

LPG price hiked

KARACHI (PPI): The LPG price has been increased by another 10 rupees per kilogram on Saturday, multiplying the burden the common man already facing due to higher electricity and petroleum rates. Out to cash in on gas shortage at homes, the LPG mafia raised the price ignoring the official rate list. The LPG's official rate is Rs201 per kilogram but it is being sold at Rs260 in Karachi.



QUETTA: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing a meeting regarding development of irrigation system and water supply in Balochistan.

Electricity tariff hike Countrywide protests continue

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The protest demonstrations against inflated electricity bills continued across the country on Saturday. People came out on the streets in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Toba Tek Singh, Tala Gang and other cities today to register their protest against the levy of additional taxes that had led to astounding increase in the power tariff.

They blocked roads by burning tyres, torched their electricity bills, and shouted anti-government slogans. They also demanded the government to end the facility of free supply of electricity to ministers and government servants. They also demanded relief for the households consuming up to 300 units of electricity.

A large number of workers of Jamaat-e-Islami and traders held a demonstration outside WASA's office

in Rawalpindi against mind-boggling increase in electricity and water rates. Speaking on the occasion, representatives of business community complained that the WASA had increased water bills from 300 to 1,500 per cent. They said in these circumstances it was becoming extremely difficult for them to do business. They shouted slogans against the government and the WASA officials.

Traders in Peshawar came out on roads to vent their anger at the government over hike in the electricity tariff. The protestors blocked the Circular Road and took out a rally. They shouted anti-government slogans and torched their bills.

They demanded the government to withdraw increase in the electricity rates immediately. Women at Toba Tek Singh lost their temper as they held a

demonstration against inflated electricity bills in Bukhshi Park locality. Holding bills in their hands, the protestors said that at a time when they were finding it hard to meet their both ends meet, how they could pay huge sums to the government.

They said they were not even in a position to bring up their kids, and now to rub salt into their wounds, they had been burdened with power bills. The women appealed to the government to take notice of the situation and rid them of their predicament. A large number of people, including religious scholars, traders and lawyers, held a demonstration at Tala Gang. They demanded the government to provide them relief by reducing the bills. Similar protests were also reported from Hafizabad, Feroze Watanwan and other small cities and towns.

High flood prevails in Sutlej

LAHORE (PPI): High flood prevails in Sutlej River due to Indian water release following which Gunda Singh Wala and its nearby areas were submerged.

According to details, the water level was likely to increase further in the next 10 to 12 hours at Head Ganda Singh Wala. There was also a high level of flood at Head Islam in the River Sutlej. The inflow of water on Headwork Islam was more than 100,000 cusecs due to which thousands of acres of crops and low-lying settlements came under floodwater and dozens of villages were submerged.

In Manchanabad, high flood at Ratika Patan caused havoc in the area. Flood torrents inundated more than 85 settlements severing connection of the villages with other parts of the country. People were confined to their homes. Floodwater entered Government Girls Elementary School Akbar Mari Nihal forcing the administration to suspend educational activities at the academic institution.

According to Irrigation Department, flood torrents in Sutlej River washed away several dams in three tehsils of Bahawalpur. At Head Melasi Siphon, water level rose to 124,000 cusecs due to which many villages came under water. Pakistan Army was busy in relief activities in the low-lying areas of the Bahawalpur Division.

Army had set up free medical camp while conducting rescue operations. The personnel of the armed forces were also distributing free ration among flood victims. Shifting of victims to safer places in Lodhran, Borewala and Head Sulaimanki was in progress. Medical camps have also been set up to prevent epidemics during floods.

Hearing of Imaan, Ali's bail pleas put off

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Saturday adjourned the hearing of post-arrest bail petitions filed by human rights lawyer Imaan Haza Mazari and former MNA and co-founder of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) Ali Wazir until Monday.

Duty Judge Raja Javed Abbas also directed petitioners' lawyers to give arguments on the next hearing. Police had arrested Imaan in overnight raid in Islamabad last Sunday. Imaan was taken away by police officials and "men in plainclothes and masks" from her home. Moments before the arrest, Imaan posted on X that "unknown persons" were breaking down the security cameras in her home and that the gate to her house was "jumped over".

Ali Wazir was also arrested by police in Islamabad a day before Imaan, daughter of former PTI leader Shireen Mazari, was taken into custody. Both Imaan and Wazir drew the ire of authorities after they made anti-state institutions speeches at a rally taken out by the PTM in the federal capital last Friday.

Imran challenges his bail rejection pleas in IHC

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has challenged the rejection of nine bail pleas in the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

According to the details, after the bail plea rejection in several cases including May 09 riots, judicial complex attack and fake accounts, the Chairman of PTI has filed nine applications through his lawyer Salman Safdar in the Islamabad High Court. The Sessions Court rejected six, while three bail application was rejected by the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC).

In the petitions submitted to IHC, the PTI lawyer requested that the bail reject verdict should be declared null and void. The lawyer further calls upon the IHC to instruct the trial courts to hear the cases again based on merit and prevent the police from

making arrests of PTI chairman in these nine cases. Earlier to this, Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) approached the Supreme Court against Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq.

A petition has been filed on behalf of the PTI Chairman by Latif Khosa in the apex court under Article 186-A today. "My cases should be transferred to the Lahore or Peshawar high courts from the Islamabad High Court (IHC)," petitioner pleaded. Petitioner also sought restraining IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq from hearing the cases against him. The PTI Core Committee had yesterday announced that it would approach the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) for reference against Justice Aamer Farooq.

Qureshi challenges physical remand in IHC:

PTI leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi has challenged his physical remand in the Islamabad High Court.

Former foreign minister has filed a petition against physical remand granted by a special court to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in a case pertaining to a diplomatic cipher that reportedly went missing from the PTI's ex-prime minister.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi has pleaded to the court to declare the trial court's August 20, 21 and 25 decision as void. He pleaded to the high court to send him on judicial remand after declaring the physical remand decision as void. "With malicious intent and connivance of the federal government the case has been against me. I didn't receive the cipher telegram, neither shared its transcript with a person," he pleaded.

Made in Pakistan brand: President urges honesty

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a resounding call for trustworthiness and the advancement of 'Made in Pakistan' goods, President Arif Alvi urged the business community to work harder for brand Pakistan at the inaugural ceremony of the 'Made in Pakistan' movement in Karachi.

President Alvi stressed the vital importance of honesty and trust in all commercial endeavors, both domestically and abroad. He lauded the track record of Pakistani products that had achieved international acclaim through the addition of value to their original forms, emphasizing the potential for global promotion of 'Made in Pakistan' items.

President Alvi asked business leaders and the

youth of Pakistan to take an active role in rectifying societal issues and advocating for local products. He called upon Pakistani society to prioritize 'Made in Pakistan' products over foreign alternatives as a means of promoting domestic manufacturing and reducing the nation's import bills.

Highlighting alarming statistics, the President drew attention to the mental stress faced by 24% of the Pakistani population and the unfortunate reality that approximately 27 million children were out of school.

President Alvi underscored the significance of character and honesty, evoking the values exemplified by the Muslims and preached by our Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). He emphasized that honesty and character

must remain at the core of commercial activities, with morals and ethics guiding business conduct.

In a call to action, the President urged coordinated efforts to promote charity and philanthropy, advocating for a shift away from wealth accumulation. He made it clear that Islam does not endorse the accumulation of wealth as a primary pursuit. He said that the rich should help the needy people.

The ceremony was attended by the distinguished figures including Rizwan Jaffar, the founder of the 'Made in Pakistan' movement and the first Youth Parliament, as well as prominent businessmen and CEO of TDAP, alongside the Secretary of TDAP, Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, and other esteemed business leaders and notables.

The Frontier Post

Seven die as van overturns F.P. Report

MANSEHRA: Seven people were killed and five others severely injured when a passenger van veered off the road and plummeted into a ditch near Mansehra, police said Saturday. Rescue teams rushed to the scene to provide aid. The injured, in a state of distress, were initially taken to King Abdullah Hospital in Mansehra for medical assistance.

Caretaker govt to focus on revenue generation: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD / QUETTA: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Saturday said that the interim government would focus more on rationalizing the expenditures, generations of revenue and development of human resource during its short constitutional period.

Talking to a delegation of students from Howard University US, the prime minister said that in Pakistan, about nine percent population was contributing towards GDP with their taxes. How to bring the undocumented economy, people in the tax net and how to invest in the human resources would be broadly focused during the short period of the caretaker government, he added.

The prime minister said Pakistan was gifted with the natural resources and was a country of talented people. He said the government was focusing to produce the high-tech educated and skilled human resource and cited a couplet of Allama Iqbal in which he had hinted the importance of human resource through individual and collective efforts.

"Pakistani diaspora in the US is a success story itself," he said, adding the Americans knew the Pakistanis who were contributing in their society. A delegation of the Harvard University, comprising 38 students from nine different nationalities, is currently on a visit to Pakistan.

Responding to a question, the prime minister said Pakistan had been the biggest victim of climate disaster which was a global issue. The climate change had become an existential threat, he added. He opined that the world viewed the US as a big power but at the same time, expected it to turn itself into a green power.

Kakar summons emergency meeting over power price, consumers' bills

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has summoned an emergency meeting on Sunday over the price of electricity and consumers' bills.

The prime minister has directed the ministry of energy and the power distributions companies to present detailed briefing over the issue, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release on Saturday. The meeting would null over provision of maximum relief to the masses over electricity bills. Separately, on his X handle, the prime minister posted that he summoned an emergency meeting over these issues in the PM House and would hold consultations to provide maximum relief to power consumers.

Appreciating the progress achieved by the American society, he said the diversification in the US society was an example for other countries to follow, adding their society was tolerant and what the US had produced in the domains of knowledge and skills was amazing. The caretaker prime minister said the other countries ought to learn from it for their own benefits.

Replying to a query, the prime minister elaborated the role played by Pakistan during the former USSR and Afghanistan war and the subsequent events in the region. He said Pakistan had contributed hugely towards the global peace and economy.

They had faced a lot of challenges in the past as the two powers of the world; the US and Russia, had been in its milieu which had implications, he added. PM Kakar, explaining a viewpoint, said that priorities by different governments in Pakistan kept on changing, but they did have visions and tried to visualize those visions. He also deliberated upon the history and creation of Pakistan.

The prime minister, to another question, said that democracy gave

(Continued on Back Page)

Solangi, Secretary briefs media on electricity tariff



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi along with Federal Secretary of the Power Division Rashid Mahmood Langrial held a media briefing on Saturday to explain the current state of electricity tariffs.

At the outset of the briefing with anchorpersons and bureau chiefs from various media outlets, the minister acknowledged the difficulties faced by the people due to the escalating electricity prices.

In response, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar had called a high-level meeting on Sunday to address concerns related to electricity pricing, he added.

He said all stakeholders within the power sector would participate in the meeting. The Secretary of the Power Division informed the media that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority

(NEPRA) determined electricity tariffs using three distinct methodologies. The three-month tariff adjustment was meant for new power plants, he said, adding electricity prices were subject to fluctuations based on the Consumer Price Index.

Moreover, he elaborated on the necessity of tariff alterations due to the upsurge in KIBOR rates. However, fuel price adjustments also impacted electricity costs. In the fiscal year 2023, the tariff was initially set at Rs 195 per dollar, but the value of the dollar surged to Rs284. "We initially aimed to set the price of RNLG at Rs 3,183 per MMBTU, however, the actual price ranged between Rs 3,000 and Rs 3,800," he noted.

Similarly, the secretary said the price range for imported coal fell between Rs 51,000 and Rs 61,000 per metric ton. He further disclosed that a staggering Rs 2 trillion would be exclusively

allocated to capacity payments in the upcoming year. The increase in electricity tariffs predominantly affected consumers utilizing more than 400 units, he said, adding the tariff remained unchanged for 63.5 per cent of domestic consumers.

For 31.6 per cent of domestic consumers, he said electricity prices saw an uptick of up to Rs 6.5 per unit. Notably, a tariff of Rs 7.5 per unit was only applied to 4.9 per cent of domestic consumers, he added. Langrial asserted that the average tariff increase for domestic consumers stood at Rs 3.82. "In July 2022, the highest recorded electricity tariff was Rs 31.02 per unit," he affirmed, also revealing that by August 2023, the price had increased to only Rs 33.89 per unit. He confirmed that the facility of free electricity units to DISCO officers would be discontinued, emphasizing that the burden was not being transferred to regular bill-paying individuals.

Court extends Khadija's remand

LAHORE (PPI): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore on Saturday extended the judicial remand of PTI activist Khadija Shah, Sanam Javed and others in the Jinnah House attack case.

Ms Shah, Sanam Javed and others were presented before the ATC judge after their judicial remand expired today. The court while extending their judicial remand for 14 more days, ordered police to present the accused again on September 9. Khadija Shah, a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist and former finance minister Dr Salman Shah's daughter, is currently in jail on judicial remand.

Violent clashes broke out across Pakistan after the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan was arrested at the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on May 9. The protests were held in remote and major cities as the party workers are agitated due to their chairman's arrest, with Balochistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad summoning the armed forces to ensure law and order. Army installations and Corps Commander's house in Lahore came under attack during a protest by PTI workers.

Depts to KP advisors assigned

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has assigned departments to the newly appointed Advisors and Special Assistants here on Saturday.

According to notification issued here, Dr Riaz Anwar has been appointed as Advisor for Health, Labor and Population Welfare while Sarfaraz Ali Shah has been appointed Advisor for C&W, Planning and Development and Public Health and Zafarullah Khan, the only special assistant to the chief minister, has been appointed as the special assistant for irrigation and housing.



JI to approach SC to ensure timely execution of general elections: Siraj

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) will not tolerate even a single day's delay in the elections beyond the constitutional 90-day period required to organize the polls following the dissolution of assemblies, says JI Emir Sirajul Haq while announcing the party's intention to approach the Supreme Court of Pakistan to ensure the timely execution of the national vote.

Speaking to the media after addressing a condolence reference for JI Bangladesh vice-emir Dilawar Hussain Saedi at Mansoorah on Saturday, Haq emphasized the care-

taker government's foremost responsibility to collaborate closely with the Election Commission of Pakistan to ensure free and fair elections. Additionally, he urged the caretaker government to reverse the recent hikes in electricity tariff and petrol prices.

Haq pointed out that the caretakers should refrain from blindly adhering to the policies dictated by the IMF. He said the masses were unable to bear the burden of inflated bills. The JI, he said, to stage protest demonstrations across the country against the surge in power tariff and overall inflation, forcing the gov-

ernment take back decision aimed at targeting the poverty-stricken masses at the behest of the IMF.

He said it was due to ill-conceived economic policies of past governments of the PDM, PPP, and PTI that the people were starving to death, appealing the masses to actively participate in JI's peaceful protests and raise their voices against injustice.

The JI Emir said the former rulers lacked sincerity towards the public. The rulers, he said, amassed wealth in foreign accounts, depriving the people of from basic rights. He emphasized that both military regimes and political

parties' governments backed by the establishment have only brought destruction. He urged the people to reject tested parties and instead cast their votes for the JI, which promises genuine transformation and the establishment of an Islamic welfare state in Pakistan.

In homage to the tireless efforts of the late Dilawar Saedi for Islam and the Ummah, the JI chief extolled his contributions, assuring that his endeavors would not be in vain. Haq expressed optimism that the rule of the Quran and Sunnah would ultimately prevail in both Bangladesh and Pakistan.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Syed Jamal Shah addressing a press conference at Radio Pakistan.

Sindh governor objects to Karachi Metropolitan University Bill

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori has returned a bill to the provincial assembly regarding establishing Karachi Metropolitan University.

Raising objection to the bill passed by the Sindh Assembly, Governor Tessori sent it back unsigned.

The governor particularly objected to mayor or administrator's becoming

the pro vice chancellor of the university.

The last Sindh Assembly had passed 'The Karachi Metropolitan University Bill, 2022' earlier this month.

It may be mentioned here that the Sindh governor had dissolved the Sindh Assembly on the recommendation of Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah

on August 11 last.

The governor signed the summary under Article 112(1) of the Constitution, which empowered him to dissolve the provincial assembly within 48 hours if advised by the chief minister.

Consequently, a caretaker government led by interim Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar was sworn in August 19.

CM orders provision of free medicines

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Muhsin Naqvi has said that no shortcoming will be tolerated in the provision of free medicines to patients.

During his visit to DHQ hospital Kasur on Saturday, the CM expressed his determination to press ahead with his initiative of visiting hospitals till the provision of quality treatment facilities to the common man are ensured.

On the occasion, he inspected emergency ward especially and different wards of the hospital for reviewing medical facilities, provided to the patients. The Punjab Chief Minister also enquired patients and their attendants about the provision of free medicines in the hospital.

On the complaints of overcharging in the parking lot, the Chief Minister ordered Medical Superintendent the immediate redressal of complaints on priority basis.

13 new dengue cases reported

LAHORE (APP): Thirteen positive dengue cases were reported in the city during the last 24 hours.

According to a handout, issued by Lahore Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa, 12 probable and 64 suspected dengue cases were also reported. After finding larvae in Lahore, dengue spray was conducted in 10,036 houses and places.

The number of dengue positive cases in Lahore is 315. When the positive cases came out, dengue case response was conducted in 841 houses. In the last 24 hours, 41,591 indoor checks resulted in 1,016 larvae detections. Outdoor 7,669 surveillance resulted in identification of 50 positive larvae points.

NAB announces Rs440mn disbursement among affectees

LAHORE (APP): NAB Lahore Director General Amjad Majeed Aulakh held the third monthly open court which attracted a large number of housing sector affectees.

Affectees of Omega City Housing, Omega Residencia, Pak-Arab Housing Society, Model Housing Enclave, Fizaia Housing Scheme, Formanites Housing Society, Metro City (Al Raheem Garden), Lahore Garden Housing scheme, Al-Rehman Garden, LDA Avenue-I, Maryam Garden, Elite Town Society and Ali Green Group narrated their ordeals to the NAB DG, who listened to them patiently and issued directives accordingly.

Talking to the affectees of the Pak Arab Housing Scheme, the DG cited court orders regarding the settlement of all claimants within six months, however, he said the NAB investiga-

tion team was working tirelessly to materialize it. "Initially, NAB Lahore has sold some properties owned by accused persons and recovered a handsome amount, whereas, a hefty amount is soon to be received from the accused," he added. He informed the affectees of Model Housing Enclave that the NAB had successfully recovered Rs440 million and disbursements would start soon. "The NAB has earlier recovered and gave away more than Rs2 billion to affectees."

He asked the NAB team to expedite work on Metro City (Al-Rahim Garden) so that proceedings might be initiated over the claims. Talking to the affectees of Omega City case, he said that the layout plan/map of the scheme had been approved by departments concerned, however, the affectees were advised to pay remaining amounts and

secure possession of their plots from society administration, otherwise, they could recover their amount from the society. In this regard, the NAB Lahore has already issued instructions to the society administration.

Addressing the participants, he said the NAB was working to function according to the mandate. He said that he was listening to every person appearing in open hearing and proper initiatives were taken to facilitate them. He said that two impersonators had been arrested by the NAB Lahore on a complaint received in the last month's open hearing, who were handed over to police for investigations.

The NAB Lahore organizes open hearing (Khuli Ketchery) on the last Friday of every month in which the DG listens to every complainant himself and issues directives accordingly.

Chairman RHC briefs British HC on measures to safeguard minority rights

LAHORE (INP): Chairman Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabeer Azad on Saturday welcomed British High Commissioner Jane Marriott at the Badshahi Mosque and shed light on its historical significance and architectural beauty.

Maulana Azad who is also the Khateeb and Imam of Badshahi Mosque, extended warm greetings and focused on matters of mutual interest. The recent tragic incident in Jaranwala was also discussed during the meeting. Maulana Azad highlighted the role of religious leaders and scholars of various faiths in the context of the Jaranwala incident.

He emphasized the importance of safeguarding the rights of minorities and assured that Islam guarantees the protection of minority rights. The chairman RHC reiterated that the responsibility of imposing penalties lies with the state, and Pakistan as a nation upholds this principle.

Expressing condemnation for the incident, Maulana Azad stated that the government, armed forces, and the entire nation were resolute in preventing such incidents in the future emphasizing the need for effective measures and practical wisdom to ensure lasting peace.

He conveyed to the British High

Commissioner the solidarity and cooperation of all compassionate individuals and minority communities residing in the country.

