help brothers and sisters in Turkiye, he added. The prime minister was told that Pakistan had enough capacity to make tents for the quake affectees of Turkiye and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) was in contact with Pakistan Tent Manufacturers Association in this regard.

Sh Rasheed to be indicted on March 2

ISLAMABAD (INP): A local court in Islamabad fixed March 2 for the indictment of Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad in a case pertaining to levelling allegations against former president Asif Ali Zardari.

Judicial Magistrate Umar Shabbir heard the case and announced to indict PTI ally Sheikh Rasheed on March 2. During the hearing, the court was informed that the investigation officer (IO) had submitted a challan against the former interior minister at the Abpara police station. Sheikh Rasheed requested the court to adjourn the case till March 15 as he had to attend a conference on March 2. At this, the judge said he could not adjourn the case for long as challan had been submitted by the IO in the case.

PM calls for OIC emergency meeting

Shehbaz pledges to continue assisting quake-victims of Turkiye

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday reiterated that Pakistan would stand by its Turkish brothers and sisters in the wake of a devastating earthquake with all possible relief assistance.

In an interview with Anadolu news wire, the prime minister said they were deeply grieved at this very difficult situation and expressed the hope that the Turkish people with their resilience under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan would overcome the post-quake challenges. He said President Erdogan was leading from the front along with his team. Undaunted by the extreme weather conditions, they were marching forward with a sense of purpose.

"Things are extremely difficult, but the resolve of the Turkish nation is strong," he said adding, the Turkish nation, in the past, had fought for their freedom by offering sacrifices. "Out of this challenge, there is an opportunity, and no doubt, they will convert this destruction into a wonderful construction," the prime minister opined. The prime minister said Pakistan and Turkiye were like two souls and one heart. He said that after the earthquake, he spoke to President Erdogan on the telephone and offered condolences and everything they had in Pakistan for their Turkish brothers and sisters.

He said Pakistan had already sent 500 tons of relief goods through different commercial flights and via Pakistan air force planes. So they hoped by the end of this month, they would be able to send something like 1300 tons of relief goods and in the month of March about 1700 tons of relief goods, he added. The prime minister said the bulk of it would be comprising winterized tents.

He informed that he had already directed for rapid manufacturing of the winterized tents which would be sent to Turkiye. "Our rescue teams are able to rescue 14 people from the rubble. But this devastation is beyond imagination," he added. The prime minister said the federal cabinet and parliament of Pakistan had donated one month's salary to the relief fund established for the earthquake-affected Turkish people. He said that he had also requested the people of Pakistan to express complete solidarity with the people of Turkiye. The prime minister recollected that during the earthquake of 2005, floods of 2010 or last year floods in Pakistan, President Erdogan and the Turkish people went the extra mile to help the people of Pakistan with huge generosity. "It's a colossal loss, so no amount of aid would be enough," he

observed while referring to the vast devastation caused by 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck different regions of Turkiye and Syria.

He said more than 30,000 people had died and they offered condolences for this devastating loss of lives and properties. "We are in a deep sense of grief and sorrow and prayed for the departed souls", he added. To serve the suffering humanity in Turkiye, the prime minister said that the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) should immediately convene a meeting, assuring that he would request the OIC secretary general to convene an emergency meeting, so that all the Muslim countries could decide immediate relief package for Turkiye.

He also urged the international community to play its role, as Turkiye needed their support. The prime minister cautioned that a similar situation could occur somewhere else, so the global community should accept the challenge and with collective efforts, support the quake victims. He said that it was not a question of point scoring or taking sides.

"It is a high time for the international community to come forward and contribute whatever they can for the rehabilitation of the earthquake-affected people," he added. Lauding the leadership qualities of President Erdogan, the prime minister expressed the optimism that his government would come out of the crises, adding the people of Pakistan stood in complete solidarity with the Turkish people. He said Turkish people had also donated billions of dollars for their quake victims.

About the close ties between the two countries, the prime minister said that their hearts beat together, though they spoke different languages, but understood each other. They were like families. "That is the spirit and motivation, it goes back to centuries," he further elaborated. Some people said that the friendship formed during Khalifat Movement, a movement which was led by Johar brothers in the Indo-Pak sub-continent, in which the Muslims had contributed whatever they could for their Turkish brethren.

"But the relationship goes back to centuries. It is unique in this world," he observed. During last year flood in Pakistan, Turkiye had donated millions of dollars to the flood victims, with the provision of tents, medicines and the construction of schools. Turkish first lady also contributed her bracelet for the flood victims which reflected the highest level of empathy. It could only be done by the brothers and sisters.

ECP expresses concerns over President's 'choice of words'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Responding to President Dr Arif Alvi's letter, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has expressed reservations over the words used by the president while addressing constitutional institutions.

In the letter, the electoral watchdog — while expressing reservations — said that president should have use a "better choice of words" while addressing other constitutional institutions. "The office of the president is the highest constitutional body whereas all other constitutional and legal bodies are under constitutional obligation to offer utmost respect for the president," the letter stated.

"We are sure that it is impartial and expect paternal guidance from this prestigious in office towards other constitutional bodies," the ECP wrote, adding that there will be better

choice of words while addressing such other constitutional institutions. The letter further stated that the ECP abides by the Constitution and the law and that the electoral watchdog's job was to conduct elections whereas the president and the governors were responsible for announcing election dates. "According to Article 48(5) of the Constitution, where the National Assembly is dissolved by the president, he shall appoint a date for the election and appoint a Caretaker cabinet," it noted, adding: "Under Article 105(3)(a), he shall appoint a date for General Elections to the assembly and shall appoint a caretaker cabinet." The ECP pointed out that after dissolution of both provincial assemblies, the commission approached governors of both provinces for appoint-

ment of a date for elections, and also sent reminders.

FIA summons Ijaz ul Haq

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has summoned former minister and Pakistan Muslim League (PML) leader Muhammad Ijaz ul Haq in a money laundering case.

According to media reports, Ijaz ul Haq who is the son of former president and military ruler General Muhammad Ziaul Haq, has been asked to appear on February 21 (Tuesday) at the investigation agency's office in Faisalabad. The former minister of religious affairs and minorities was accused of having more assets than income. The case of Ijaz ul Haq was handed over to the FIA by NAB.

PTI reveals 'Jail Bharo' movement schedule

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Saturday announced the schedule of 'Jail Bharo' movement starting from February 22, under which 200 party workers will serve themselves for arrest voluntarily every day till March 1. The movement will kick off from Lahore and a list of volunteers has already been prepared. A six-member group of former members of national and provincial assemblies will also present themselves for arrest.

As per the schedule, the PTI activists will self-surrender in Peshawar on February 23, in Rawalpindi on 24, in Multan on 25, in Gujranwala on 26, in Sargodha on 27, in Sahiwal on 28 and in Faisalabad on March 1. PTI leadership said that they will stage sit-ins if the authorities did not put them behind bars.

This process would continue up to 1st March and on each day 200 party activists would offer their arrest to police. Six former member national assembly (MNA) and member provincial assembly (MPA) will also present their arrests. According to the schedule, on the first day of PTI's Jail Bharo Tehreek, 22 February, the PTI workers will offer their arrests on Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam, Lahore.

Maryam slams Imran for 'hiding in bunker'

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice-President and Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz Saturday censured Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan for "hiding in a bunker" and using "women as a shield".

The PML-N scion, during an informal discussion with journalists in Lahore, spoke about the PTI chief hiding inside a burrow and avoiding appearing in courts — in reference to the ex-prime minister residing at his Lahore residence and not appearing before the judges despite being repeatedly ordered to do so. Khan, the country's deposed prime minister — whose government was ousted after a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly in April last year — announced kickstarting his party's 'Jail Bharo' (court arrest) movement from February 17, starting from Lahore.

The PTI chairman's decision comes as he blames the Pakistan Democratic Movement-led coalition government for resorting to "political victimisation" of his party's leaders. "We will fill jails, they [authorities] will have no space left to hide," Khan said in his address to the nation via video link a day

earlier.

"Imran Khan [came into power] through the establishment's support and is now trying to use the judiciary. His deeds are about to be exposed," Maryam said while also slamming the PTI for not leaving the "bunker". The PML-N senior leader added that the PTI chief drafted a 12-year plan to rule the country; however, his plans were thwarted by her party's supremo Nawaz Sharif.

"Imran Khan wanted to make the next appointment, but could not do so," she said in an apparent reference to the army chief's appointment. "Nawaz Sharif did not panic and his [Khan's] plan failed," she claimed. Without naming anyone, the party's chief organiser spoke about "some people", who are on their way out, trying for Khan's facilitation. "No institution is supporting Imran Khan. PTI's defeat is inscribed on the wall."

Maryam, while insisting that the PTI chief be held accountable, said people like him should not avoid accountability. "Accountability is not for revenge. We need to draw the line," she said while stressing the need to devise a future plan of action. In her bid to convince the judiciary, the PML-N sen-

ior vice-president said accountability doesn't weaken but strengthens institutions.

Speaking about the possibility of elections, the PML-N leader said while she is preparing for elections, she doesn't care when they are taking place. "We are ready whenever the election takes place. I am going to the public," Maryam said while claiming that her party is working hard and will win the polls.

Commenting on the rising levels of inflation, Maryam agreed that people will not respond well to it; however, she mentioned her government rebuilding the economy which the PTI-led administration in Islamabad had ruined. "The country is under development. The focus should be on progress," she said while highlighting the PML-N's ideology of performance and how Pakistan will have to return to it.

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Sindh govt inaugurated Pink People's Bus Service for women in Hyderabad

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: With the efforts of the Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon, a Pink People's Bus Service equipped with modern travel facilities for the women of Hyderabad was inaugurated by MNA Shaghuba Jumani, Special Assistant to Chief Minister Sindh for Information Technology Tanzila Qambrani and Secretary Transport Sindh Abdul Haleem Shaikh at SRTC Bus Terminal Qasimabad today.

MD Mass Transit Zubair Ahmed

Channa, Additional Commissioner Hyderabad Surhan Ijaz Abro, Additional Deputy Commissioner Qaim Akbar Nimai, women from PPP ladies wing and social organizations attended the inaugural ceremony.

On this occasion MNA Shaghuba Jumani talking to media persons said that the launch of Pink People's Bus Service by the Sindh government was a very good step. She said that PPP's Sindh Government after Karachi and Sukkur had inaugurated Pink People's Bus Service in Hyderabad and now women in Hyderabad could avail

modern travel facilities through Pink People's Bus Service in Hyderabad. She informed that two Pink Buses would be run from Hyder Chowk to Hatari Bypass through which women going to colleges, schools and offices could travel in Pink Buses. She said that special seats had also been arranged for differently-able women in the bus.

Later, Secretary Transport Abdul Halim Sheikh talking to the media persons said that very soon the routes of the Pink People's Bus Service would be increased for which planning was being done.



Punjab CM condemns Karachi attack in meeting with Sindh governor

KARACHI (PPI): Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Karachi Police Chief's office.

He also paid rich tribute to the sacrifices of the martyrs of the Karachi attack and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured during a meeting with the Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori.

The Sindh governor called on Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at his office on Saturday.

Naqvi welcomed the

governor and held a discussion with him regarding issues of mutual interests and promotion of inter-provincial coordination.

Lauding the sacrifices of the Karachi Police and Rangers, he said security personnel took timely action and killed the terrorists.

"Martyrs are heroes of the nation and their sacrifices will always be remembered."

Mohsen Naqvi said that mutual differences should be kept aside and united in order to end the scourge of terrorism in the country.

"A handful of miscreants cannot destroy peace of Pakistan," he added. Sindh Kamran Tessori speaking on the occasion said that Karachi Police and Rangers bravely sent the terrorists to hell. "To end terrorism, we should move forward with unity and consensus."

The Sindh Governor appreciated the people of Punjab and said the people of Punjab stand with Sindh in every difficult time.

"The fraternal attitude of Punjab towards the people of Sindh is commendable."

Chaudhry Pervaz Elahi throws weight behind 'Jail Bharo Movement'

LAHORE (NNI): Former chief minister Chaudhry Pervaz Elahi on Saturday announced his support for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's "Jail Bharo Movement" which would commence from Lahore on February 22 (Wednesday).

Mr Elahi called on PTI chief Imran Khan at his Zaman Park residence in Lahore. During the meeting, both top guns discussed the country's prevailing political situation

while party's "Jail Bharo" movement took centre stage in the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, the ex-Punjab executive castigating the PDM-led government over the date of the election said that the incumbent rulers are afraid of Imran Khan's popularity and not following the Lahore High Court (LHC) orders, adding that they are damaging the sanctity of the constitution. He went on to say

that Imran is the only hope for the masses which are being crushed by soaring inflation, adding that the nation will back Imran's court arrest drive.

On the other hand, the deposed premier said that the PML-N top brass continuously attacked the judiciary in their speeches, adding that instead of following court orders they only focused on "political victimisation" against PTI's stalwarts.

Asad Umar wants court to summon Maryam, ministers

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) secretary general Asad Umar said on Saturday court should summon Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice president Maryam Nawaz and other federal ministers in contempt of court cases as they were levelling severe allegations against the judiciary.

Talking to the media, he said it seemed the law was not active in the country adding the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) should initiate proceedings against those breaking the law. "The constitution is being derailed without any fear as the Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah brought audio tapes himself to the public", he added. It was their aim to target the institution of the judiciary, he said, and they were pressuring it.

He said there was no ambiguity in holding elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within 90 days [of the dissolution of assemblies]. "They [the government] deem the action of the judiciary right if it reinstates Ms Nawaz's passport but a contempt of court case was lodged against me when I voiced my concern against the court over slow action on Arshad Sharif murder case", he added.

Joint efforts needed to break current class system: Ch Manzoor

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party Central Committee Member and Incharge Peoples Labour Bureau Ch Manzoor Ahmad has said that the labour class will have to jointly struggle for freedom from the class system in the society.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, he said that 5 institutions and 50 families had grasped the country, society and economy, adding that the exploitation of the working class would continue if this grip was not broken.

He said that a joint effort of workers, labours, youth, farmers and deprived people was needed to save themselves. He said that it was a mournful thing that no politics, no justice, no journalism, no security and no economy was prevailing in the country.

He said that a crises was weakening the roots of the state from inside and all parts of the ruling class had been failed. "Nobody is ready to sacrifice for the country," he said.

Criticizing the current taxes, he said that all burden had been shifted to the shoulders of the poor by imposing indirect taxes. "It is the only country of the world where taxes are collected from the poor and the rich is being facilitated," he added.

Ch Manzoor said that revolutionary steps were needed to combat current economic crises instead of traditional ways. He said that economic policies of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto late should be implemented by synchronizing them with the current situation to fetch the country out of the crisis.

Imran using his injury as an excuse to avoid courts: Atta Tarar

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Attaullah Tarar said on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was using his leg injury as an excuse to avoid courts, but instigating his party workers and followers to come out of their houses for his so-called "Jail Bharo Tehreek" (court arrest drive).

Talking to the media at the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Model Town secretariat, he claimed that the PTI chief was hiding at his Zaman Park residence to avoid courts in multiple cases including Tosha Khana, Tyrian White and other cases against him,

and using his health condition to prolong the cases.

If Imran Khan was not still able to appear before the courts due to his leg injury, why he was not ready to form a medical board to examine his condition, the SAPM raised a question. Tarar said that Imran Khan should present himself for accountability as nobody was above the law.

About an alleged audiotape of former chief minister Punjab Parvez Elahi, Tarar demanded the higher judiciary take notice of it for legal proceedings. He said that the previous PTI government in the Punjab province, led by Parvez Elahi, committed corruption in every department. Principal Secretary to the

then CM, Muhammad Khan Bhatti, was involved in corruption of billions of rupees, whereas Moonis Elahi made illegal occupation of various housing societies, Tarar alleged. He said that transparent investigation should be held into the corrupt practices committed by this cabal in the province.

The SAPM alleged that CCPO Ghulam Mahmood Dogar, during his posting as the DIG Operations in Punjab, misused his powers. He said that law should take its course against the corrupt. He said the PML-N had always showed respect for the courts and presented themselves for accountability whenever they were called.

HRCP mission to northern Sindh finds poor law and order, slow flood relief

KARACHI (PPI): The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has concluded a high-profile fact-finding mission to northern Sindh and expressed its alarm over the state of law and order, the high incidence of gender-based violence, safety of journalists and slow pace of rehabilitation of flood-affected communities.

The mission is also concerned by the level of political and feudal influence over state institutions and agencies, which makes people's access to justice unpredictable and affects their ability to realise their rights.

The mission comprised HRCP chairperson Hina Jilani, vice-chair Sindh Qazi Khizer Habib, Council member Sadia Bokhari, and senior activist Imdad Chandio. Accompanied by HRCP co-chair Asad Iqbal Butt, the team visited Ghotki, Kandhkot, Jacobabad and Larkana.

Of particular concern to the mission were reports that families affected by the devastating 2022 floods have yet to receive compensation or assistance in rebuilding their homes. The mission was told by the deputy commissioner

in Qambar Shahdadkot that over 142,000 in this area alone had been destroyed. Additionally, the number of schools destroyed have severely interrupted children's education, with little sign of the situation improving.

The mission was alarmed to find that at least 300 cases of kidnapping for ransom were reported in Ghotki, with women and children the primary targets. Police reports suggest that military-grade weapons have been used in such instances, allegedly sourced from Balochistan and thus calling into question provincial border security, although residents have alleged the complicity of security forces, given the hundreds of check-posts that line the border.

The incidence of forced conversions was raised by numerous respondents, who said that they now feared sending their daughters to school in case they were abducted for this purpose. The mission also noted reports of extrajudicial killings as well as law enforcement agencies' view that the police remain vulnerable to losses, given the poor state of law and order.

During their visit to Kandhkot and Jacobabad—which appears to account for the highest rate of karo kari [honour killings] in the province—the mission was appalled to learn that victims included underage girls, married women and even elderly women. Victims' families also complained of needlessly long delays in investigation as well as in the courts.

The mission was concerned to learn that journalists based in Ghotki, Kandhkot and Larkana found it difficult to report against influential persons for fear of reprisal in the shape of death threats, kidnappings, assault and fabricated FIRs.

During their visit to Larkana, the mission found that reports of enforced disappearances were rampant, with victims' families complaining that they were forced to travel to Karachi to attend successive hearings of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances—in many cases, this was financially impossible to sustain. Families also recounted receiving threatening phone calls from unidentified persons when they reported such cases.

PSL to continue as per schedule: Governor

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Saturday visited National Bank Cricket Arena (National Stadium) and reviewed security arrangements.

During the visit, the Governor was apprised of the security arrangements. Kamran Tessori said that Pakistan Super League (PSL) would be made successful and he had also talked to PCB Management Committee Chairman Najam Sethi to this effect. He said that the matches of PSL would continue as per the schedule and no change had been made in this regard.

17 Covid-19 cases reported

LAHORE (PPI): Pakistan has reported no death in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of confirmed positive cases surged to 1,576,658. The nationwide tally of fatalities stood at 30,641 on Saturday.

According to the latest figures issued by the National Institute of Health (NIH), at least 17 people were tested positive for Covid across the country in the past 24 hours.

Pakistan has conducted 5,160 tests in the past 24 hours, out of which 17 people were tested positive. The Covid positivity ratio was recorded at 0.33 per cent.

12 killed in road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 12 people were killed and 1,215 others injured in 1,148 accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 661 seriously injured people were shifted to different hospitals, while 559 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams, said a spokesman for Rescue-1122 here on Saturday.

The analysis showed that 1,011 drivers, 34 underage drivers, 138 pedestrians, and 503 passengers were among the victims of the road crashes.

The statistics showed that 230 accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 238 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 91 in Faisalabad with 92 victims and at third Multan 75 with 75 victims.

As many as 995 motorcycle, 126 rickshaws, 245 motorcars, 40 vans, 22 buses, 41 trucks and 208 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.

LWMC to ensure cleanliness during Raiwind congregation

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) would provide extraordinary cleanliness services for the congregation in Raiwind.

According to LWMC sources here on Saturday, the company had formulated a comprehensive plan prior to the event and was working according to it. According to the plan, the LWMC would provide special cleaning facilities from Saturday, Feb 18, to March 5.




Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Competition 2024

Opportunity for Professional Development in the USA

The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP), a bi-national commission, invites applications for the Hubert H. Humphrey Program. This non-degree program is designed for mid-career (5-15 years of relevant experience) professionals and consists of 10-12 months of graduate-level, non-degree academic course work and an opportunity to work in the United States in the relevant field.

For information about eligibility, program description, relevant fields, and application process, and to apply, visit:

www.usefp.org

All application materials, including degrees, transcripts, CV, Duolingo English Test score report, and references, must be submitted online to USEFP by

Tuesday, April 18, 2023.

Duolingo English Test score report is mandatory with the application. Applications without valid score reports will not be accepted.

Plagiarism or misrepresentation will lead to disqualification at any stage of the program.

Women, people with disabilities, and individuals from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, Northern Sindh, and Southern Punjab are highly encouraged to apply.

Email: humphrey@usefp.org




اوگر اے گیزر میں گیس سیورکون کی تنصیب لازمی قرار دے دی



اوگر اے احکامات کے تحت

سوئی ناردرن گیس کی میٹر گھر گھر جا کر انکیشن کا آغاز کر رہی ہیں

صارفین سے التماس ہے کہ سوئی ناردرن سے تعاون کرتے ہوئے فوراً گیس سیورکون لگوائیں

آؤری کیلئے ای میل پتہ: 1199@pakistan.gov.pk

بل کیے ذریعہ 12 ماہ کی آسان اقساط میں ادائیگی



LAHORE: A large number of people attending the Faiz Int'l Festival 2023 at Alhambra. —APP Photo



Governor KP stresses to bring women towards business, trade activities

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Saturday stressed the need to bring women towards business and trade activities for boosting of country's economy.

Addressing the delegations of various Chambers of Commerce here, he said the business community has always played a valuable role in the stability of the country's economy, and all facilities would be provided to the business community for boost the economy. He also assured them of full cooperation to solve their problems.