He also commended the efforts of Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar and Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi for their commendable initiatives in swiftly rebuilding the affected houses and places of worship in Jaranwala.

Maulana Azad also presented the great national narrative "Paigham-e-Pakistan" to British High Commissioner Jane Marriott. British High Commissioner Jane Marriott commended his leadership and contributions in addressing the situation.

IGP gives cash awards to 40 instructors

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar gave away cash awards and certificates of appreciation to 40 instructors at a ceremony, held at the Central Police Office, here on Saturday.

The instructors and police officers from Police Training College Chung Lahore, Training College Sihala Rawalpindi, Police Training School Farooqabad and Multan participated in the event.

Addressing the instructors, the IGP said the training curriculum of the police force had been upgraded according to modern requirements, similarly the training steps and performance evaluation mechanisms of the force had also been digitalised.

Additional IG Training Tariq Rustam Chohan, DIG Headquarters Humayun Bashir Tarar, AIG Training Faisal Mukhtar and AIG Discipline Ahsan Saifullah participated in the event.

IGP visits 1787 Complaint Centre: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar paid a surprise visit to 1787 Complaint Centre at Central Police Office here on Saturday and checked the grievance redress process.

He listened to complainants and issued orders on the spot. On an application, received from Hafizabad, the DPO was ordered to take immediate action under personal supervision. The IG Punjab asked all supervisory officers to take immediate action on the complaints sent through 1787 and provide all possible relief to citizens.

PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)
CORRIGENDUM

CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL ABUTMENT PLACE IN CAA MASJID AT BKIAF PESHAWAR

- Reference is made to Tender notice for the work "Construction of additional abutment place in CAA masjid at BKIAF, Peshawar" published dated 24th August 2023.
- The para # 6 of the above tender notice may be read as "Tenders will be received in the office of the **DIVISIONAL ENGINEER ES (CIVIL) BKIAF PESHAWAR AIRPORT ON 11-09-2023 AT 11.00 AM AND WILL BE OPENED ON THE SAME DAY AT 11.30 AM.**"
- The remaining terms and conditions remain the same.

DIVISIONAL ENGINEER ES (CIVIL)
BKIAF PESHAWAR

PID(K)#631/23 www.caapakistan.com.pk

TENDER NOTICE

- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), invites sealed bids from eligible Firms/ contractors for procuring high quality items in Lot-1 & Lot-2 for the financial year 2023-24 under KPRA Procurement Rules 2014.
- Bidding shall be conducted through **Single Stage-Two Envelopes** Bidding Procedure comprising a single package containing two envelopes as per KPRA Rules-2014. Each envelope shall contain separately **technical & financial bid** clearly marked in bold & legible letters. The bidders are bound to provide their complete information along with its postal as well as valid email address and phone number/s on each of the respective envelope.
- Bidding documents, detailed description and quantities of items, can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours till **13th September, 2023** against the non-refundable cash payment of Pak Rupees Two thousand (Rs. 2000/-PKR). The Bidding Documents can also be downloaded from the following website of CVE: <https://kpcve.gov.pk> and/or KPRA website www.kpra.gov.pk.
- The bids shall reach to the Office of the undersigned through registered Dak or Courier Services on or before **13th September, 2023 at 12.00PM**. The bids shall be opened on the same day by the Procurement committee in the presence of Representatives of the bidders who choose to attend at **12:30 PM** in the office of Director Administration. Bid submitted after due date & time shall not be entertained.
- The bid must be accompanied with Bid Security @ 2% of the bid value as per KPRA Rules in the name of the undersigned.
- The bidders shall submit an undertaking in their Technical Bids that the requisite Bid Security is included in their Financial Bid. A bid having no undertaking attached with technical bid will be considered non-responsive. Late bids shall not be entertained.
- Bids/Rates shall be quoted in Pak Rupees inclusive of all taxes where applicable.
- Bidders are required to offer the rate of their items inclusive of all the taxes, as negotiations on quoted rates are not allowed under the rules. The bid must be valid up to 90 days from date of opening of the bid.
- The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the bids as per provisions contained in Rule 47 of KPRA Procurement Rules 2014.

Director Administration
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)
Rano Garhi, Peshawar. Phone # 091-9214441

INF(P): 2091/2023

PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)
OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A PART OF PCAA'S PROFESSIONAL TEAM
SITUATION VACANT NOTICE NO. 20/2023

Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority requires services of qualified individuals to fill the following vacant posts on **contract basis** for **three (03) years** (extendable) where selection will be made purely on suitability and merit:-

Post	No. of Seat (s)	Prescribed Qualification	Quota & Pay Scale	Age Limit
Superintendent (Grade I) Accounts (SG-10) - Aeronautical Billing	One (01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B.Com Bachelor's degree in Commerce from HEC recognized University. Diploma in ERP (Oracle). Minimum 15 years of hand on experience, with at least 10 years' experience in Billing Management System (Experience in Aviation related organization will be preferred). Should have hand on experience of verification / preparation of billing data. Proficient in Computer Literacy (specifically in MS Excel, having the training in Advance Excel will be given preference). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merit Lump Sum Pay Package shall be offered equivalent to Gross Pay of Staff Group - 10 (SG-10). 05% increment shall be applicable annually on Lump Sum Pay Package 	Maximum 50 years (including all age relaxation)
Superintendent (Grade I) Accounts (SG-10) - Oracle Financials Functional Consultant (Non-Aeronautical)	Two (02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor degree in Commerce at least 2nd Division from HEC recognized university. Minimum 15 Years of Work Experience with at least 10 Years of experience as Oracle Financial Functional Consultant / Super User in large organization specially in ERP Project. Experience in Consultancy Firm and Aviation related organization will be preferred Should have hands on experience in the area of Oracle Financials (Super User) (Especially in Property Manager and Receivables) and or along with trainings are preferred. Good Knowledge of MS Excel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merit Lump Sum Pay Package shall be offered equivalent to Gross Pay of Staff Group - 10 (SG-10). 05% increment shall be applicable annually on Lump Sum Pay Package 	Maximum 50 years (including all age relaxation)
Superintendent (Grade I) Accounts (SG-10) (Oracle Financials Functional Consultant - Aeronautical)	One (01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor degree in Commerce at least 2nd Division from HEC recognized university. Minimum 15 Years of Work Experience with at least 10 Years of recent relevant experience as Oracle Financial functional consultant in a large organization specifically in ERP Project (Experience in Consultancy Firm and Aviation related organization will be preferred) Should have hand on experience in the area of Oracle Financials Super User Finance and or along with trainings are preferred. Experience in the area of Oracle Financials (Receivables, Cash Management & Payable Module) Provide Support in Internal / External and Government Audit Revenue recording, Bank reconciliation, Technical support, Oracle Management Reports Final Accounts. Good Knowledge of MS Excel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merit Lump Sum Pay Package shall be offered equivalent to Gross Pay of Staff Group - 10 (SG-10). 05% increment shall be applicable annually on Lump Sum Pay Package 	Maximum 50 years (including all age relaxation)

Application Procedure:

- Interested candidates are required to fill & submit Online Job Application Form available at www.caapakistan.com.pk within fifteen days from the date of this advertisement.
- Candidates will be required to upload scanned copies of certificate / degree of the required qualification only of the concerned post as mentioned above and CNIC while applying for the job.
- In case a candidate does not upload the above documents with the online application form, his/her application will be rejected.
- All the interested candidates must read the Terms of Reference (TOR) mentioned in the detailed notice available at www.caapakistan.com.pk before applying for the post.

ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR HR (TM)
HEADQUARTERS PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY,
TERMINAL-I, JINNAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KARACHI
TEL: 021-99072068 - 67

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Caretaker govt to fulfill constitutional responsibilities: Jamal

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Syed Jamal Shah here Saturday said the caretaker government would fulfill its constitutional obligations and will extend allout support to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold free and transparent election in the country.

The Minister said the main mandate of the caretaker Govt was to provide allout assistance to ECP to hold free, fair and transparent election in all provinces of Pakistan. He expressed the hope that ECP would soon announce date for General Election.

Talking to media during his visit to Radio Pakistan Peshawar, the Minister said that broad day attack on Radio Pakistan and APP Offices on May 10 were unpardonable crime and demanded strict action against the attackers.

He praised PBC employees for speedy restoration of its transmission after the

attack.

The Minister said he would request Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting to rehabilitate the building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar as quickly as possible and assured full support to PBC on behalf of his Ministry.

‘I have a close association with Radio Pakistan and served at PBC Quetta station programs.’

He said there are politicians who spent 30 years in jails but their workers had never attacked national organizations, adding a social media party was exposed before masses after May 9 vandalism.

He said that May 9 vandalism have hurt him the most, adding the misleading people have put on fire the rare archives of musics and dramas transcripts and others record of PBC and had inflicted heavy losses to the national broadcaster.

Syed Jamal Shah said that misleading elements had made a planned attack on Radio Pakistan in a bid

to silence the voice of the national broadcaster but failed in their nefarious designs.

Syed Jamal Shah said Pakistan is a unique country with diversity in culture, languages and rich history and suggested holding a three to five days international conference on its diversity and heritage for education and Information of people especially youth.

For this purpose, he underlined the need of the use of digital media tools including videos and documentaries to spread information among youth imperative for a knowledge based tolerant society.

He said awareness was a source of strength and accurate decisions, adding violence and intolerance was harmful for political and economic stability besides democracy.

He stressed the need of working for mutual coexistence and national harmony. He said Pakistan was our country that gives us everything including iden-

tity and every challenge could be countered by working for its prosperity and development.

The Minister said storage of dollars for monetary gains was one of the reason of the country’s shabby economic situation and urged people to avoid storage of dollars and worked tirelessly for economic prosperity of Pakistan.

Jamal Shah said our poets, artists and writers believed on sharing of their knowledge with people and their role in reformation of society was of paramount importance.

He said great Pashto poets Rehman Baba and Khushal Khan Khattak had used their pen for unity, believe in own abilities and patriotism.

Earlier, the Minister went around the different sections of the burnt building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar where he was briefed by PBC authorities about the May 9-10 horrific incidents, overall damages and rehabilitation plan.



PESHAWAR: People protesting against heavy electricity bills in Ganj Gate area. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

ATC handovers alleged terrorist for remand Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Special Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Peshawar has handover two alleged terrorists for five days on physical remand to Counter Terrorism Department (CTD).

According to prosecution, Abdul Jabbar alias Usman and Umar aka Umari are involved in serious crimes including terrorism and facilitating terror’s financing.

Investigation officer requested for provision of physical remand for interrogation and investigation while ATC accepted the plea and granted five days remand to Counter Terrorism Department.

Meanwhile, Additional District and Session Judge Peshawar Syed Badshah has rejected bail petition of alleged drug-smuggler.

According to prosecution, Asfandiyar resident of Wahid Garhi arrested by Khazana police along with 4800 grams hashish while the alleged culprit approached court for his release on bail.

AD&SJ Peshawar Syed Badshah rejected bail plea of alleged drug-smuggler after conclusion of arguments.

SSP surprise visits to PSs, check posts

PESHAWAR (APP): SSP Operations Kashif Aftab Abbasi Saturday made a surprise visit to various Police Stations, Check Posts and Blockades in order to check the officials deputed working affairs.

During his visits, he conducted a detailed inspection of all the records of the police stations, offices, residential buildings, hawalas and security in different parts of the buildings. SSP Operations also interacted with the policemen who came to the Police Station.

SSP Operations instructed the police personnel on blockade duty to keep a watchful eye on suspicious persons, suspicious vehicles and motorcycles while on duty. For your protection, use bulletproof helmet, jacket and night vision devices at night, avoid using mobile phone during duty, he advised the Jawans.

There is no place in Peshawar Police for officers guilty of negligence, SSP Operations Kashif Aftab Abbasi concluded.

ECP responsible to hold transparent polls: QWP

PESHAWAR (APP): Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Saturday said that the onus to hold a free and fair election was on the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Speaking at a gathering of party workers in Harichand in Charsadda district, he said that the delimitation process should be carried out in a manner to ensure the holding of the free and fair election.

He recalled that issues cropped up when the delimitation process was carried after the 2017 census, calling for efforts to avoid problems.

“The ECP should now ensure an enabling environment for the conduct of the free and fair election so that nobody could raise objec-

tions to the polls outcome later,” he added.

Aftab Sherpao said that paying the inflated electricity bills was beyond the financial capacity of most people particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which produced cheap and surplus hydel electricity.

Asking the caretaker government to provide relief to the people in the face of skyrocketing inflation, the QWP leader maintained that rising prices of the daily use items had squeezed the purchasing power of the commoners.

He said that rising US dollar rate, the unprecedented increase in POL and electricity prices had made life a living hell not only for the have-nots but also for the ones doing white-collar jobs.

“The people are also facing the brunt of prolonged power cuts in the hot and humid summer days,” he remarked.

Expressing concern over the poor law and order in the country particularly in KP, Aftab Sherpao asked the government to take corrective steps as soon as possible or else the situation could spin out of control.

Asking the government to give KP its rights enshrined in the constitution, he said that the QWP would spare no effort to serve the Pakhtuns and help them get their due rights.

Commenting on the Battagram chairlift incident, he said that it showed that the remote areas in KP were still underdeveloped and lacked even the basic road infrastructure.

Health Adviser takes immediate action

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial government has written a letter to the Director General Health Services

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding the availability of essential medicines and directed him to submit an immediate report on the matter of public interest besides ensuring best healthcare facilities to the general public.

There have been incidents of shortage of medicines in various hospitals, RHCs and BHOs and treatment of patients is compromised due to lack of medicines, the letter says. In the letter, it has been told to all the concerned quarters to overcome the report of shortages and inconsistent availability of essential

medicines in various hospitals, Rural Health Centers (RHCs) and Basic Health Units (BHU) within the province.

Such shortages can have severe consequences on patients’ care, leading to compromised treatment outcomes and under stress on both patients and healthcare providers, the letter says.

The Adviser to the Chief Minister on Health Dr. Riaz Anwar while taking serious notes of the issue directed Director General Health to ensure all such essential medicines in all health facilities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The DG Health has directed intervention and protective measures to

address this issue on priority basis. The Adviser directed the Health authorities to take necessary action accordingly and comply and submit a complete report immediately. The matter is of top priority looking after ensuring healthcare facilities to the general public, otherwise serious action would be taken against all those using delaying tactics.

The letter says supply of medicines should be ensured in all health centers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and steps should be taken immediately to solve the problem of medicines besides the report regarding medicines should be sent for submission to the competent authority.

LG by-polls today

PESHAWAR (PPI): Local government by-polls on vacant seats of different categories in 65 villages and neighborhood councils in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be held tomorrow.

The by-elections will be held in 21 districts including Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khyber, Mardan, Kohat, Bannu, Laki Marwat, DI Khan, Tank, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Battagram, Torgar, Swat, Shangila, Malakand, Upper and Lower Dir and Bajaur. 256 polling stations have been established for this purpose. 159 polling stations have been declared extremely sensitive, while 84 as sensitive polling stations.

The polling will begin at eight in the morning and will continue till five in the evening without any break.

Senior police officials confirmed the deployment of security forces at polling stations to maintain law and order and guarantee a peaceful voting experience.

Mother, son drowned

PESHAWAR (APP): A mother and son from Kaju Bala, Chitral lower drowned in Chitral river after returning home after working in the fields in the evening.

According to detail, the search operation began but the mother and son could not be found, the officials of the Rescue 1122 rescue and driver teams confirmed. “We have tried our hardest to find out both the mother and her son but due to darkness and speedy flow of the river, we could not succeed to find them,” the head of the Rescue 1122 team told media men. The search is on soon after the information received by the control room of the missing mother and son who fell into the river near Kaju Bala area.



PESHAWAR: Members of Pasban protesting against heavy electricity bills. — F.P. photo

Citizens protest against heavy electricity bills

PESHAWAR (APP): The Citizens’ protest against the sending of heavy electricity bills continues for the second day with people of the inner city blocking the main circular road, causing problems and huge traffic jams on both sides.

The protesters marched from various localities of the inner city gathered near Gunj Gate on main Circular Road, chanted slogans against PESCO and other concerned quarters for

sending huge bills and demanded from the government to set up a probe committee to see the actual riding of the electricity bills.

The protesters while recording their protest also set on fire their electricity bills. “It is injustice on the part of the concerned authorities wherein sending bills of thousands and millions of rupees to even very poor families, which is a gross abuse,” the protesters said. “Along with increasing

the cost of electricity, the government also added taxes to the bills which have no justification,” they said.

“Citizens’ patience has been exhausted, protesters should not be put to the test as we are paying the bills by selling our household goods and other valuable items.”

“People are being provoked and forced to commit suicide,” the protestors said.

Govt prioritizes education

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali said that private sector has played an important role in education by cooperation with government sector institutions, on Saturday.

This he said while addressing students and parents during inauguration of Apple Group of Schools campus while added that he

will provide every assistance for provision of books and sports facilities for students.

Mayor Peshawar claimed that Apple Group of Schools providing standard and quality education within low fees while appreciated school’s admin for prioritizing of welfare students as well as building nation through education.

He also appreciated les-

sons of Chinese language as well as provision of sport facilities.

He said that city government is committed for uplifting of quality and standard of education at the elementary and secondary levels while added that local government institutions are already working in this regard.

School’s Director Naveed Babar briefed the participants on aims and objectives of the institute while claimed that the school will taught students in moral, technical academic disciplines to make them provide citizens.

FIA recovers huge quantity of foreign currency, nabs 3 accused

PESHAWAR (APP): FIA Commercial Banking Circle Peshawar on Saturday arrested three suspects involved in the illegal exchange of money (hundi) and confiscated huge amount of foreign currency.

On the direction of Deputy Director Afzal Niazi accused Izzatullah was arrested from Torkhum having 51,000 Qatari riyals and 49,000 Saudi riyals.

The arrest of the accused took place as a result of effective coordination between FIA Commercial Banking Circle Peshawar and FIA Immigration Torkhum.

In another operation, an accused Muhammad Mujahid was arrested from Nishtarabad area having 2800 US dollars, 1600 New Zealand dollars and 27,000 Pakistani rupees.

In a third operation, Shafiullah was arrested from Gambit, District Dir having 368000 Pakistani rupees. The accused could not satisfy the valid reason of holding the recovered currency.

A number of receipts related to Hundi reference were also recovered from them.

FIA registered cases against the accused under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act and started investigation.



PESHAWAR: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami District Peshawar Bahrullah Khan Advocate addressing a public gathering.



PESHAWAR: Additional Secretary Social Welfare Department Muhammad Farooq visiting district office.

Truck driver killed in road accident: Police

PESHAWAR (APP): A truck full of cement fell into a deep ditch at Choti Pul on the main road of Peshawar and Charsadda, said an official of the Daudzai Police Station here on Saturday.

The truck driver died on the spot after falling into a deep ditch while the conductor was injured, the police official confirmed.

The truck was going to Charsadda from Peshawar. The official also confirmed that the deceased driver was from Kohat.

Soon after the accident, Rescue 1122 and local people rushed on the spot and a relief operation was started to recover the body of the driver from the truck, fell into a deep ditch.

The said place was washed away in the 2022 flood which has not been repaired yet, said the local people present on this occasion.

In the 2022 flood, the small bridge collapsed here, which created a big puddle between the main road of Peshawar and Charsadda, the eye witness

said. The said place is the native area of the caretaker Chief Minister and since August 2022, more than a dozen incidents have occurred in this deep ditch on the main road, the Native people of the area said.

As a result of the incidents, there has been loss of life and property as it has been one year since the flood, yet the said bridge has not been repaired. Residents of the area told media men.



In brief

Two killed due to poisonous gas F.P. Report

SHANGLA: As many as two miners belonging to Shangla have died due to poisonous gases filled within the mine, on Saturday. The deceased was identified as Syed Jan and Ihsan Ullah residents Chachlo area of Ranyal, district Shangla. The dead of miners belonging to Shangla is a question mark for local parliamentarian because on regular basis dead coming to the district. It is worthy to mention that as may as 11 miners have dead during the last month from Shangla district which has compelled the residents to think regarding electing their representative because they had compelled to lack of opportunities. As many as 65% population of Shangla are employed in mining sector despite challenges including illegal mining activities and lack of safety measures across the country.