The Governor also appreciated the delegation for their untiring efforts for the representatives of various Chambers of Commerce of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Charsadda Women Cham-

ber of Commerce and Industry, Charsadda Chambers of Commerce, Kurram Chamber of Commerce, Nowshera Chamber of Commerce and Abbottabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Caretaker Provincial Minister Adnan Jalil was also present on the occasion.

Representatives of the business community, said that they were feeling proud that the governor belongs to the business community. They paid glowing tribute to Governor Haji Ghulam Ali for opening the doors of the Governor House for the people and especially for the business community for the first time in the history of the province in the true sense.

The delegation apprised the Governor of the prob-

lems faced by the business community, especially security, offices for chambers, opening of borders for commercial activities, load shedding of electricity and gas, and other problems, and thanked the Governor for meeting and listening to the problems in a fully public manner.

Officials of Charsadda Women Chamber also mentioned various problems faced by women entrepreneurs. The Governor thanked all the delegations, including the Women's Chamber, for paying a visit to the Governor's House and assured the business community of his full cooperation and resolution of issues on a priority basis.

Governor Haji Ghulam Ali said that the women of our province are very talented and are performing their duties well for the

development of the country and the nation side by side with men in every field. He said that he himself recognizes the capabilities of such courageous women and is always struggling to solve their problems.

He said that solving the problems of young and skilled women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, especially the adjoining merged districts, is one of his priorities. The Governor said that the development of industries is the development of the country's economy.

The federal government, he said, also wants to provide all facilities to the business community. Governor Haji Ghulam Ali said that every sector and class has to play its role to get the country out of the current difficulties and crisis.



PESHAWAR: Women being briefed at stall during Property Expo organized by Pakistan Association of Exhibition. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

RPOs, DPOs asked to review security of police installations

PESHAWAR (APP): The Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan has directed the police high ups of the province to personally review the security of Police establishments and double the security apparatus in layers to respond to the terrorists in a befitting manner.

These directives were given to all Regional Police Officers (RPOs) and District Police (DPOs) through a circular issued from the Central Police Office here Saturday. The IG directed them to

ensure fool proof security at police establishments with a double duties system by deputing personnel at vintage points so that nobody with suspected movement can take them on and not let them run amok.

The RPOs and DPOs were further directed to personally check security arrangements at training institutions including Police Training College Hangu, Elite Police Training Centre Nowshera, Police Training and Specialized Schools as well as also try to rectify the shortcomings and coordi-

nate with the authorities responsible for such training institutes. They were also directed to retaliate to any terrorist activity with full strength and power.

The IGP made it clear that no lapses would be tolerated on the part of police in maintaining peace and tranquility in the society.

Meanwhile, a wide range search operation has been launched in the border area suburbs and suburbs adjacent to the city. Police has confirmed here Saturday.

During the wide range of search operations in and

around Peshawar city, different police units are taking part in the operation. The police teams are being assisted by security agencies in the operation.

The SSP led the operations with Elite Force Al-Badak Unit, Rapid Response Unit and Bomb Disposal Unit teams are also participating in the operation.

Search operations are being conducted against suspects and criminal elements in the areas.

Local leaders are also assisting the police party in the operation.



PESHAWAR: Provincial president of QWP Sikandar Khan Sherpao and Syed Fayaz Ali Shah addressing a public gathering. — F.P. photo

Caretake Minister directs for provision of uninterrupted flour supply

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister for Communications and Works (C&W) Muhammad Ali Shah on Saturday directed concerned officials for the provision of an uninterrupted supply of government flour to the public in a transparent and systematic manner.

He said this in a meeting held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office Saidu Sharif Swat.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Swat Sohail Ahmed, Assistant Commissioner Babuzai Asghar Surani, other officers of district administration and officials of Food Depart-

ment participated in the meeting.

A briefing was given by the food authorities on the availability, delivery, and accessibility of government flour to the public. Matters related to flour mills were also discussed in the meeting.

The caretaker minister asked to continuously monitor the availability of flour, monitor supply from flour mills on a daily basis, keep a constant eye on quality and quantity, and take into account public complaints regarding distribution networks and procedures.

The caretaker minister Muhammad Ali Shah said that people should get qual-

ity flour easily.

He said that people are complaining about the distribution system, which needs to be improved.

He directed to distribute flour transparently and without any discrimination at the village council level.

The caretaker minister said that Ramadan is near and in this regard, there is a need for advanced measures.

The caretaker minister directed the food authorities to systematically monitor the situation in the flour mills and said that flour should be released from the flour mills as per the quality formula and strict action should be taken in case of adulteration.

JUI election candidate shot dead

PESHAWAR (INP): A leader and election candidate of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) was shot dead in Peshawar on Saturday. Unidentified gunmen targeted JUI's local leader Maulana Ijaz in Peshawar's suburban area of Mashookhel as he came out of his house to offer Fajr prayers in mosque.

Maulana Ijaz had contested elections from PK-72 and was again a candidate of the JUI. Peshawar police took the body in custody and sent it for post-mortem.

People urged to inform authorities

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Home and Tribal Affairs Department on Saturday urged people to inform nearby police stations or to contact on 1125 if they witnessed any suspected persons or suspicious activity in their surroundings.

In a press statement issued here, it was said that all the law enforcement agencies are actively performing their duties; however, the security was a common responsibility.

Therefore, people have been requested to cooperate with security forces by contacting nearby police stations or check-posts or can dial mobile numbers of 0336-1816106 and 0325-1855653.

The name and identification of the informer would be kept secret and would not be disclosed, the statement said.

PESHAWAR (APP): Capital City Police (CCP) Peshawar launched an intelligence-based targeted search & strike operation to maintain law and order in the provincial capital on Saturday.

The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, Kashif Aftab Abbasi has said that the capital city police along with security forces and other agencies has initiated indiscriminate crackdown

against anti-social elements in the district and beside daily based snap checking, special checkpoints have also been established at all entrances to the city.

In this connection, a targeted search & strike operation was carried out early in the morning. The SSP (Operations) himself monitored the operation. All divisional Superintendents of Police (SPs), Sub-Divisional Police Officers

(SDPOs), Station House Officers (SHOs), officers and jawans of the security forces, police commandos, and personnel of the Frontier Reserve Police, Bomb Disposal Unit, sniffer dogs, ladies police and other units of police participated. The operation was also monitored through an online vehicle camera.

During the operation, action was also taken against unregistered tenants

and other suspects while cases were also registered against several persons involved in various criminal activities and heavy arms and ammunitions including Kalashnikovs, guns, hundreds of pistols and cartridges of various bore of weapons have also been recovered from the accused.

The local level verification of the arrested accused is being carried out from different angles.



PESHAWAR: Leader Jamaat-i-Islami Shah Faisal Afridi addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo

Cold, partly cloudy weather predicted

PESHAWAR (APP): Regional Meteorological Department on Saturday forecast cold and partly cloudy weather for most districts of the province while very cold in hilly areas for next 24 hours.

Isolated rain with light snowfall over the hills is likely to occur over Chitral, Dir, Malakand, Buner, Kalam, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torgar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber and Swabi districts.

DPO reviews security arrangements for Chinese staff working

PESHAWAR (APP): The District Police Officer (DPO) Charsadda Muhammad Arif on Saturday made a visit to the Munda Dam, Mohmand and police Line to review the security measures for the Chinese staff working on the project.

During the visit, he expressed satisfaction with the security arrangements and issued instructions to the police officers present.

He emphasized that special attention should be

given to the security of foreigners and that police personnel should be deployed on the designated routes.

The officers were instructed to escort the Chinese nationals through routes, while also remaining alert and vigilant by wearing helmets and jackets.

District Police Officer (DPO) Charsadda also emphasized the importance of maintaining constant communication between the policemen on

duty and the control room. DSP Tangi Taj Mohammad Khan and DSP Headquarters Nasrullah Khan, along with other police officials, were also present during the visit.

The visit by District Police Officer (DPO) Charsadda was seen as a positive step towards ensuring the safety and security of the Chinese nationals, which is of great importance as the two countries continue to strengthen their ties.

Chinese canola flowers in full bloom in Pakistan

PESHAWAR (INP): Canola variety HC-021C of a Chinese seed company is blooming in Pakistan. This agriculture cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will increase Pakistan's edible

oil production and save foreign exchange reserves.

In an interview with Gwadar Pro, Zhou Xusheng, Director of International Department, Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Company said that the project will increase the country's unit output and reduce import bills. Mills can get better milling yield and consumers can get healthy edible oil, he added.

Comparing with other existing Brassica napus canola varieties in Pakistan, Zhou said that HC-021C has a shorter growth period, making it suitable to match with local farmers' sowing habits. In addition, HC-021C is proven to show higher disease resistance and is suitable for high density planting. Given these great characteristics, HC-021C has a higher yield, 5% higher than other local varieties per unit.

The last date of registration is March 2 and students are requested to complete the registration process as early as possible to avoid any inconvenience.

Underlining the benefits of HC-021C in Pakistan, Zhou said that the Punjab government gives a Rs5000/ package to HC-021C as it has better oil rape seed color. Farmers

can get Rs500/40kgs more than raya/mustard, therefore HC-021C can get a better income.

He said, "In terms of nutritional value, given Ayub's research, HC-021C is able to achieve 38% or higher on oil content (10% higher than raya/mustard) and over 66% on oleic acid."

Moreover, HC-021C's erucic acid content weighs 0.7%, much lower than the 2% international standard, resulting in higher added value on downstream processing."

"In the future, Qingfa and its partner Certus Seeds in Pakistan will invest in new breeding varieties locally. For building an industry chain in Pakistan, we plan to introduce canola harvester modules and Chinese oil press technology and units.

Besides the downstream chain we also want to develop fine variety, contract farming to provide high quality rape seeds to local oil press mills. This mode will benefit whole chains," Zhou added.

Pakistan has a huge

demand for vegetable oil. Each resident is estimated to have an annual consumption of 18 kilograms of oil, resulting in an annual consumption of around 5 million tons. Edible oil is among the largest food imports in Pakistan.

From 2021 to 2022, Pakistan has imported around 3.6 billion dollars' worth of edible oil, making it 89% of Pakistan's national supply. Among all edible oils Pakistan has imported palm oil which occupies the largest share of 94%. Local supply of palm oil only takes up 11% of the market share. Since 2009, Wuhan Qingfahesheng Seed Company has cooperated with Certus Seeds Pakistan for canola research and breeding in Pakistan while HC-021C was approved by the Pakistani Government later in 2019.

The company also manages breeding and technical support for local farmers. Every March the company arranges field days for farmers and transfers cultivation technology to them for better yield.



PESHAWAR: Leader PTI Abdul Sattar Khalil with other party workers offering dua for health of Chairman PTI Imran Khan. — F.P. photo



In brief

Fire destroys sugarcane crop

KHANPUR (INP): Sugarcane crop spanning on eight-acre area in Khanpur's village Chak 60-P caught fire on Saturday. The fire tender team of Rescue reached the site after getting information and extinguished the blaze. However, crop worth rupees tens of thousands of a farmer burnt to ashes. The reason of the fire eruption has not been ascertained as yet.

Dry, cold weather forecast

BAHAWALPUR (APP): The local Met Office has forecast dry and cold weather for the city for the next 24 hours. The highest maximum temperature of 30 centigrade and the lowest minimum of 15 centigrade were recorded during the last 24 hours. Dry and cold weather has also been forecast for the rest of the region.

Profiteers fined in Sargodha

SARGODHA (APP): Assistant Commissioner Kotmomin Rabnawaz on Saturday imposed a total fine of Rs 120,000 on four outlets and a petrol pump for profiteering. According to official sources, the AC imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on a petrol pump for creating artificial shortage of petrol, Rs 30,000 on Bakes & Bite shop for overcharging, Rs 20,000 on Hadi restaurant for poor cleanliness arrangements and Rs 20,000 on Anwar Sons shop for profiteering. The Assistant Commissioner visited Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kotmominand checked the attendance of staff.

One-day training session held

LARKANA (APP): A one day training session for faculty and staff on "Peace, Tolerance and Inclusivity" was held in the Seminar hall of the Campus. Society for Peace & Conflict Management Sindh University Campus Larkana, organized one day training workshop on Peace, Tolerance and Inclusivity for faculty and staff in collaboration with Peace Advocacy and Community Engagement for Tolerance project of Shaor Foundation. The training was a part of the series of sessions being held under the Project for Peace Advocacy and Community Engagement through Transformation (PACT) launched by Shaor Foundation. Pro Vice Chancellor SU Larkana Campus Professor Dr. Azhar Ali Shah chair the session. The participants of the session discussed the importance of peace, tolerance and inclusivity in human life in general and campus health in particular. The significance of gender-equality was also thoroughly deliberated and the role of women as mother, spouse, sibling, teacher, doctor and so forth was categorical emphasized and acknowledged by the participants. The workshop was attended by faculty members and support staff of the Campus belonging to departments of English Literature, Computer Science and business Administration. The participants of the session discussed the importance of peace, tolerance, in human life in general and campus health in particular. The significance of gender-equality was also thoroughly deliberated and the role of women as mother, spouse, sibling, teacher, doctor and so forth was categorical emphasized and acknowledged by the participants. Professor Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, Focal person G M Sheikh and Coordinator Ms. Hina Shah, conducted the workshop session and informed the participants that the training workshop aims at sensitizing the participants about the prevalence of different forms of extremism at academic campuses.

Fundraising drive for victimism of Turkiye, Syria kicks off

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Local deputy commissioner Fazal Akbar kicked off the fundraising campaign for the earthquake affected people of Turkiye and Syria at a meeting held on the premises of the District Headquarters Complex Tajazai. The campaign was inaugurated here the other day wherein a contractor Haji Rehmil Khan, brother of JUI-F former MPA Munawar Khan, deposited Rs 100000 to help the earthquake victims.

The meeting was attended among others by additional DC finance and planning Najibullah Khan, additional DC relief Hahibullah Khan, additional AC Gohar Ali, DEOs Ilyas Khattak and Farzana Sardar, bar president Asif Iqbal Advocate, officials of line departments, local bodies' members and traders' organisations representatives. An official told the meeting that the social welfare department had set up three aid collec-

tion camps in the district under the supervision of district administration.

He said that the administration officials had also held meetings with traders' bodies to motivate them to take active part in the fundraising campaign and collect donations from shopkeepers and members of the business community. "The Turkish government and its organisations had executed a number of uplift works in water supply and other sectors and also helped poor in the district in the past", claimed Asif Iqbal, adding that the people of Lakki Marwat will extend all out assistance both in cash and kind to their brethren in trouble.

He appreciated the local administration for launching the fundraising drive and said that the legal fraternity would take enthusiastic part in it. The ESED officials said that they had already issued special instructions to schools' bosses to engage teachers and students in the fundraising activity to help

earthquake victims of Turkiye and Syria. They said that the instructions issued by the provincial secretary of elementary and secondary education and district administration in this regard would be implemented with true spirit.

They also said that details of the amount deposited by schools' heads in the government notified bank account would be shared with the administration and high ups of the education department on a daily basis. The deputy commissioner asked the relevant authorities to activate civil society and local welfare organisations in the fundraising activities. He said that Pakistan stood by the brethren Muslim countries and would support and help them in the time of distress. Mr Fazal said that Turkiye had helped Pakistan in all disasters and catastrophes and now it was our responsibility to respond in the same gesture.

Transparent supply of flour to public directed

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: A meeting was held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office Saidu Sharif presided by the caretaker Minister for Communications and Works (C&W) Muhammad Ali Shah regarding the uninterrupted supply of government flour to the public in a transparent and systematic manner. Additional Deputy Commissioner Swat Sohail Ahmed, Assistant Commissioner Babuzai Asghar Surani, other officers of district administration and officials of Food Department participated in the meeting.

A briefing was given by the food authorities on the availability, delivery and accessibility of government flour to the public. Matters related to flour mills were also discussed in the meeting.

While presiding over the meeting, the caretaker minister asked to continuously monitor the availability of flour, monitor supply from flour fills on a daily basis, keep a constant eye on quality and quantity, take into account public complaints regarding distribution network and procedures.

The caretaker minister Muhammad Ali Shah said that people should get qual-

ity flour easily. He said that people are complaining about the distribution system, which needs to be improved. He directed to distribute flour transparently and without any discrimination at the village council level.

The caretaker minister said that Ramadan is near and in this regard, there is a need for advance measures. The caretaker minister directed the food authorities to systematically monitor the situation in the flour mills and said that flour should be released from the flour mills as per the quality formula and strict action should be taken in case of adulteration.

Students should focus on studies: VC Gomal Varsity

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Federal Government with the support of Higher Education Commission (HEC) distributed Benazir Scholarship checks worth about one and a half crore rupees to 71 students of Gomal University Dera Ismail Khan.

Vice-Chancellor



Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah said that the provision of scholarship beyond the expectations of the students by the government is a good step, the aim of this policy is to promote knowledge. Students should focus on their studies.

However, in practical life, by serving the country and the nation, convey the fruits of this scholarship to others. He said that our area is a poor area and I

am well aware of the financial difficulties of our students and their parents.

The process of distribution of need based and FATA scholarship will also be started soon, He said that it is my effort to ensure the provision of maximum educational facilities for the students of Gomal University. He also paid tribute to the efforts of Dr. Hamid Khan and his team in charge of Scholarship Cell.



ORAKZAI: Activists of JUI holding a rally for peace in their area. — F.P. photo

Expensive parrots looted at gunpoint

GUJJARPURA (INP): In a strange incident in Gujjarpura area of Lahore, two intending 'buyers' of pet birds looted a man at gunpoint and made away with his expensive parrots, police said reported on Saturday.

In the available CCTV footage two accused entered the house of the parrot owner Arshad Niazi in the garb of buyers of pet birds. A third accused kept standing outside the house. Arshad Niazi's house is located in Begumpura area of Lahore.

Arshad Niazi took the two accused to rooftop of his house to show them the parrots. However, the alleged robbers, held him at gunpoint, tied him and made away with expensive parrots. In the CCTV footage, the accused can be seen coming out of the house and taking away the parrots in a cage. Arshad has submitted an application in Gujjarpura Police Station for the registration of a case. The police have started investigation into the incident after collecting evidence from the crime scene.

Students set up relief camps

HYDERABAD (PPI): Students of Sindh Agricultural University (SAU) set up camps to help earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria. According to a statement on Saturday, the camps were inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agricultural University. Vice chancellor, teachers and students collected donations.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri said, "Turkey is our friendly country and being a Muslim country, it is our duty to help the affected people of both countries." He further stated that during the recent flood in Pakistan and especially in Sindh, Turkey helped our people. Turkey also worked together with Sindh Agricultural University to restore the agricultural sector and distributed free wheat seeds among flood-affected small farmers. Marri said that we are working with Turkey on various technology exchange projects in agriculture and other sectors. "The Sindh Agricultural University has also directed teachers and officers above grade 17 to voluntarily submit one day's salary as donation," he added.

Technical training for youth continue in Bajaur

F.P. Report

KHAR: Security forces are continuously focusing to make the youth of the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa skilled. In this regard, a two-week special training program is going on for the youth in Bajaur. 25 youth of the area are being trained in the training program starting from February 13.

The technical training program for the youth included electricians, lectures on safety precautions while handling electrical wires, how to connect electrical wires, building wiring procedures, wiring techniques and circuit board proce-



dures, computer and laptop handling, names of computer parts, basic details on computer functions, typing, vehicle repair & maintenance and introduction to engine

parts and tools. The aim of this training program given by the security forces is to make the tribal youth self-sufficient so that they can get dignified employment.

Farewell party in honour of retiring officers held

F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Vice-Chancellor University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK), Prof Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, has said that the faculty members and administrative staff who devotedly served the institution and nurtured a generation of highly educated youth in the region will never be forgotten for their valuable services and lighting the candle of knowledge in the society.

He expressed these views while addressing a farewell party held in connection with the retirement of Prof Emeritus Dr. Muhammad Qayyum, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Sadeeq Awan, Prof. Aamir Farooq, Prof. Arif Bakhari, and Additional Treasurer Abdul Wahid.

Paying rich tribute to their services, the Vice-Chancellor said that the retiring faculty members and administrative officers have dedicated their lives to serving the institution for over three decades and have prepared young people by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and spirit of national development. "Their devotion is an admirable example and a source of inspiration for other officers," he added.

Dr. Kaleem Abbasi said that UAJK has a great tradi-

tion of honoring its retirees after serving in any capacity at the university, and today's ceremony was organized to uphold this glorious tradition and acknowledge their services and bid them farewell with dignity and respect.

Acknowledging Prof. Dr. Abdul Qayyum Khan's contributions to the university as a faculty member, Registrar, Dean of Engineering, and Director of Finance, he termed it a golden chapter in the history of the institution. "Similarly, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Sadeeq Awan, Prof. Arif Bukhari, Prof. Aamir Farooq, and Abdul Wahid have also rendered remarkable services in their respective fields, which is a source of pride for the university," the VC remarked.

The ceremony, besides retiring professors and administrative officers was also addressed by, Meritorious Prof. Dr. Ghulam Murtaza, Prof. Emeritus Dr. Muhammad Rustam Khan, Registrar Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail, Meritorious Prof. Dr. Nadeem Haider Bukhari, Dean of Sciences Dr. Sadiq ur Rahman Khattak, Dean of Engineering Saadat Haneef Dar, President Officers Welfare Association Sardar Majeeb Zafar, Additional Registrar Sardar Zafar Iqbal, representative of Academic Staff Association Dr. Manzoor,

and President Administrative Staff Association Israr Saeed Qadri. The speakers paid tributes to their fellows for their professional services to the university and presented shields and souvenirs to them as a memento.

Accused nabbed

HARNAI (PPI): Harnai police claimed to have arrested proclaimed offender in an operation launched against proclaimed offenders in district Harnai of Balochistan province on Saturday.

In compliance with the directives of SP Harnai, Asim Shafi, staff of police station, Harnai under the supervision of Madad Shah, Station House Officer (SHO), Police Station, Harnai launched crack down against proclaimed offender.