Man kills wife, daughter

WAZIRABAD (INP): A man gunned down his wife and teenage daughter for honour and fled the scene, police said on Saturday. The incident took place in Rahimpura area of Wazirabad where accused Bilal earlier critically injured wife and 13-year-old daughter by axing them. The culprit later killed both by shooting them. The local residents attempted to catch the murderer but he managed to escape from the scene. The bodies were shifted to hospital for post-mortem and police after registering a case against the accused started raids for his arrest.

Youth killed, another injured

BAHAWALPUR (INP): A youth was killed and another injured in armed clash between two groups over breaking protective dyke, police said on Saturday. According to details, armed men of two groups traded fire over breaking of protective dyke constructed in the areas surrounding river to save them from floods. As a result of fire exchange, a youth Muhammad Safdar was killed while another person was injured. The culprits fled the scene. The body and injured were shifted to hospital and police after registering a case against accused involved in fire exchange started raids for their arrest.

Three injured as roof collapses

CHINIOT (INP): Three people were injured roof of room of a house collapsed due to heavy rain here in the wee hours of Saturday, rescue sources said. According to details, heavy rains lashed different areas of Chiniot resultantly dilapidated roof of room of house situated in suburban Kot Qazi suddenly came down. Three people were buried under the debris and were seriously injured. The rescue personnel pulled out the injured from rubble and shifted them to hospital for treatment.

Minister visits flood-hit areas

VEHARI (INP): Car-taker Punjab Minister for Transport and Livestock Ibrahim Hassan Murad visited flood-hit areas of district Vehari, and advised people living in low-lying area to cooperate with government and shift to safer places. Speaking on the occasion, he assured strong support of the government to the people and pledged to protect their lives and property. Ibrahim Hassan Murad was informed on the occasion that three tent villages and 20 relief camps had been set up in the area and over twenty-nine thousand people had been shifted to safer places.



QUETTA: Residents of Jhal Magsi Arbab Joya addressing a press conference.

Provision of electricity on reasonable prices demanded

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mayor Hamayatullah Mayar of Mardan recently voiced his concerns about the sudden surge in electricity prices, which has added to the challenges faced by the local population. Speaking during a meeting with senior officials from the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), Mayor Mayar highlighted that the escalating electricity bills have become an unbearable burden for both households and businesses, straining the public's finances.

Mayor Mayar emphasized that the intense load shedding, especially during scorching heatwaves, has significantly aggravated the difficulties faced by the community, causing distress and frustration. He urged WAPDA to address this issue promptly by reducing unplanned power outages. He also drew attention to the plight of impoverished individuals struggling to afford even two meals a day amidst the current inflationary environment, exacerbated by the weight of high electricity bills.

Directing his attention toward practical solutions, Mayor Mayar urged the elimination of power cuts and the resolution of low voltage issues in various localities. He called for initiatives aimed at enhancing the performance of transformers, a critical component of the electricity distribution system.

Mayor Mayar pointed out a pressing issue regarding electricity generation and distribution. Despite producing a surplus of electricity within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the province lacks control over its distribution. Similarly, the province lacks authority over gas distribution, leading to insufficient gas availability and mounting pressure on the community.

He expressed dismay over the current pricing system, remarking that electricity is purchased at a nominal cost of 1 rupee per unit from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but sold to consumers at an exorbitant 50 rupees per unit, an arrangement he characterized as deeply unjust and inequitable.

Mayor Mayar also invoked Article 158 of the Constitution, which asserts that the province generating resources should have a primary claim to those resources. However, he highlighted the unfortunate reality that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa lacks con-

trol over its electricity and gas affairs, despite being a resource-rich province.

During the meeting, WAPDA officials shared their perspective on the challenges they face, including rampant electricity theft and low recovery rates. They sought collaboration from both law enforcement and the public in combatting electricity theft and improving recovery efforts.

Preparation concluded for LG's by-polls: All preparations have been completed for the by-elections on several vacant seats of nine village and neighborhood councils of Mardan, polling will be held today. In which a total of 40 polling stations have been established in Mardan, in which 17 male, 15 female and eight joint polling stations have been established.

A total of 120 polling booths have been set up in forty polling stations. A total of 71,344 voters will exercise their right to vote. In which 38 thousand nine hundred and 81 male and 32 thousand two hundred and 63 female voters are included. Considering the security concerns, forty polling stations have been declared as the most sensitive by the relevant security institutions and administration.

In this regard, section 144 has also been implemented by the district administration on two days, twenty-seven and twenty-eight August. Double riding, aerial firing, tinted windows of vehicles and gathering of large number of people have been banned.

Patwaris strike continues against police's attitude: An ongoing protest led by the Anjuman-i-Patwariyan (Patwaris' Association) and Qanon Goyan (Lawyers') has now entered its sixth day, fueled by anger over the arrest of a patwari fellow and alleged misconduct by the police. The movement has triggered the closure of patwarkhanas (revenue offices) across the district as a mark of collective dissent.

Patwari representatives took to the streets, staging a protest rally outside the local press club in Mardan. They voiced their grievances through spirited slogans and demanded prompt action against the officials involved, setting a one-week ultimatum. The rally, spearheaded by Anjuman-i-Patwariyan and Guyans Provincial

Chairman Khanzada Khan Jadon, saw dozens of patwaris participating, including District President Sikander Khan and General Secretary Shahab Khan. The protesters later convened an emergency press conference at the Mardan Press Club.

During the press conference, Khanzada Khan Jadon, along with fellow speakers including Kashif Khishgi, Buland Iqbal, Rawaidad Muhammad Shah, Abid Khan, Syed Jihad Ali Shah Bacha, and Sajid Jahangiri, accused Rustam Police of unjustly arresting Rustam Patwari Dost Muhammad under false charges. The arrested patwari was allegedly held in custody without just cause. The speakers criticized the police actions, asserting that the entire patwari community now feels vulnerable due to the aggressive behavior of Rustam police.

The protesters called upon the Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer (DPO) to immediately dismiss the fabricated First Information Report (FIR) and to conduct an unbiased inquiry into the incident, also urging for the removal of Sub-Inspector Iltibaar Shah from the district. The demand was underlined with a stern one-week deadline, and a warning that the strike could escalate beyond the district to the entire province if their appeals remained unanswered.

Sikandar Khan, the President of Anjuman-i-Patwariyan and Law Goyan in Mardan district, mourned the lack of progress in addressing their rightful demands despite a six-day-long strike. He expressed his frustration over the absence of justice.

Dost Muhammad, the alleged patwari from Rustam, recounted his experience with the police. He claimed that he was forcefully detained without explanation, leading to his detention and the filing of a case against him. He further shared that he was denied access to his mobile phone and essential documents, and even the opportunity to close the Patwarkhana (revenue office). In a display of solidarity, the officials of Anjuman-i-Patwariyan and Law Guyan, led by Provincial Chairman Khanzada Khan Jadon, visited the strike camp, emphasizing their complete support for the protesting patwaris.

Local elders argued DC for provision of facilities to tourists: Malik Shah Naseem Yousafzai President Dir Qami Passoon meeting with Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdul Wali Khan regarding the problems faced by tourists in Dir Lower. Zeeshan of upper dir and Fahim from Lower Dir, who invites tourists from outside to take a tour of various tourism spots in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. And to torture them is cruel with delay. In this regard, a detailed discussion was held with Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdul Wali Khan.

Fatima murder case

Court grants three-day remand of prime suspect

KHAIRPUR (PPI) A local court on Saturday granted a three-day physical remand of prime suspect Asad Shah in child maid Fatima's murder case.

Accused Pir Asad Shah was produced before the court of the senior civil judge in stringent security after completion of his five days' physical remand. The police pleaded to court for further extension in remand of the accused in the child's murder.

The issue initially came to light after video clips of Fatima's body bearing severe torture marks went viral on social media. In the video, the seriously injured girl is seen strug-

gling to sit up on her bed but collapses. DIG Sukkur division, Javed Jiskani said the medical report has confirmed the physical and sexual assault of Fatima. The top court further said DNA samples have been collected from the residents of Ranipur Haveli and after the report, the culprit, who raped Fatima will be identified.

Earlier, Police arrested the medical superintendent of the Ranipur Rural Health Centre Ali Hassan Wassan for facilitating prime suspect Asad Shah and hiding facts in the murder case. Wassan had allegedly facilitated the prime suspect Asad Shah

by transporting Fatima's body via an ambulance without conducting the post-mortem. "We have decided to take remand of the under investigation former SHO, head muharrir, doctor and compounder," DIG Jiskani said.

According to the initial post-mortem report, the body of Fatima was in its initial phase of decomposition. "Her face was blue on the one side and green on the other," according to the report. "There were torture marks on the body including eyes, waist, forehead, feet, knees and hands." Some samples have been sent to the lab for microbiology tests," report said.

Two killed, 4 injured in road mishap F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Two people were killed and four others including two women received injuries in a head-on collision between two motorcars near Darra Pezu town, said a Rescue1122 official on Saturday.

Rescue added that they dispatched a medical team along with two ambulance vehicles to the venue when the control room received information about the accident. The identified as deceased as Matiullah, a resident of Serai Naurang and Hanifullah, a resident of Malang adda, saying that the injured included Nasir Khan, two women and a three year old girl.

The official said that both cars were badly damaged in the road accident. He said that the deceased were shifted to a hospital in Titterkhal town while the wounded were taken to the District Headquarters Hospital located at Tajazai.

Five drug traffickers arrested

SARGODHA (INP): Sargodha police arrested five alleged drug traffickers on Saturday and recovered narcotics and weapons from them.

According to police, the police teams conducted raids in Factory Area and Tarkhanawala police stations and arrested the suspects, identified as Rashid, Ikraam, Imran, Hussain, and Tanveer.

The police recovered 2.62 kilograms of hashish, 40 liters of liquor, and three pistols from the suspects. Cases have been registered against the accused and they are being interrogated. The police said that the crackdown against drug traffickers will continue and anyone found involved in the illegal trade will be dealt with strictly.

Dealers booked for selling substandard pesticides: Two pesticide dealers were booked for selling substandard pesticides without having a licence, here in SARGodha on Saturday. A team of the Pesticide Department conducted a raid at Mateela village and caught Bilal and Faisal red-handed selling counterfeit pesticides at their shops.

Rehabilitation center opened

F.P. Report

BUNER: A rehabilitation center for drug addicts has been inaugurated at Elai village of Buner district with the title Madad center by a welfare organization that will also skill the addicts in accordance with the demands of modern industry to make them productive citizens for society.

The center inaugurated by former Members Provincial Assembly Mufti Fazal Ghafoor, Qaiser Wali Khan, famous comparer and social media influencer Afsar Afghan, Deputy Commissioner Buner Arshad Qayyum Barki and Chairman Madad center Saweed Khan.

Chairman Madad center Saweed Khan claimed that its fourth rehabilitation center Batakheela, Kohat and Peshawar. He claimed that a Jihad has been initiated against drugs to protect youth and upcoming generations from this menace. The chairman claimed that Madad center at Buner has been inaugurated due to provoking rise in abuse of

drugs while youth is directly impacting from the drug addiction. He claimed that 150 drug-addicts from Buner had rehabilitated at Batakheela center as well as become productive citizens.

The speakers stressed upon law enforcement agencies to take indiscriminate actions against drug-dealers and smugglers because street crimes and petty nature offenses are reporting committed by drug-addicts in majority. They claimed that availability of drugs had addicted the youth in alcohol, hashish, heroin and Ice-drug.

Deputy Commissioner Buner promised administrative support for the drug rehabilitation center and appreciated the efforts of civil society for working for the welfare humanity. Buner Qaumi Jirga president Mian Syed Laiq Bacha claimed that a committee should be constituted in every village to work for welfare and rehabilitation of drug-addicts in the district.

One killed on resisting dacoits

F.P. Report

SHAHDADKOT: Unknown armed men shot and killed Altaf Hussain Mughiri, a young man, after resisting his attempt to steal Honda 125 motorcycle from him at Kor Mughiri, a suburb of Shahdadt district, Qamber. The newly bought motorcycle was also taken away while the body was handed over to the heirs after the post-mortem.

According to details, three days ago, he had come from Saudi Arabia to the village with a cheetah. When he returned home after buying a new motorcycle from Qamber city, he was assaulted by armed men on the way, while the local people informed the border police. On the other hand, the heirs staged a protest on the Indus Highway.

Addressing the heirs, Badr Mughiri and others said that the law and order situation is already deteriorating in Qamber Shahdadt district, but the administration

remained a silent spectator. He demanded the DIG Police Larkana and SSP Qamber Shahdadt to arrest the people involved in the incident and bring them to justice so that the soul of the deceased can be satisfied.

Police failure before dacoits condemned: The law and order situation could not improve in Tehsil Wara of Qamber Shahdadt district, the armed men escaped easily after extorting 6 lakh rupees from the shopkeeper. In Wara, unknown armed persons robbed Irfan Shabrani, the owner of a mobile phone at Fazil Raho Chowk, and stole six lakh rupees in cash and a broken mobile phone.

A dharna was held in which the former taluka Nazim Manzoor Ali Marfani, Sartaj Ahmed Chandio, Muhammad Panhil Abbasi and others protested and said that the peace and order of Warh tehsil is being artificially destroyed while the local boundaries are being destroyed.

Importance of religious education in modern era stressed

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Religious schools are strong fortresses of Islam and no restrictions will be allowed to be imposed on religious schools. To run religious schools, the government should fully cooperate with religious schools and create facilities for them.

Sheikh ul Hadith Maulana Bacha Munir, Maulana Rafiullah, Sheikh Hadith Maulana Ali Haider, Maulana Amanullah, Maulana Abdullah, Qari Najibullah, Qari Ejazul Haq, Maulana Hayanullah speaking at the opening ceremony of the newly con-

structed religious seminary of Jamia Talim ul-Qur'an Kandu Dherai Lajbok.

He said that the Madrasas running the government have taken the responsibility of the government and have taken the burden of religious and contemporary studies of millions of students studying in religious madrasas? And in the future, the scholars will not hesitate to make any sacrifice for the protection of the country and the nation. Get religious education along with contemporary studies because getting religious education is good for both worlds.

CHITRAL (APP): The hide and seek between clouds and sun with moderate to erratic rainfalls over Kalash valley known for unique culture heritage and primitive history, take tourists into the lap of serenity after visiting the Lower Chitral district during monsoon season.

The cultural programs on beat drums amid blossom of seasonal flowers at picturesque Kalash valley surrounded by lush green mountains of Bumbret, Rumbur and Birir valleys leave an inerascable imprint on the minds of thousands of visitors every year. Carrying a unique language, custom, dresses and culture, Kalasha vibrant festivals, ancient rituals and colorful tradition bring people of all areas' closers besides promoting cultural tourism in Chitral.

"Chitral is my favorite tourist place due to its better climate

condition, Klasha culture and people's hospitality. My visit to Chitral remained incomplete without visiting the beautiful Kalash Valley to see its live cultural festivals," said Manzoorul Haq, former ambassador of Pakistan while talking to APP.

"Kalash valley is more than just a tourists' destination but a voyage of centuries old tradition believed to be started during an era of Alexander the Great that impressed me the most. Besides its ancient cultural rituals and customs, Kalash's vibrant live festivals, musical programs and colorful traditions strengthen bonds of warmth and friendship besides allowing tourists to explore its nearby snow-clad mountain peaks, especially of Trich Mir and Rakaposhi.

He said Kalash culture was the identity of Chitral and Govt patronage for development of its

road infrastructure and establishment of camping pods would help bolster culture tourism here. Manzoor also underscored the need for highlighting Kalasha culture through digital and social media so that more tourists especially from foreign countries could come here that would benefit people of Chitral economically.

By promoting infrastructure at Kalash valley, he said tourists' load on Kalam, Kumrat, Malam Jabba, Galayat and Murree would be reduced and people of Chitral especially of Kalash and Bumbrarat would be largely benefits.

Bakhtzada Khan, senior research officer, Museums and Archeology Department KP told APP that history of Kalasha tribe was very primitive and carried significance in Asian history. The people of Wadi e Kalash had

been considered an ancient people of Asia whose elders migrated to Chitral and settled here at Hindu Kush mountains range believed during the era of Alexander the Great."

He said there are many myths about the origin of Kalash people and mostly it was believed that they are the descendants of Alexander the Great's army. Another tale is about their ancestors migrating to Chitral from the land of Tsiyam – the original home place of the Kalash people, which they keep referring to in their folk songs.

To preserve the ancient art and culture of Kalasha tribe, he said work on Kalasha Dur Museum in Chitral was started in 2001 and completed in 2005. "There are about 1300 to 1500 objects exhibited in the museum which are of Ethnological interest from the Kalasha tradition

and from the traditions of the wider Hindu Kush area."

In ground floor of the museum, he said Ethnological collection of Kalasha culture besides primitive dresses, weapons and agriculture tools of Kalash women and men were kept preserved while a school of Kalasha culture with a library of books, written on the valley's significance and local artist work were housed in the second floor.

In addition to traditional weapons made of stones, metals and woods, the Museum has a great collection of other artifacts used by the Kalasha people for hunting and self-defense purposes. Kalasha museum also houses a vast collection of agricultural tools, which reminds the visitors about its glorious culture, history, and innovation changes in tool-making techniques.

A tourist could not remain

unimpressed after seeing the indigenous dresses of Kalasha tribe at the museum. Various musical instruments used over centuries are also put on display in the Museum besides tabla, sarangi, sahnai, tambura etc. Besides the rare photographs, he said the museum has film rolls, journals, books, sculptures, maps, documents, and materials related to Kalasha Dur Chitral.

Bakhtzada said the Kalasha tribe's primitive dresses of both men and women are very special because it is not just traditional dresses but also an expression of cultural identity of the Kalasha tribe. Besides other small events, he said three major festivals were organized by people of Kalash every year who enjoy dancing on traditional musical beats in these yearly events that were attracting tourists from across the country.

Kalash Valley: A home to ancient cultural heritage requires govt patronage to develop infrastructure



Hawaii’s cherished notion of family, the ‘ohana, endures in tragedy’s aftermath

LAHAINA, Hawaii (AP): Families were torn asunder. A community is reeling with grief. More than 100 people have perished and hundreds more remain missing after flames and smoke barreled from the hills and annihilated the historic town of Lahaina.

But even in places overwhelmed by despair and devastation, the Hawaiian spirit known as 'ohana endures. In the Hawaiian lexicon, 'ohana is a sensibility, a way of thinking that means family, belonging, community and so much more — solace in a time of calamity. It is a unifying principle in an increasingly fragmented world. And in recent weeks, amid misfortune, the word has taken on profound importance in a place appealing for help.

“In times like this, ‘ohana gets stronger,” says Dustin Kaleiopu, whose Maui roots date back to when monarchs ruled the islands. The kana-ka of Hawaii, the Native Hawaiians who inhabit the islands, value 'ohana, which extends beyond the familial ties of blood. It is a life nourished by kinship.

“In a small town like Lahaina, we all know each other. We’ve all grown up together,” says Kaleiopu, whose ‘ohana came to his aid after he and his grandfather escaped the flames that turned their home into a mound of ash and charred debris. “It’s such a tight-knit community.” Finding grace and solace can be almost unimaginable when the very world around you is burning. This is what Lahaina faces today as the smoke begins to clear.

Thousands of other homes are gone. At least 115 people are confirmed dead. And by some counts, nearly 400 of Lahaina’s residents remain unaccounted for: fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, young and old, friends and neighbors — all part of someone’s ‘ohana. “There’s plenty of families who’ve been displaced by the fire. So we’re going to take care of our community as much as possible. So in this sense, our community is the ‘ohana,” says Kapali Keahi, whose family has lived on Maui for generations.

In the days, and now weeks, after the deadliest wildfire in the United States in more than a century, families who lost homes and possessions continue to depend on the generosity of relatives, friends and even strangers. Shipments of food, clothes and everyday necessities keep arriving from the state’s other islands, including Oahu, home to Honolulu. Online fundraisers, many set up by displaced families, have raised hun-



dreds of thousands of dollars, much of it from distant places. One relief fund has well surpassed \$1.2 million, its 6,400 donors hailing from every part of the globe.

So much of Lahaina has been lost. Left behind are people in deep despair, said Kekai Keahi, another Lahaina resident. One thing, though, remained strong: a connecting strand. “‘Ohana was never lost. It never left,” he said. “We will always come to each other’s aid.”