One accused, wanted to Harnai police in First Information Report 10/2023 under section 380-457-411-34, was arrested in an operation conducted in the precincts of Police Station Harnai. The alleged accused was shifted to Police Station Harnai and later handed over to the Investigation Staff of PS, Harnai for further investigation. Further investigation was underway.

Supremacy of Constitution key for equality

Zia-ur-Rahman Tajik

SUPREMACY of the Constitution means that no one is above the law irrespective of his social status and position in society and are equal before the law. In case of contradiction between the constitution and the ordinary law, the provision of the constitution would prevail.

Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It limits all organs of the state to perform their functions and exercise their powers within the frontiers prescribed by the constitution. The constitution takes precedence over all other laws and ensures the smooth running of the state. The constitution protects individual rights. Limits the parliament from legislation in contravention of fundamental rights. protects people from the arbitrary exercise of power by those who are in power.

Supremacy of the constitution keeps check and balance on the govt power. Prevents its abuse. Defends human rights, promotes rule of law and order in society. Ensure the independence of the judiciary. Protects citizens from all kinds of punishment except for

established infringements of the law. For supremacy of the constitution existence of a written constitution is essential which describes an obvious distinction between constitutional and ordinary law.

Constitutional supremacy creates a national govt consisting of an executive, a judicial, and a legislative organ. The constitution divides power between the federal and provincial Govt. The opposite of constitutional supremacy is the supremacy of the parliament. In parliamentary supremacy, the parliament can legislate and amend any law without being questioned by any authority and no court can declare it unconstitutional or illegal. Parliamentary supremacy also does not make any difference between ordinary and constitutional law. Parliamentary supremacy is in vogue in the United Kingdom.

In Pakistan constitution is supreme and provides functions for all the three organs of the state. The legislature has the power to legislate and enact laws both on a constitutional and a sub-constitutional provision. under article 141 of the constitution, parliament can promulgate laws for the whole of Pakistan or

part of it and under article 142 of the constitution parliament exercises exclusive jurisdiction to make law concerning any matter in the federal legislative list.

The executive authority of the federation is exercised by the federal govt in the name of the President under article 90 of the constitution and implements and enforces the law. The establishment and jurisdiction of the courts are provided by the Article 175 of the constitution. The main function of the judiciary is the dispensation of justice and interpretation of the law. Redressal of grievances of litigants under the command and mandate of the constitution and Acts of the parliament. Supreme Court also enjoys suo moto jurisdiction under article 184(3) and all the judicial and executive authorities under article 190 of the Constitution are bound shall act in aid of the supreme court.

But the doctrine of separation of power is debatable in Pakistan, unlike the American constitution where 3 organs of the state independently and without any interference exercise power. Article 1 of the American constitution expressly vests all the legislative power of the state

on congress. under article 2 the executive powers are vested in the president and Article 3 confers the judicial power on the Supreme Court and such other lower courts as may be created by the American legislature.

The doctrine of separation of power is not strictly implemented in its true perspective in Pakistan for example the President and Governor under articles 89 and 128 have the power to issue ordinances having the same force and effect as an Act of the parliament and Article 260(2) of the constitution is also clear on the subject.

In Pakistan supremacy of the constitution is the basis of Pakistan's constitutional and political system. Parliament exercises supremacy within the jurisdiction assigned to it by the constitution. Parliament has the power to amend the constitution under article 238 of the constitution and the said amendment also cannot be challenged on any ground as per article 239(5) of the constitution. The parliament has no power to change the basic structure of the Constitution. A basic structure doctrine is a form of judicial review that is issued to test the legality of amend-

ments in the constitution. The basic structure doctrine was adopted by the Indian Supreme Court in Kasavananda Bharti versus the state of Kerala case (AIR 1973 SC 1461).

In that case, it was held by the Supreme Court of India that Parliament has the power to amend the constitution but cannot change its basic structure. The basic structure of our Constitution is a parliamentary form of Govt, democracy, federal structure of the state, independence of judiciary, fundamental rights, impartial sovereign and amendment by 2/3 majority.

It was held by the August Supreme Court of Pakistan that the constitution is supreme because parliament is the creation of the constitution and parliament has no inherent power of amendment, amendment Power is given to a limited extent and cannot change its basic structure and identity. (PLD 2009 SC 879 relevant page is 1174). The basic structure doctrine is not accepted by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the famous case of the District Bar Association Rawalpindi versus the Federation of Pakistan etc (PLD 2015 SC 401). In that case, the

majority of honourable judges avoided to owned the basic structure doctrine instead they used the expression basic or silent feature.

Supremacy of the constitution provides a safeguard from all kind of hardships, and also provide a guideline for running the govt and governing the state. It's our misfortune that to date no proper heed was paid by the institution of the state to the provision of the constitution for the progressive development of the motherland. constitutional supremacy also provides a solution to all problems subject but needs strict implementation of its provisions in letter and spirit.

Supremacy of the constitution also restrains every institution of the state from interference in the affairs of other institutions. Due to the interference of the institutions in each other's affairs inhabitants of Pakistan are affected economically, politically and socially. The present worst economic crises, degradation and exorbitant increase in price hike is the worst example of illegal and unconstitutional interference of institutions in each other affairs.

Ziaurrahmantajik123@gmail



Turkish quake victims sleep in trains, tents, greenhouses

SAMANDAG (AP): Nearly two weeks after a massive earthquake leveled tens of thousands of buildings and displaced millions of people in Turkey and Syria, many are still struggling to fulfill their basic needs and some are bedding down in tents, factories, train cars and greenhouses. People pushed from their homes in the disaster zone described a wide range of conditions: Some were able to find regular hot showers, while others feared freezing to death.

The Turkish government and dozens of aid groups have launched a massive relief effort. The government said that more than 5,400 shipping containers have been deployed as shelters and over 200,000 tents dispatched. But it's facing a massive disaster. The government says at least 84,000 buildings, containing more than 332,000 dwellings, were either destroyed by the Feb. 6 quake or too damaged to be used. There is no official figure for the number of people displaced in Turkey's side of the disaster region, which is home to some 14 million, or 16% of the country's population.

In the mountain villages of Kahramanmaraş province, locals battle to keep warm during the bitterly cold nights. Buyuknacar, a village just a few kilometers (miles) from the epicenter of the 7.8 magnitude quake, was severely damaged and 158 were killed. Two days after the initial tremor, a military helicopter brought supplies and on the fifth day the road was cleared. Although the villagers have tents, they are too flimsy to keep out the cold. Villagers said they feared icy conditions in the mountains would lead to further deaths.

Umut Sital, 45, said: "Our basic need is, first, containers. Tents won't work here. ... People in tents will freeze to death." President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said 2.2 million people had left the disaster zone. Of those, he said, the housing needs of

1.6 million had been fulfilled, including some 890,000 people placed in public facilities, such as student dormitories, and 50,000 in hotels.

The Transport Ministry said that the government had helped more than 272,000 to evacuate by air, sea and rail. However, many people prefer to remain close to their homes, either to protect their possessions, wait for relatives' bodies to be recovered or, in rural areas, care for their livestock. Others seeking protection from winter temperatures have resorted to any structure that will keep out the elements.

Near the Mediterranean coast in Hatay, one of the hardest-hit provinces, farmers in Samandag district fled their damaged homes to large greenhouses normally used for growing tomatoes, bringing with them whatever bedding and cooking utensils they could salvage. Locals said that around 2,000 people were now living under the plastic covers. Many had lost not just their homes but also their livestock.

"There's no safe place apart from the greenhouses, because the houses collapsed due to the earthquake," said Ozkan Sagaltici, in his 50s. The villagers have set up wood stoves inside the greenhouses to cook the food handed out by aid agencies. "We have no clean clothes," said Suzan Sagaltici, who's staying in a greenhouse on the other side of the village. "We can't clean ourselves as we would like to, we can't take a shower. It's very difficult to live here. There's no sink. We have nothing. It's like living in the open air."

Other displaced people have found relatively stable shelter. Elsewhere in Hatay, the Yuksel family found refuge in a metal factory, where they have been provided with necessities including clothing and household items. Veysel Yuksel, his wife, Dilek Nur Yuksel, and their three children are living in a trailer at the factory near the port city of

Iskenderun. The children play among heavy machinery as their parents prepare food. "Our house has not been completely destroyed but seriously damaged," said Yuksel. "All the buildings surrounding ours have been ruined."

In the first days after the earthquake, around 1,600 people from the nearby town of Dortyol stayed at the factory, but half later left for other parts of Turkey. The displaced residents can use a shared bathroom with hot water, a laundry and a small kitchen. They sleep in offices, shipping containers or trailers.

At Iskenderun's rail station, families shelter in train carriages, according to the state-run Andalou Agency. "Our house has become unusable, we can't get into it," said Nida Karahan, 50, whose family of five was living in a cream- and red-painted carriage. "The wagons have become our home." As well as providing warm shelter, people said they were being provided with three meals a day by the military.

Qatar is sending shelters used to house soccer fans during last year's World Cup. Many other nations have also sent tents and containers. In the provincial capital of Kahramanmaraş, which has the same name as the province, residents also complained of difficulties finding a place to stay. "I couldn't find anything like a tent for the first three or four days," said father-of-three Haci Kose. "I went around with my family in my car (but) couldn't find a place to stay wherever I went. They said there are tents here and there (but) they're making it up."

He was eventually allocated a tent by an Azerbaijani aid agency, but said he still has problems getting enough to eat or finding a place to relieve himself. "I wish we were stuck under the rubble too so we didn't have to live in this situation," Kose added. "The aid isn't coming to the people in the tents."

Chinese officials arrive in Taiwan

TAIPEI (Reuters): A group of Chinese officials arrived in Taiwan on Saturday on the first visit in three years since the COVID-19 pandemic began, to attend a cultural event at a time of soaring military tensions across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan's government this week allowed the trip of six officials, lead by Liu Xiaodong, deputy head of the Shanghai office of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, to attend the Lantern Festival in Taipei, at the invitation of the city government.

Liu, arriving at Taipei's downtown Songshan airport, did not answer questions from reporters. His group was ushered into a van under heavy security and driven away. Around a dozen pro-Taiwan independence supporters protested his arrival outside the airport, shouting "Taiwan and China, separate countries" and "Chinese people, get out", while on the airport road another small group of pro-China supporters shouted their welcome.

Chilly Chen, head of the pro-independence Taiwan Republic Office, told Reuters the Taiwanese people were very hospitable and welcomed visitors but were concerned they were coming to push Chinese policies on the democratic island. "Everything China does is in the service of politics, and their aim is definitely united front," Chen added, referring to the name of China's policy to co-opt non-Communists and Taiwan's people in particular.

Taiwan's China-policy-making Mainland Affairs Council said the group has been allowed to come as long as they keep a low profile and it hoped their visit would promote mutual understanding and "healthy and orderly exchanges". Taipei Mayor Chiang Wan-an, from the main opposition party the Kuomintang which traditionally favours close relations with China, told reporters they "very much welcomed" the delegation. Arrangements for the group will follow the principles of "low-key, simple, and secure" as set out by Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, Chiang told reporters. While China has refused to speak to Taiwan's government since President Tsai Ing-wen took office in 2016, believing she is a separatist, city-to-city exchanges had continued until interrupted by the pandemic.

Still, Tsai's administration has cautiously been trying to reopen less sensitive people-to-people links since it lifted pandemic-related border controls late last year, aiming to engender goodwill with China. China continues to carry out military activities near Taiwan, including almost daily crossings of the Taiwan Strait's median line by Chinese air force jets, which had previously served as an unofficial barrier.

Nigeria police deploy for security

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP): Nigeria will deploy more than 400,000 security personnel ahead of the presidential election next week amid fears that Islamic extremists or secessionists could try to disrupt the vote. The security forces also will be on hand in case of violent protests, Usman Baba, Nigeria's Inspector-General of Police, told reporters.

"The Nigeria police with the support of other security agencies have perfected plans to deploy in a coordinated and collaborative manner," he said. The West African nation is set to elect a new president as it is confronted by a myriad of security problems: an Islamic extremist insurgency linked to the Islamic State group in the north-east, armed rebels in the northwest, and secessionists in the southeast.

The security challenges bring a "critical, serious threat to Nigeria's democracy," according to Bulama Bukarti, a senior fellow with the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. "The non-state armed groups are going to do whatever they can do — using every arm in their arsenal — to see that Nigeria's election gets disrupted," Bukarti said.

Philippines 'will not lose an inch' of territory: Marcos

MANILA (Reuters): Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said on Saturday that the country "will not lose an inch" of territory, his remarks coming on the heels of continuing maritime tensions with Beijing in the South China Sea. The Southeast Asian nation this week protested what it called as Beijing's "aggressive activities" that have stoked a long-running territorial dispute over the South China Sea.

"The country has seen heightened geopolitical tensions that do not conform to our ideals of peace and threaten the security and stability of the country, of the region and of the world," Marcos said in a speech at a military alumni homecoming event. "This country will not lose an inch of its territory. We will continue to uphold our territorial integrity and sovereignty in accordance with our constitution and with international law. We will work with our neighbours to secure the safety and security of our peoples."

Beijing's embassy in Manila did not respond to a request for comment. China's foreign ministry had said its coastguard conducted actions according to law. Marcos summoned China's envoy to express his "serious concern" over Beijing's "increasing fre-



quency and intensity of actions" against the Philippine Coast Guard and Filipino fishermen in the South China Sea. The Philippines' foreign ministry also filed a diplomatic protest after Manila's coastguard reported its Chinese counterpart had directed a "military-grade laser" at one of its ships supporting a resupply mission to troops, temporarily blinding its crew on the bridge.

However, Marcos sees the laser pointing incident as insufficient to invoke a mutual defence treaty with United States, a longstanding ally. "If we activated that, what we are doing is escalating, intensifying the tensions in the area and I

think that would be counterproductive," Marcos told reporters. Marcos said he discussed with China's ambassador to Manila what he saw was intensifying actions of Chinese marine militia, coast guard and navy, including the laser pointing incident. China's recent actions came just a month after Marcos' state visit to Beijing, where the two countries pledged to handle disputes peacefully and boost cooperation. China claims large swathes of the strategic waterway, where about \$3 trillion in ship-borne trade passes annually, which was invalidated by an international tribunal in The Hague in 2016.

Clinic to open near Ohio derailment

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio (AP): A plume of chemicals that spilled into the Ohio River after a fiery train derailment has broken up and is no longer a concern, Ohio's governor said. But worries remain near the disaster site among residents who have complained about lingering headaches and irritated eyes.

Despite repeated assurances that air and water testing has shown no signs of contaminants, some around East Palestine, along the Pennsylvania state line, are still skeptical and afraid to return to their homes. Early next week, the state plans to open a medical clinic in the village to evaluate those who are worried and analyze their symptoms, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine announced. The clinic will include a team of experts in chemical exposures that is being deployed to eastern Ohio.

"These are very legitimate questions, and residents deserve an answer," DeWine said while also emphasizing that testing inside and outside of homes in the village have no found no signs of toxins that were on the train. "We're doing absolutely everything we can to assure residents to what the situation is," he said. "I understand people have been traumatized. I understand skepticism."

Nick Patrone, who lives four miles outside the village, said there is definitely an irritant in the air.

"You feel it," he said. "A lot of my friends have children who have rashes that are unexplained all over their bodies. They have sore throats, they have congestion, they have ear irritation." Earlier this week, hundreds of people showed up at a public meeting to voice concerns and get answers from not only state and local leaders but also railroad operator Norfolk Southern. But representatives of the railroad were absent, saying they were worried about physical threats. DeWine was upset by the no-show and said Norfolk Southern President and CEO Alan Shaw needs to go to East Palestine and answer questions.

At least five lawsuits have been filed against the railroad, and lawyers have been showing up in the area to offer advice and legal options. Two weeks have now passed since the freight train carrying a variety of hazardous chemicals derailed, but the stench of what spilled hasn't left. In the aftermath, residents have complained about finding their cars covered in soot, their homes filled with overpowering odors and their pets getting sick or dying. The chemicals

also spilled into nearby creeks, killing thousands of fish, and a smaller amount eventually made their way into the Ohio River.

While environmental officials said the contaminant amounts in the river were low enough that they did not pose a threat, cities in Ohio and West Virginia that get their drinking water from the river had been monitoring a slow-moving plume and a few temporarily switched to alternative water sources. Water samples showed the plume is now completely gone, DeWine said.

The governor also said that air testing inside 500 homes hasn't detected dangerous levels in the village since residents were allowed to return after the controlled release and burn of five tanker cars filled with vinyl chloride, which is associated with an increased risk of certain cancers. DeWine said the derailment has been traumatic for the village of just under 5,000 people. But he said "no one is trying to downplay anything." Ohio Health Department Director Bruce Vanderhoff said the extensive testing of air and water that has been in place the past two weeks should be reassuring. "We have been guided from the beginning by people who are national experts on what to test for," he said.

Speed up support for Ukraine, Zelensky pleads

KYIV (AFP): Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky urged world leaders to speed up support at the opening of the Munich Security Conference, as European allies renewed vows to back Kyiv ahead of the first anniversary of Russia's invasion. Western backers have delivered an array of weaponry to Ukraine since the outbreak of the war and pledged more, but Kyiv fears crucial supplies will arrive too slowly to defend against major new offensives.

"We need to hurry up," Zelensky told the start of the three-day gathering via video link. "We need speed - speed of our agreements, speed of our delivery... speed of decisions to limit Russian potential". There is no "alternative", as people's lives were on the line, he said. The key annual conference comes just days ahead of the February 24 anniversary of Moscow sending its forces into the country, unleashing war in Europe for the first time in decades.

It is being attended by the leaders of France and Germany, as well as US Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Antony

Blinken, China's top diplomat Wang Yi and NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg. Russian delegates including Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who was a regular attendee at Munich in the past, have not been invited.

Zelensky also insisted that there was "no alternative" to Ukraine triumphing in its fight against President Vladimir Putin's troops, and no choice but for Kyiv to eventually join the EU and NATO. Speaking to the forum after Zelensky, French President Emmanuel Macron urged allies to "intensify our support" for Ukraine to aid its forces in launching a counter-offensive.

While insisting he did not want to see a drawn-out war, he said France was ready for a "prolonged conflict" and it was not the right time for dialogue with Moscow. "We have a Russia which has chosen war, which has chosen to intensify the war, and which has chosen to go as far as committing war crimes and to attacking civilian infrastructures," he said.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz meanwhile insisted that German support was "designed to last", but took a

veiled swipe at other allies over faltering efforts to deliver promised tanks to Ukraine. Facing desperate pleas from Kyiv, Berlin finally agreed in January to allow German-made, heavy Leopard tanks -- widely used in Europe -- to be sent Ukraine. Berlin has vowed to send some of the most modern variety from its military stocks but is struggling to persuade allies to do the same.

"Those who can send such battle tanks should really do so now," Scholz told the conference, where he said he would be "intensive campaigning" to get allies to move on the issue. It is a reversal of fortunes for Scholz, who up until last months facing accusations of foot-dragging over his reluctance to permit delivery of the tanks. Under German law, Berlin must give permission for other countries that use the tanks to re-export them.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba is in Munich, and is expected to join a meeting of foreign ministers from the G7 club of rich countries on Saturday, on the sidelines of the conference.

Ukraine invasion reshaped global alliances, renewed fears

BANGKOK (AP): Nearly a year after Russia invaded Ukraine, the battlefield has narrowed and stiff resistance has forced Moscow to scale back its military goals. But the diplomatic consequences of the war still reverberate worldwide. The fighting has reshaped global alliances, renewed old anxieties and breathed new life into NATO and the bond between Europe and the United States.

The invasion drew Moscow closer to Beijing and the pariah states of Iran and North Korea. It also raised broad questions about sovereignty, security and the use of military power, while intensifying fears about China's designs on Taiwan. "The war underscores the inter-relationship between diplomacy and the use of force in a way that has not been thought about in quite the same fashion for many, many years," said Ian Lesser, vice president of the German Marshall Fund think tank. When Russian forces invaded on Feb. 24, it "marked the complete end of the post-Cold War world," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said last month in a speech at Johns Hopkins University. "It has come to light that globalization and interde-

pendence alone cannot serve as a guarantor for peace and development across the globe."

Russian President Vladimir Putin has claimed that Ukraine is an "integral part" of Russian history that never achieved "real statehood" — a stance that echoes Chinese President Xi Jinping's position on Taiwan, a self-governed island that Beijing claims as its own. Some six months after the invasion of Ukraine, China issued a white paper on Taiwan, saying the island "has been an integral part of China's territory since ancient times." The paper said Beijing seeks "peaceful reunification" but "will not renounce the use of force."

China's designs on Taiwan date to well before the war in Ukraine, but China stepped up its pressure over the past year or more, including firing ballistic missiles over the island and into Japanese waters in August in response to then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taipei. If Russia is allowed to succeed in Ukraine, it could further embolden countries like China, with its visions of an international order "that diverge from ours and that we can never accept," Kishida said.

He pledged to use Japan's presidency of the G7 this year to strengthen "the unity of like-minded countries" against Russian aggression. "If we let this unilateral change of the status quo by force go unchallenged, it will happen elsewhere in the world, including Asia," he said. A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would be far more complicated than Russia's attack on Ukraine, said Euan Graham, a Singapore-based expert with the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

"Russia's incompetent performance on the battlefield in Ukraine has to give pause to any military or senior political leader in China about an adventure on a much more ambitious scale with Taiwan," Graham said. But the fear is real. Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen extended the nation's compulsory military service in a December announcement that referenced the war in Ukraine.

"They've drawn the lesson from Ukraine that you need to have a larger military reserve if there is a conflict," Graham said. North Korea, which has threatened to preemptively use nuclear weapons in a broad range of scenarios, was already a regional concern. But Russia's sugges-

tion that it could use nuclear weapons in Ukraine fueled new worries. South Korea, which is under the protection of the American "nuclear umbrella," last year expanded exercises with the US military that had been downsized under the Trump administration. South Korea is also seeking stronger assurances that Washington will swiftly use its nuclear capabilities in the face of a North Korean nuclear attack.