Keahi spoke as Hawaiian flags fluttered near the ocean and a Native Hawaiian group calling itself Na ‘Ohana o Lele — the ‘ohana of Lahaina — gathered at a beachside park to speak on behalf of their community. The message from the group was clear: There will be talk of rebuilding, yes, but families need time to grieve and begin healing before any of that begins.

Archie Kalepa, a surfing legend and revered member of Maui’s Native Hawaiian community, urged his ‘ohana to honor core values. “Love your family, take care of the land,” he said, “and you’ll rebuild your community.” The community of 13,000 people included immigrants from many parts of the world. Here, they find common ground.

No matter where they came from, no matter when they arrived, transplants are soon charmed by Hawaii’s culture, a melange of imported customs and traditions melded together by ways in existence long before the British imperialist and explorer Capt. James Cook came across the Hawaiian archipelago nearly 250 years ago while crossing the Pacific. As they assimilate, newcomers pick up the oft-spoken vocabulary intrinsic to island life. “Mahalo” conveys gratitude, admiration and respect. “Aloha” is for hello and goodbye,

or for love and affection — a word with the warmth of a hug and the beauty of a lei.

Then there is ‘ohana. As the movie “Lilo & Stitch” defined it, “‘ohana means family, and family means nobody is left behind or forgotten.” With so many dead or missing, a sentiment like that is ripe to resonate across a community coping with loss.

“It’s all about family out here,” says Mike Tomas, whose immediate family lost their home in the fire. They are sheltering in the homes of friends and relatives. He had planned to move with his girlfriend to Texas sometime in the fall, but they will now depart much sooner. “Nothing’s left here,” he says. Not even the clothes and belongings they had begun packing. But he knows he’ll be back.

“This has always been home,” he says. “This is where family is.” Amber Bobin moved from Chicago to Maui nearly four years ago. She says she was drawn, in part, by the culture and strong bonds of community.

Earlier this week, she joined a small group to hang 115 crosses on fences erected along the road that cuts through Lahaina. That’s a single cross for each of the souls whose remains have been found. Bobin expected to hang more crosses in the coming days. The fence also was festooned with a collection of ribbons, one for every person still missing. And if ‘ohana is a way of life in good times, those crosses and ribbons help reveal what it is in tough ones: a mindset that ensures those who have been part of you remain so, even after they were torn away by forces no one imagined would be visited upon home. “To be able to experience what ‘ohana means, especially in tragedy,” she says, “has been significantly impactful.”

Monaco closes graft probe against Lebanon’s PM

BEIRUT (AP): A three-year probe against Lebanon’s caretaker prime minister and his family over corruption allegations has been closed by Monaco’s judicial authorities for lack of evidence, the premier’s office said.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati’s office said that Morgan Raymond, the deputy public prosecutor in Monaco, told the Lebanese premier’s legal team that they have closed the investigation into the case that was raised by unspecified Lebanese plaintiffs on allegations of illicit enrichment and money laundering. Mikati’s office said Monaco’s decision shows that the case was “fake” and meant “for political purposes.” It added that Mikati and his family will take legal action against those who were behind these “lies and rumors.”

In 2021, a trove of leaked documents named the “Pandora Papers,” that were examined by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and Daraj, a Beirut-based independent digital media platform, showed that for years, Lebanon’s politicians and bankers have stowed wealth in offshore tax havens and used it to buy expensive properties. Mikati has owned a Panama-based offshore company since the 1990s. He used it in 2008 to buy property in Monaco worth more than \$10 million, Daraj reported from the documents.

The leaked documents also show that Mikati’s son Maher was a director of at least two British Virgin Islands-based companies, which his father’s Monaco-based company, M1 Group, used to obtain an office in central London. Mikati at the time released a statement saying his family fortune was amassed prior to his involvement in politics and was “compliant with global standards” and regularly scrutinized by auditors.

12 dead at island games’ ceremony

MADAGASCAR (BBC): At least 12 people have been killed in a crowd crush at a stadium in Madagascar’s capital Antananarivo, Prime Minister Christian Ntsay says.

Another 80 people were hurt during the opening ceremony of the Indian Ocean Island Games at the Mahamasina stadium. “There were a lot of people at the entrance,” Red Cross official Antsa Mirado told the AFP news agency. President Andry Rajoelina, who was at the stadium, said it was a “tragic event”, calling for a minute’s silence.

The Mahamasina stadium - with a capacity of nearly 41,000 - is reported to have been packed with spectators. Footage has emerged showing a number of injured people sitting dazed on the ground. Other victims are seen being carried away from the stadium. Set up in 1977, the Indian Ocean Island Games is a multi-sport event held every four years.

The participants are the island nations and territories of Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, the Maldives and Réunion. In 2018, one person died and nearly 40 others were injured in a crush at the Mahamasina before the start of a Madagascar-Senegal football match.

Japan’s team postpones China visit

TOKYO (Reuters): The head of Japan’s Komeito party, the junior partner in the coalition government, will postpone his planned visit to China at China’s request, the party announced on Saturday.

Natsuo Yamaguchi was planning to visit China from August 28 to 30 in hopes of meeting China’s President Xi Jinping and to hand over a personal letter from Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. However, the Chinese side on Saturday informed Komeito that “the timing is not appropriate considering the current situation of Japan-China relations”, the party said in a statement.

No letup in Sudan fighting as UN issues dire warning

KHARTOUM (AFP): Fighting in Sudan showed no signs of abating as the United Nations issued a dire warning over the impact of a war it said threatens to “consume” the country.

Paramilitaries launched a renewed attack on a key armoured corps base in the capital’s south, witnesses said, which the army and the Rapid Support Forces have been battling to control since Sunday. The war between army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the paramilitary RSF, has raged since April 15.

It has spread from Khartoum and the western region of Darfur to Kordofan and Jazira state, killing thousands and forcing millions to flee their homes. “The war in Sudan is fuelling a humanitarian emergency of epic proportions,” Martin Griffiths, under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator at the United Nations, said. “This viral conflict — and the hunger, disease and displacement left in its wake — now threatens to consume the entire country,” Griffiths added in a statement.

Conservative estimates from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data project say nearly 5,000 people have been killed. But the battles have prevented the recovery of the bodies of many others thought to have died. UN figures indicate that more than 4.6 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to the fighting.

For the second consecutive day, Burhan was seen outside his Khartoum headquarters which for weeks had been besieged by the paramilitaries, according to army videos. The images showed jubilant soldiers greeting him as he stepped out of a helicopter at the Atbara base in Nile State, some 300 kilometres (185 miles) northeast of Khartoum.

Local journalists meanwhile flocked to the coastal city of Port Sudan on the Red Sea, where the UN and many government officials have relocated, anticipating a rumoured visit by Burhan, according to an AFP correspondent. While Khartoum airport has been out of service since the conflict began, Port Sudan’s airport has remained operational for evacuation and relief flights, fuelling speculation of an

overseas trip for the army chief.

Footage of Burhan, who was wearing his army fatigues and his trademark beret when he landed in Atbara, have rarely been released since the fighting erupted in April. But the army posted images showing the general speaking to soldiers with a caption indicating he was at the Wadi Seidna air base north of Khartoum.

Another video showed him surrounded by civilians in the capital’s twin-city of Omdurman, even as residents there reported fighting. The raging war between the rival generals has devastated Sudan, already an impoverished nation, and numerous attempts to mediate a ceasefire, namely by the United States and Saudi Arabia, have failed. - “Places have run out of food” -

Humanitarian aid groups have long been active in Sudan, where for years millions of Sudanese have relied on food and other assistance. As the war has dragged on with no let-up in sight, more than half the country is in need of humanitarian aid, according to the UN. Experts have warned that more than six million people in Sudan were on the brink of famine, with Griffith reiterating that the country was more fragile than ever.

“The longer the fighting continues, the more devastating its impact. Some places have already run out of food,” Griffiths said. “Hundreds of thousands of children are severely malnourished and at imminent risk of death if left untreated.” The UN official said that in Kadugli, in South Kordofan state, “food stocks have been fully depleted, as clashes and road blockages prevent aid workers from reaching the hungry.”

Griffiths’ spokesman Jens Laerke told reporters in Geneva that the UN faces two major problems concerning Sudan: a lack of funds and difficult access to the beleaguered population due to security issues. Bureaucratic obstacles also stand in the way of attempts to channel aid to Sudan, which has reduced the number of entry visas to UN and other aid workers, he said. As a result, containers of aid are stuck in Port Sudan, which has been spared the fighting but is difficult to reach from Khartoum and Darfur.

Niger junta gives French envoy 48 hours to leave

NIAMEY (BBC): Niger’s coup leaders have given the French ambassador 48 hours to leave the country as bilateral ties continue to deteriorate rapidly. The junta said Sylvain Itte had refused to respond to an invitation to meet Niger’s foreign minister.

France, a former colonial power, said the “putschists have no authority” to order such an expulsion. Paris opposes July’s coup, saying that ousted President Mohammed Bazoum must be returned to office. Announcement was made by Niger’s foreign minister installed by the junta.

This follows a series of statements and demonstrations hostile towards France. The French foreign ministry responded by saying that it had “taken note of the putschists”, the AFP news agency reported. “The putschists do not have the authority to make this request, the ambassador’s approval coming solely from the legitimate elected Nigerian authorities,” the ministry added. Gen Abdourahmane Tchiani,

Niger’s coup leader, last week pledged to return the West African nation to civilian rule within three years.

He made the announcement after meeting mediators from the West African regional bloc Ecowas in the capital, Niamey. Ecowas has threatened military action to reverse last month’s overthrow of President Bazoum if talks fail. The junta head said that Niger did not want a war, but would defend itself against any foreign intervention.

“If an attack were to be undertaken against us, it will not be the walk in the park some people seem to think,” he warned. Gen Tchiani also reiterated criticism of what he called the “illegal and inhumane” sanctions imposed by Ecowas on the landlocked impoverished country. This has included cutting electricity, resulting in blackouts in Niamey and other major cities, as well as blocking crucial imports. Lorry drivers have been stuck for weeks waiting to bring in supplies, forcing

up food prices.

Ecowas rejected the three-year timeframe after talks on Sunday. “Ecowas is not accepting any prolonged transition again in the region. They just have to get ready to hand over in the shortest possible time,” Abdel-Fatau Musah, the bloc’s commissioner for political affairs, peace and security, told the BBC. He said the “military aspect is very much on”. Regional efforts to reverse the coup have been backed by the US and France, which both have military bases in Niger. These bases are part of efforts to tackle jihadist groups in the wider Sahel region.

The junta leader, who headed the presidential guard before seizing power on 26 July, said military intervention could worsen the Islamist insurgencies linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group. The coup mirrors similar recent takeovers in neighbouring Burkina Faso and Mali. And the influence of Russia in the wider Sahel region is also growing through its mercenary group Wagner.

President Ali Bongo aims for third term

GABON (BBC): Polls have opened in the oil-rich central African nation of Gabon where President Ali Bongo - who came to power when his father Omar died in 2009 - is hoping to win a third term.

He faces competition from 13 people. “Gabon is not the property of the Bongos,” says rival candidate Albert Ondo Ossa, who hopes he can lead the Alternance 2023 coalition to victory despite only being appointed last week. As in previous general elections, there are serious concerns about the process.

Both of Mr Bongo’s prior wins were disputed as fraudulent by opponents, and this time around controversial changes have been made to the ballot papers just weeks before election day. For the first time, voters are being asked to mark a single ballot with their choice of a president and MP who must belong to the same party.

Experts say these disadvantages independent candidates - notably Mr Ondo Ossa, who heads the opposition Alternance 2023 alliance but lacks a party of his own. Foreign media

have been banned from setting foot in the country to cover Saturday’s vote, says the campaign group Reporters Without Borders.

No international election monitors from the EU or UN will be present either. Local civil society group Tournons La Page say they will try to act as observers despite having no official accreditation. Before Saturday’s vote a row erupted with President Bongo accusing Mr Ondo Ossa and another opposition figure of treason.

The pair deny claims that they were recorded plotting ways to create a power struggle in Gabon and win support from foreign powers, and they have accused the government of “shameful manipulation” in a statement released by Alternance 2023. As well as voting for their choice of president and MPs, the people of Gabon are also choosing mayors and local councillors. Gabon has a total population of 2.3 million people and enjoys oil wealth and rich swathes of rainforest. But the global economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic has led to declining exports of raw materials.

‘Black Sea deal must be renewed’

KYIV (Reuters): The Turkish and Ukrainian foreign ministers said that other solutions to the export of Ukrainian grain than the Black Sea grain deal, which ended after Russia quit last month, were less optimal.

The deal brokered by Turkey and the United Nations last year had allowed the safe Black Sea export of Ukrainian grain. Ankara has been trying to persuade Moscow to return to the agreement. Ukraine announced earlier this month a “humanitarian corridor” in the Black Sea to release cargo ships that have been trapped in its ports since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. The first vessel that used the corridor arrived in Istanbul last week.

In a news conference during his visit to Kyiv, Turkish FM said renewing the grain deal was a priority for Ankara and that Russia must be included in the equation for a functioning agreement.

Niger journalist: I lie awake at night fearing they will arrest me

NIAMEY (BBC): My country Niger is never normally “front page news” but that all changed on 26 July. Rumours started to circulate that there had been a coup at the presidential palace. I immediately got to work, tapping up contacts, trying to establish the facts.

I didn’t have to wait long - that same night the head of the presidential guard announced that President Mohamed Bazoum was under “house arrest”. The democratically elected president had been overthrown. Two days later, Gen Abdourahmane Tchiani proclaimed himself the new leader. For the next two weeks, I barely slept. Everyone across the BBC wanted to talk to me but communication was difficult.

Before long, the atmosphere began to change on the street. “You’re either with us or against us” was the line from the military junta

and their supporters. As the BBC reported all the twists and turns, including the reaction of the regional Ecowas bloc as well as Western countries, the mood soured. I was doing my job, striving to report fairly and objectively on developments. But some of our audience in Niger were only interested in hearing information which chimed with their viewpoint. Pro-Russia, pro-Tchiani, anti-French - these labels hide more than they explain but I was suddenly in the spotlight.

I started being trolled heavily on social media and then came abusive phone calls. The military junta threatened to throw out all “foreign” media. It was too risky for me to go down the street in the capital Niamey and report on any of the pro-Tchiani demonstrations. As doing my job has become more difficult, so has life in general. I now spend most of my day

without electricity as Nigeria has cut its supply. It’s a daily battle to charge my laptop and mobile phone which more often than not fails. I know these sound like “first world problems” but if I can’t do my job, how will people know what is happening?

Food is also becoming more difficult to find due to the Ecowas economic blockade. People are hurting and it’s understandable they are looking for someone to blame. We’re also running out of money - vital in this cash economy where everyone lives day to day. The limit for a withdrawal is now 50,000 CFA (about \$83; £64). It may seem a large sum but prices have rocketed. When I do my shopping, I keep a low profile. The joy and laughter I used to see and hear on the streets has disappeared. Everyone talks about the coup but only one side is allowed to “lead” the debate.

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Let's hope PPP means it

PAKISTAN People's Party (PPP) has demanded holding of the general elections in the country within 90 days as required by the constitution, urging that pushing the country towards a constitutional and political crisis should be avoided through unjustified delay in the election. During a presser, PPP Vice President Sherry Rehman told the media that the PPP Central Executive Committee has reviewed the situation regarding the general elections and expressed serious reservations regarding a potential delay in that regard which is a grave constitutional setback. According to her, a PPP delegation is scheduled to visit the Election Commission on August 29 to place the party's position before the Election Commission.

The process of transparent and credible poll is of utmost importance for a peaceful and smooth transition of government in a Democratic nation, while the fairness of electoral exercise became more crucial for a state like Pakistan that suffers from a fragile democracy and confronts simmering political and constitutional challenges ahead of countrywide vote. The country witnesses extreme divergence of views upon different legal and political issues while overlapping laws, bisecting interests and contradictory opinions of civic groups further added to the confusion of the public. The reflexivity of the problems and self medication by the state institutions, the political groups, civil society or media commentators play no constructive role in a legal conundrum, only propels harmful propaganda and undermines democratic practices in the country, thus judicial verdict in constitutional matters must be binding for all times.

In the current scenario, a majority of the civic parties had expressed reservations over the delay in forthcoming General Election that might have pushed the electoral process beyond the 90 days limit set by the article 224 of the constitution. Meanwhile, shocking results are expected if polls are conducted under the latest headcount and fresh delimitation of the constituencies, which continuously unnerves political pundits who invested billions and lobbied for months to reach top slots in the next political setup in the aftermath of the elections. Interestingly, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) along with its nearly a dozen allies grasped the lucrative dividends of their joint rule in the country for almost the past 15 months, after the PDM's successful no confidence motion ousted the PTI Chairman from premiership. Being a major ally in the coalition government, the PPP has maintained its grip over political and government affairs and brokered major political deals including the delay of polls in Punjab and KP along with awarding an extension to interim governments in both federating units. Unfortunately, the Federation joined the fate of KP and Punjab with respect to the delay in election that not only caused nationwide concerns, but exposed the so-called principled views and reviews of opposing political factions, who always served themselves first.

Currently, the ECP has kicked off its delimitation exercise, and the interim government is not ready to announce the polls until it receives ok from the relevant quarters including the ECP. The situation is of great concern for political and ethnic groups who might lose their votes in the constituencies and drop their seats in the Provincial and national Assemblies as well. After handing over the ruins of the government to caretakers, the PPP went through specific changes in its political and electoral manifestos, however several of its PDM allies still perceive the delay beneficial for recovery of their lost political heirloom. The situation is unique and has certain legal, political and constitutional aspects that warrants due care and timely remedial from the concerned quarters to avoid any unpleasant situation in the Country. Political dialogue and national consensus is the only way forward to safely sail through the prevailing conditions and that is the sole responsibility of Mr. Kakar and team. The warring political groups must hold back their political agendas and only use available legal and political means to make their way through contentious scenarios. As soon as the interim authorities build political consensus among all stakeholders it would be better for the continuity of democracy, strengthening of political stability and grooming of socio-economic activities in the country.

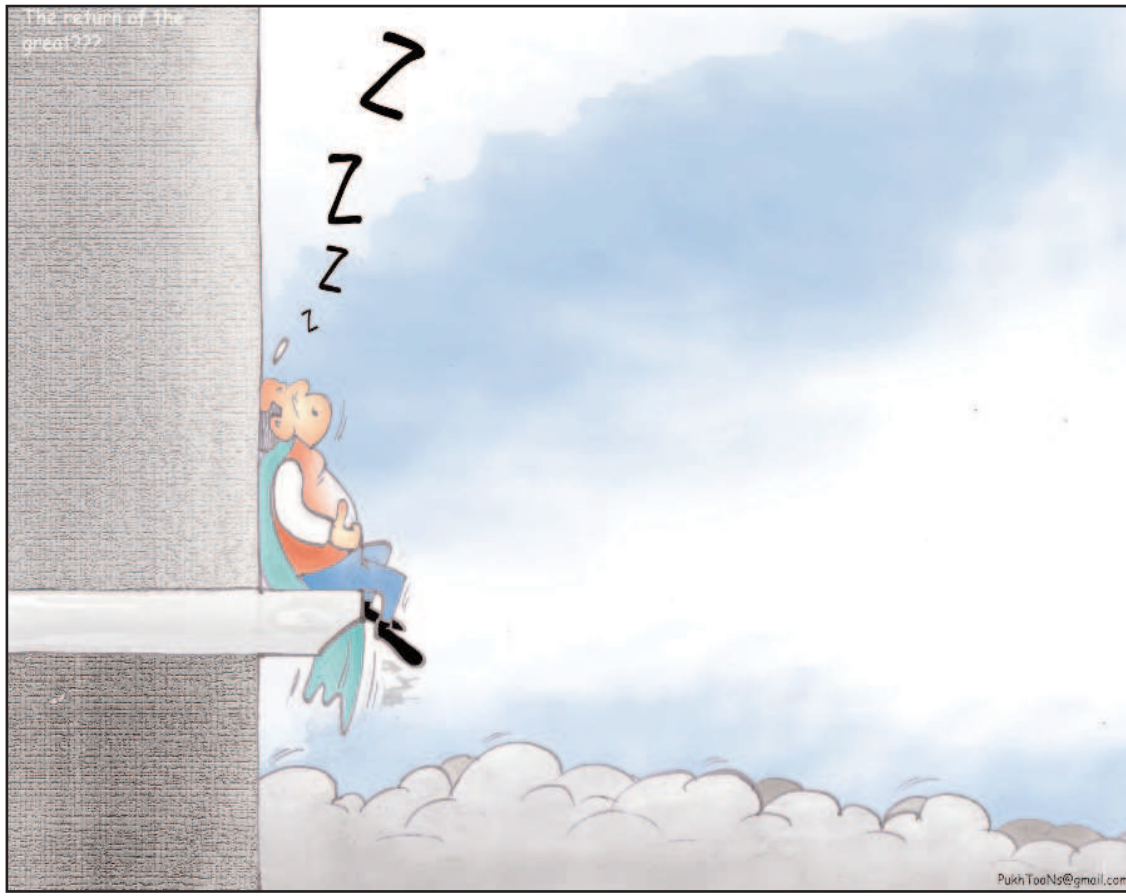
It's about time Denmark

THE Danish government has moved a legislation in the parliament aimed at the provocative stunt of religious blasphemy, desecration of holy books particularly Quran and verbal assault on poise personalities by declaring those shameful acts punishable crimes. According to the Danish Minister for Justice, burning a copy of the Holy Quran under the new law would be an act punishable by the fine or imprisonment upto two years. The Danish Foreign Minister told the media that the move sends an important political signal to the rest of the world.