North Korea has been strongly supportive of neighboring Russia. Late last year, the US accused Pyongyang of supplying Russia with artillery shells. Iran has also been helping Russia militarily, providing the bomb-carrying drones Moscow uses to strike power plants and civilian sites throughout Ukraine. While Western allies have cooperated closely in their responses to the war, a major diplomatic challenge has been to convince much of the rest of the world of the invasion's significance.

Only a handful of countries in Asia have taken tough action against Moscow, and many abstained from the United Nations resolution condemning the attack. Just weeks before the invasion, China declared a "no limits" friendship with Russia.

Leaderless Michigan GOP seeks new direction in chair race

LANSING, Mich. (AP): The Michigan Republican Party is set to elect its next chair Saturday from a field led by far-right candidates after sweeping losses to Democrats in last year's midterms left Republicans powerless in the state government and the party in disarray.

The winner, inheriting a state party torn apart by infighting and millions in debt, will be tasked with helping the party win back control of the Legislature and flip one of the nation's most competitive Senate seats while attempting to help a presidential candidate win the battleground state. Republican delegates will vote to select the party's next leader during a spring convention Saturday in Lansing. The highest-profile candidates in the 10-candidate field are Matthew DePerno and Kristina Karamo, two of the state's loudest election conspiracists who lost by wide margins for top statewide offices in the 2022 midterms.

Other candidates vying for the position include two

county GOP chairs, a political consultant, a real estate agent, an information technology specialist and other political newcomers. DePerno is considered the favorite to win and has been endorsed by former President Donald Trump, along with other far-right GOP leaders Michael Flynn and Kari Lake, after losing the attorney general race. Hanging over his bid is an investigation by a special prosecutor reviewing whether to criminally charge DePerno and others for attempting to gain access to voting machines after the 2020 election.

Karamo seeks to lead the party after losing her secretary of state race by double-digits with a campaign centered on election conspiracies. In her campaign announcement for the chair, Karamo said the state is on "the precipice of tyranny, which voting alone will not be able to overcome." With a field dominated by grassroots activist candidates running on far-right messaging, many longtime Michigan Republicans have already given up on the

state party that was once one of the best-funded in the country.

"We lost the entire state-house for the first time in 40 years, in large part, because of the top of the ticket. All deniers. It turned off a lot of voters," former longtime Republican US Rep. Fred Upton said. "As I look at the state convention, it looks like it could be could well be more of the same." The party may take "a cycle or two to correct itself and to get out of the ditch that we've been in for the last couple of years," Upton told The Associated Press.

The state party previously has been led by former US Sen. Spencer Abraham, former Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and current national Republican Party Chair Ronna McDaniel. The party built a large volunteer base of grassroots activists, former Chair Bobby Schostak said, while also raising "\$30 to \$35 million each cycle." In Schostak's four years as party chair from 2011 to 2015, Republicans won control of the Legislature and the state elected a

Republican governor, Rick Snyder, for the first time in eight years. Trump won the state in the 2016 presidential election.

Democrats now control all levels of power for the first time since the 1980s. They won control of both houses of the Legislature and defeated Republicans by significant margins for governor, attorney general and secretary of state in the 2022 midterms. Longtime donors withheld millions in donations as the Republican party grew increasingly loyal to Trump, nominating his handpicked candidates, DePerno and Karamo. Tudor Dixon, who lost her race for governor to Whitmer, said her campaign was hurt by the state party not having as much money as in the past.

"I'd love to say that it is just a movement of going and knocking doors. But you've got to be able to put the money behind it," Dixon said. Following the midterms, Michigan GOP Chair Ron Weiser and co-chair Meshawn Maddock said they would not seek reelection.

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A new upsurge in terrorism

A group of terrorists attacked the Karachi Police Chief's Office on Friday evening in a bid to create a crisis by taking hostage Police officials but Security Forces successfully cleared the five-story Police Complex after nearly a four-hour operation in a busy area of the provincial capital. According to the reports, all attackers were killed by the LEAs while two police officers and another employee got martyrdom.

A fresh wave of terrorism come about across the country and banned terrorist groups are particularly targeting Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Sindh. There had been recurrent incidents of terrorism, kidnapping, and ransom in KP's settled districts including Swat, Mardan, Dir, and Swabi over the past few months, while the recent suicide attack on Peshawar Police Line Mosque was the biggest terror incident in recent years that cost nearly 100 human lives and prompted nationwide concerns regarding the gravity of the threat posing by terrorism to the country. Peshawar Police Line Massacre shattered the whole country, however, the government demonstrated a traditional response and forgot its responsibilities until a new carnage occur somewhere else. Ironically, the most crucial All Parties Conference (APC) fell prey to the ongoing rivalry between the coalition government and PTI-led opposition and could not be convened so far, which illustrates the nonseriousness of our leaders toward a sensitive issue relating to national security.

There had been continuous calls from the public, civil society, media, and certain political groups regarding the growing risk of terrorism, regrouping, and unlawful activities of the members of banned outfits in North and South Waziristan, Swat, Dir, and Buner in recent past but neither the local administration nor provincial and central governments responded to those sane voices until the menace of terrorism turned into a gigantic risk to the nation. The state of Pakistan had voluntarily given in hard-earned gains against terrorism by ignoring the 19-point National Action Plan (NAP), while our leadership reimported terrorism to its country by striking a truce with the TTP. So, the wrong decisions of the governments pushed the nation into the newest upheaval, and no consensus national strategy could be adopted to foil the threat effectively.

The current situation displays absolute disappointment and indignation among the masses as the state and People of Pakistan are under attack, inflation and energy crises are on the rise while the national economy is on the verge of collapse, and even then political leadership is embattled with each other for mere politics. The Nation squares up multiple challenges to its survival but the leaders yet not judge the sensitivity of the issue and are still busy with their descriptive politics.

The situation has become alarming and demands a national dialogue and consensus on the current issues particularly terrorism, national economy, and political stability. Therefore, politicians must pause their personal revenge and sit together to work out on the grave challenges endangering national security and survival if they really have good faith in their nation. Disunity is the worst weakness, while cooperation is the key to success, however, the legacies and piety of the leaders would be judged by their actions at this critical junction.

Russia no longer has the economic means to wage offensive warfare

THE vast Uralvagonzavod tank factory in Western Siberia is running out of workers. Plans to add a second production line for T-90 battle tanks have stalled. “It’s now impossible: there is an acute shortage of personnel at the plant. A master used to need special training, but now they take anyone with any experience in production,” said one employee, speaking to the regional Sverdlovsk newspaper.

The sprawling complex served as Stalin’s rear fortress in the Second World War. It built the Soviet Union’s T-34 tanks, safely beyond the reach of the Nazis. Now under the state-conglomerate Rostec – run by ex-KGB general Sergey Chemezov – it may struggle to save the Russian army a second time. Rostec is scouring the country, offering bumper wages and housing vouchers, especially for design engineers. But the pool of skills and manpower has dried up.

Some 700,000 Russians have left the country since the war began a year ago, mostly young men and mostly the best-educated. The military meat grinder is chewing up 800 soldiers a day, according to British intelligence. The more that Vladimir Putin mobilises those who remain, the less he has for his war industries. The International Institute for Strategic Studies thinks Russia has already lost 2,000-2,300 tanks in Ukraine, wasting half of its pre-war stock of T-72s and T-80s. “They’re producing and reactivating nowhere near enough to compensate for those loss rates,” it said.

Clearly, Uralvagonzavod cannot change this equation. Russia is for now drawing down its final reserve of Soviet relics, but these lack parts and are sitting ducks for Ukrainian drones. The US Treasury said in October that the Western blockade of semiconductors had led to a 70pc drop in chip imports from all global sources,

curtailing production of hypersonic missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and airborne early-warning systems.

It said Russia is cannibalising dishwashers and fridges to find chips for the military, but this is desperate bootstrap stuff. These circuit boards are not instantly interchangeable. Russia has two major semiconductor producers, Mikron and Baikal. They are in the 90nm (nanometer) range, workhorse technology from 20 years ago, unfit for modern precision weapons. Intel, Samsung, and Taiwan’s TSMC are

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard

Russian customs data purports to show that chip imports have surged despite the blockade, which is of course what the Kremlin wants us to believe. To the extent that volumes have risen, the imports are mostly routine low-tech chips from China. These reportedly have a “defect rate” twenty times higher. James Lewis, technology chief at Washington’s Center for Strategic and International Studies, says it would take two to three years to reconfigure platforms to accept many of these Chinese

illicitly without the knowledge of the manufacturers.

“Can Chinese manufacturers replace all those components? I am sceptical. We’ve hardly seen any of these Chinese chips in Russian weapons platforms. They haven’t actually done it,” he said. When it comes to weapons, the Kremlin still depends on an opaque supply-chain of western chips through Hong Kong, Turkey, or the Middle East. Many get through, but many do not, and the Biden administration is tightening the global

But the picture deteriorated rapidly in the fourth quarter, and shock figures in January have since raised alarm bells at the Kremlin. State energy revenues collapsed by 46pc and the budget swung to a \$25bn deficit in one month. Russia has no internal bond market to fund deficits on this scale. The Kremlin is having to raid the national wealth fund. That dropped by \$38bn to \$148bn in January. Lumpy outlays on weapons may have distorted the figures but a “burn-rate” of this magnitude means that Russia will soon have to face draconian aus-

with shocking CO2 emissions – but that does not mean the sanctions are futile. The point is to deprive the Kremlin of money. Russia has lost its primary gas market in Europe forever. The price for liquefied natural gas that it can still sell has dropped 70pc since last August. Russia has now lost half its global oil export revenues as well, and that is much more painful.

Putin still has the means to torment the West. He could slash oil output by three million barrels a day, timed to coincide with recovering Chinese demand, and force the price to \$200 in hopes of provoking Europe’s frazzled democracies to turn against their leaders over Ukraine. He might think he can recoup on price what he loses on volume. But such an oil shock would hurt China, India, and the global South even more than the West, and it would probably fail to shift democratic opinion.

The lesson of economic warfare, from the Continental Blockade through to the strangulation of Germany in two world wars, is that it takes a long time, but often ends with startling speed. Why did the German Spring Offensive in 1918 crumble and set in motion the cascading collapse of the Wilhelmine system? Why did the nation snap after four years of stoic forbearance? Because the country no longer had the economic means to wage offensive warfare. It had run out of workers for iron and steel plants. It had run out farm hands. It had run out of fuel, rubber, fertilisers, and food. It had run out of money. Russia is not going to run out of fuel or food, but it lacks much else needed to sustain its war machine, and it is massively out-powered by the West. How does one go bust, to borrow the immortal line from Hemingway? “Two ways: gradually, then suddenly.”

The Telegraph

The US Treasury said in October that the Western blockade of semiconductors had led to a 70pc drop in chip imports from all global sources, curtailing production of hypersonic missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and airborne early-warning systems. It said Russia is cannibalising dishwashers and fridges to find chips for the military, but this is desperate bootstrap stuff. These circuit boards are not instantly interchangeable. Russia has two major semiconductor producers, Mikron and Baikal. They are in the 90nm (nanometer) range, workhorse technology from 20 years ago, unfit for modern precision weapons. Intel, Samsung, and Taiwan’s TSMC are already working on 2nm chips. The Kremlin has unveiled a \$40bn (£33bn) national project to produce 90 nm chips en masse by 2030, but that only goes to show how hopeless the task is. “Despite this Russian effort to build a home-grown semiconductor industry, despite the propaganda, they haven’t succeeded, and I don’t think they’ll ever succeed. It leaves them critically dependent on foreign technology,” said James Byrne, head of open-source intelligence at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

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imports. “They don’t make all the types of chips the Russians need. While they could gear up to do this, they’ve seemed reluctant,” he said.

RUSI’s James Byrne says the weapons captured or shot down in Ukraine overwhelmingly contain US chips, mostly from Texas Instruments and Analogue Devices. This was to be expected in the early phase of the war: these were legacy weapons built earlier. The surprise is that Russia has continued to rely on US chips a full year later to keep the war industry going, obtaining them

noose.

Smuggling on this scale is a very expensive headache. Putin could afford to pay whatever it took in 2022. Russia had a current account surplus of 20pc of GDP in the early months of the war, before the G7’s oil and gas sanctions began to bite. It had a fossil-funded budget surplus that permitted guns and butter at the same time. Hence the apparent resilience of the Russian economy. It did not shrink by 10pc to 12pc as expected. The central bank says GDP contracted by just 2.5pc last year.

terity if it wants to keep fighting.

Putin can still sell his oil under the G7 oil price cap, activated in December. But the West controls 90pc of the trade through insurance, financing, and ship ownership. His “shadow fleet” has mostly failed to materialise. The ships are too big to dock in Russian ports. China, India, or Turkey are all driving hard bargains, knowing that Russia is a distressed seller. Urals crude has been trading at a \$40 discount to Brent.

Some Russian oil ends up in Europe again after a round trip to the Far East –

Elon Musk has put every lost young man on Twitter in the crosshairs of the far right

Katherine Denkinson

AT the end of last year, the British far-right group Patriotic Alternative (PA) was allowed back on Twitter after a ban of nearly two years for an unknown transgression. Far-right groups immediately urged Elon Musk to “be a hero” and also reinstate the account of the group’s leader, Mark Collett. Three weeks later, they rejoiced as Collett’s account was returned.

The reinstatements appear to be part of Musk’s commitment to free speech. But if he knew anything at all about PA, he would realise that he has placed a target on the back of every disenfranchised and politically lost young man on Twitter, many of whom are recruited to the far right via the platform. Consider the cases of two young men who recently began lengthy prison sentences for far-right terrorism offences. Daniel Harris, 19, is a far-right extremist now serving 11 years for creating videos that inspired mass

shooters in the US. Luca Benincasa, 20, who recently started a nine-year sentence, was a member of the proscribed neo-Nazi group Feuerkrieg Division.

Both men should be held to account for their behaviour, but their actions did not happen in a vacuum. They did not hatch from a swastika-stamped egg at 17 years old, determined to wreak havoc on the world. Their actions, and the beliefs that drove them, are the end product of years of indoctrination by online extremists. Before becoming a journalist, I worked with young men like Harris and Benincasa and have spent a considerable part of my career since then tracking the far right online. I’ve seen first-hand how easily they fall for the rhetoric of extremist and fascist groups and can say, without hyperbole, that the longer groups such as PA are on Twitter, the more dangerous they will become.

Unlike the English Defence League and others

content to down some beers and scream at the dinghies in Dover, PA and their ilk are tech-savvy PR machines; they know that optics matter and they’re familiar enough with online culture to blend in with more acceptable rightwing groups when they need to. This is apparent in their tweets, promoting community-friendly litter picks and sharing pictures of cute red squirrels. Their online recruitment began on gaming platforms, where PA has a history of coercing boys into the far right, appearing first on Discord then later on the live chat feature in Call of Duty. (Both sites are aware of far-right organising on their platforms, and have committed to action, including banning accounts.) Far-right groups recognise, as the alleged human trafficker Andrew Tate did, that young men disillusioned with the current state of politics often need a strong voice to guide

them, and have set out to make themselves the strongest voice in the room. Beyond online gaming communities, fringe groups have been targeted as well. This was clear towards the end of the pandemic, when groups including PA had infiltrated anti-vax conspiracy circles so thoroughly that the latter became convinced that Drag Queen Story Hour was a front for paedophile acceptance. Ostensibly supporting their anti-vax and anti-lockdown views, a post by Collett on his blog suggested his true intentions. Complaining that “any conspiracy theory ... or half-baked idea, is taken with the utmost seriousness ... [but one of the] forbidden subjects is that of the great replacement”, he revealed that his main goal was to push these collectives further to the right. Like the young men who get sucked in by “incel” groups, those who are susceptible to far-right influ-

ence are often lonely, isolated and unsure of how to connect with other people. They may have difficult home lives, or have been bullied and ostracised at school. Retreating into an online world, they find others in a similar situation. Their feelings are validated, their beliefs shared and their confidence that it’s the rest of the world who are “wrong” gets a boost.

Playing on those insecurities, nationalist groups quickly begin confirming these young men’s worst beliefs; they can’t get a job because the government’s gone “woke”; the girls who won’t look twice at them are evil feminists out to emasculate western men; and the immigrants they’re intimidated by are the real Big Bad, here to steal their lives, jobs and country. Scary stuff for a teenager, but luckily the far right offers a comforting solution. Join us and be protected. Join us and be part of something. Join us and be somebody. This lasts until

the combination of adolescent energy and zealotry turns tragic, and they are discarded. It is telling that none of the prominent online far-right groups have commented on the cases of Harris or Benincasa.

So what can we do to protect young men from their influence? For the two who have just bartered their twenties for far-right approval, all we can do is hope they get the much-needed support that it will take to improve their lives. We owe it to those just starting out on their political journeys, however, to remove the harmful influence of PA et al from Twitter. By separating the far right from their intended prey, we enable reasoned discourse and the chance to explore the disillusionment of men such as those above, free from the influence of those with ulterior motives. A win for fascism is not a win for anyone else. Even “free-speech absolutists” with billions of dollars.

The Guardian

Space alliance on the horizon as arms race heats up

Khalid Abou Zahir

FOR more than 40 years, the US Air Force never had to shoot down any aircraft or objects over North America. Over the last two weeks, however, it has shot down four. As the topic burst onto social media, the conversation moved away from the possibility of other countries being involved and went on to fantasize about an alien invasion.

The initial silence of the Air Force was understandable as the operation was still unfolding. Yet, none of the exchanges on social media were speculating about whether it was, for example, Russia that was involved, especially with the object in Alaska, but were instead in a frenzy that these UFOs were potentially our first contact with extraterrestrial beings.

Obviously, it was not aliens. Rather, it is the start of a new age of astropolitics. The geopolitical tensions witnessed on Earth are now being launched into space. Space was, until

recently, an area of collaboration among nations. It is now shifting toward an extension of the confrontations witnessed on Earth. And so what is valid on Earth is becoming valid in space. This means that friends and foes alike are starting to maneuver. Yet, in space, there is no East or West and no demarcation lines.

One may ask why is space important? The first answer is that, on the purely intelligence and military side, satellites provide valuable information and actionable insights. It includes navigation, communications and the detection of military assets on Earth, as well as in the skies and in space. The first object visible to the US was a case in point, as it was allegedly a surveillance balloon that could gather key information. And so today, beyond radars, there is a full area of assets that support these activities. As a quick recap, stratospheric surveillance balloons can fly at an altitude of between

about 20 km and 45 km. Low Earth orbit satellites are at a maximum of 2,000 km, but can range down to 160 km.

Space is obviously more than just an area for surveillance and military operations. The infrastructure that is being put in place is also empowering a great number of new commercial applications. For example, all the apps on your mobile phone that require geolocation are enabled by this infrastructure. Also, new satellites are empowering activities on Earth that can support, for example, mobility, insurance and agriculture. The capacity to track assets via the internet of things is also something to consider. And, so, space is becoming just like Earth – an area for commercial competition as well as military confrontation.

Nevertheless, space is not an unregulated area; there are rules that both governments and the growing private commercial

enterprises need to respect. However, there is no real way of enforcing the regulations against a rogue actor. Many analysts expect that these tensions will become clearer once settlements start being founded on the moon. Indeed, unlike in orbit, on the moon there will be a sense of borders as well as of property. It will also be on a first come, first served basis. In order to avoid this and to build on the Outer Space Treaty, the US launched the Artemis Accords to promote collaboration and transparency for activities on the moon.

One now understands why countries are looking to maintain their sovereignty regarding space activities, from launch capacity to managing and developing their own space assets. It is an extremely costly and challenging task. Yet, to understand better the risks and why countries need to be prepared for these new scenarios, just imagine if a malevolent

actor destroyed the Global Navigation Satellite System or Global Positioning System. The impact would be catastrophic and losses in the billions. These satellite networks, along with the communications networks, are now the backbone of not only surveillance but also commercial activities.

And this is why the risk of more and more spacecraft or flying objects becoming weaponized is now increasing. Assets in space have become a potential target in any confrontation. And there will be an increase in anti-satellite weapons, which is why Russia destroyed one of its own satellites in 2021, shortly before the war in Ukraine started. This came as tensions were growing and cooperation on the International Space Station was brought into doubt. Indeed, the stratospheric balloon that was destroyed above US territory could be weaponized instead of being for surveillance. This puts forward the need to

create redundant networks, as well as to protect assets and people on Earth and in space. There must also be the capacity to retaliate in the case of an attack on these assets.

Last Wednesday, 16 Allies from NATO, together with invitees Finland and Sweden, launched a new initiative to gather and use data from space. It will provide intelligence, surveillance and essential support to NATO’s military missions and operations. Called Alliance Persistent Surveillance from Space, it is an important element in the implementation of NATO’s Overarching Space Policy, which was adopted in 2019. If it only includes surveillance today, there might be a need to develop a space military alliance to protect against rogue actors. And as people on social media focused on aliens last week, they can, just as in the movies, imagine that this potential space alliance will protect the Earth against an alien invasion.

Arab News

Turkiye, Syria earthquakes: Earthquake diplomacy smooths rocky bilateral ties

IT has been almost two weeks since a major earthquake struck southern Türkiye, delivering devastation across the region. More than 41,000 people have died and another 120,000 injured. Millions of people in Türkiye and Syria have been left without a home and their lives ruined. As the window of survivability closes, it is likely that cleanup efforts will tragically add even more deaths to the total.

With so much death and destruction, it is hard to find anything positive. However, one glimmer of optimism is the possibility of a regional rapprochement between Türkiye and Greece and Türkiye and Armenia as a result of so-called earthquake diplomacy. Greece was one of the first countries in the world to send rescue teams to neighboring Türkiye in the aftermath of the earthquake. Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias was the first among his EU colleagues to visit Türkiye. Not only has Greece sent several rescue teams, it has also sent multiple plane-loads of humanitarian assistance. Greece is also playing an important role inside the EU to ensure that assistance finds its way to Türkiye in a speedy manner.

Meanwhile, hundreds of kilometers to the east of where the Greek foreign minister visited in Türkiye, the Turkish-Armenian

land border at Alican opened for the first time in more than 35 years to allow humanitarian aid to cross. Armenia has also sent dozens of search and rescue personnel to assist in the recovery efforts. Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan visited the site of the devastation in Türkiye and ended his visit with a high-level meeting with his Turkish counterpart.

So what is to be made of the earthquake diplomacy between Türkiye and these two neighbors? Obviously, any interaction and engagement between Ankara and Athens and Ankara and Yerevan is positive and should be welcomed. However, one should also understand that the challenges in Türkiye's relations with Greece and Armenia are complex and deeply rooted in history.

The main sticking point between Türkiye and Greece is over agreeing to a fair and equitable maritime delineation of the Aegean Sea. This is a complex issue steeped in history, geography and international law. While there will be a positive short-term impact in the Turkish-Greek relationship resulting from earthquake diplomacy, do not expect a major breakthrough anytime soon. Both the Turkish and Greek leaders face hotly contested national elections later this year. Unsurprisingly,

Luke Coffey

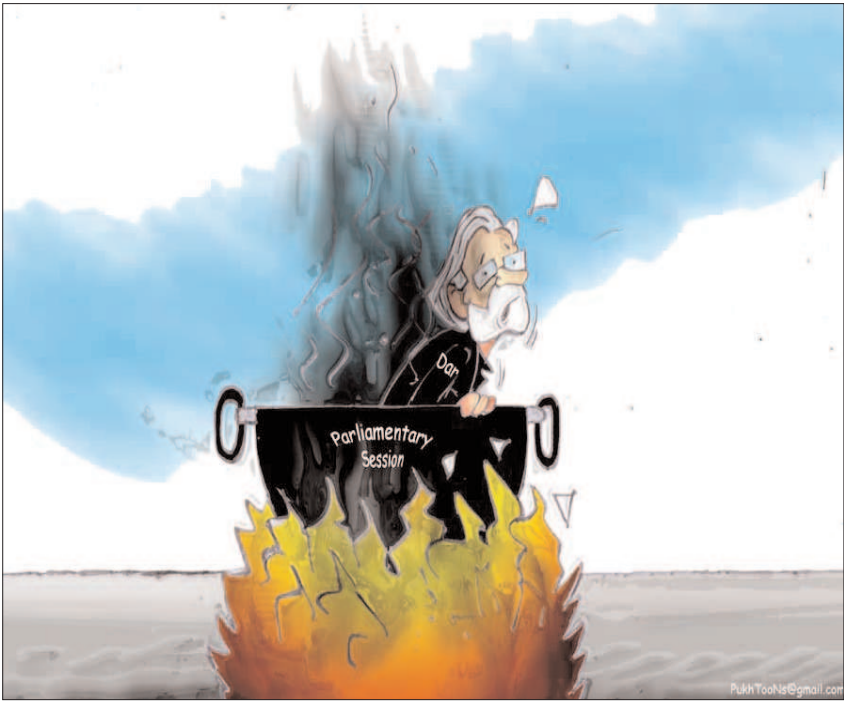
Turkish-Greek bilateral relations are a hot button political issue in both countries. For there to be any progress made in Turkish-Greek relations beyond the goodwill of earthquake diplomacy, both sides will have to seek a reasonable compromise. With elections forthcoming, there will be little room for compromises by either side. While earthquake diplomacy might help pave the way, it is more likely that a new political mandate after the elections can create the political space for genuine talks between Türkiye and Greece. This possibility becomes even more realistic if both incumbent leaders win reelection. It will be the last term in office for each, thereby giving them more political flexibility for compromise than they otherwise would have.

Even though Türkiye and Armenia have had a difficult relationship over the past few decades, there is cause for more optimism. Türkiye was one of the first countries to recognize Armenian independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, but relations between the states quickly soured after Armenia's invasion of Turkish ally Azerbaijan in the early 1990s. By 1993, diplomatic relations between the two states had ended and the border was closed. This is why the opening of the border last

week for humanitarian aid was so significant.

But even with these tensions going back decades, there have been steps taken in recent months between Türkiye and Armenia that earthquake diplomacy can build on. For example, in the past year, the Turkish and Armenian foreign ministers have met to discuss the prospects of diplomatic normalization. Both sides have appointed special envoys to negotiate during discussions about normalizing relations; Turkish and Armenian airlines have resumed direct flights between the two countries; and Armenia ended its embargo of imports from Türkiye last year.

Also, ongoing peace talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan offer a window of opportunity for Ankara and Yerevan to normalize. In the short-term, Türkiye and Armenia should use the momentum created by earthquake diplomacy to keep the border open for trade and commerce. This would serve as an important confidence-building measure for both sides that could lead to the normalization of relations. Even though their relations are rocky, Greeks, Armenians and Turks understand that they are bound by history and geography. Greece and Armenia quickly stepped up to the plate in Türkiye's time of need. There is no doubt that the Turkish people will always remember this goodwill and generosity.



Poland is now the rising power of Europe

Ivor Roberts

IT doesn't seem so long ago that Poland was regarded as the problem child of the EU, a "dirty Remainer" whose constitutional tribunal ruled that fundamental parts of EU law do not trump its national constitution. How different things are now, with Poland assuming the role of bastion of Western defence – a key nation in the front line of the battle against Putin's Russia. Warsaw has consistently been at the forefront of support for Kyiv: diplomatically, militarily, but also morally, as it copes with the largest number of Ukrainian refugees.

Andrzej Duda, the Polish president, is currently on what he describes as a "diplomatic offensive", holding talks with Nato leaders to stiffen support for Ukraine in advance of President Biden's visit to Poland next week, marking the first anniversary of Russia's invasion. Duda's talks in London on Thursday and Friday with Rishi Sunak and the King will have been preaching to the converted. But this trip was also a missed opportunity: we should have emphasised the need for a new special relationship between London and Warsaw. A new axis in European diplomacy and defence.

At this weekend's Munich Security

Conference, conversations with Chancellor Scholz of Germany and President Macron of France will flow less smoothly. Warsaw has been openly critical of both leaders for being willing to talk to Putin (which is like talking to Adolf Hitler, says Duda), and for their general reluctance to provide strong concrete support for Ukraine. Duda's recent announcement that he was prepared to send German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine whether Berlin agreed or not was just the latest diminution in their relationship.

More importantly, it showed that Poland does not need the EU's two main powers. No, it wants to become a power of its own. And it has every right to pursue that. Warsaw can reasonably claim to have acted as a catalyst for Western Nato unity in the wake of Russia's aggression. Far from suffering "brain death" as President Macron described Nato only three years ago, the alliance is alive and very much kicking with traditionally neutral Sweden and Finland lining up to join.

And Poland will soon become an indispensable European military power in its own right. The country aims to create Europe's largest land army: 300,000 combat troops up from its current 114,000. The Polish

armed forces are being modernised at pace. The defence budget is set to reach 4 per cent of GDP from its present 2.4 per cent. Poland has roughly three times as many main battle tanks as the UK (647 to 227), and has on order hundreds of new US Abrams tanks and 1,000 K2 tanks from South Korea.

Naturally, then, Biden's visit will be the first time a US president has come twice within one year. Beyond signalling the high importance now attached to US-Polish relations, there will also be the occasion of a summit of the so-called Bucharest Nine, the eastern flank of Nato.

Biden can expect to be pressed to provide air support to counter the anticipated Russian aerial onslaught this spring. While the US president will probably maintain some ambiguity over any precise commitment, he will almost certainly endorse Poland's lofty ambitions to be a leading Nato player and laud the country's commitment to a substantial increase in defence spending. Washington has for decades complained about the failure of European governments to meet the agreed Nato commitment to spend 2 per cent of GDP on defence. Poland, aiming to move to 4 per cent, will go from being an EU problem child to top of the Nato European class.

Truss's delusional speech about China

Simon Tisdall

THERE is a serious, calm and thoughtful discussion to be had about the western democracies' future security and economic relationship with China, and it is under way in Washington and European capitals. Judging by her confrontational, attention-seeking speech in Tokyo today, Britain's disgraced former prime minister Liz Truss is not part of it.

Truss, short of new ideas and insights, has defaulted to crowd-pleasing, hawkish positions that appear principally designed to facilitate a domestic political comeback at Rishi Sunak's expense. A "totalitarian" China, she says, poses a global threat to the "free world". Britain should help rally regional countries against Beijing by building a "Pacific defence alliance" and an "economic Nato".

Truss also calls on G7 states, which will meet in Hiroshima in May, to prepare to impose tough sanctions on China if it further escalates its military intimidation of Taiwan. The self-governing island should be admitted to international organisations from which it is currently excluded, she says – a red rag to Beijing. This stance echoed her previous, provocative call for Britain to supply weapons direct to Taipei. Truss is right to suggest relations with China are at a critical point, illustrated by the absurdly hyped flap in the US that accompanied the shooting down of a Chinese surveillance balloon. But her proposals, if actively pursued, could intensify east-west tensions, deepen the divide and boost Russia's attempts to ally itself with Beijing – while doing little or nothing to enhance international security.

Her Tokyo speech raises two broader questions: is Truss truly looking for workable ways to mitigate the

aggressive posture of China's president, Xi Jinping, or is she just posturing for hard-right, anti-China audiences in Westminster and Washington? Her position, including on the selective decoupling of economic relations, undercuts Sunak, who, like Joe Biden, has declined to classify China as a "threat".

Second, does Truss truly believe that Britain is still a global power with the political will, financial wherewithal and military firepower to intervene effectively in dangerous geopolitical crises thousands of miles from its shores? If so, she is truly delusional. Alone and adrift in a post-Brexit vacuum she helped create, Britain's ability to influence world events is diminishing rapidly. The defence and security of Europe, of which it is a part, and not the Asia-Pacific region, is the UK's primary strategic concern. Politically, she cannot admit that axiomatic fact.

Empty threats do not make good foreign policy – and we have been here before. In her Mansion House speech last year, shortly after the invasion of Ukraine, Truss insisted Russian troops must be forced back to pre-2014 borders – meaning expelled from Crimea and all of Donbas. "We are going to keep going further and faster to push Russia out of the whole of Ukraine," she declared. You and whose army, Liz? Did she mean UK forces should launch a ground war against Russia? The Kremlin certainly thought so.

Truss has hit repeat play in Tokyo, proving again that loose talk costs other people's lives. There is no doubt Xi's threats to subjugate Taiwan by force, his bullying of neighbours such as the Philippines, his colonisation of the South China Sea and

his criminal treatment of the Uyghur and Tibetan peoples are shocking and alarming. But it is likewise clear, or should be, that Xi, despite his domestic problems, will not be deterred by a former colonial power with blood on its hands that poses no credible kinetic or economic challenge. The danger, instead, is that he may double down – with Taiwan in his gunights. A US general recently predicted war within two years – and that was before the spy balloon went up.

Yet what does calamity Liz do? She jumps in rhetorically with both feet, clichés flying. She can expect little support from the Biden administration. Likewise, Japan's leaders may be privately appalled, though too polite to say so. Like Taiwan's savvy president, Tsai Ing-wen, they prepare for the worst – and meantime try to manage the China relationship, not blow it up.

Taking on China is not like taking on Russia. Vladimir Putin's empire is built of straw. It will implode eventually, as happened to the Soviet Union in 1989-91. But China is too big to foil. Interdependence runs too deep, economic ties are too mutually valuable and shared challenges such as the climate emergency and nuclear proliferation are too pressing for the west to attempt to contain, let alone halt China's rise. The western democracies have no sensible choice other than to continue to argue for their views and stand up for their values, issue by issue, while strengthening alliances, maintaining lines of communication and waiting for Beijing to modify its more objectionable behaviours, as Xi has recently started to do. Truss, with her siren calls, is digging the trenches of a second cold war. It's a war Britain and the west cannot win – and should not fight.

Nigeria's elections have bigger problems than vote trading

Ayisha Osori

WHEN veteran politician Ayo Fayose contested — and won — the June 2014 gubernatorial elections in the southwestern Nigeria state of Ekiti, he mocked Kayode Fayemi, the incumbent who had lost. "People don't want road infrastructure; they want stomach infrastructure," Fayose said. Overnight, he introduced a new lexicon for a decades-old practice and triggered an outsized focus on the sale of votes, or vote trading, as a critical challenge to election integrity in Nigeria.

Indeed, elections in the country have repeatedly been marred by allegations of votes being bought and sold. If the rate was allegedly between \$8 and \$13 a vote when Fayemi came back to power in 2018 in Ekiti, the stakes are even higher nationally. As Nigerians prepare for one of the country's most decisive and divisive elections since 1999 to pick their president, vice president and members of parliament on February 25, many believe that vote trading will play a determining role.

After all, the primaries of the two main parties, the governing All Progressives Congress and the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party, were particularly contentious in 2022, with allegations of delegates receiving as much as \$25,000 each to vote in favour of those paying them. Yet the focus on vote trading obfuscates far deeper problems with Nigeria's electoral democracy, and risks covering up for those flaws.

To be sure, vote buying is a major threat to Nigeria, one that is not new. In fact, it is part of Nigeria's history of transactional politics and elections, where votes are exchanged for food, favour and

cash. Before "stomach infrastructure" there was "democracy of the stomach" coined by Ozumba Mbadiwe, a federal minister in the years just before and after independence from the United Kingdom. The problem is also not unique to Nigeria: At least 165 countries have laws against vote trading. Like Nigeria, votes are influenced by payments or allurements in many other developing world democracies.

Tackling this menace isn't easy. When the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) announced in October 2022 a move towards a cashless economy and declared that current notes would be no longer valid in the days leading up to the presidential election, many concluded that the move, in part, was targeted at politicians and their cash stockpiles used for vote-buying. Yet days later, the central bank governor Godwin Efemiele found himself in the crosshairs of allegations from the government that he was involved in financing terrorism, charges that many independent analysts do not buy.

Whatever the merits of the allegations against Efemiele, the large question remains: Are Nigeria's electoral problems fundamentally about vote buying? Today there are 133 million Nigerians in multidimensional poverty; living on or below the national poverty line of 376.50 naira (\$0.51) in earnings a day. When votes fetch several times that amount, voters are not illogical to sell. They have delayed gratification, between one election cycle and the next, and are not swayed by narratives of future accountable governance and public goods they have

never known. Money, food and jobs are concrete and complete the calculation, hardwired into Nigeria's political culture, that the bird in hand is the only bird. Nigeria's political economy is extractive and transactional – and financial imperatives are built into every process from the emergence of party candidates to securing judgments at election tribunals.

The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission, an autonomous agency set up by the government in 2000, estimated that 9.4 billion naira (\$26 million) were exchanged in bribes for favourable judgements in election-related cases between 2018 and 2020 alone. Voters know this murky reality and expect their cut at the polling unit. This explains why vote trading prevails despite the increasing sophistication of scripted "do-not-sell-your-vote" messages in pidgin and other languages, and a formal ban against the practice. And if Nigeria's corrupt electoral system is to be truly reformed, the attention that vote-buying draws must be put in context.

No politician can pay off 50 per cent of Nigeria's 93 million registered voters. Vote-buying strategies work when there are fewer people to pay and when politicians can confirm, or convince voters that they can confirm, whom they actually voted for. This requires at least three things: low voter turnout arranged through pre-election and election day violence; amplified narratives about the power of vote trading in determining elections to dissuade "unsold" voters from bothering about going to the ballot box; and politicians' access to voters'

ballots.

Simply put, increasing voter turnout, checking violence and maintaining the secrecy of ballots deserve more attention than vote trading. The 2019 presidential election, for instance, saw an abysmally low voter turnout — just 34.75 per cent. Those elections also saw a return to ballot box snatching and other violent disruptions, particularly around vote collation centres. Had politicians perfected vote trading, they would no longer need to rely on other ways to compromise elections. Indeed, collation centres are the black hole of elections in Nigeria and eliminating violence there and improving transparency of collation will improve voter confidence. And if politicians don't know how people have actually voted, it will reduce the effectiveness of vote trading, since voters can take the money and yet vote as they wish.

To focus on vote trading at the expense of these more fundamental problems with Nigerian elections is self-defeating for those looking for reforms. It discourages all but those who have access to bullion vans and public funds. In fact, there is reason for hope. Peter Obi, the businessman-politician who was governor of Anambra province, is leading all presidential polls despite his popular slogan, "we no dey give shishi" (we give nothing), an allusion to the transactional nature of Nigerian politics. This is an indication of a maturation of Nigeria's political culture that democracy and election integrity advocates should recognise. But this will only happen with the acknowledgement that it is meaningless to talk about vote trading without first addressing the deeper rot in Nigeria's electoral practices.

Is Israeli ignorance contributing to the cycle of violence?

Daoud Kuttab

NEWTON'S third law is very clear: for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. But for some reason, whenever a violent action takes place against Israelis, they seem totally surprised as to its reasons and motivation. Israelis describe any violence against any Israeli, whether soldier, settler or civilian and whether in Jerusalem, Jenin or Tel Aviv, to be a terrorist act.

Even though then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat exchanged letters of recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization) in 1993, Israelis continue to deny the existence of Palestinian nationalism. They also wrongly keep demanding that Palestinians recognize Israel, even though that took place 30 years ago.

In addition, Israelis want the 13 million Palestinians, many of whom live or used to live in what is now Israel, to go one step further. They want Palestinians to recognize Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people, ignoring the fact that 20 per cent of the population living within the internationally recognized areas of the state of Israel are not Jewish. Instead, Palestinians and others say that, if it wants to be seen as a democracy, Israel should simply be the country of its citizens, whether Jewish, Druze, Muslim, Christian or agnostic.

The cycle of violence does not, of course, happen in a vacuum. As Newton's third law suggests, the actions against Israelis, including deadly violence, are usually a reaction to something that happened to Palestinians the day, month or years

before. Unlike the expectations of Israeli Zionists, which Palestinians will one day forget, their national and personal memories cannot be extinguished, no matter how much Israelis want them to be.

The surprise that bewilders Israelis is the result of politicians and leaders not doing their job of warning their own people of the possibility of something happening. If you violently attack your neighbors and burn down parts or all of their homes, you would be stupid if you did not expect some type of retaliation. In fact, the Israeli army itself uses retaliation as what is considered a necessary part of the policy of deterrence.

So, if a useless rocket is shot from Gaza, every single person living in Gaza can expect an Israeli raid of some sort and possible punishment, including the fisherman, who will be further limited in the areas they are allowed to work. And in the West Bank, the now-routine collective punishment of demolishing a home is also used as revenge for any violence against Israelis. Since the new far-right Israeli government took over, innocent Palestinians who were forced to build their homes without licenses because official permission is impossible to obtain are being retaliated against even though they have nothing to do with anti-Israeli attacks. Therefore, the question persists — if Newton's law is valid, why are Israelis surprised by Palestinian reactions to attacks against them?

In addition to the silence of their leaders, one guilty party might be the media. The Israeli media gives little and at times no attention to what is being done by their soldiers and

army-protected settlers in the Occupied Territories. The Israeli media, with the world's best spin, always justifies Israeli actions. They often create a totally fake context that ignores the Palestinian narrative or the facts on the ground. When journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was killed last year, Israel immediately provided what appeared to be a rational explanation, except it was a total lie.

When 10 Palestinians were killed in Jenin, Israelis were surprised by the attack in Neve Yaakov and, when five Palestinians were killed in the Aqbat Jabber camp near Jericho, Israelis were surprised by a Palestinian shooting or stabbing or ramming Israelis. When female Palestinian prisoners sent an SOS about the way they were being repressed in Israeli jails, Gazans shot a rocket that surprised Israelis, who had no idea of what was happening to the female Palestinian prisoners even though the story made the rounds in the Arab media.

Sometimes, the retaliation takes hours or days, while at other times it can take years. The attack in Neve Yaakov was carried out by Palestinian Khairi Alqam, who was named after his grandfather, who was stabbed to death by a supporter of the racist Israeli rabbi Meir Kahane 25 years earlier. A student of Kahane, Itamar Ben-Gvir is now the minister of national security throwing oil on the fire.

The conflict will not be resolved until people, and especially political leaders, have the will to break this cycle of bloodshed. Knowledge will increase pressure on them and weaken their justifications. Media aware-

Important Notice

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

Declining exports trend to put more pressure on foreign reserves: PIAF

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front has stressed the need for putting the economy on a balanced and sustainable growth trajectory by providing incentives to the industry through smooth energy supply at competitive rates, addressing the underlying structural vulnerabilities, as country's overall export proceeds continued to shrink for the fifth consecutive month in a row.

According to the press release, PIAF Chairman Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that the drop shows the government would find it difficult to achieve the export target this fiscal year, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country.

He observed that the drop in textile and clothing exports is gaining momentum over the past five months owing to multiple factors including high energy costs, stuck-up refunds and a slump in global demands despite the massive depreciation of the rupee. He believes that one of the main reasons behind falling exports was the exchange rate instability. The discontinuation of duty drawbacks on local taxes and levies by the government has also created liquidity issues for the export sector.

Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that the government has increased the gas and electricity tariffs and, at the same time, also indicated that the subsidy will be phased out, which will further increase the cost of production. The textile exports remained weak in Jan mainly due to the demand and supply challenges being faced by the sector.

Global recession, which reduced the purchasing power in key export markets, also resulted in lower bookings of orders, he added. Inventory piled up at large global retailers, while gas shortages and increased costs of working capital in the country also played a role in the decline, he said.

He said that the country's textile export has witnessed a decline of almost 15 percent in Jan 2023 annually to \$1.32, with current export portfolio, marred by a lack of diversification.

He observed that exports have dropped by about one percent during the fiscal year ended June to \$22.97 billion, falling massively short of the \$28 billion target set by the government, as very few products are exported by some exporters to limited markets.

He stated that a major enhancement in exports requires huge and wide structural reforms, urging the government to take business community on board, who are the real stakeholders in preparing policies to enhance exports, which is prerequisite for economic growth.

As part of the agreement with the IMF, the government has announced discontinuing subsidies on energy from March for the export sector. The piling of containers at ports is also contributing to the decline in exports.