Historically, there had been a sequence of incidents of burning of the Holy Quran and desecration of the poise personalities by the far right politicians, Islamophobic agitators and religious fanatics in Denmark, Sweden and other western nations over the past years. The deplorable satanic acts had been frequently repeated by individuals and groups for heinous motives but the western ruling elite blatantly defended those condemned actions in the garb of freedom of expression and civil liberties. Western leaders fail to understand that unrestricted freedoms sometimes abuse the human rights of other citizens, cause grievances, incite hatred and fuel violence in the society. However, the Muslims across the world, their representative governments and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) used all available resources and platforms to exert pressure over western countries including Sweden and Denmark to stop such heinous Islamophobic acts that have become customary in those nations. Meanwhile, the UNO and several western nations including the US and the UK played an adorable role in condemning those actions and sensitizing the western nations about their global obligations regarding preservation of human rights of their Muslim citizens and protecting the religious beliefs of over one million Muslims across the globe. Meanwhile, the powerful Muslims nations threatened to sever their diplomatic and trade links with countries who fail in ending religious desecration of Islamic sacred books and blasphemous acts against Muslims on their soil. The Danish government has finally woken up, and initiated a sane move that would surely resist Islamophobia in the Nordic nation when it becomes a law. This positive trend must be followed by other western nations if they intend to advance inter-faith harmony and promote rule of the law in their countries. Realistically, it had been possible only due to religious solidarity of Muslim Ummah, Political wisdom and kynetic diplomacy of Muslim leaders in the world. Therefore, the Muslims across the world must firmly uphold unity and Muslim brotherhood if they want to live a dignified life in this world.

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BRICS means a lot to Africa's development

Ehizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruyi

THE emergence of BRICS has raised hopes that win-win partnerships can foster the development of Africa. The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) oppose Cold War mentality and hegemonism, and are committed to promoting multilateralism, mutual respect, cooperation, fairness and justice, by cementing a global alternative that represents the trend of history.

BRICS accounts for more than 40 percent of the world population and 20 percent of global trade, and attracts 25 percent of global foreign investment. It represents the development expectations of emerging markets and developing countries, promotes cooperation among developing countries, acts as a platform for South-South cooperation, and has made substantive progress in cooperation across the board. And the BRICS Summit in South Africa from Tuesday to Thursday will add to the vitality of this unique economic grouping.

Unlike certain countries that are trying to divide the world into blocs and expand their military alliances to maintain their domination in almost all fields, BRICS, which as a grouping has been growing at a faster pace than the G7, is focused on maintaining world peace and promoting common development, including Africa's development. BRICS has emerged as a formidable economic bloc in recent years, with a combined GDP of more than \$20 trillion in 2021 against the G7's GDP of about \$35 trillion (both in nominal GDP terms). However, in terms of purchasing power parity-adjusted GDP, the BRICS members contribute 31.5 percent of global GDP while the G7's share has fallen to 30 percent. It is clear therefore that BRICS will be in a stronger position to counter the interventionist attitude of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank when giving loans, and the United States when offering economic, political and military assistance.

Given BRICS' rising economic and political power and increasing engagement with African countries, the BRICS countries are more attractive to African countries. They are attractive also because they offer new opportunities for trade, investment and technology transfer, which can help boost Africa's development and integration. In terms of finance, too, BRICS provides a better alternative to the existing global financial system led by the IMF and the World Bank. For example, in 2014, with \$50 billion in seed money, the BRICS countries launched the New Development Bank not only as an alternative to, but also to complement the work of, the IMF and the World Bank. Likewise, BRICS created a liquidity mechanism called the Contingent Reserve Arrangement to support its members struggling with payments. These efforts and measures appear very attractive to African countries, especially because they have had painful experiences with the IMF's structural adjustment programs and austerity measures. This is one of the main reasons many African countries have shown interest in joining BRICS. In recent years, the BRICS countries, China in particular, have expanded their economic engagement with Africa. For instance, China is the largest trading partner of Africa and is becoming a more important market for African countries. In 2022, 12.5 percent of Africa's exports went to China, compared with a mere 0.8 percent at the beginning of the century.

According to official statistics, the total trade value between China and Africa hit an all-time high of \$282 billion in 2022, up 11 percent year-on-year. China has also invested heavily in infrastructure and industrial projects in African countries. India, too, has increased its trade with and investments in Africa, mostly in the fields of agriculture, healthcare, renewable energy, infrastructure, education and information technology, and set up a \$10 billion fund to support development projects in Africa. Based on the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry data, in the 2022-23 fiscal year, trade between India and Africa grew by 9.26 percent to nearly \$100 billion, up from just \$7 billion in 2001. And the fact that its exports amounted to \$51.2 billion and imports \$46.65

billion shows that India-Africa trade was more or less balanced. Brazil and Russia have also increased their engagement with Africa through various initiatives including the Brazil-Africa Agriculture Platform, the Russia-Africa Summit, and the South Africa-India-Brazil Dialogue Forum. Taken as a whole, BRICS is Africa's largest trading partner. In fact, the 2022 economic survey data from the African Development Bank show BRICS is now Africa's largest trading partner with their trade expected to cross \$500 billion by 2030, with China accounting for 60 percent of it. The BRICS countries are also becoming significant investors in Africa, especially in the manufacturing, infrastructure and service sectors.

The above facts show BRICS is promoting South-South cooperation and making efforts to build a multipolar world order, which resonates with Africa's vision of achieving regional integration and becoming self-sufficient. As a matter of fact, African countries have decided to adopt a policy of strategic autonomy from the West, because Western economies are known to prioritize and impose their own interests and values when engaging with African countries. The African countries have realized that reliance on the West makes them vulnerable, especially when their interests conflict. The fact that they have to mainly sell their energy and other resources to Western nations, conduct trade in US dollars and use the West's Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication system for transactions is seen by African countries as a weakness, because the West has used the dollar, as well as the institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, as an economic and political tool to control the African countries. So when African countries fight for autonomy and say they want to de-dollarize their economies, they are actually seeking total freedom from the West and its institutions. This freedom includes realizing economic emancipation, the freedom to conduct trade based on equality and manage their internal affairs without

being dictated how to do so by the West. This in turn necessitates the reconfiguration of the global economic architecture, in which every country will be free to trade independently, without any conditions.

Since the African countries oppose the West-centered world order and are making efforts to make their economies more dynamic, they welcome the emergence of BRICS, because it opposes the domination of the West and offers African countries novel ways to de-dollarize their economies. The African countries think this paradigm shift will protect them against Western pressure, which is another key factor that has prompted African countries to partner with BRICS. As a way of benefiting from this new partnership, African countries should further increase their trade with the BRICS countries and leverage their strengths and resources for mutual gain. This can be done if the African countries adopt a strategic approach to engaging with BRICS based on the assessment of their respective strengths and weaknesses, and by pursuing mutual benefit. For that, however, they need to strengthen their domestic institutions and policies, enhance regional integration and cooperation, and engage in a more assertive and proactive manner with the BRICS countries and other emerging market economies based on a shared vision of mutual benefit, inclusivity, and sustainability. In particular, the African countries need to leverage their natural resources, cultural diversity and strategic location to boost their economic development. They also need to capitalize on the opportunities created by BRICS and the evolving global economic order by prioritizing investments in education, technology and infrastructure, and promoting innovations and inclusive and sustainable development.

Above all, African countries need to attract more investment from and increase trade with the BRICS members and other developing countries. By doing so, they can unleash their full potential and contribute to shaping the future of the global economy in a more equitable and balanced manner.

The China Daily

If Putin has eliminated Prigozhin

Samantha de Bendern

‘We will all go to hell. But in hell we will be the best,’ commented Yevgeny Prigozhin, discussing his attitude to death in an undated interview that was published last night on the pro-Wagner Grey Zone Telegram channel. In the absence of any remarkable developments, it is looking increasingly likely that, as per Russian reports, the Wagner boss was killed on Wednesday afternoon in a plane crash in the Russian region of Tver, on his way from Moscow to St Petersburg.

Prigozhin shot to international notoriety almost a year ago, when a video of him recruiting convicts in Russian prisons to fight in Ukraine for his Wagner private military company established him as one of the most important Russian players in the war in Ukraine. This culminated in May this year when Wagner took the symbolically important town of Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine after nine months of bloody fighting. During the battle, Prigozhin became increasingly vocal in his criticism of Russia's top military leadership, and even went so far as to make veiled criticisms of Vladimir Putin. Then there was the coup-that-wasn't. In late June, the world watched with bated breath as Prigozhin led an armed rebellion that captured the Russian military headquarters in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don and headed towards Moscow, demanding that Russia's defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, and the chief of staff, Valery Gerasimov, be removed from their posts. Then, under circumstances that are still unclear, Prigozhin halted his rebellion some 125 miles (200km) from Moscow and was supposedly forgiven by Putin (who the day before had stated that all traitors would be punished). Prigozhin was offered safe passage to Belarus and the criminal charges against him were dropped - implying something of a pardon. Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko offered safety guarantees to all Wagner fighters.

According to Russian news reports, 10 bodies have been recovered at the site of the crash, and the list of passengers indicates that Prigozhin was on board, together with reported Wagner founder Dmitry Utkin. Other dead include senior Wagner figures. Although Prigozhin had reportedly drawn up contingency plans on who should take over the group in case of his death, the presence of other key Wagner members on the plane suggests that the organisation has been all but decapitated.

What is interesting here is that Prigozhin, Utkin and other senior Wagner commanders appeared to feel confident enough of their safety in Russia to ignore the golden rule of leaders of any important organisation - which is to not travel on the same plane. Russia has opened an investigation into the crash - and some Russian commentators are suggesting that a terrorist act was committed. Wagner-affiliated Telegram channels

are claiming that a Russian surface-to-air missile shot the plane down.

On Thursday morning, the UK government said it was monitoring the situation closely, but has not yet commented on the crash. Joe Biden has been less circumspect, noting, in response to a question about culpability: "There's not much that happens in Russia that Putin's not behind. But I don't know enough to know the answer." The plane crash that appears to have killed Prigozhin happened two months to the day after the start of his aborted rebellion. In view of Putin's fondness for anniversaries and other significant dates, it is hard not to see his hand behind the downing of the plane. The death of Prigozhin also happened the same day that Sergei Surovikin, who disappeared in the aftermath of the aborted June rebellion, was officially relieved of his duties as airforce commander. While not confirming his whereabouts, this is a step up from the official line that he was simply on holiday. This suggests that whatever loose ends Putin needed to tie up before dealing with Prigozhin that were somehow linked to Surovikin have been dealt with. This could be related to Putin's fears that, through Surovikin, Prigozhin could still count on support in the army.

The mood on the pro-Wagner Telegram channels is sour. Grey Zone calls those who killed Prigozhin "traitors to Russia". Russian military blogger Roman Saponkov writes that "Prigozhin's murder will have catastrophic consequences. The people who gave the order do not understand the mood in the army." Other Wagner-affiliated channels are threatening a second rebellion, but at the time of writing it is hard to tell how much credence to give them. The next few days will be crucial in determining whether Putin comes out in a stronger position after Prigozhin's reported death. A clear message has been sent to anyone thinking of defying him: no matter how powerful they are, they will be put away or put down.

But the surviving Wagnerites choose to interpret both Lukashenko and Putin's words as promises to Prigozhin that were broken. "If there is a lesson to be learned, it is that one must always see something through to the end," writes the pro-Wagner Telegram channel DSHRG. None of this bodes well for the Russian leader's negotiating authority with any future mutineers, or anyone else for that matter (people in favour of quick negotiations over Ukraine, please take note). If Putin is not able to consolidate absolute power over all armed forces in Russia, anyone who opposes him will have no choice but to push through till the end. Paradoxically, with the elimination of the most serious threat to Putin's power, Russia could emerge even more unstable than ever.

Age apparently gives you wisdom, so why doesn't Joe Biden know when to quit?

Chris Mullin

SOME years ago, at an African Union conference in Addis Ababa, I heard the then UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, say to an audience stuffed with life presidents: "One of the tests of leadership is knowing when to leave the stage." All the big offenders were present - Robert Mugabe from Zimbabwe, Omar Bongo from Gabon, Teodoro Obiang from Equatorial Guinea and Yoweri Museveni from Uganda.

They sat stony-faced amid much nervous foot-shuffling and laughter as the chairman, the former president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano (one of the few African leaders who stood down when his time was up), pointed at them and said, "And we all know who Kofi was talking about, don't we?" It was an electric moment. Annan may have been

talking about African presidents, but today his words might equally apply elsewhere. Is it not extraordinary that, more than 200 years after it was founded, a political system as open and allegedly sophisticated as that in the US can only offer the American electorate a choice between two elderly males - one a serial liar and the other a decent man well past his sell-by date. One can understand what drives Donald Trump (77) - a desire to stay out of prison - but why on earth should Joe Biden (80), who has held elected office since 1972, want to cling to power? And not just Biden; what of Nancy Pelosi (83), until recently House speaker, or the Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell (81), both visibly fading? Or, indeed, the revered supreme court justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, whose refusal to

recognise that her time was up arguably gifted control of the most important institution in the US to the hard right when she died in post in 2020 at the age of 87.

Despots at least have the excuse that, having trampled their enemies and made themselves rich beyond the dreams of avarice, they can't guarantee that were they to relinquish the reins of office, they wouldn't be called to account for their misdeeds. Political leaders in a mature democracy, however, have no such excuse. A comfortable retirement awaits them - a good pension, lucrative memoirs and (should they want it) adulation on the after-dinner speaking circuit.

In the UK, whatever our problems, rule by geriatrics is not an issue, although once upon a time it was. William Gladstone, Winston

Churchill and Clement Attlee - great men in their heyday - overstayed their welcome. Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair, though by no means geriatric, had to be prised out of office. Some of our judges, too - notably Lord Denning - overstay.

Our problem, however, is almost the opposite: in the increasingly feeble UK, such is the pressure on a reigning prime minister that, in recent years, it has been rare to last a single full term, never mind two. And as for ministers, the turnover is extraordinary. Rory Stewart, to name but one, held five posts in four years. We could do with a bit more stability, not less.

Many of the current generation of MPs seem to get their feet on the ladder when they are far too young. Some are not long

out of university or a political thinktank. I am occasionally asked by an ambitious young person for my thoughts on how to get into parliament. My advice is always the same: "Go away and do something else first and then you might be of more use if and when you do get elected." For better or worse, I was 39 when I was first elected as an MP.

Experience in other fields is important. There is more to politics than tweeting. (Though I read with horror the other day that there are now companies that, for an appropriate fee, offer a bespoke social media service to young professionals vying for selection as candidates for parliament. Lord, save us.)

Power, of course, when finally achieved, is addictive. Having striven for so long to reach the top - nearly 50

years in Biden's case - there is understandably a reluctance to relinquish office. The longer you are in power, the more messianic you become. "All prime ministers go mad after two terms," one of Blair's closest advisers once remarked to me, only half-jokingly. The US system, for all its faults, does have one great strength: two terms and you are out.

As for me, who only ever inhabited the political foothills, I stood down at the age of 62. As those who have read my diaries will know, a great deal of agonising preceded the decision. At the time I regarded it as either the best or the worst decision of my life. Thirteen years on, I am pleased to report that it has worked out better than I could ever have anticipated. It's always better to go when people are still asking "why" rather than "when".

The Guardian

Russia’s concessions to Israel should worry Palestinians

Ramzy Baroud

SINCE the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, a global cold war has also kicked in. As a strong ally of the US and the home of a massive constituency of Russian, Ukrainian and Eastern European Jews, it was only natural that Israel would be at the heart of the global conflict. When the war began, Israel was ruled by an odd coalition, bringing together political parties from the right, center and left. These parties were aware of the electoral importance of Russian Jews, who mostly arrived in Israel following the collapse of the former Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This sizable and rapidly growing constituency is largely anti-Moscow, as opinion polls have demonstrated.

These demographics, in addition to Israel's loyalty to Washington, complicated the Israeli position. On the one hand, Tel Aviv voted in favor of a UN General Assembly resolution in March 2022 that condemned Russia. In response, Moscow expressed its "disappointment" in Israel. Additionally, Israel opened its doors to Ukrainians and also Russian Jews who wanted to flee the war zones. On the other hand, then-Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett attempted to play the role of mediator, holding meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky. Moreover, Israel was repeatedly floated as a possible meeting place for future negotiations, giving it a special status as a peacemaker, although in media coverage only. This did not culminate in anything. In fact, it later resulted in multiple controversies. They included an ongoing diplomatic row over what

Israel views as Ukraine's veneration of Nazi collaborators. Another embarrassing episode followed allegations by Bennett that Zelensky had sought assurances through the Israeli leader that Putin would not try to kill him. Ukraine denied this took place.

Yet, while Bennett was trying to insert Israel into the conflict as an important global power, Yair Lapid, then Israel's foreign minister, openly condemned Russia. The Israeli position may have reflected the country's political-demographic makeup. It could also be true that it was largely a political ploy, in which Bennett attempted to pacify Moscow, while his coalition partner, Lapid, sought to reassure Washington. Despite occasional rebukes of Israel by the US and Russia, the language used by both sides was hardly comparable to the threats they leveled against other countries that refused to toe their line. In fact, the strongest of Moscow's warnings to Israel came in February, when Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters that "all countries that supply weapons (to Ukraine) should understand that we will consider these (weapons) to be legitimate targets for Russia's armed forces."

The reference in Zakharova's statement was understood to be Israel, since it followed a CNN interview with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In the interview, Netanyahu said that his country was "looking into" sending "other kinds of aid," aside from humanitarian assistance, to Ukraine. In the same interview, Netanyahu referred to Tel Aviv's relationship with Moscow as "com-

plex" because of their conflicting interests in Syria and Moscow's strong ties to Tehran, Israel's arch-enemy in the region.

Unlike the previous two prime ministers, Bennett and Lapid, Netanyahu was keen on maintaining a degree of neutrality in the Russia-Ukraine war and the resulting global cold war. Whether Netanyahu was sincere or not, it seems that Moscow is far more comfortable with Tel Aviv's new position than those of the previous governments.

For example, in July 2022, Russia's Justice Ministry declared a legal war on the Jewish Agency for Israel, whose mission, starting a century ago, has been to facilitate Jewish immigration to Palestine and, later, Israel. The Russian move was clearly political, meant to send a strong message to Israel that Russia has many tools at its disposal should Tel Aviv veer too much to the Ukrainian side. Israel responded by bombing Syria more frequently than before, sending a message back to Moscow that it also has options. The truth is that the legal move against the Jewish Agency did raise serious alarm bells in Israel. It demonstrated Russia's seriousness in countering Israel's politicking and mixed agendas. Still, the rift between Russia and Israel is yet to have any direct positive impact on Palestinians. There are reasons for this.