Minister, Chinese team discuss investments

LAHORE (APP): The Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer and a delegation of TIANs Group of China discussed investment opportunities in Punjab, here at Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT), on Saturday.

Both sides agreed to increase cooperation in the fields of energy, health and technical training.

The delegation was led by Zhang Zhang Tao, President of TIANs Group of China. He said, "Our group wants to increase its business activities in Pakistan and also to set up a manufacturing plant here."

SM Tanveer said that TIANs Group should set up factories in Special Economic Zones (SEZs), assuring that government would cooperate in every possible way.

He said that TIANs Group could also enter into the joint ventures with Pakistani companies, for this government would provide all possible facilities.

He said that there were investment opportunities in the production of electric vehicles in Punjab.

PBIT CEO Jalal Hasan Khan gave a detailed briefing about the investment opportunities for Chinese companies in Punjab.

He said that 13 SEZs had been established in Punjab while six more were in the pipeline, all other foreign investors including Chinese were being provided with best security and other facilities.

The delegation included Wang Fei, Walton Wang, Miss Vicky Gao and others from TIANs Group.

Luxury market poised for swift rebound in 2023

HAIKOU (APP): Recent reports suggest that China's luxury market is expected to usher in a rapid recovery in 2023, fueled by factors including a surge in off-shore duty-free shopping.

According to the global management consulting firm Bain & Company, personal luxury sales in China shrank 10 percent year on year in 2022, ending its five-year streak of exponential growth, but positive conditions are expected to return before the end of the first quarter of 2023.

Xing Weiwei, partner with Bain & Company, said luxury consumption in China is expected to bounce back as the COVID-19 pandemic recedes, foot traffic in malls increases, and consumer confidence improves. "We expect to see 2021 sales levels sometime between the first and second half of 2023."

A report by PricewaterhouseCoopers suggests that China will continue to release growth potential as a main driving force of the global luxury market.

The PwC report estimated that China's luxury market will reach 816 billion yuan (about 119 billion US dollars) in 2025, accounting for about a quarter of the global luxury market share.

Younger generation, Chinese traditions, increasing internet penetration and the development of the duty-free market are future trends for China's luxury market, the report added.

Duty-free shopping, with the island province of Hainan being the main channel, is breaking new ground in China's luxury market. The impact of this trend is so significant that the PwC report described Hainan as being "strategically important for luxury brands to speed up expansion in China."

Hainan's offshore duty-free sales reached 49.5 billion yuan in 2021, taking up about 13 percent of China's luxury market, according to the report. It projects the compound annual growth rate of the Hainan duty-free market to hit 32.8 percent from 2023 to 2026.

Duty-free shopping has become a key attraction of Hainan, with its scenic beaches drawing tourists from across the world. Wu Lan, a tourist from north-west China's Xi'an, purchased many skin care products and cosmetics from duty-free shops in Haikou and Sanya during the Spring Festival.

"The beauty (of Hainan duty-free shopping) is the lower price and a wide range of brands for me to choose from," she said.

Since the beginning of this year, as tourism boomed after the ease of epidemic control measures, Hainan's duty-free shopping has seen a strong recovery, marking a good start for China's luxury market.

Hainan reported a total of 1.56 billion yuan in off-shore duty-free sales during the Spring Festival holiday, a year-on-year increase of 5.88 percent, according to Haikou Customs.

The number of shoppers for duty-free products in Hainan during the week-long holiday totaled 157,000, up 9.51 percent from the same period last year, with each shopper spending an average of nearly 10,000 yuan.

Since 2011, the island has seen its annual duty-free sales grow by nearly 50 times, with an average annual growth of 44.6 percent, according to the provincial department of commerce. Hainan will strive to boost consumer demand and raise its off-shore duty-free sales to over 80 billion yuan in 2023, according to the province's government work report.

Court Notice

In The Court Of Sana Afzal Civil Judge(V) Kohat. Suit No. 236/1 Date of hearing. 21-02-2023. Titled:- Ameer Khan Vs Said Kamal (etc) Notice against:- Lrs Defendant No. 2 (1) Abdul Rahim S/o Gul Zada r/o Zafar Khel Qoum Shiraki Dara Adam Khel District Kohat presently r/o (now in Dubai UAE) (2) Mst Jan Ziba W/o Gul Zada (3) Mst Bilhuda D/o Gul Zada r/o Zafar Khel Qoum Shiraki Dara Adam Khel District Kohat (Defendants) Whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a civil suit against you defendants in which date of hearing 21-02-2023 is fixed for your appearance. Since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you defendants is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 21-02-2023 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on 15-02-2023 (Court of CJ V Kohat).

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF FAZAL GUL ADJ-IV KOHAT. Appeal no.22/CR Date of hearing.28-02-2023. Titled:-Yaseen Khan S/o Provincial Govt(etc) Notice against:- Respondent no(13) Mst Atifah Mazhar Ali Shah Dughter of Mazhar Ali Shah R/o Village Jarma District Kohat (Respondent) Whereas the above plaintiff has civil appeal of against you Respondent in which date of hearing 28-02-2023 is fixed for your appearance Since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you Respondent is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 28-02-2023 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on.01-02-2023 (Court of ADJ-IV Kohat).

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF FAZAL GUL ADJ-IV KOHAT. Appeal no.23/CR Date of hearing. 28-02-2023, Titled:-Yaseen Khan S/o Provincial Govt(etc) Notice against:- Respondent no(13) Mst. Atifah Mazhar Ali Shah Dughter of Mazhar Ali Shah R/o Village Jarma District Kohat (Respondent) Whereas the above plaintiff has civil appeal of against you Respondent in which date of hearing 28-02-2023 is fixed for your appearance Since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you Respondent is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 28-02-2023 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on.01-02-2023(Court of ADJ-IV Kohat).

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 235/1. Institution 26/11/2021. Date of hearing. 24/2/2023. Amer Rehman VS Nowsherwan Khan etc. Notice No. heirs 3/1. Mst Janat Baha widow. 3/2. Asmat. 3/3. Anass. 3/4. Naved sons of Fazal Wahab resident of Jangdara Torwarsak thesdel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 24/2/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the court of Kiran Noor judge family court Matta Swat. Case # 340/12 year 2022. Hearing date 21/2/2023 Sharafat etc. VS Abdul wakeel etc. Notice to (1) Abdul wakeel s/o yar Gul r/o Presently Saudi Arab (2) Habib Ullah s/o Yar Gul r/o Koray Presently Deran patty thesdel matta district Swat. Whereas the above named defendants cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 21.02.2023 at 8.00 am ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you seal of the court.



MULTAN: Traders displaying bags of tomatoes for trading at vegetable market.

Envoy: Role of academia important to strengthen people-to-people relations

SIALKOT (APP): Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Jemal Beker Abdula said on Saturday the role of academia was important to strengthen people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and Pakistan.

Addressing a seminar titled "Explore Emerging Giant of Ethiopia/Africa for Trade and Investment Opportunities" held at the University of Sialkot (USKT), the Ambassador urged the academia to play its full role to bring the people of Ethiopia and Pakistan closer to the bilateral relations.

He said that educational institutions had produced many such intelligent people, and created such ideas in them, which had not only contributed to the betterment of society but also kept the world connected.

The Ethiopian Ambassador said that people of Pakistan were very hospitable which he had experienced himself. Both countries could move forward together for the welfare of common man, he added.

He said that Ethiopia formally known as Abyssinia was remembered as Habsha in Islamic history. The land of Hazrat Bilal Habshi and first homage to migrated Muslims where King Najashi provided Muslims protection and livelihood.

The Ethiopian envoy stressed for promoting educational cooperation between the two countries which was crucial to enhance people-to-people contact between the two countries.

Similarly, he said that it was very important for the business community to connect the two countries, which had vast potential for bilateral trade in various sectors of the economy including manufacturing, agriculture, agro-processing, textiles, cement, chemicals, technology, fertilizers, steel and pharmaceuticals.

The ambassador said another area where both countries could enhance collaboration was climate change which had recently brought a flash flood to the shores of Pakistan and inflicted colossal damage.

He vowed to make all out sincere efforts to boost mutual trade ties between Ethiopia and Pakistan, saying that time had ripen to further strengthen mutual trade ties.

The ambassador assured all possible assistance and facilitation to businessmen.

Jamal Baker said that Pakistan needed to expand its footprint in Africa, especially Ethiopia, which was the gateway to the continent of 1.4 billion people.

He said the embassy had planned a trade delegation for Pakistan, which would leave for Addis Ababa on March 5, in this regard.

The Ambassador said that facilities of discounted airfare and accommodation, business-to-business and government-to-business meetings as well as a lavish reception by the country's leadership and cultural nights would be given to the trade delegation.

He said: "Prepare yourselves because this is the right time to enter Ethiopia which will connect you to the whole of Africa".

SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik said that there were vast opportunities for trade, business and investment in Africa. He said that Pakistan needed to look at countries like Ethiopia to increase exports.

Malik suggested active engagement of Pakistani businessmen with the businessmen in Africa and exchange of trade delegations with African countries.

On this occasion, Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) and Convener Parliamentary Task force on SDGs Romina Khurshid Alam thanked the Ambassador for honoring the University of Sialkot with his dignified presence and appreciated his vision and efforts for Ethiopia-Pakistan relations.

She said that Ethiopia was brotherly Islamic country from whose emerging economy our industrialists could take full advantage.

The SAPM said the seminar organized by the University of Sialkot (USKT) was very useful, it was very important to organize such seminars which were not only useful for education but also for the stability of bilateral economic relations. Chairman Board of Governors USKT Faisal Manzoor also spoke on the occasion.

The seminar was attended by Executive Director Muhammad Rehan Younas, Chairman Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association Arshad Latif Butt, Chairman Surgical Instruments Manufacturers Association of Pakistan Jahangir Babar Bajwa, Chairman Pakistan Gloves Manufacturers and Exporters Association Ejaz Chaudhry, Chairman Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association Khawaja Musharraf Iqbal, Sialkot business community, students and faculty members.

ICCI calls for privatizing loss-making SOEs

ISLAMABAD (APP):The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) urged the government to privatize loss-making state owned entities (SOEs), including PIA, Pakistan Steel, Pakistan Railways and DISCOs, for improving the performance of these organizations and enable the country to decrease its debt.

It said that the government is spending billions of rupees every year to bail out these entities, which show that these entities are a big burden on the national exchequer.

While addressing as chief guest at a dinner reception hosted by Secretary General, Islamabad Estate Agents Association Zahid Rafiq, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that there are many reputed businessmen in the country who have the financial capacity and capability to turn the loss-making SOEs into profit-generating organizations and urged the government to hand over these SOEs to them on the condition that they would pay off all the debts of the country within 10 years and after that these SOEs should be transferred to their name.

He said that deregulation and privatization of banking and telecom sectors have made significant improvement in their performance and these two sectors are paying billions of rupees in taxes to the government.

He said that the best option of transforming loss-making SOEs into profit-generating entities is to privatize them as soon as possible.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI, said that rising debt servicing obligations are consuming a major share of our total revenue due to which the country is unable to spend more on development and public welfare projects.

He said that Pakistan cannot achieve sustainable economic development without controlling the rising debt burden.

He urged the government to make policies to control debt and reduce non-development expenditures.

He called upon the business community to work hard to promote trade and exports in order to improve the economy.

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, former President ICCI said that running business entities is the job of the government. Therefore, he stressed that the government should focus on improving the regulatory framework for commercial organization and reduce its footprint in the business field by handing over the loss-making organizations to the private sector.

Islamabad Estate Agents Association President Sardar Tahir, Secretary General Zahid Rafiq and others also spoke at the occasion and urged the government to adopt austerity measures and reduce all unnecessary expenditure to overcome fiscal and current account deficits.

Country facing several challenges: SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) President Abdul Ghafoor Malik on Saturday demanded the government not to implement the proposed decision of withdrawing regional competitive energy tariff/rates of five export oriented sectors.

In a press statement, he said the business community of Sialkot believed that such decision would further discourage the growth of exports industry and stop the wheel of industry.

He said that Pakistan was already facing several challenges in creating policies that favour the ease of doing business, and this decision would only aggravate the situation, resulting in great blow to the exports industry, rendering it impossible to compete in the international market.

The SCCI President mentioned that exporters of Pakistan were doing their best efforts to sustain the business and export of Pakistan, but the proposed decision of increasing the energy tariff would result in an unavoidable loss to the business across Pakistan.

Malik urged the government to review its decision which might have impact on exports and country's economy as a whole.

He hoped that the government would not implement the decision to support the industry's growth and provide necessary incentives and support to promote exports and create jobs.



In brief

Qalandars promise to revive hockey

LAHORE (INP): Lahore Qalandars the title defender in the ongoing domestic cricket season of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) – have launched an initiative to revive the ignored national game, hockey, in the country. Franchise owner Atif Rana announced the launch of “Qalandars Players Development Program (Hockey)” at an event attended by team captain Shaheen Shah Afridi and officials of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF). Sharing his plans, Mr Rana announced start of the trials to hunt the talent from Karachi and then move towards Lahore for the same. He said initially two team teams would be formed for matches, adding that it would gradually be turned into a league. The trials in Karachi began on Friday where the programme received an overwhelming response as a number of players took part in it. Lahore Qalandars CEO Atif Rana and players, including Shaheen Afridi and Haris Rauf, also visited the Karachi Hockey Association Sports Complex near Nipa Chorangi to motivate the hockey players. Former hockey Olympians have appreciated the initiative taken by Qalandars by launching a programme for revival of the national game.

St-Germain shocks Shiffrin

MÉRIBEL (Agencies): Canada's Laurence St-Germain caused a massive upset by winning world slalom gold in Meribel on Saturday, outgunning favourite Mikaela Shiffrin who took silver. It meant the end of Shiffrin's bid for a fifth world slalom title after she dominated the first of two runs in the French resort, but floundered on the second to allow the Canadian in for a stunning victory. The result still saw the 27-year-old American leave the champs with giant slalom gold and a second silver from the super-G. St-Germain had been third fastest after the first leg down the Roc de Fer slope in sunny, warm conditions and held her nerve on the second run for a winning aggregate time of 1min 43.15sec. It was a remarkable victory for the 28-year-old Quebec native who has never made a World Cup podium. The best result of her 13 top 10 finishes from her eight seasons on the circuit is a fifth place in a parallel slalom in St Moritz in December 2019. "That is weird!" St-Germain said when asked how it felt to be the newly-crowned world champion. "I was really not expecting this obviously. I was really stressed, I was kind of nauseous. "I had bit of a mistake but I was thinking 'go down, go down, go down', and it worked out," said St-Germain, who becomes the first Canadian woman to win a world gold since Melanie Turgeon claimed victory in the downhill in St Moritz in 2003. 'Energy gone' - Shiffrin, whose attention will immediately turn to her bid to equal and then surpass Ingemar Stenmark's overall record of 86 World Cup victories, suffered a terrible second run to finish 0.57sec off the Canadian's pace, with Germany's Lena Duerr taking bronze (+0.69). "These two weeks have been unbelievable," said Shiffrin, who split with long-time coach Mike Day just 24 hours before her giant slalom victory. She said she'd run the "full range of emotions: disappointment, excitement, triumph, stress, everything I could possibly feel".



KARACHI: Quetta Gladiators' Martin Guptill celebrates after scoring century (100 runs) during the Pakistan Super League (PSL) T20 cricket match between Karachi Kings and Quetta Gladiators.

Vlada Guryleva annexes ITF Pakistan World Jr Tennis C'ships title

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vlada Guryleva of Russia annexed the Girls Singles title of ITF Pakistan - PPL Syed Dilawar Abbas Memorial World Junior Tennis Championships by eliminating Yejun Lee (KOR) in a well-contested two sets match at S.Dilawar Abbas PTF Tennis Complex, Islamabad on Saturday. In the first set, Vlada built up the winning lead 3-1 by breaking the 1st and 3rd game of Lee and then continued the winning pace till the score reached 4-2. Vlada again played excellent tennis and break the 7th game of Lee 0-40 and then held the 8th game to win the first set at 6-2. In the second

set, Valada played aggressively and did not allow her opponent to settle down, taking the lead 4-0 by breaking 1st and 3rd game of Lee in a comfortable style. Lee struggled hard to reduce the lead 4-2 by breaking the 6th game of Vlada. In the 7th game, Valada did not allow her opponent and hit some excellent cross court short to advance the lead 5-2. In the 8th game, Vlada comfortably won the game and match 6-2, 6-2. Both the players displayed excellent game. The match lasted for one hour and was chaired by Shahzad Akhtar Alvi, the ITF White Badge Official. Islamabad Tennis

Association organized tournament in the memory of late Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas, who played vital role for the promotion of game of tennis in the country. Dilawar remained President/Patron of PTF, Lifetime Sr. Vice President of Asian Tennis Federation, and Hon. Lifetime Patron Islamabad Tennis Association. He was also member of ITF Constitutional Committee. As many as 46 boys and 17 girls from 12 countries - Turkey, Korea, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, GBR, Poland, Romania, Russia, Canada, USA, and hosts Pakistan participated in the Championships.

Kickboxers bring laurels to Pakistan

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistanis kickboxing team brought laurels by showing excellent performance in Iran. Nazar Khan won the gold medal by defeating the Iranian player in the 51-kg final and Mohammad Sohail won the gold medal in the 63kg category. Mohammad Sohail also got the best fighter award. Iran stood first, followed first Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and Syria. Secretary of Pakistan Kickboxing Federation Rana Zahid Mehmood and coach Mansoor Durrani too showed up at the event.

Trials for KP women Softball team on March 4

PESHAWAR (APP): A trial to select Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Softball team for the forthcoming 34th National Games will be held here at Main Campus of the City University Peshawar on March 4, 2023. This was stated by President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Softball Association Shahid Khan Shinwari while addressing the General Council meeting held here at Peshawar Garrison on Saturday. The meeting was attended by the representatives from all the affiliated districts including Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat, Mardan, Buner, Khyber District, Mohmand District, Dir Upper, Dir Lower, District Chitral, Swat and host Peshawar. The female representatives Miss Summayah Khan (Swat), Miss Sana Liaqat (Peshawar), Miss Lubna (Mardan), Miss Mehwish (Swabi) and Miss Aysha (Kohat) were also present on the occasion. Addressing the meeting, Shahid Khan Shinwari said that the game of softball would be promoted at the grassroots level. He urged upon all the district representatives to continue their hard work so that new faces could be evolved so that they could come up at national and international levels. He said that a camp would be set up soon after the open trials to be conducted under three members' selection committee including Asim Khan, Miss Sumayyah (Swat) and Miss Sana Liaqat (Peshawar). The short-listed probables will go under the qualified coaches so that a strong team could be formed for the forthcoming 34th National Games scheduled to be held in Quetta in May this year, he added. He said soon after the trials, the National Junior and National Senior Women Softball Championship will be organized in Peshawar before Ramadan. Shahid Khan Shinwari said that the Women Softball National Championship would be held before Ramadan, during which refresher course (Technical) and Coaching course would also be organized wherein male and female representatives from various schools and colleges would also be invited. He said that softball would be brought to light in the entire province so that good players could come forward.

Quetta Gladiators open victory box with 6-run win over Karachi Kings

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): In another nerve-racking match, Quetta Gladiators (QG) staged a 6-run victory over Karachi Kings (KK) despite Shoaib Malik's determined 71 runs off 49 balls in the sixth contest of the eighth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) at National Stadium on Saturday night. QG opened its victory box with this win while leaving a third consecutive defeat for KK.

In the last three death overs, QG snatched the momentum posed by the seventh wicket partnership between Shoaib Malik and Irfan Khan Niazi. KK needed 36 runs in the last three overs but Naseem Shah blocked Malik's way to hit a boundary in the eighteenth over and Mohammad Hasnain only gave 7 runs leaving 24 runs for KK in the last over.

Earlier, QG opener Martin Guptill's thumping 117 runs on 67 balls had helped QG post a total of 168 against Karachi Kings (KK) after the batting side suffered four early blows. Guptill remained top scorer while Iftikhar Ahmad added 32 runs to the scorecard on 27 deliveries. Meanwhile other players failed to register a noticeable knock.

The KK's bowling side performed exceptionally well until the 17th over when Guptill started accelerating the score with his blistering boundaries. Imad Wasim took three wickets against 16 runs in four overs, Aamir Yamen bundled out two

against 37 runs while Andrew Tye remained the most expensive bowler with 55 runs in four overs without a wicket.

Kings had won the toss and elected to bowl first against Gladiators. Both teams are yet to open the tournament with a victory.

QG skipper Sarfraz Ahmad said that he would have opted for field first had he won the toss. "We will try to post a target of 170-180 for KK", he added.

Kings flew to the field with the inclusion of spinner Imran Tahir (replacing Muhammad Musa) and medium pacer Aamir Yamen after losing two close contests against Peshawar Zalmi and Multan Sultans. In the former game, Zalmi secured a two-run win over KK as the Kings could not chase the target of 200 posted by Zalmi. In the latter, Sultans managed to dupe the hopes of Kings by chasing the target of 174 against a loss of six wickets with ten balls left.

On the other hand, Gladiators could not incept the contest with a win as against Multan Sultans, QG posted a total of 110 which the Sultans chased comfortably in the 14th over with 9 wickets in hand.

However, the team would land the field with Qais Ahmad and Odean Smith replacing Nuwan Thushara today. Meanwhile, QG dropped former Pakistani skipper Mohammad Hafeez for the match. He had been included in the team after Ahsan Ali was ruled out of the team on account of injury.

HBL PSL 8 to continue: PCB

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has said the HBL Pakistan Super League 8 will continue as planned, with both Karachi Kings and Quetta Gladiators fielding their full-strength sides later on Saturday at the National Bank Cricket Arena.

Toss will take place at 6:30pm, with the first ball to be bowled at 7pm.

PCB Chairman Najam Sethi said on Saturday, "The HBL PSL 8 will continue as planned after it has been established and confirmed that Friday's incident was an isolated one, which was unrelated to cricket. We have been working very closely with all stakeholders, including the local and foreign security experts, who have provided assurances and comfort that the event can proceed as there was no threat to cricket.

"The PCB takes the safety and security of all those involved in the HBL PSL 8 very seriously. To ensure no stone is left unturned, Presidential-level security has been provided to the teams and officials. These unprecedented arrangements are similar to what were in place for international matches that have been highly praised and appreciated by the visiting teams and officials.

"The PCB remains committed to providing complete safety and security to all the participants and, as always, will continue to work very closely with the security experts and law enforcing agencies to ensure the players and officials are comfortable and being well looked after so that they can enjoy their stay in Pakistan and continue to entertain the fans and followers with their cricketing skills and talent."



BIRMINGHAM: Bukayo Saka of Arsenal shoots past Boubacar Kamara of Aston Villa during the Premier League match between Aston Villa and Arsenal FC.

Late goals give Arsenal 4-2 win over Villa to halt slide

BIRMINGHAM (AP): With Arsenal heading toward another disappointing result, new signing Jorginho came up big to keep the Gunners' title aspirations on track. Jorginho's shot from outside the area in second-half stoppage time bounced against the crossbar and off Villa goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez's head before going into the net to put Arsenal ahead for good in a come-from-behind 4-2 win Saturday that halted a three-game winless streak in the Premier League.

Arsenal had to come from behind twice before the lucky bounce from Jorginho's shot made it 3-2 in the third minute of stoppage time. Gabriel Martinelli then tapped a fourth into an empty net on a quick counter after Martinez — the former Arsenal goalkeeper — had come up the field as the hosts searched for an equalizer in an action-filled game at Villa Park.

Martinelli had also helped set up Arsenal's third goal by squaring the ball back to Jorginho, who unleashed a fierce strike. "We needed a magic moment and Jorginho pro-

duced it," Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said.

The win puts Arsenal three points above Manchester City atop the table ahead of the defending champion's game against Nottingham Forest later Saturday. It also halted an alarming slump for Arteta's team, which had looked in danger of suffering a fourth loss in five games in all competitions. That recent run included a 3-1 loss to City at the Emirates Stadium on Wednesday that handed the momentum in the title race to Pep Guardiola's team.

"Of course, very important after the last results we had," said Jorginho, who joined Arsenal from Chelsea before the transfer deadline. "And the start wasn't easy. We were not producing our game. And then we came into halftime, we had a talk, a chat, then we went back to doing the basics that we need to do, and we could change the game."

With actor and avid Villa fan Tom Hanks in attendance, the hosts went ahead in the the fifth minute through Ollie Watkins, after Oleksandr Zinchenko had given the

ball away cheaply. Bukayo Saka equalized with a perfectly struck volley in the 16th, but Villa reclaimed the lead in the 31st through Philippe Coutinho.

Zinchenko then scored his first Arsenal goal with a shot from just outside the area in the 61st to level for a second time, and the crucial bounces then all went the visitors' way as Villa's Leon Bailey hit the crossbar with a late chance before Jorginho — the former Chelsea midfielder who joined Arsenal in January — was more fortunate at the other end.

"We (learned) an unbelievable lesson for all of us, that (is) we just need to believe until the very end that we can achieve everything," said Zinchenko, who won four Premier League titles with Man City before joining Arsenal last summer. "The reaction from all of us in the second half is perfect."

For Arteta, it was also a first win over Unai Emery, the former Arsenal manager who knocked the Gunners out of the Europa League semifinals two years ago when he was coaching Villarreal.

3rd Jinnah Gold Polo Cup: finals on Sunday

LAHORE (APP): BN Polo will take on Master Paints in the main final of the 3rd Jinnah Gold Polo Cup 2023 sponsored by Al Rehman Developers and Town Planners here at the Jinnah Polo Fields on Sunday (tomorrow).

According to Jinnah Polo Club President Col Shoaib Aftab (R), a total of eight teams featured in this high-goal tournament and after tough competitions, BN Polo and Master Paints earned places in the main final. Before the main final, Diamond Paints will compete against Master Paints/Newage Cables in

the subsidiary final at the same venue.

"The week-long tournament remained very competitive and challenging and the spectators enjoyed the entertaining games throughout the week. It is hoped that the final will also prove very enthralling and exciting as top national and international players will be vying against each for the top honours and the team, which will play better polo during the final, will emerge as title winner," said the JPF President.

Team BN Polo, one of the finalists, consists of

Roberto Iturrizoz Arias, Baber Naseem, Hamza Mawaz Khan and Tito Ruiz Guinazu while Master Paints, other finalist team, comprises Sufi Muhammad Amir, Agha Musa Ali Khan, Pelagio Balazaldi and Manuel Crespo.

Diamond Paints, one of the subsidiary finalists, has Mir Huzaifa Ahmad, Ahmad Ali Tiwana, Nico Roberts and Chulo Corti while Master Paints/Newage Cables, other subsidiary finalist team, includes Farooq Amin Sufi, Raja Temur Nadeem, Juan Cruz Greguol and Simon Prado.

Broad fires England to verge of first Test win over New Zealand

MOUNT MAUNGANUI (Agencies): Stuart Broad razed New Zealand's top order with a destructive opening spell on Saturday to put England on the verge of winning the first Test at Mount Maunganui.

Broad claimed four wickets under lights -- all clean bowled -- to reduce the Black Caps' second innings to 63-5 at stumps on day three, with hopes of reaching their winning target of 394 all but extinguished.

England have two full days to claim the remaining five wickets at the Bay Oval and go one-up in the two-match series -- completing a 10th win in their last 11 Tests in the process. In a match largely dominated by aggressive batting, Broad got the pink ball to zip sideways to devastating effect, removing arguably New Zealand's four best batsmen to take 4-21 off 10 unrelenting overs.

Openers Devon Conway (2) and Tom Latham (15) both had their off-stumps disturbed while a scoreless Kane Williamson couldn't defend his middle stump.

Ollie Robinson had Henry Nicholls (7) caught behind before first-innings centurion Tom Blundell was also cleaned out by Broad, for one. The 36-year-old Broad admitted conditions

were set up perfectly.

"It's just a different pitch to bowl on in the lights," he said. "You go into a rhythm of not over-complicating, not thinking too much. "I was looking to bowl the same ball, whoever I was bowling against and getting a wicket early just settles me.

"Once I got Conway, I felt like it could be my day." Daryl Mitchell will resume on 13 and Michael Bracewell on 25 on Sunday. Adding to the celebrations for Broad, he and long-time new-ball partner James Anderson became the most prolific bowling partnership in Test cricket.

The evergreen pair have taken 1,004 scalps between them in 133 Tests played together, surpassing the 1,001 shared by Australia's Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne in 104 games together. Broad was relieved the pair were still hitting high standards, particularly as both had played limited cricket last year.

His previous Test appearance was six months ago, having skipped the 3-0 series win in Pakistan late last year because of the birth of his child. "I've not played since September so it's nice to feel I've contributed," he said.

"All our talk was 'inroads tonight' because we knew if

we could get their quality batters out early in conditions that suit us, it can set the Test match up."

With fine weather forecast for the last two days, England should march to their first win on New Zealand soil since 2008, having drawn five and lost two of the seven Tests since. Resuming at 79-2, they plundered 158 runs in the first two hours before wicketkeeper Ben Foakes' controlled 51 steered their second innings to 374.

Ollie Pope scored 49, Joe Root 57 and Harry Brook 54, all unfurling the sort of fearless batting that has become an England hallmark under the "Bazball" attacking methods adopted when coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes took charge last year. Stokes contributed a lusty 31, in the process overtaking McCullum as the outright record holder for the most sixes struck in Test cricket.

He hoisted the 108th six of his career when hooking seamer Scott Kugeleijn over fine leg. Stoke hit one more six before being stumped off spinner Michael Bracewell (3-68), typically trying to force the pace. Most other England wickets fell when taking risks, with Root's dismissal the most blatant.



In brief

IRSA releases 103,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 103,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 52,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1475.04 feet and was 77.04 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 17,900 cusecs while outflow was 50,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1120.35 feet, which was 70.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 11,500 cusecs and 30,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded at 60,800, 43,400, 28,300 and 6,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 13,000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

Four held for possessing illegal arms

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested four illegal arms holders and recovered weapons, ammunition from their possession during a crackdown here on Saturday. Racecourse police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Zakirullah. Similarly, Taxila police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Hamza, informed a police spokesman. While Wah Cantt Police nabbed Ahmed and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession and 01 pistol 30 bore from Javed. Police have registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was underway. City Police Officer CPO appreciated the performance of police teams, adding that the crackdown against illegal arms holders would be continued. Meanwhile, Rawalpindi police have arrested 42 professional beggars and they were held from different areas of the city during the operation, the spokesman said.

Police bust gang

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Police in Rawalpindi on Saturday registered a case against members of a gang involved in the illegal kidney transplantation of people. According to the text of the case, the gang, running the business at a private housing society of the city, called Azam, a labourer at a brick kiln in Faisalabad, to Rawalpindi on the pretext of giving him the amount he had to repay to the brick kiln owner. When the complainant arrived, they took him to the housing society where he was made to drink a juice. After drinking it, the man lost his consciousness. And when he regained his consciousness, he found out that one of his kidneys was missing. Meanwhile, the suspects gave to his brother, who was accompanying him, Rs0.2 million which he had to return to the brick kiln owner.

Five gamblers held

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested five gamblers and recovered bet money of Rs 5,390 from their possession during a crackdown here on Saturday, informed police spokesman. Westridge police conducted a raid and arrested gamblers who were identified as Faisal, Shehryar, Imran, Raqib and Ali. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and started investigation.

Sherry condemns terrorist attack on Karachi Police

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Saturday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the Karachi Police Chief's Office.

In a statement issued here, the federal minister expressed solidarity with

the families of the martyred in the attack. She also prayed for the speedy recovery of the personnel injured in the attack.

"I salute to the Police and Rangers who participated in the operation. Sindh Police and Rangers foiled the attack with

quick and effective action and saved the country from major damage," Sherry Rehman said.

She added that such cowardly attacks of terrorism could not dampen the nation's spirits. The whole nation stood united against terrorism, Sherry Rehman said.

Sheikh Rashid suggests Maryam to fix issues with husband before politicking

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad on Saturday took an aim at PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz when he advised her to fix issues with her husband, retired Capt Safdar, before engaging in political activities.

The former interior minister apparently referred to a reported tension between Mr Safdar and his wife, which came on the scene when the former slammed the PML-N leadership for voting for the extension of ex-Chief of Army Staff (COAS) retired Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and regretted

his comments against PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

Speaking to a private news channel, he also shared his two cents on turncoats, stating that the lawmakers should not change their loyalties for personal benefits. Mr Safdar also commented that he was not seeing Maryam Nawaz as prime minister in near future. Following his statements, reports claimed that Maryam Nawaz had barred her husband from issuing policy statements.

Sheikh Rashid, in a series of tweets, said: "Maryam should take her husband onboard before addressing workers". He

said the PML-N did not need enemies as it was being damaged by insiders.

The AML chief said the friendship with China could not be put at stake at the behest of imperialist powers, adding: "Pakistan-China friendship is higher than Himalayas".

Lashing out at the government for increasing power tariff, he said burden of line losses worth Rs380 billion had been put on poor consumers. "The 88-member cabinet is answerable to whom," he asked. Mr Ahmad said only President Arif Alvi and the Supreme Court could save Pakistan from the ongoing crises.

SAPM, Swiss envoy discuss possibilities of enhancing mutual cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Switzerland Georg Steiner here on Saturday called on Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Jawad Sohrab Malik and discussed with him matters pertaining to enhancement of mutual relations and bilateral cooperation in different areas.

The SAPM underscored the commitments of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals in fostering sustainable economic growth, rule of law, management of natural resources and peace for the people.

He appreciated Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-24, formulated by the Federal Council highlighting sustainable economic growth, market development, creation of jobs, addressing climate change by managing natural resources, human development in education and healthcare, promoting peace, rule of law and gender equality.

Talking to the



Ambassador, Jawad Sohrab Malik said that the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) had been performing an efficient role through its projects in mitigating water woes in vulnerable areas of Pakistan. The Swiss Ambassador said that Swiss international cooperation was driven by the vision of a world without poverty and in peace, for sustainable development. Switzerland has earmarked CHF 11.25 billion for international

cooperation in the 2021-24 period, he told and added, Swiss international cooperation alleviates need and poverty, reduces global risks and promotes peace.

The Ambassador said that in Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021-24, the Federal Council had set out four objectives of equal importance: economic development for contributing to sustainable economic growth, market develop-

ment and the creation of decent jobs; climate change and the environment to addressing climate change and its adverse effects and managing natural resources sustainably; human development for saving lives, ensuring quality basic services (especially in relation to education and healthcare), and reducing the causes of forced and irregular migration; and peace and governance to promoting peace, the rule of law and gender equality.

Thick fog causes disruption

ISLAMABAD (APP): Several major sections of National Highways and Motorways have been closed due to poor visibility and thick fog on Saturday.

According to National Highway and Motorway Police (NHMP), the affected routes include the Islamabad-Lahore section (M-2), the Lahore Abdul Hakeem section (M-3), and the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway.

The NHMP stated that the M-2 section, which connects Islamabad and Lahore, has been closed from Thokar Niaz Baig to Khanqah Dogran, while the M-3 section, which links Lahore and Abdul Hakeem, has been closed from Faizpur to Darkhana.

Similarly, the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway has been closed from Sialkot to Sambrial. The closures have been put in place due to poor visibility and fog, which can make driving conditions hazardous. The NHMP has urged caution and advised travelers to avoid unnecessary travel during this time.

With visibility expected to remain low in the affected areas, commuters are advised to check the latest traffic updates before embarking on their journeys. The NHMP has assured that the affected sections of the highways and motorways will be reopened as soon as the weather conditions improve.

In light of the closures, commuters are advised to exercise caution while driving and to follow the instructions of the NHMP personnel.

10 outlaws arrested; weapons and drugs recovered

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police apprehended 10 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directives, the Secretariat police team arrested an accused namely Awais Ahmed and recovered 1140 gram

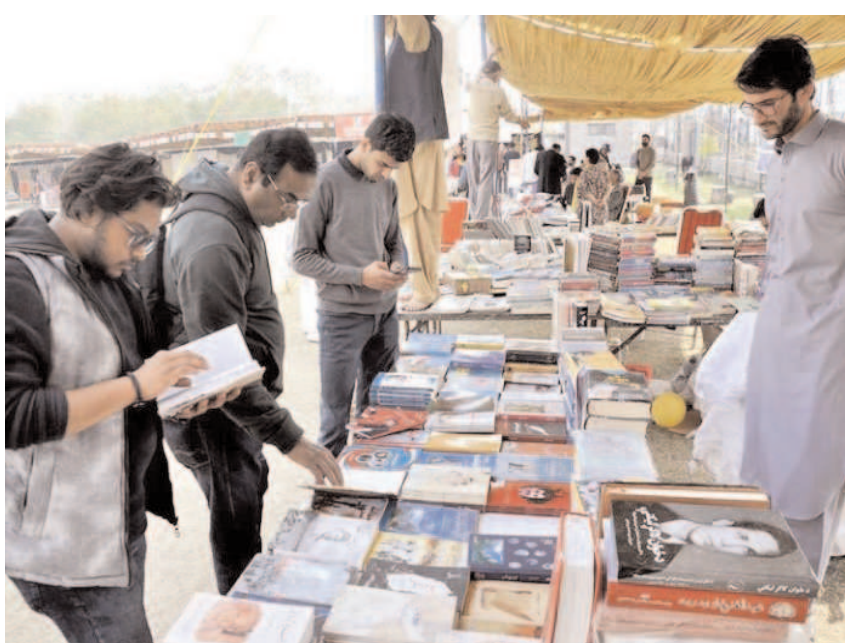
hashish from his possession while police team also arrested an accused namely Muhammad Awais involved in illegally gas refilling.

Similarly, the Khanna police team arrested six accused namely Dilawar Khan, Usman Ali, Awais Khan, Ameer Mehmood, Shahzaib and Mehmood involved in possessing illegal weapons and bootlegging and recovered five 30 bore pistols with ammunition and 15 liters liquor from their possession. Lohi Bher police team arrested an accused namely Arbaz involved in drug paddling and recovered 1625 gram heroin from his possession.

Moreover, the Noon

police team arrested an accused namely Naeem Kareem involved in possessing illegal weapons and recovered one 12 bore shotgun with ammunition from his possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

CPO/DIG (Operations) Islamabad Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons. The performance of police officials in this regard would be reviewed on a regular basis, he maintained.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors selecting books during the 3-day literature festival to celebrate Pakistan's mother languages will organized by Indus Cultural Forum (ICF) in collaboration with Pakistan academy of Letters and UNDP at PNCA.

Islamabad Capital Police conduct mock exercise at Police Line Headquarters

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police conducted a mock exercise at Police Line Headquarters with a purpose to deal with any possible emergency situation and to ensure the safety of life and property of the citizens, a police public relation officer said.

According to detail, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the mock exercises by the Islamabad Capital Police are being conducted in different areas of the city in order to prepare the force to deal with any untoward situation.

Officials from counter terrorism department (CTD) and bomb disposal squad of Islamabad capital police participated under the supervision of SP CTD.

The main objective of this mock exercise is to control the situation by reaching the spot in a short

time in case of any emergency and taking timely action, according to the standing order procedure (SOP).

Islamabad Capital Police is taking all out efforts to secure the life and property of the citizens and no stone would be left unturned in this regard. Citizens are requested to call Pukar-15 for any information about any suspicious activity.

Strict action against smoke emitting vehicles ordered: Islamabad

Capital Police has intensified action against smoke emitting and pressure horns vehicles for the purpose of environmental protection, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of IGP Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Islamabad capital police has intensified the crackdown against vehicles causing environmental pollution and using

pressure horns.

In this regard all Zonal DSPs have been directed to take stern action against vehicles involved in polluting the environment. Mobile squads of Islamabad capital police have been formed to implement the campaign against the smoke-emitting vehicles.

These squads patrol in various areas and important boulevards of the city and are directed to take legal action against those vehicles involved in noise and smoke pollution.

Special squads had been constituted as per the directions of IGP Islamabad in order to conduct regular checking and issued fine tickets against vehicles involved in noise or other environmental pollution in the city. The purpose of this whole practice is to provide a clean environment to citizens and ensure safety of their health.

WASA launches operation against defaulters

RAWALPINDI (INP): The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi launched a massive crackdown against water defaulters and imposed heavy fine on them. According to the authority spokesman, operation has been launched on the special direction of Managing Director (MD) Tanveer Ahmed as Deputy Managing Director WASA supervising this grand operation.

WASA teams under the supervision of Inspector

Amar Yaz took part in the operations that conducted in the different localities of Rawalpindi city including Commercial Market, Seventh Road, Chandni Chowk, Raja Bazar, Mohanpura and other areas. During the operation teams inspected door to door and checked water bills, functionality of connections of defaulters and payments of bills. Several water connections of defaulters disconnected and imposed heavy fines on them. During the oper-

ation teams also sealed 12 commercial plazas and disconnected their meters. WASA staff also seized the water motors of 30 housed and disconnected the supply.

WASA spokesperson viewed that department teams were regular visiting the houses, commercial centers, markets and plazas to check the functionalities of the meters, water supply and teams also check the bills to identify the defaulters and water thieves.

National Islamic calligraphy competitions held at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Punjab Arts Council on Saturday organized national-level Islamic calligraphy competitions in collaboration with Ashraf-ul-Qalam Calligraphy Foundation.

Interim Minister for Primary & Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir was the Chief Guest of the opening and prize distribution ceremony of Islamic Calligraphy competitions. While addressing the participants of the competitions he said Husn-e-Tehreer (calligraphy) was the Islamic civilization and cultural heritage.

At the beginning of the Islamic civilization, the importance of the preservation of tradition and the sanctity of the word, and then the deep commitment of Muslims to the promotion and dissemination of sciences and arts, resulted in the art of calligraphy gaining extraordinary importance, he added.

He said this art was related to the Holy Quran. "Calligraphers add their creative and conscientious spirit by writing Quranic verses or hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH) in a unique style," he ended. Finally, he congratulated the calligraphers from all over the country for presenting beautiful works. On the occasion, Director of Punjab Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said Islamic calligraphy is the legacy of Muslims.

"The tradition of calligraphy is

centuries old and our calligraphers are the trustees of this tradition who have kept this art alive. We should focus on teaching our children creative literature along with formal education. Arts Council is taking a lot of steps to promote Islamic calligraphy. Islamic calligraphy classes are a link in this chain," he added.

Chairman Ashraf-ul-Qalam Calligraphy Foundation Muhammad Ashraf Hieera said there is the immense talent of calligraphy in Pakistan, which only needs to be developed. Pakistani children can shine the name of the country in calligraphy competitions around the world. Finally, Mohammad Ashraf Heera thanked the Punjab Arts Council and reiterated his commitment to holding Islamic calligraphy competitions in the near future with the support of the Punjab Arts Council.

Muhammad Azeem Iqbal, Nasir Seemab, Khalid Yousufi, Faisal Iqbal, Asrar Farooqui, Shabbir Ahmed Zia, Maimoona Humayun performed the duties of the judges in the National Calligraphy competitions.

Warda Mubasher from Lahore got the first prize while Sara Javed from Hafizabad got the second prize and Lubna Kazmi from Karachi got the third prize in the national modern calligraphy competition. Sania Shabbir, Mah Jabeen Gul and Aqsa Fareed

won the first, second and third positions respectively in the National traditional Calligraphy Competition.

In the modern calligraphy competition of the Rawalpindi Islamabad category, Muhammad Zuheez Azim won the first prize. Mubeen Zafar the second prize and Shaain Jameel got the third prize. Ali Hassan Muaz, Iman Taskin and Hamza Ishtiaq won first, second and third positions in the category of traditional Islamic Calligraphy of Rawalpindi Islamabad category.