One, historically, Russia's - and previously the Soviet Union's - view of Israel has been based on Moscow's own political priorities. Two, Russia's foreign policy discourse has, in recent decades, been largely tied to the collective Arab stance toward Tel Aviv. This was

illustrated by the severing of ties between Moscow and Tel Aviv during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and the resumption of ties during the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab peace talks in 1991. Today's absence of a united Arab position regarding Palestine makes a stronger Russian push against the Israeli occupation of little urgency. Three, the Palestinian leadership has mostly failed to navigate the geopolitical spaces that have opened up since the Russia-Ukraine war began, therefore rendering itself largely irrelevant to Russia's political calculations.

In fact, as soon as Israel began adopting a more consistent and less aggressive position on the Russia-Ukraine war, it began reaping the rewards. In July, Foreign Minister Eli Cohen celebrated the "diplomatic achievement" of his country following a Russian decision to open consular offices in West Jerusalem. This surprising announcement was coupled with the use, by some Russian government-funded media, of the term "West Jerusalem," instead of Tel Aviv, to refer to the capital of Israel. It could be argued that the Russian stance on Palestine remains strong and that Russia's concessions to Israel are likely temporary, merely necessitated by the war. Indeed, this could be the case, especially if we keep in mind the strong pro-Arab constituency in the Kremlin and the Duma. It is also possible - in fact, true - that Russia's foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine at the present time is entirely motivated by Russian priorities. This means that Moscow cannot be taken for granted as a Palestinian ally, and an outright recognition by Russia of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is not entirely off the table.

Mindlessly printing money has ruined Britain’s economy and politics

Daniel Hannan

WE should be wary of catch-all solutions. Campaigners who claim that every trouble would be addressed by their particular remedy - a land tax, say, or changes to the school curriculum, or some form of alternative energy - are generally monomaniacs. Modern government is a messy business, involving difficult trade-offs. All the easy stuff has already been done.

So I am not going to make exaggerated claims about monetary policy. I will instead say this. A surprising number of apparently unrelated problems - the decline in living standards, the rise in house prices, the widening gap between those who own assets and those who don't, the fact that we are close to being overtaken in real GDP per head by South Korea, the sense of generational unfairness, the doctors' strike, even the way in which government departments spray money around on woke campaigns - have been exacerbated by one policy. That policy was not demanded by the population at large or voted through by Parliament. It was decreed, rather, by the Bank of England in response to the 2008 financial crisis. Starting in March 2009, our central bank, in common with others around the world, began to print money on a scale that would have embarrassed a 1970s Latin American junta.

They called it "quantitative easing" and, while people were aware of it, few realised how radical and transformative it would be. Until then, the Bank of England's tool for stimulating economic activity was lowering interest rates, but that tactic had been exhausted. Indeed, it seems to me to be partly because the Bank of England had kept rates so low for so long that the crash happened in the way it did.

In March 2009, the base rate was 0.5 per cent, leaving little room for further cuts. So the Bank of England, determined to blow at least some air back into the bubble, began magicking up money. "Inflation is caused by too much money chasing after too few goods," said Milton Friedman. But the impact of QE was not immediate. The extra pounds called into existence were not loaded onto pallets and driven around the country. They were used to recapitalise banks and fund bond purchases. Their inflationary effect was thus delayed.

Emboldened by their apparent ability to get away with it, central banks kept going. A response that had been intended as a one-off reaction to a global emergency effectively became a standard policy tool. Financiers, who enjoyed first access to all the new moolah, became addicted to it. Each new injection of QE seemingly had less effect. The highs became shorter, the cold turkey scarier.

Then, in 2020, just when QE was scheduled to be wound up, the pandemic hit. Naturally, the Bank of England - with the tacit support of many politicians, who preferred the long-term pain of money printing to the sharp shock of spending cuts - responded with yet more QE. The numbers are almost literally unbelievable. As a result of the Bank of England's actions since March 2009, the amount of money in circulation has increased by more than 50 per cent. Hundreds of billions have been added to the pool since 2020. This time there was no getting away from the consequences. The money might as well have been loaded on to pallets, in the sense that it enabled banks to buy bonds with money that was then handed out through furlough payments, business grants and other benefits.

As Gertjan Vlieghe, a then member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, put in a April 2020: "If we were the central bank of the Weimar Republic or Zimbabwe, the mechanical transactions on our balance sheet would be similar to what is actually happening in the UK right now." It was an extraordinary admission even if, as he added, the difference is that the Bank of England was not being told what to do by the government. What does all this mean? Most obviously, it means that Britain feels poorer. As the pound drops in value, so the country begins to compare unfavourably with the wealth of nations elsewhere. But these effects are not felt evenly. People whose wealth is mainly in money - that is, people who live on their salaries - have been much more badly hit than people who own houses, stocks or other hard assets. Those whose savings were in cash have been subjected to a swinging tax. The debasement of the pound means that their bank accounts have lost their value, but so has the government's debt. Inflation shifts wealth from private savers to the state. Money-printing is also, to my mind, the proximate cause of the public-sector strikes. When trade unions complain that their members' salaries have fallen, they are not wrong. But they helped bring the problem about by insisting on the longest possible lockdown, thus prolonging QE.

To give in to the strikers would be to dole out more of the medicine that sickened the patient. Excessive state spending is the cause of the problem, not the solution, and Rishi Sunak knows it. But I fear he is in the minority. Another malign consequence of QE was to destroy our sense of value. When we read of hundreds of billions of pounds being spent on lockdowns, we can't understand why our own pet cause shouldn't have a few hundred million. Civil servants are especially guilty of this failing, throwing the new-minted money at their favourite projects. Despite the talk of cuts, taxpayers are funding 10,000 jobs in "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion" (EDI) at an annual cost of £557?million a year. That is on top of the £150?million worth of paid days spent sending officials on training courses covering EDI, race, sexuality and unconscious bias. Billions more go on quangos which are, so to speak, indirectly woke: the Quality Assurance Agency - which checks on university course standards - demanding "decolonisation"; the Arts Council tying grants to an agenda linked to a campaign that backs "unlearning whiteness"; and so on. We don't usually think of identity politics as a consequence of loose money. But, according to a report by Conservative Way Forward which totted up the figures, woke grants cost taxpayers £7 billion a year - £19?million a day. That is the kind of money that governments spend when they are not forced to live within their means. Without the cash, identity politics would struggle to get off the ground. Is it possible to turn monetary policy into a popular cause? Maybe. The surprise winner of Argentina's primary elections last week, Javier Milei, bases much of his appeal on sound money and spending cuts. The shock-haired economist, who describes himself as an anarcho-capitalist and has named his English mastiffs after economists Milton Friedman, Murray Rothbard and Robert Lucas, has a real shot at becoming president in November.

In most countries, politicians who talk about restoring the gold standard or ending fractional reserve banking are regarded as cranks. But not in Argentina, where inflation is running at more than 100 per cent. We are not ready for a British Milei - things are not yet that bad here. But we can, in a more modest way, turn sound money into a vote-winning issue. Last month I co-signed a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer organised by a new lobby group, the Honest Money Initiative. We are not asking for full-fat Austrian economics, complete with ending fractional reserve banking (though if you want to understand what is wrong with the current system, I recommend the new film Ex Nihilo: The Truth About Money, released a couple of weeks ago by the Cobden Centre, and free to watch online). No, all we want is to tweak the rules governing the Bank of England, removing its right to print unlimited quantities of cash and giving it a statutory responsibility to preserve the value of the pound. What could be more moderate? What could be more Tory? Come to think of it, what could be more popular?

The Telegraph

Why Navalny’s allies overestimate Europeans’ support for Putin

Roni Greenfield

AHEAD of the two-year anniversary of the attempted assassination of Alexei Navalny, the Anti-Corruption Foundation (ACF) released the results of a survey analyzing attitudes to President Vladimir Putin and the war in Ukraine in France and Germany. The researchers discovered a surprisingly high level of pro-Russian sentiment. According to the survey, published on Aug. 15, in both countries more people have a "rather positive" view of Putin than a "rather negative." In France, 43% view Putin positively, with just 35% registering a negative answer. In Germany, the result was 35% and 34% respectively.

They also found that 32% of Germans would agree Putin is a "strong leader." Only a third would call him a "killer," and even fewer would consider attending an anti-Putin rally under that slogan. Most shockingly, in both countries, when asked who started the war in Ukraine, respondents were more likely to blame the United States than Putin. The ACF team believes these results have far-reaching implications. It seems to confirm that Kremlin narratives are much more popular in the West than currently thought. "He [Putin] hopes to flip public opinion in Europe undermining his support for Ukraine. And, as you have seen, he has reason to believe in his strategy" Navalny's longtime aide and former head of ACF Leonid Volkov said. The results are especially surprising because they paint a completely different picture from almost every other piece of

research on the topic. Citizens of France and Germany are regularly polled on the same and similar issues, and the results from a diverse range of reliable pollsters contradict the ACF findings.

A recent poll by Civey found that over 60% of Germans think Putin is a threat to their country. Another opinion poll by the Institut Français d'opinion Publique in June 2023 found that German and French citizens overwhelmingly have a negative view of Russia. Among German responders, only 21% had a positive view, and the number in France was even lower at 15%. An overwhelming majority support aiding Ukraine with weapons and blame Russia for the war. Finally, a comprehensive study by the Pew Research Center confirms this trend - 86% of Germans and 82% of French citizens have an unfavorable view of Russia, with around 50% of all responders opting for "very unfavorable." What might explain such a significant discrepancy with the ACF survey, which found a diametrically opposite result? This is likely explained by significant flaws in several key aspects of ACF's methodology. Volkov refused to disclose their methodology in detail, but even the publicly available information is enough to conclude that their survey was bound to produce extremely unreliable results.

First, ACF's surveys used relatively small sample sizes. Ranging between 554 to 800, they are approximately three times smaller than alternative polls. While this alone isn't a deal-breaker, it leads to

a higher margin of error, meaning results are less accurate. Furthermore, the ambiguous phrasing of the questions themselves makes it hard to draw reliable conclusions. For example, ACF finds that few people would call Putin a killer. However, the answer in each case would depend on the interpretation of the word "killer" - which could mean a person who has killed someone with their own hands, directly ordered for someone to be killed or is complicit in killings. Likewise, those who agree Putin is a "strong leader" don't necessarily condone his actions, but may be making a morally neutral observation. Another problem is sample selection. Professional pollsters try to ensure that their sample is as random as possible, usually conducting surveys by phone. ACF opted for an online survey. The webform was randomly advertised using internet algorithms, leading to self-selection bias, as those who had particularly strong opinions were much more likely to participate in the survey, thus skewing the sample.

Web surveys are also prone to a "snowball effect," where people with an interest in a topic share the survey with their friends, or others with similar interests, who then share it themselves. This distorts the sample even further in favor of people with strong interests and opinions. As a result, the sample ACF used is almost certainly quite skewed, leading to inaccurate results. But even the most carefully picked sample isn't perfect. This is why reputable pollsters weight

their samples by multiple factors which could influence a person's response. The ACF study only employs quotas by age and gender. For the results to be properly representative, ACF would have to also weight by geographical region, political affiliation, income and education, and ideally at least a few other key parameters. Without that, it's impossible to say, for example, if the sample overrepresented far-right AfD supporters, or underrepresented university graduates. Unfortunately, this lack of proper weighting effectively renders the result completely meaningless. Volkov and members of ACF defend their findings. They also examined attitudes in Lithuania, arguing that their results are in line with what other polling has shown. Furthermore, they claim that the same technique was already successfully tested to predict the result of the recent Turkish elections. While they did correctly predict Erdogan's re-election, this does not address the very serious issues with their approach.

Ultimately, it is almost certain that ACF's survey methodology is extremely flawed, and as a result, it widely exaggerates the effectiveness of Russian propaganda. It is hard to disagree with Volkov's conclusion that Western governments must do more to combat pro-Russian narratives. But we need reliable data to design policies that do that. ACF does incredibly important and often dangerous work. They shouldn't risk undermining their hard-earned credibility by trying to make a point with numbers that don't hold up to scrutiny.

The Moscow Times

Malaysia calls time on pro-LGBTQ watches

Zomber Peter

IN Malaysia, wrapping the wrong candy-colored watch around your wrist can now earn you a \$4,300 fine, not to mention three years in jail. The penalties are laid out in an August 10 order from the Ministry of Home Affairs banning LGBTQ-themed watches from the popular Swatch brand for putting Malaysia's "national interest" at risk. It comes three months after ministry staff raided a number of shops selling the watches and seized more than 170 of them.

Rights groups say the government's reaction reflects its dwindling tolerance for the country's LGBTQ community and the growing sway of political parties appealing to the conservative base of the country's ethnic Malay and Muslim majorities. "It's a trend among the political scene to use LGBT issues as a scapegoat to kind of gain last-minute support from the Malay-majority conservative part of Malaysian society," Dhia Rezki, vice president of the local gay rights group Jejaka, told VOA. Malaysia's ethnic Malays are automatically Muslim by law and denouncing the faith is illegal. Malaysian law also outlaws and punishes sodomy - calling it "intercourse against the order of nature" - with up to 20 years in jail. The government ordered the watch ban just two days before state elections that were widely seen as a critical test of the ruling coalition's standing with Malay voters.

The order cites the country's Printing Presses and Publications Act, which gives the Home Affairs Ministry "absolute discretion" to ban any published material "likely to be prejudicial to public order, morality, security," to "alarm public opinion," harm the "national interest," or

breach any law. It says the ministry banned the Swatch watches for "promoting, supporting and normalizing the LGBTQ movement, which is not accepted by the general public of Malaysia." The Swiss company's Pride Collection features six watches, each in one of the bright, bold colors of the LGBTQ flag. Each watch also features a pair of wristband loops bearing all six colors of the flag together. Asked for comment, Swatch Group referred VOA to a public statement company CEO Nick Hayek issued in May following the shop raids. "We strongly contest that our collection of watches using rainbow colors and having a message of peace and love could be harmful for whomever," Hayek said at the time. "In the contrary, Swatch gives always a positive message of joy in life. This has nothing political."

The Ministry of Home Affairs did not reply to VOA's request for comment. Thilaga Sulathireh, co-founder of the local LGBTQ rights group Justice for Sisters, said the watch ban was not only "discriminatory and unreasonable" but a breach of the rights to personal liberty, gender equality and freedom of expression enshrined in Malaysia's constitution. He said the order was also an overly broad and possibly illegal use of the printing act, and no less than the seventh time the government has used it to curb LGBTQ material since 2020. "The law is in and of itself extremely broad," he told VOA. "And because it is so broad, I think it is misused and it is used arbitrarily against LGBT expression." Dhia, from Jejaka, said using the law to ban a watch underscores the government's resolve to quash that expression. "Malaysia

already has a problem with restricting freedom of expression, but for them to issue a whole separate ban under a prohibition order kind of highlights how deep the government's prejudice against LGBTQ expression is," he said. The "paradox," he added, is that the government has been stepping up its repression just as younger LGBTQ Malaysians are finding their voice. "As people push for more equal rights, [other] people are feeling that their rights have been taken away on the other side," he said. "So in general ... I do think in Malaysia, [in] the social context ... [our] rights are being restricted more and more."

Tolerance "is definitely shrinking by the day," Thilaga agreed. Last month, the organizers of what was to be a three-day music festival canceled the remainder of the event after Maddy Healy, frontman for the British pop band The 1975, slammed the country's anti-LGBTQ laws and kissed a male bandmate on stage. In October, authorities raided an LGBTQ Halloween party and arrested 20 people for crossdressing. Rights groups also point to the myriad programs meant to "cure" or "rehabilitate" LGBTQ people that the government helps run or fund. Thilaga said the number of those programs has "increased exponentially" over the past decade. Advocates and analysts point to more recent - and political - motives for the mounting backlash as well.

In 2018, the long-ruling Barisan Nasional bloc lost its first national elections since Malaysia's 1957 independence from Britain. The country has since seen four shaky administrations take power, the latest a tenuous alliance between Barisan Nasional

and its former rival, Pakatan Harapan. Where Barisan champions the interests of the country's ethnic Malays, Pakatan built its reputation espousing the cause of the country's ethnic and religious minorities. While Pakatan leads the alliance, its reliance on Barisan to hold a majority in parliament seems to be pushing its agenda toward the right, says Khoo Ying Hooi, an associate professor and human rights scholar at the University of Malaya. "Pakatan Harapan, when they were the opposition, they were the hope for a bigger ... democracy and human rights space," she said. "With this very difficult partnership [with Barisan], this has to take a lot of compromising, hence I think that explains the approach that they are taking." While being pushed to the right from within, she said, the government is also being pulled the same way by the opposition Perikatan Nasional, a bloc of parties with staunch pro-Malay, pro-Muslim goals. The largest of them, the Malaysian Islamic Party, better known as PAS, has called for the death penalty for apostasy and saw a surprise surge in support during last year's national elections, winning the most seats of any party in the race.

With help from PAS, Perikatan also put up a tough fight in elections to fill six of 13 state legislatures last week and ended up gaining seats in most of them. "The state elections have basically signaled that the trend of [the] national elections continued," Khoo said. "That's why the Malay votes are very important, that's why the Swatch issue has become even more sensitive, because PAS ... Perikatan Nasional, those who use the agenda of Malay Muslims ... do not tolerate at all [the] LGBT issues," VOA

THE Rohingya people are a stateless ethnic group who predominantly reside in Rakhine State, Myanmar. For centuries, the Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic minority, have inhabited predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, historically known as Burma.

Despite their long-standing presence in the region, the Rohingya remain unrecognised as an official ethnic group and have been systematically denied citizenship since 1982, rendering them the largest stateless population on the planet.

The Rohingya genocide of 2017 by the junta in Myanmar forced more than two million to seek refuge in neighbouring countries with the brunt of the refugee influx being borne by Bangladesh already heavily populated country ballooned by more than one million Rohingya refugees. Since 1982, the Rohingya ethnic group that had been peacefully living and working in Myanmar suddenly found themselves stateless with a change of law that denied them nationality.

In Myanmar, most Rohingya have no legal identity or citizenship and statelessness remains a significant concern. Rohingya children in Rakhine State, meanwhile, have been hemmed in by violence, forced displacement, and restrictions on freedom of movement. Stripped of

Tariq A. Al Maena

legal recognition, Rohingya families face a harrowing reality, devoid of fundamental rights and safeguarded protections. This leaves them alarmingly susceptible to exploitation, as well as various forms of abuse including sexual and gender-based violence. In 2013, an AP journalist reported that a mob armed with swords and knives invaded a predominantly Muslim village, striking at Muslims as they went along and burnt down their homes. There were many acts of bloodshed and destruction. One of the victims described the outcome of those attacks. "After most of the villages had been burnt by the mob, the notorious security did not allow us to move from one village to another village to look for lost relatives or allow us to mourn our dead. If the security catches one of us doing that, they will put the innocent Rohingya behind bars indefinitely without charges."

The violence and restrictions intensified in August 2017 causing a mass exodus of the survivors to adjacent countries - India, Malaysia, and Bangladesh quickly saw a huge influx of these refugees, with Bangladesh taking the lion's share. Appropriately called the most persecuted minority in the world, unable to claim citizenship in a country that refuses to

recognise them, the Rohingyas were subject to beatings, rape, abuse, and displacement from their homes, and many were simply gunned down and killed by army troopers. The horrors of genocide were in full view of the world as the conflict was covered by many media outlets. Unfortunately, there was not more than a whimper of protest while the killings were going on.

Those Rohingya refugees that managed to escape to India face various challenges. This not only hampers their integration into society but also places them at risk of being deported back to Myanmar. In Nuh, the only Muslim-majority district in the state of Haryana in India, Rohingya refugees are reportedly living in fear of detention. According to a news report, a refugee there who requested anonymity stated that the community was feeling anxious. "We fled from ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, yet we are still living in fear." Recently, reports are emerging that the fate of the displaced Rohingya in Bangladesh camps is not much better. According to human rights group NGO Fortify Rights, Rohingya people living in refugee camps in the Bangladeshi city of Cox's Bazar are being sometimes 'arbitrarily detained'. Bangladesh and India must react fairly in support of this much-persecuted minority.

ICCI calls for revisiting PPAs with IPPs to save businesses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the root cause of the surging circular debt and rising power tariffs was the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed with the International Power Producers (IPPs). He called upon the government to revisit PPAs with IPPs to pay them in local currency, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

Talking to media at the Chambers House, the President ICCI said that IPPs were earning huge profits in dollars, but the

businesses were badly suffering due to exorbitant power tariffs and the rising cost of doing business.