Malaika Shahzadi, Nadia Qazalbash, Hafiza Aniza Hameed, Maria Abdul Rahman, Bushra Bukhari, Hira Moazzam, Adnan Rasheed, Shamim Akhtar, Natasha Saleem, Obaidullah Abid, Akkrish Hamza, Muniza Nusrat, Haider Sultan, Ifra Bibi, Anam Zahra, Ayesha Nusrat, Arooj Qaiser, Hina Qadeer, Uzair Hasan, Mehreen Abbas, Ghulam Zainul Abidin, Faiza Faiz and Maria Azhar were awarded the Jury Award.

Cash prizes, shields and certificates of appreciation were distributed among the participants who won positions in the competitions. More than 300 calligraphers from all over the country participated in the competitions. A large number of people from the cities participated in the exhibition.



ISLAMABAD: A view of construction work on IJP Road during development work in the city. —APP Photo

Minister visits Shir Khan Port

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Finance Minister, Mullah Hedayatullah Badri, in his trip to north visited the Shir Khan Port and the damages of the Amu River. Finance Minister talked with the officials of Spinzer Company termed the value of state-owned companies in the economic growth of the country important. He said that the taxes collection strengthening the national budget and share details on better management and development of taxes collection affairs.

DAB set to auction \$17m

KABUL (Pajhwok): In an attempt to keep the afghani stable, the central bank is auctioning \$17 million today (Sunday). While announcing the auction, Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) asked eligible private banks and money-exchange firms to participate in it. Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) tweeted the successful bidders would have to settle their accounts by the end of the day. A limited settlement of transactions is not acceptable.

Paktia: Aid delivery slowing since women banned from NGOs

PAKTIA (TOLOnews): Some Paktia residents said that aid from relief organizations in this province has slowed down after restrictions were imposed on women’s work. Many families in Paktia are still struggling after losing homes and family members in this past summer’s earthquake. They claimed that some relief organizations have stopped their activities due to the latest ban on women and asked that the Islamic Emirate reconsider this decision. “We call on the Islamic Emirate to allow women to return to their work in

Hijab so relief organization can aid the people,” said Faridon, a Paktia resident. “The aid process has decreased from 100 percent to 80 percent and the reason is a ban on women’s work,” said Wali Khan, a Paktia resident. According to Paktia residents, the natural disaster caused many challenges. Malalay has a seven-member family and said that she faced economic challenges and did not receive aid from a relief organization. “I didn’t have anything to eat at night now that I have come here, I borrowed money to rent a car,” said

Local officials said relief by organizations in this province has decreased. “The process of providing aid has decreased, the institutions should be asked why they have reduced the aid. The warehouses that we have in the disaster management department have been forced to help the people from the warehouses,” said Nisar Ahmad Nijat, head disaster management department in Paktia. It has been two months that the process of providing aid by relief organizations has slowed down after restrictions were imposed on women’s work.

Afghan iron and steel industry calls for support



KABUL (TOLOnews): Steel-making businesspeople said that they have made significant progress despite the ongoing challenges in the the country. Officials in the union of the steel industry said nearly \$500 million has been invested in the field. The union said that more than 20,000 people are working in this field. “Around 42 factories of the steel industry exist in Afghanistan. We have invested around \$500 million in this sector. More than 20,000 people are pro-

vided with direct jobs and dozens of others are engaged indirectly,” said Abdul Naseer Rishitia, an economist. This comes as the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) said that steel is not being exported abroad. “We don’t have exports of steel to overseas. The exports have been halted in general because what we make is being used inside Afghanistan,” said Akhundzada Abdul Salam, a spokesman for the MoIC. “In Afghanistan over the past two years the recent

political changes in the country have resulted in a reduction of development projects,” said Mohammad Karim Azimi, the CEO of the chamber. According to the chamber, the steel industry of Afghanistan has reached a good position in competition with the neighboring countries. The Afghanistan steel industry has constantly called for the government’s support. The Afghanistan industrial businesspeople have recently withdrawn their investments and shifted them overseas.

11 people including two women publicly flogged

BADAKHSHAN (Khaama Press): The supreme court of the Taliban said that eleven people, including two women, were publicly flogged at a sports ground in the city of Faizabad in Badakhshan province. The statement said the 11 were allegedly accused of “moral crimes and adultery”, and were lashed by the Taliban officials in front of a huge crowd in northern Badakhshan province. High-ranking Taliban authorities, scholars, and local elders attended the event, which took place in the 7th district of Faizabad city. After the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, this is the first time the Taliban officials report the public punishment of criminals in Badakhshan province. Prior to this, as per the verdict of the Taliban supreme court, 16 people were publicly flogged in the Grishk district of southern Helmand province. This comes as the Taliban authorities have publicly flogged at least 250 people in different provinces on charges of various crimes. The practice of public punishment started by the Taliban in November, after the group’s supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, asked judges to implement Sharia law in their decisions in courts, including the death penalty. Over the past months, the Taliban-run administration has flogged scores of people in different provinces including Helmand, Farah, Takhar, Logar, Kabul, Badakhshan, Urugzan,

Jawzjan, Parwan, Paktiya, Paktika, Laghman, and some other provinces. In response to the Taliban’s public punishment, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the international community was “calling for the suspension of the death penalty by the Taliban.” US State Department spokesman Ned Price has said the implementation of the death penalty by the Taliban indicates the group’s return to its “dark past”, and its regressive policies. Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, in response to the massive criticisms on Twitter said that the international community “should not interfere in Afghanistan’s internal affairs.”

Essential items prices stable in Kabul

KABUL (Pajhwok): The prices of essential daily-use items remained unchanged, but the afghani lost some value against the US dollar during the outgoing week in Kabul.



29 criminals arrested in 5 provinces, says MoI

KABUL (Pajhwok): Security forces have arrested 29 alleged criminals in connection to theft, kidnapping and other crimes in eight provinces of the country, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Saturday. On its twitter handle MoI wrote: “Seven criminals arrested in Parwan, five in Takhar, four in Kandahar, three each in Kabul, Khost and Daikundi and one in Farah province.” Twenty-nine persons had been arrested in connection with committing criminal crimes in Kabul, Parwan, Takhar, Kandaha, Khost, Daikondi, Balkh and Farah provinces in connection to robbery.” The ministry did not provide information regarding the identity of detained individual, it did not reveal when that arrest was took place and what items recovered from detainees. Balkh police forces released two persons from kidnappers and arrested three abductors, the twitter added. Earlier, MoI announced the arrest of 26 alleged criminals in connection to murders and theft in five provinces of the country.

More historical sites found in Zabul

ZABUL (Agencies): Local Culture officials of Zabul said that recently 18 historical sites founded in Zabul. The provincial Department of Information and Culture of Zabul say that after the Islamic Emirate sovereignty in the country, they have registered many historical sites in this province as historical heritage. “Earlier, ten historical sites were registered in that province by the Zabul Department of Information and Culture, but after the Islamic Emirate sovereignty, this number has increased to more than eighty,” said Abdul wali Basharmal, an official of the department. The department of Information and Culture of Zabul strives to register and preserve historical sites in the province, he added.

12% Afghan families lack access to clean water

KABUL (Pajhwok): The United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) says three successive droughts have hit Afghanistan hard, with 12 percent families facing lack of access to potable water. UNOCHA tweeted: “Three successive droughts have hit Afghanistan. hard. 2022 drought saw a 7% spike in families expressing increased need for drinking water; a 12% in families facing barriers to accessing safe water.” It said \$479 million was needed to improve access to safe drinking water for \$14 million people and prevent them from water-borne diseases.

Culture Minister visits Herat historical sites

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Information and Culture Minister, Mullah Khairullah Khairkhal, visited Herat historical sites. The Minister of Information and Culture, Visiting Herat, stressed on the preservation of historical sites said: “Every historical sites are a part of the cultural and historical value of the country and this ministry will do its best to preserve it. On his trip he visit the famous historical bridge of Tarpol in that province. Tarpol bridge is located on Harirod river, 90km to the west of Herat, between Khesan and Ghorian districts, and the construction of the bridge dates back to

the pre-Timurian period. The historic Tarpol bridge, has a sight-seeing attraction, and also has a



different structure in terms of construction, said Mawlaana Naeem ul Haq Haqqani, the head of information and culture of Herat. Meanwhile, Minister Khairkhal, during his trip visited Islam Qala border.

Commission: Before Islamic Emirate, UK aid unsatisfactory

KABUL (TOLOnews): The UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has been put in the spotlight by a report released in November by an independent commission. The Independent Commission for Aid Impact, which examines UK aid spending, published a review UK aid to Afghanistan in November 2022. The review looked at UK aid spending before the Islamic Emirate takeover. ICAI awarded the government an Amber/Red score, meaning “unsatisfactory achievement in most areas.” UK MPs will explore the key findings of their report and seek an update on the government’s response at a session scheduled for February 21. Lord Ahmad, responsible minister for the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and the United

Nations will give evidence on the Government’s response to ICAI’s review and the current situation in Afghanistan, according to the UK parliamentary brief posted online. The report also expressed concerns over the current economic situation of Afghanistan, saying that the country is currently facing an ongoing economic crisis and freezing conditions, which have increased the number of people in humanitarian need. The report said that one month after the recent ban on female NGO employees in Afghanistan, a poll of 87 NGOs by the Humanitarian Access Working Group revealed that one in five organisations said that women could no longer access their services. The services offered by NGOs in Afghanistan have been scaled back, with 67% having reduced their work, only

17% operating fully and 15% not operating at all. Economists said that the injection of aid to Afghanistan is important in the current situation, the report said. “The continuation of such aid, especially by the UK in the current situation, is important because Afghanistan is currently at the edge of a humanitarian crisis and more than 90 percent of the population are living in poverty,” said Seyar Qureshi, an economist. This comes as the residents of Kabul expressed concern about unemployment. “All of the people need aid because all of the people are jobless. They don’t have the capacity to purchase wood and coal,” said Mohammad Zakir, a resident of Kabul. “The aid should be through a certain method, they should come with a

community leader and conduct a survey, and provide the aid to the people who deserve it,” said Mohammad Aslam, a resident of Kabul. The Ministry of Economy (MoE) said that cash aid has helped the stabilization of Afghan currency. “The cash aid in addition to stabilization of exports, has played an important role in the economic development and stabilization of Afghan currency. We support this aid,” said Abdul Latif Nazari, deputy Minister of Economy. According to the Central Bank, more than \$2.2 billion in cash has been assisted to Afghanistan after the Islamic Emirate came to power. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said that more than 28 million people need aid in 2023 in Afghanistan.

Ghazni museum attracts more visitors recently: Ghaznavi

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): The number of people visiting historic museum in Ghazni city, the capital of southern Ghazni province, had surged by 50 percent recently, an official said on Saturday. Mawlawi Hameedullah Nisar Ghaznavi, the provincial Information and Culture Department director told Pajhwok Afghan New, the number of people who visited the museum in the past stood at 25 on daily bases while currently up to 50 or even more people visit the museum every day. “So far this year up to 2,500 people, majority foreigners and local visitors coming from far flung areas of the country, visited the museum while thousands of people, the exact figure of which are not ascertained, coming from Ghazni districts and villages visited the museum,” Ghaznavi said. He said Ghaznavi was one of the historic places in the country where historic shrines, national museum and other historic places are situated that worth visiting. Ghaznavi said, there were thousands of historical items in Ghazni museum from the civilizations of Bactrian, Kushanian, Ghaz-



navids, Ghoris, Sassanid’s, and other empires. These historical items are made of stone, iron, leather, clay, tile, copper and some of them are even 2,500 years old, he added. Currently 150 items have been put for the display of the visitors in showroom of the museum while 1,200 more of the items from the Ghaznavids and Timurids eras are kept in the store of the museum due to the lack of enough room in showroom of the museum. The local residents and some visitors of the museum said, the government must provide more facilities for the visitors the double the efforts of reconstruction in this province which will attract more visitors and that could help to further flourish the economy of this province. Nazar Mohammad, a res-

ident of Ghazni told Pajhwok, the government must implement more development projects and reconstruct the damaged roads to attract more visitors. The implementation of such projects will increase the revenue of the government and leave positive impact on the lives of the residents. Ali Sajjad, a visitor from Bamyam told Pajhwok, there was need for the extension of the museum to bring in more historic items from its store to the showroom for display, adding that currently a few items were put on display in the museum. According to Sajjad’s information, the museum of Ghazni has many historical items related to the era of Islamic civilization and Buddhism that should be put in display to attract

more visitors. But, Abdul Qayoum, another visitor said, the Department of Information and Culture must task some officers in the museum who can provide the visitors with more information about the historical items present facility. He said currently little information written on a piece of paper attached with each historic item, there is need for detail information, he added. Ghazni province is situated in the southeastern part of the country which has over 200 historical monuments and ancient sites and some entertainment places about which some historian also wrote in the past. Ghazni Museum was founded in 1978 and is considered one of the historically richest museums of the country.

Police arrests 29 criminals

KABUL (Agencies): Police arrested 29 people in 8 provinces on charges of robbery and abduction. The Ministry of Interior in a statement informed on the arrests of 29 criminals from Kabul and other provinces of the country. 7 from province, 5 in Takhar, 4 in Kandahar, 3 from Kabul 3 Khost, 3 from Daikundi, and 1 from Farah province, the statement

added. According to the statement, police of Balkh freed two people from the grip of abductors and arrested three people on charges. Meanwhile, the National Defense forces discovered weapons and a number of ammunition from Nangarhar province. The 201 Khalid Bin Waleed Army Corps’ forces recovered and seized 25

weapons and a number of ammunition from the districts of Dur Baba Nangarhar. 10 Kalashnikov, 6 M16, 6 M4, 2 rifles, one sniper, and many other ammunition recovered said the Defense Ministry in a statement. According to the Ministry of National Defense, a person has been arrested on charges with this case by their forces.

Countering threats of terrorism FM urges capacity building of Afghan authorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday urged the international community to help in capacity building of the Afghan interim authorities to take on threats of terrorism. The foreign minister was taking part in a panel discussion in Munich Security Conference. He said the international community wanted the Afghan interim government to live up to its obligations and commitments in areas like women education, all-inclusive government and tackling of potential threats from terrorism, emanating from terrorist groups of Daesh, TTP and Al Qaeda.

The foreign minister said that if this issue was not taken seriously, the terrorist groups could conduct terrorist activities from

Afghanistan as had been witnessed recently from incidents in Pakistan. The interim government neither had a standing army, a counter-terrorism force and even a border force, nor have the capacity, he opined.

Bilawal said the global community should convince the Afghan interim government to take on the threat of terrorism and demonstrate its will. Terrorism not only posed threat to immediate neighbours of Afghanistan but also to the West, he cautioned. Pakistan had helped Afghanistan in the past and would continue to do so as it had hosted the largest number of Afghan refugees on its soil, he said, adding that the international community could not wash their hands and turn away from

Afghanistan. He stressed that the world should continue its humanitarian support, unfreeze Afghan's assets, open up banking channels and engage with the Taliban, society and the women. The foreign minister reiterated that a peaceful Afghanistan was vital for the stability of the region and the international community must play its role in this regard.

The Afghan interim government had assured to eradicate terrorism from its soil, he added. The foreign minister also elaborated that the continuation of economic activities and progress in the war-weary Afghanistan was must for peace and stability and would help the interim Afghan authorities to run affairs of the country.

Samjhauta Express victims waiting for justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indian government continues to deny justice to the families of victims of the Samjhauta Express terrorist attack despite availability of evidence even after the passage of 16 years to the horrific incident.

A report, released by the Kashmir Media Service on the completion of 16 years to the deadly attack, said that on this day in 2007, 68 persons, mostly Pakistanis, were killed in bomb blasts in Samjhauta Express – a cross border train service between Pakistan and India. It maintained that the bombs were planted by Hindutva terrorists with connivance of Indian secret agencies.

The report deplored that the Indian court acquitted four Hindu terrorists despite the evidence of their involvement in the heinous act. It said that these culprits were acquitted owing to their Hindutva connections. It pointed out that the court decision came even after a Hindu extremist leader and affiliated with RSS, Swami Aseemanand – the mastermind of the attack – confessed during the investigations that Hindu terror outfits were behind the blasts.

The report said the acquittal of those involved in blasts showed Hindu extremists enjoy impunity under Modi-led fascist Indian government and that the court decision in this regard was a reflection of Indian state policy to protect the Hindu terrorists. It lamented that Indian agencies had blamed a Pakistan-based group despite seeing a clear Hindutva link to the Samjhauta blast.

The report said that Samjhauta Express bombing was a false flag operation aimed at maligning Pakistan. It pointed out that the Indian secret agencies had staged several Samjhauta Express blasts like false flag operations to defame Pakistan. It added that the world must realize that the RSS-backed fascist BJP regime is a threat to global peace.



LAHORE: A delegation of Tents Manufacturers Association called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Imran says ‘tapping phones a bid to pressurise judges’

LAHORE (INP): Former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-E-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan has said that the tapping of phone calls is a bid to pressurise the judges and stop the rule of law in the country. Imran Khan made the statement while meeting with columnists and senior writers in which he discussed the PTI's political strategy, economic challenges and terrorism incidents. He also elaborated on PTI's Jail Bharo Tehreek and its targets.

The PTI chief said that the ongoing propaganda against the judiciary especially the judges is shameful. He added that Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) has a history of targeting the judiciary. Khan said that the tapping of phone calls is a bid to pressurise judges and stop the rule of law. Khan said that the judiciary is the last hope of the nation. He added that the government should implement the rule of law without pressurising the judges.

The PTI chief alleged that the chief election commissioner (CEC) is the main supporter of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) in

constitutional violations. He added that the incumbent government is promoting vengeful actions and political dictatorship. Imran Khan said that PTI will stop the lawlessness and economic crisis with the nation's support. He added that he has announced the commencement of the Jail Bharo movement for real independence.

He said that political stability will bring economic stability to the country which is impossible without the rule of law. Khan alleged that Qamar Javed Bajwa had admitted to play role in regime change and violated his oath. He added that Qamar Javed Bajwa had also admitted to controlling the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

He also alleged that Bajwa had also admitted to audio recordings which was an illegal step. He demanded the military institution conduct an inquiry into Bajwa's steps. Imran Khan praised President Dr Arif Alvi for not signing the Finance Bill ordinance. He said that the Finance Bill would bring inflation to the country. He said that economic

indicators were positive during the PTI government. He said that the default risk to Pakistan reached 100 per cent during the incumbent government.

Regarding his cases, Khan said that he is being summoned by courts despite doctors stopped him from walking. The PTI chief said that they sacrificed governments in two provinces to end the crisis through fresh elections but the rulers were delaying the polls. He added that elections should be held within 90 days after the dissolution of the assemblies as per the Constitution.

He alleged that the caretaker governments are not impartial. He added that false cases are being filed against PTI leaders and supporters besides their arrests. Imran Khan said that they adopted a peaceful way to protest against the government by announcing the Jail Bharo movement. They will surrender before the authorities across the country. He said that PTI will start the Jail Bharo movement on February 22.

Russia committed ‘crimes against humanity’ in Ukraine: US

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The United States has determined that Russia has committed “crimes against humanity” during its nearly year-long invasion of Ukraine, US Vice President Kamala Harris has said. Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, days before the anniversary of Moscow launching its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Harris said Russian forces had conducted “widespread and systemic” attacks on the country's civilian population.

“In the case of Russia's actions in Ukraine we have examined the evidence, we know the legal standards, and there is no doubt: these are crimes against humanity,” said Harris, a former prosecutor. “And I say to all those who have perpetrated these crimes, and to their superiors who are

complicit in these crimes, you will be held to account.” The Biden administration formally determined last March that Russian troops had committed war crimes in Ukraine and said it would work with others to prosecute offenders.

A determination of crimes against humanity goes a step further, indicating that attacks against civilians are being carried out in a widespread and systematic manner. Harris listed a litany of abuses that she said were carried out by Moscow's forces in Ukraine – “gruesome acts of murder, torture, rape and deportation, execution-style killings, beatings and electrocution”. In her remarks, Harris cited as “barbaric and inhumane” the dozens of victims found in Bucha shortly after Russia's invasion last

February; the March 9 bombing of a Mariupol maternity hospital, that killed three people, including a child; and the sexual assault of a four-year-old by a Russian soldier that was identified by the UN in a report.

Organisations supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) have documented more than 30,000 war crime incidents since the invasion, according to the US government. Ukrainian officials said they were investigating the shelling of the city of Bakhmut this week as a possible war crime. Russia, which has said it is conducting a “special military operation” in Ukraine to eliminate threats to its security and protect Russian-speakers, has denied intentionally targeting civilians or committing war crimes.

Earthquake death toll passes 45,000

ANTAKYA/KAHRAMANMARAS (Agencies): More than 45,000 people have been killed in the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria, and the toll is expected to soar with some 264,000 apartments in Turkey destroyed and many still missing in the country's worst modern disaster. Twelve days after the quake hit, three people, including a child, were rescued alive from the rubble of a building in Antakya city of southern Turkey on Saturday, 296 hours after the earthquake, state news agency Anadolu said.

Television images showed them being carried to ambulances. The death toll in Turkey stands at 39,672, while neighbouring Syria has reported more

than 5,800 deaths. Syria's toll has not changed for days. While many international rescue teams have left the vast quake zone, domestic teams continued to search through flattened buildings on Saturday hoping to find more survivors who defied the odds. Experts say most rescues occur in the 24 hours following an earthquake.

Hakan Yasinoglu, in his 40s, was rescued in the southern province of Hatay, 278 hours after the 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck in the dead of night on February 6, the Istanbul Fire Brigade said. Earlier, Osman Halebiye, 14, and Mustafa Avci, 34, were saved in Turkey's historic city of Antakya, known in ancient times as Antioch. As

Avci was carried away, he was put on a video call with his parents, who showed him his newborn baby. “I had completely lost all hope. This is a true miracle. They gave me my son back. I saw the wreckage and I thought nobody could be saved alive from there,” his father said. Aid organisations say the survivors will need help for months to come with so much crucial infrastructure destroyed. In neighbouring Syria, already shattered by more than a decade of civil war, the bulk of fatalities have been in the northwest, an area controlled by insurgents who are at war with President Bashar al-Assad — a conflict that has complicated efforts to aid people affected by the earthquake.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE WOMEN OF HYDERABAD

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Features:

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