He stressed that the government should change the basic tariff of IPPs in PKR instead of US dollars as this change would save billions of rupees of the national exchequer and provide electricity at affordable cost to the businesses making our export competitive in the international market. Similarly, the profits to the IPPs should also be paid in local currency instead of US dollars, he said.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that around 47 IPPs were

working in Pakistan's power sector and they had already earned huge profits as compared to their capital investment. As per Power Policy 1994, 16 IPPs had invested around Rs.60 billion and earned over Rs.400 billion, which shows their huge profits in Pakistan, he said.

He said that PPAs in Pakistan had made energy cost highest in the region and stressed that to save the industry, the government should renegotiate PPAs with IPPs in the best national interest.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG

said that due to the significant depreciation of rupee, the import of industrial raw materials had become very expensive which was pushing up the production cost.

He stressed that the government should take urgent measures to stabilize the value of rupee in order to save the industry from further troubles.

He said that instead of hiking the power tariffs, the government should focus on controlling the transmission and distribution losses and power theft besides improving the performance of power companies to save the consumers from further burden.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor arranging and displaying bird's nests and wooden base stand for refrigerator on his bicycle to attract customers.

Jubilee, Telenor to facilitate insurance access through Telenor's Apollo app

KARACHI (PPI): Jubilee Life Insurance, Pakistan's largest private sector insurance company, has signed an MOU with Telenor Pakistan, one of the country's largest telecommunications service providers to bring unprecedented ease and accessibility for health and life insurance services. Under this collaboration, insurance products from Jubilee Life will be directly integrated into the Apollo app, Telenor's flagship platform which caters to a robust network of 120,000 retailers across Pakistan.

Apollo, a trademarked product of Telenor Pakistan, stands at the forefront of innovation. It's a comprehensive digital solution that redefines the conventional retail distribution landscape into a modern digital space, ensuring easy

access to the Apollo retailers. Through its ingenious design, Apollo enables the retailers to connect with the audience more efficiently than ever before.

Through an effective collection of their expertise, Jubilee Life Insurance and Telenor Pakistan are set to revolutionize insurance penetration in the country. This initiative will enable millions of Pakistanis to be empowered in terms of securing insurance policies through Telenor Pakistan retailers, ushering in a new era of swift and simplified insurance acquisition.

The streamlined, user-friendly process caters to the modern dynamics of the nation, where convenience and efficiency are being given the utmost importance especially by younger audience.

Farhan Faridi, Group Head – Retail Operations, Marketing and Administration at Jubilee Life Insurance, stated, "As the dynamics of our society evolve, digital technologies have become an integral part of our daily lives. We recognize that a significant portion of our population comprises young individuals who embrace these technologies. Jubilee Life is committed to raising awareness about the importance of insurance plans among this demographic. Our collaboration with Telenor Pakistan is a demonstration of our dedication to making insurance coverage accessible and relevant to the digital age."

Omer Bin Tariq, Chief Marketing Officer Telenor Pakistan, stated, "Telenor Pakistan consistently

strives to provide its users with innovative solutions that simplify their lives. Collaborating with Jubilee Life Insurance aligns seamlessly with our mission to empower our user base and partners through technological advancements. We take immense pride in joining forces with a leading institution like Jubilee Life Insurance to reshape how insurance is accessed and perceived in Pakistan."

By harnessing the power of digital technology and catering to the preferences of the younger generation, the integration of insurance products within the Apollo app marks a significant step towards increased insurance coverage, simplified processes, and enhanced financial security for Pakistanis.

Commercial vehicle sales up in seven months

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's commercial vehicle production and sales continued to maintain rapid growth during the first seven months of this year, data from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers showed.

Sales of commercial vehicles surged 15.9 percent year on year to 2.26 million units during the period, while the output of such vehicles jumped 16.9 percent to 2.25 million units, according to the association.

Production and sales of coaches and trucks both registered double-digit growth compared with the same period last year, with coach sales soaring 25.1 percent year on year to 262,000 units, the data showed.

In July alone, China's sales of commercial vehicles stood at 287,000 units, up 16.8% year on year.

During the January-July period, China's exports of commercial vehicles reached 427,000 units, surging 32.5 percent year on year, the data also revealed.

China's AI investment expected to exceed 38 bln USD in 2027

China's investment in artificial intelligence (AI) is estimated to reach 38.1 billion US dollars in 2027, accounting for about 9 percent of the world's total, according to an industry report.

China has continued to boost its prowess in the AI sector in recent years, said global market research firm International Data Corporation (IDC).

In the future, with government support and a rapid pace of industrial upgrades, AI technology will integrate with diverse industry demands and become a part of products, services and business models, the IDC added.

Amid recent breakthroughs in AI technology and enhanced application integration, numerous enterprises are scrambling to use advanced technologies represented by AI to adapt to the general landscape of the digital intelligence market, empower new businesses, and help enterprises determine the value of intelligent decision-making goals, consequently fueling a surge in customized demands for AI, the IDC said.

SIALKOT (APP): The Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturer and Exporter Association (PSGMEA) and the Surgical Instrument Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (SIMAP) inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in research and development, cross-industry product development and joint participation in international exhibitions, knowledge and expertise exchange, collaboration in export promotion and collaboration for human resources development.

The signing ceremony was held at the PSGMEA Auditorium, attended by group leader, Sialkot Business Community, Riaz-ud-

Din Sheikh, Chairman PSGMEA Arshad Latif Butt, Chief Coordinator SIMAP Jahangir Baber Bajwa, Chairman SIMAP Yousaf Hassan Bajwa, Executive Committee members and Secretary General Mohsin Masood.

Chairman PSGMEA Arshad Latif Butt said that both organisations had agreed to facilitate cooperation in promoting trade and industry in their respective areas whereas they would improve inter-association dialogue for the promotion of trade, industry and export-oriented activities. Both will cooperate in promotion of demand-driven human resource activities in Sialkot, build strong

relationship among academia linkage needs in the respective areas along with exchange of visits of their respective members to discuss matters of common interest.

They will ensure regular exchange of documents and publications on economic and commercial issues and other matters of mutual interests produced by the two and exchange of information and technical expertise necessary for establishment of data banks at the two organizations and inform each other of, and if necessary consult one another on activities that, in their opinion, give rise to possibilities of cooperation and unified opinion.

PSGMEA and SIMAP ink MoU

US dollar advances after Powell's speech

NEW YORK (Xinhua/APP): The US dollar increased in late trading on Friday, after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell signalled that the central bank may need to raise interest rates further to ensure inflation is contained.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback against six major peers, was up 0.09 percent to 104.0776 after Powell's remarks.

"Although inflation has moved down from its peak... it remains too high," Powell said Friday at an annual economic symposium in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

"We are prepared to raise rates further if appropriate, and intend to hold policy at a restrictive level until we are confident that inflation is moving sustainably down toward our objective."

Experts have their own interpretations of Powell's speech.

In June, the Fed temporarily halted its battle against inflation due to concerns over the impact of banking stresses on lending.

There is a possibility that the central bank might opt to pause once more in September, as it awaits additional data amid uncertainties.

"We think that the Fed is more likely to take a wait-and-see approach with the data and try to understand a little bit more about why the labor market is remaining so strong, despite the inflationary experience that we've had and the higher interest rates in the economy," said Sinead Colton Grant, head of BNY Mellon investor solutions.

US agriculture futures closed mixed

DUBAI (Xinhua/APP): Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) agricultural futures closed mixed on Friday, with corn and wheat falling and soybean rising.

The most active corn contract for December delivery fell 0.25 cents, or 0.05 percent, to settle at 4.88 US dollars per bushel. December wheat lost 10 cents, or 1.58 percent, to settle at 6.2175 dollars per bushel. November soybean rose 16 cents, or 1.17 percent, to settle at 13.8775 dollars per bushel.

CBOT wheat futures drop on a higher US dollar. Otherwise, US and global agricultural markets were steady to higher while Pro Farmer's tour summary is awaited.

The risk that national soybean yield declines to or below 50 bushels per acre (BPA) and corn yield drops to 170-173 (BPA) is elevated. Chicago-based research company AgResource recommends end user buying on corrections over the next 10 days.

US exporters sold 121,000 metric tons of soy-

beans to China. Egypt was in private talks to secure additional wheat overnight, but no purchase was made. Spot cash milling wheat in India rallied another 0.03 dollars per bushel to 8.45 dollars.

An extended period of little to no rainfall is forecast for the Plains and the Midwest.

High pressure ridging eases south and westward this weekend or early next week, but resumes its position aloft the Central Plains and the Midwest in the 6-15 day period.

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming (Reuters): It may be too early for the European Central Bank to pause interest rate hikes now as an early stop in the fight against inflation could force the bank to exert even more pain on the economy later, Latvian policymaker Martins Kazaks said on Saturday.

The ECB has raised rates at each of its past nine meetings to arrest runaway inflation but policymakers are now contemplating a pause as recession risks loom, inflation slows and wage growth remains moderate.

"Given the information that we have now - and there is of course more data to come - I would say that another modest increase would be playing it safer, rather than delaying it and

then risking having to do much more later in the year or early next year," Kazaks told Reuters on the sidelines of the annual gathering of central bankers and economists in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Markets see a roughly 50% chance of another hike in September but a move by the end of the year is seen as very likely.

"We can cut rates if we raise them too much and we can cut quite soon," he said, "But if we've done too little, then we may have to raise them even more, so it's cheaper to do it sooner than later."

Still, the Latvian central bank governor added that he will go into the Sept. 14 policy meeting with an open mind and needs to see new staff projections before committing.

Even if the ECB opts for a hold, it needs to make clear that its job is not yet done and more policy tightening could be on the cards, Kazaks added.

ECB projections currently see inflation returning to its 2% target only in late 2025 and Kazaks argued this was too late.

A key reason why some are contemplating a pause is that economic growth indicators are now pointing to a contraction in the third quarter, despite what could be a record-breaking tourism season.

Industry is already in recession and services are also softening, with both survey and hard indicators coming below expectations.

While growth will be flat over the rest of the year, Kazaks said a deep recession was not on the cards as the bloc is still displaying resilience and some softening of the labour market was actually desirable to tame inflation.

Once rates peak, a plateau should be held for some time and the ECB should only start cutting rates when projections start showing inflation was at risk of coming back below 2%.

"I would be happy to start cutting the rates when the inflation projection - so the outlook and not actual data - starts to undershoot our 2% target in a consistent manner," he said.

Markets see a rate cut only in the second half of 2024 and Kazaks said he did not consider this inconsistent with the macroeconomic outlook.

Shares rise as Fed weighs inflation risks, yields steady

NEW YORK/LONDON (Reuters): World stocks eked out gains on Friday as investors, shrugging off bets for a more dovish tone, took comfort from a balanced message from the Federal Reserve that the inflation fight is not over, but it will proceed "carefully" in its next move.

In remarks delivered at the central bank conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said inflation was still too high even with recent favourable readings, and that the US central bank has substantial ground to cover to regain price stability.

But at the same time, Powell noted that economic uncertainty called for "agile" monetary policy making, and that the Fed will proceed "carefully" when deciding its next policy move.

"There was a little something for everybody. If you're a bear, you heard him say we're going to be restrictive, and we might hike rates," said David Sadkin, president at Bel Air Investment Advisors.

"If you're a bull, you heard him say, we're making progress against inflation and we still expect there to be a lag in from the effects of monetary policy, and we could be on hold."

The remarks led US stocks to gyrate between modest gains and losses

before jumping higher towards the end of the session. The Dow Jones (DJ) gained 0.73%, the S&P 500 (.SPX) rose 0.67% and the Nasdaq Composite (.IXIC) gained 0.94%.

Gains on Wall Street lifted global stocks, and the MSCI All Country stock index (.MIWD00000PUS) edged 0.12% higher.

US bond investors nonetheless dialled back their bets of a rate hike in November and December following Powell's remarks, though Treasury yields traded near break-even by late morning.

The yield on 10-year Treasury notes was steady at 4.2314% and the two-year yield, which reflects interest rate expectations, rose to 5.0735%. European shares (.STOXX) also gave up earlier gains to end flat, and the euro at one point fell to its lowest since mid-June on expectations that the European Central Bank could pause its tightening cycle next month. The euro pared its losses by the end of the day to be down 0.12% at \$1.07965.

ECB policymakers are increasingly concerned about deteriorating growth prospects and momentum for a pause in its rate hikes is building, Reuters reported, citing sources with direct knowledge of the discussion.

Markets are split almost

evenly on whether the ECB will hike at its meeting next month, compared with around a 60% chance of a hike before weak activity data was published earlier this week.

"We've seen a back-off in ECB rate hike expectations. The trillion dollar question is how much validation and support that gets from (ECB President Christine) Lagarde today," said Ben Laidler, global markets strategist at eToro.

Powell's message on Friday lined up with the mixed signals by other Fed officials in the final run-up to the conference.

Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker told CNBC he doubted the central bank would need to raise rates again, but also indicated he was not ready to predict when rate cuts might begin. Boston Fed President Susan Collins said on Yahoo Finance's video channel that rates may be near or at a peak, "but certainly additional increments are possible."

Asian shares also had a lacklustre performance overnight. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares (.MIAP000000USD) sagged 1.2%. The US dollar index - which measures the currency against a basket of six developed-market peers, including the euro - also gave up earlier gains to stand unchanged, after

jumping as much as 0.35% to 104.44, a level last seen in early June.

"USD gains have moderated through European trade and the USD has lost minor ground against some high beta currencies as equity markets have strengthened over the session," said Shaun Osborne, chief FX strategist at Scotiabank.

Against Japan's currency, the dollar edged tentatively back toward last week's nine-month high of 146.595.

Tokyo consumer price data on Friday, which front-runs nationwide figures, showed inflation remained well above the Bank of Japan's target. However, the lag in pay increases may be more pivotal for steering policy.

"We do not expect the Bank of Japan to tighten monetary policy because the spike in inflation has not spilled over to a large acceleration in wage growth," CBA strategist Joseph Capurso wrote in a client note. BOJ Governor Naoko Kitagawa, 55, is scheduled to speak at Jackson Hole on Saturday.

In energy markets, crude prices rose on Friday but remained on track for weekly declines. Brent crude rose \$1.42, or 1.7%, to \$84.78 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was up \$1.02, or 1.29%, at \$80.07 a barrel.

More brokerages name female leadership amid pressure for change

TOKYO (Agencies): Female presidents have been placed at the helm of Japanese brokerage firms in a series of appointments, reflecting increased momentum for gender diversity in managerial ranks in the country.

Yuko Seimei, 45, was promoted to president of major online financial service provider Monex Group, headquartered in Tokyo, in June, after Tokai Tokyo Securities in April named Naoko Kitagawa, 55, as president of the securities firm based in Nagoya.

The appointments were in line with the government's target of women accounting for at least 30% of board members at companies listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange's top-tier Prime section by 2030, which was included in a

package of measures to promote gender equality that was adopted in June.

Seimei joined Monex Group after working at a bank, and was named president of affiliated online securities firm Monex to become the first female head of a major online broker in Japan, before being promoted to lead Monex Group.

"New values will not be generated without diversity," says Seimei, as she seeks to pursue a corporate culture not constrained by gender, age or nationality.

"Employees should not be evaluated by the amount of time they spend on work," Seimei insists, emphasizing work quality and productivity. Despite facing a wider range of tasks following her promotion, she aims to add to her achievements without

increasing working hours.

Kitagawa of Tokai Tokyo Securities, who built her career in sales and marketing, held posts such as branch manager and vice president before becoming president. She says that there should be equal appointment opportunities regardless of gender.

"It's important for a corporate leader to be involved in creating an environment that makes women's voices better heard," Kitagawa said. Daiwa Securities Group, one of front-runners in promoting women, saw the share of women among its board members rise to 35.7% following a general shareholders meeting in June. "We adopt an approach that helps women take it for granted to wish for a managerial position," such as by expanding on-

the-job training for women, said an official at the office for promoting diversity and inclusion at Daiwa Securities Group.

Institutional investors are looking critically at companies without female board members. At a general shareholders meeting of Canon in March, only 50.59% of shareholders approved the reappointment of Chairman and CEO Fujio Mitarai, a result that surprised many in the industry.

OnBoard, a provider of a matching service for female executive candidates, has been receiving an increasing number of requests from listed firms, according to the company. CEO Naomi Koshi said, "Decisions made through diverse discussions at board meetings lead to innovations and enhanced corporate values."



In brief

Bahria college wins 8th Essa Lab Trophy

KARACHI (APP): Bahria College Karsaz beat their own college junior team by 36-28 points in the final of the 8th Essa Lab Girls Basketball Tournament held at International Abdul Nasir Basketball Court Aram Bagh under the auspices of Osman Club and Firdous Ittihad Basketball Club, here Saturday. The best player of the tournament was Fiza Khan, while KMA Girls College was awarded the Isa Abdullah 'Best Performance Award' for promoting the game of basketball and maintaining high discipline in the tournament, a communique said. International player and Chairman of Selection Committee of KBBA Muhammad Yaqoob was the chief guest of the final. Karachi Basketball Association President Ghulam Muhammad Khan Organizing Secretary Zaima Khatoon and others were present on this occasion. Ghulam Muhammad Khan, D.P.E of Bahria College Nusrat Afzal and D.P.E Talat Idris of KMA College were a w a r d e d C o m m i s s i o n e r Karachi Best Performance Award for their outstanding services in the promotion of sports and especially basketball. Earlier, On behalf of the winning team, Manahil Khan scored 10 points, Kanza Ali scored 8 points and Umama Bajwa scored 4 points, while Shafaq Bajwa scored 9 points, Asda Akbar scored 6 points and Fiza Khan scored six points on behalf of the runner-up team. In the final match, Haji Ashraf Yahya, Zahid Malik, Naeem Ahmed acted as referees while Aysha Zulfiqar, Hifza Khan, Minaheel Farooq and Usman Haider Khan performed the duties of technical officials.

FIFA provisionally suspends Rubiales

ZURICH (Reuters): FIFA's Disciplinary Committee has provisionally suspended Spanish soccer federation (RFEF) head Luis Rubiales for 90 days, it said on Saturday, amid uproar after he grabbed player Jenni Hermoso's head and kissed her on the lips after Spain's victory at the Women's World Cup. Rubiales had been expected to announce his resignation on Friday but instead said he would not step down, and the RFEF threatened legal action to defend him after Hermoso said she did not consent to the kiss he gave her. "The chairman of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee... has decided today to provisionally suspend Mr Luis Rubiales from all football-related activities at national and international level," FIFA said in a statement. Its disciplinary committee also ordered Rubiales and RFEF officials and employees alike to refrain from contacting or attempting to contact Hermoso or those around her. The Spanish national team that won the World Cup as well as several other players have said they would not play international matches while Rubiales remains head of the federation. "The decision adopted by the chairman of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee has been communicated today to Mr Luis Rubiales, the RFEF and (European soccer body) UEFA for due compliance." The committee said it would not provide any further information on the disciplinary proceedings until a final decision was taken.

Pakistan climb to No.1 in ODIs as Rizwan, Shadab seal 3-0 sweep

COLOMBO (Agencies): No Naseem Shah, no Haris Rauf, no problem, said Pakistan as they stitched together another splendid bowling performance to secure a clinical 59-run win over Afghanistan to sweep the ODIs 3-0. Crucially, with the win, they also zoomed to the top of the ODI rankings just ahead of the Asia Cup.

Batting first on a two-paced Colombo surface, attritional half-centuries from Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan helped them reach 268 for 8. In reply, Afghanistan never really found their bearings on a pitch that seemed to have quickened up under lights. Mujeeb Ur Rahman tried his best to briefly throw a spanner into Pakistan's works as he struck the fastest fifty by an Afghanistan batter in ODIs - off 26 balls and eventually finishing

on a 37-ball 64. But the target proved to be a bridge too far. Eventually, they were bowled out for 209 in 48.4 overs with Shadab Khan being the pick of the bowlers taking 3 for 42. Chasing 269, Afghanistan needed a strong start from their openers which they never got. It did not help that Ibrahim Zadran couldn't open, because he spent the last few minutes of the first innings off the field and hence had to serve time before walking out. Riaz Hassan and Rahmanullah Gurbaz were all at sea against the Pakistan fast bowlers, with Faheem Ashraf causing the most problems. Shaheen Shah Afridi got the ball to nip around, but his radar was off initially. Ashraf, however, was exemplary with his lines and lengths. He kept the ball in the channel outside off, back of a

length and had the batters guessing. He prised out the key scalp of Gurbaz, who missed a straight ball and was trapped in front of the stumps as he missed a flick. DRS confirmed the ball would have clipped the leg bail. Ashraf then claimed Zadran, who fell for a 11-ball duck. The two batters, who had amassed a collective 231 off 252 in the second ODI, could only muster 5 off 26 in the third. Hashmatullah Shahidi and Riaz added a brief 30-run stand for the third wicket but took 61 balls. There were plays and misses all through as the Pakistan bowlers stuck to a plan and more importantly, delivered. Riaz's chancy 66-ball 34 was ended by Shadab, who then also sent back Shahidi in the same over as Afghanistan stared down the barrel. From 60 for 2, they slipped

to 75 for 6 and then 97 for 7. At that point, it seemed another quick end was certain. But Mujeeb and Shahidullah Kamal held fort. They added 57 off 42 balls for the eighth wicket with Mujeeb doing the bulk of the damage. The only Afghan batter to show intent, he hammered five fours and five sixes during his knock which ended with him being dismissed for hit-wicket. He had his chances, took them on and frustrated the bowlers to no end. Earlier, Pakistan's was an innings of two halves. The first 30 overs yielded only 103 runs, the last 20 got them 165. At no stage did the batters look comfortable. Babar and Rizwan added 110 runs for the third wicket, but took 145 balls and had 84 dots. As it turned out, it was their innings which formed the cornerstone of

Pakistan's batting. The under-fire Fakhar Zaman was off the blocks early climbing into Fazalhaq Farooqi, slamming him for five fours in the 20 balls he faced. Imam-ul-Haq, on the other hand, struggled all through. He played back-to-back maidens off Mujeeb and in general lacked timing. Pakistan still managed to get going at a tick over four an over, with Fakhar finding his groove. But a bowling change got the hosts back into the game. Gulbadin Naib, playing his first game of the series, made an immediate impact. A couple of outswingers beat Fakhar's outstretched blade before he tried a release shot only to miscue a length ball straight up with the catch edge intercepted well by Riaz. Naib then removed Imam as well.

He came dashing down the track to a short-of-a-length ball outside off, but could only manage a thick edge with Gurbaz doing the rest. Babar and Rizwan got together in the 13th over and for the next few overs, run-scoring became a massive task. Only four fours were hit in the next 18 overs, with the run rate dropping to below 3.50. But the duo flicked a switch after drinks. Pakistan collected 85 runs between overs 31 to 40 to up the ante. Rizwan was the one to break the shackles and he reached his tenth ODI fifty off 69 balls while Babar joined him soon taking 77 balls to reach the landmark. Both batters, however, failed to post a three-figure score. While Rashid Khan induced an outside edge off Babar's blade, Rizwan fell lbw to Fareed Ahmed.



COLOMBO: Babar Azam was thrilled with Shadab Khan's exploits.

Man Utd rally to beat Forest, Arsenal held by 10-man Fulham

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester United hit back from conceding twice in the first four minutes to beat Nottingham Forest 3-2 on Saturday as Arsenal dropped points for the first time this season in a 2-2 draw with 10-man Fulham. The Gunners slip up allowed north London rivals Tottenham to remain top of the table on goal difference after they won 2-0 at Bournemouth. United were looking to kickstart their season after losing 2-0 to Tottenham last weekend, but could not have got off to a worse start at Old Trafford. Taiwo Awoniyi burst clear from a United corner to score for the seventh consecutive Premier League game after 90 seconds. There were just three minutes and 45 seconds on the clock when Willy Boly then found the net from Morgan Gibbs-White's free-kick. United escaped with a 1-0 win over Wolves in their opening game of the season despite being outplayed by the visitors to dampen expectations they could challenge for a first league

title in a decade.

But on Saturday they battled back to secure a vital three points in thrilling fashion. Cristian Eriksen started the comeback when he turned home Marcus Rashford's cross. Casemiro missed an great chance to level before the break but made amends when he fired home Bruno Fernandes' knockdown. Forest captain Joe Worrall was then sent off 23 minutes from time for bringing down Fernandes as he bore down on goal. The new United captain was criticised for his body language in defeat at Spurs, but Fernandes won the match from the penalty spot after Rashford was brought down in the area. "It wasn't the perfect start for us but we kept control, kept the ball and started doing the right things," said Fernandes. "The team showed great spirit, passion and desire. We just need to be aware that we can't concede so early." - Arsenal blow lead - Arsenal made a similarly disastrous start when Andreas Pereira pounced

on Bukayo Saka's poor pass to catch Aaron Ramsdale off his line in the first minute at the Emirates. Fulham's rearguard held out for more than 70 minutes, but their resistance was finally broken when Saka levelled from the penalty spot. Two goals in two minutes looked to have turned the game around as substitute Eddie Nketiah slotted home Fabio Vieira's inviting cross. Fulham's Calvin Bassey was then sent-off for a second bookable offence. But the 10 men salvaged a point when Joao Palhinha swept home a corner three minutes from time. - Tottenham on top - Earlier, Tottenham maintained their bright start under Ange Postecoglou as James Maddison and Dejan Kulusevski struck to see off Bournemouth. Postecoglou's men have so far shrugged off the departure of the club's all-time record goalscorer Harry Kane to Bayern Munich with new signing Maddison at the heart of most of their good work.

Army, Rangers to be deployed for Asia Cup

ISLAMABAD (PPI): In order to ensure foolproof security during the Asia Cup 2023, the federal cabinet has approved the deployment of the Pakistan Army and Punjab Rangers. The federal cabinet approved the deployment via circulation after the Punjab caretaker government had requested the deployment of the army and Rangers via summary. Sources said that army and Punjab Rangers would be deployed from August 27 to September 6. "The Punjab Rangers will be deployed in the second tier Quick Reaction Forces (QRFs), while the Pakistan Army deployment will be in third tier QRF mode," they added. This year's Asia Cup will kick off with host Pakistan taking on Nepal in the curtain raiser on August 30 in Multan. Pakistan will host a total of four matches including a Super 4s fixture. India's group stage matches including the anticipated clash against Pakistan, scheduled on September 2, will be held in Kandy while the rest of the Super 4s matches, including the final will be played in Colombo. The arch-rivals Pakistan and India will come face to face again on September 10 in Colombo if both manage to qualify for the Super 4s. Like the previous edition, the Asia Cup schedule holds a possibility of treating the cricket fans with a maximum of three Pakistan-India matches in a single tournament if both arch-rivals, in a first, simultaneously qualify for the final. The upcoming edition of the Asia Cup

Saud Shakeel added to Pakistan's squad for Asia Cup 2023

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan have made an addition to their squad for the Men's ODI Asia Cup 2023. Left-handed batter Saud Shakeel has been added to the 17-member squad. Following Saud Shakeel's inclusion in the national squad, Tayyab Tahir has been demoted to the travelling reserves. Notably, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) unveiled an 18-member squad for the three-match ODI series against Afghanistan. The 18-member squad was then supposed to be trimmed down to 17 as Saud was only picked for Afghanistan ODIs. The Babar Azam's side will arrive in Multan on Sunday, 27 August, and will rest the next day. The team management has provided relaxation to the players who participated in the Lankan Premier League. Babar, Imam-ul-Haq and Naseem Shah will travel to Lahore on Sunday and join the side on Monday evening. The players will train on

Tuesday, 29 August, at the Multan Cricket Stadium from 1630 till 1930. Before the start of the session, the Pakistan captain will hold a pre-series media conference. This year's Asia Cup will kick off with host Pakistan taking on Nepal in the curtain raiser on August 30 in Multan. Pakistan will host a total of four matches including a Super 4s fixture. India's group stage matches including the anticipated clash against Pakistan, scheduled on September 2, will be held in Kandy while the rest of the Super 4s matches, including the final will be played in Colombo. The arch-rivals Pakistan and India will come face to face again on September 10 in Colombo if both manage to qualify for the Super 4s. Like the previous edition, the Asia Cup schedule holds a possibility of treating the cricket fans with a maximum of three Pakistan-India matches in a single tournament if both arch-rivals, in a first, simultaneously qualify for the final. The upcoming edition of the Asia Cup

features six teams, divided into two groups, the top two teams from each group will then qualify for the Super 4s. The continental event will run from August 31 to September 17. Hosts Pakistan are placed in the same group as arch-rivals India and Nepal while the other group includes defending champions and co-hosts Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The Asia Cup 2023 will be played in the ODI format and will serve as an opportunity for the Asian teams to bolster their preparations for the upcoming ICC Men's World Cup. Pakistan squad: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Haris (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi and Usama Mir Traveling reserve: Tayyab Tahir.

PCB announces ticket prices for Pakistan vs South Africa Women series

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Saturday announced ticket prices for the white-ball series between Pakistan and South Africa women's cricket teams to be played at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi from September 1 to 14. Three T20Is will be played on September 1, 3 and 4, with the first ball set to be bowled at 7:30pm PST. The three ODIs, which are part of ICC Women's Championship 2022-25, will take place on September 8, 11 and 14. The ODIs will start at 3:30pm PST. Tickets will be available online on Sunday, August 27 at 1200 PST at <https://pcb.bookme.pk/>. Additionally, physical tickets will be made available to

fans on match days at the stadium's box office. Affordable prices have been fixed for the matches to encourage fans to come to the ground. Fazal Mahmood, Hanif Mohammad and Javed Miandad, all VIP enclosures will be open for spectators. Ticket prices for the first and second T20I across all three enclosures have been fixed at Rs100. For the third T20I, tickets will be available for Rs150. Likewise, the same prices have been fixed for the ODIs. Tickets for the first and second ODI will be available for Rs100, while tickets for the final match of the series on September 14, will be available for Rs150. Fans wishing to watch their cricketing stars can buy

a maximum of four tickets on one CNIC card. Tania Mallick, Head of Women Cricket said, "It gives me immense pleasure that within a span of 16 months, we are all set to host the third international women's side in Pakistan. With South Africa women's team ready to take on Pakistan from September 1, I urge fans to buy tickets and join us at the historic National Bank Stadium in Karachi. This promises to be a phenomenal six days of international cricket. "This series is not just about the matches; it's about celebrating the dedication, hard work, and remarkable talent of our players. They are eager to display their skills in front of their home fans."

'Proud' Fiji defeat England for first time to send World Cup warning

T W I C K E N H A M (Agencies): Fiji beat England for the first time with a 30-22 victory at Twickenham on Saturday as the hosts completed a woeful Rugby World Cup warm-up campaign. The Pacific islanders, 8-3 down at half-time, fully deserved their win in a match where both teams scored three tries, with this reverse meaning England head to the World Cup in France on a run of five defeats in six matches. Fiji were 12 points ahead early in the second half and although England closed to within a point, the visitors pulled clear with a try seven minutes from time by replacement Simone Kuruvoli. England desperately needed a win ahead of a tough Pool D World Cup opener against Argentina in Marseille on September 9 but instead suffered a defeat that raised fresh questions

about their defence.

Fiji, meanwhile, will be in buoyant mood in the run-up to a World Cup they begin against Wales -- the team they knocked out of the 2007 edition in France -- in Bordeaux on September 10. "I am so proud of the boys, this win is for all the people back home in Fiji," wing Selestino Ravutaumada, the player-of-the-match, told Amazon Prime. - 'Not good enough' - England captain Courtney Lawes, winning his 100th cap, admitted: "It is just not good enough, we are where we are at the minute and all we can do is push on. "We need to get our attack together, we are just turning over too many penalties and today we didn't attack well enough." England kicked-off without regular captain Owen Farrell and No 8 Billy Vanipola following

the pair's recent red cards. The experienced George Ford, playing at fly-half instead of Farrell, kicked England into an early lead with a penalty in front of a crowd of 56,854 -- a far smaller than the attendance of over 80,00 that watched world champions South Africa inflict a record 35-7 defeat upon New Zealand at Twickenham on Friday. Recalled wing Jonny May ended England's more than six-hour wait for a try by one of their backs when he fended off his opposite man before going over in the corner in the ninth minute after sharp passing by scrum-half Alex Mitchell. Ford missed the conversion but England were 8-0 ahead. As rain lashed down upon the ground, Fiji's first attack ended with Caleb Muntz kicking a penalty.



LAUDERHILL: A very lean, very mean Misbah-ul-Haq in action, California Knights vs New York Warriors, Qualifier 1, US Masters T10.



In brief

CPO visits PS Sadiqabad, New Town

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani made a surprise visit to Sadiqabad, New Town police stations here on Saturday. The CPO reviewed the police station building, front desk, records, and lock-up to ensure the provision of all possible resources to police stations. The CPO also inspected the facilities being provided to the public and directed that merit and justice must be provided to the people. Furthermore, the police chief directed the officials to make the surroundings clean. He made it clear that strict action would be taken against the officials who were found negligent in performing their duties. The CPO said it was the responsibility of the police to protect the lives and properties of the people. All available resources would be utilized to provide speedy relief to the litigants and complainants, he added. The CPO said that effective search operations and crackdowns must be carried out to prevent drug, illegal weapons and aerial firing.

Three held with arms

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Motorway Police arrested three youth with arms and ammunition over aerial firing to harass a family in Motorway Kalar Kahar Service Area on Saturday. According to details, three youth opened aerial firing to harass a family after which it contacted the Motorway Police. However, the suspect fled before the arrival of police but it chased and held the youngster besides recovery of a pistol, seven bullets and two magazines. After initial investigation the detainees were handed over to Kalar Kahar police station for further interrogation. DIG Motorway North Zone, Muhammad Yousaf Malik appreciated the in time action of the officials.

Seven die as van overturns

RAWALPINDI (PPI) Seven people were killed and five others severely injured when a passenger van veered off the road and plummeted into a ditch near Mansehra, police said Saturday. Rescue teams rushed to the scene to provide aid. The injured, in a state of distress, were initially taken to King Abdullah Hospital in Mansehra for medical assistance. Due to the seriousness of their injuries, five of these victims were later transferred to the Ayub Medical Complex for specialized care. Local authorities are urging drivers to exercise caution, especially on expressways, and are emphasising the importance of regular vehicle maintenance. The families of the victims are receiving support from the local community during this challenging time. Further investigations into the cause of the accident are underway, with preliminary reports suggesting potential mechanical failure or challenging road conditions as possible contributors.

Two criminals arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two members gang involved in street crimes and also recovered stolen goods from their possession during a crackdown in the jurisdiction of Kalar Syedan here on Saturday. Police have also recovered weapons used in the crimes. According to a police spokesman, Kalar Syedan Police held a two-member gang involved in street crime who were identified as Hanif and Taimoor. The accused have been shifted to jail for an identification parade and more revelations were expected.



ISLAMABAD: World Junior Squash Champion Muhammad Hamza Khan met the Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi at Naval Headquarters.

World Junior Squash champion Hamza Khan meets Naval Chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Junior Squash Champion Muhammad Hamza Khan met the Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi at Naval Headquarters, here Saturday. Hamza recently won the World Junior (U-19) Squash Championship held at Melbourne, Australia. It is after 36 years when any Pakistani squash player has secured such a remarkable triumph and brought a moment of pride for the

entire country.

During the meeting, Chief of the Naval Staff congratulated the young champion for winning the title and bringing laurels for the country. Naval Chief appreciated the efforts of Hamza and encouraged him to participate in future Squash events with full dedication and commitment.

In recognition of his meritorious achievement, Naval Chief awarded the Champion with a cash prize of Rs 0.5 million and life-

time gratis membership of Pakistan Navy Roshan Khan Jahangir Khan Squash Complex at Karachi.

Hamza Khan expressed his gratitude to Chief of the Naval Staff and Pakistan Navy for unwavering contributions towards the promotion of Squash in the country.

He said, "Regular organizing of CNS Open National and International Squash Championships is a testament of PN's commitment towards this sports."

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WASA directed to remain alert to avoid urban flooding

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi has directed the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi to remain alert to cope with urban flooding, particularly in low-lying areas near Nullah Lai.

According to a WASA spokesman, Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on Law and Parliamentary Affairs Kanwar Muhammad Dilshad during a visit on Saturday inspect-

ed the heavy machinery of WASA at Liaquat Bagh Office.

The Advisor also visited Nullah Lai and checked the ongoing cleanliness operation being conducted to clear Nullah Lai. He expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made for the upcoming rain spell.

He appreciated all the arrangements of the agency to avoid urban flooding in the city during the Monsoon.

that due to the best possible arrangements made before the start of Monsoon rains, this year, there was no emergency and the situation remained under control, particularly during heavy rains.

Managing Director, WASA Muhammad Tanveer informed that all the obstacles in the flow of water developed due to the last heavy rain spell were being removed utilizing heavy machinery.

23 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police apprehended 23 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police have intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directives, the Karachi Company police team arrested an accused namely Akash Masih and recovered 80 liters liquor from his possession. The Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely Haroon Zaheer and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession.

Likewise, the Tarnol police team arrested three accused namely Abdul Qadeem, Aksaar, and Altaf and recovered 955 gram

heroin and one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from their possession. The Sangjani police team arrested two accused namely Idrees and Iftikhar and recovered 210 gram heroin and one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from their possession.

Similarly, the Noon police team arrested an accused namely Bilal and recovered one revolver from his possession, while the police team also arrested an accused namely Ahmed Umer involved in illegally refilling gas cylinders. The Khanna police team arrested an accused namely Usman Ilyas and recovered 1200 gram hashish and 120 gram Ice from his possession.

Moreover, the Lohi Bher police team arrested four accused namely Khayal Muhammad, Waheed Ullah, Taj and Aman and recovered four 30 bore pistols from their possession. The Bhara Kahu police team arrested two accused namely Muhammad Asif

and Sadaqat and recovered one dagger and 505 gram hashish from their possession. The Bani Gala police team arrested two accused namely Asad Ullah and Muhammad Sheraz involved in illegally selling petrol and gas refilling.

Furthermore, the Nilore police team arrested two accused namely Shahbaz and Mehmoos Sultan and recovered one 30 bore pistol from their possession, while the police team also arrested an accused involved in illegally selling petrol.

The Shahzad Town police team arrested two accused namely Hamid Shah and Zulqurnain and recovered 40 liters liquor and four bottles from their possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is under way.

ICCPPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan directed all senior officials for an effective crackdown against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons.

Dengue tally reaches 137 cases in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): The total tally of dengue in Rawalpindi had reached 137 cases with the arrival of six more patients during the last 24 hours.

Chief Executive Officer of District Health Authority Dr Ijaz Ahmad said that two of each patient had arrived from the Potohar town, Rawalpindi Cantonment and Municipal Corporation areas.

He informed that 120 patients had been discharged after recovery while 17 confirmed patients were admitted to the district's health facilities. During the last 24 hours, Dr Ijaz said that the district administration had registered 71 FIRs, issued tickets to 13 premises, sealed 15 and imposed a fine of Rs 257,000 against the violations of dengue SOPs, he told.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Hasan Waqar Cheema called upon the residents to keep an eye on junkyards, schools and under-construction buildings and remove water after rain to prevent the spread of dengue larvae breeding.

He said that special attention was being given to high-risk Union Councils and a comprehensive micro plan had been devised as per SOPs to eliminate larvae.

The DC said that staff deployed for the anti-dengue drive had been told that no negligence would be tolerated.

TV actress Khalida Riyasat remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Veteran television actress Khalida Riyasat's 28th death anniversary was observed on Saturday, she died on August 26, 1996.

Along with Roohi Bano and Uzma Gillani, she dominated television screens during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, according to a news release.

Her pairing with Moin Akhtar was trendy in dramas. Both Rohi Bano and Khalida Riyasat saw the rise of their lives. Khalida Riyasat was born in 1953 in Karachi.

She was quiet and serious. At that time, she preferred serious acting in most of the dramas.

She married Sarmad Sehbai, a well-known director, producer, and playwright in Lahore.

No solution to economic woes sans political stability: Sheikh Rashid

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said on Saturday that there was no solution to economic woes without political stability in the country.

Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rashid said in a statement on the social media website X that country was going to face a serious constitutional and legal crisis. He said the economic hardships had started dominat-

ing the political problems. Rashid said when the elections would be held or on whose order these would be held was a secondary issue and electricity bills and high petrol tariff was the main issue for the public now.

The senior politician said for the first time sugar and flour were selling at the same price of Rs 170 per kg in the country. The poor would buy flour, pay electricity bills, house rent or fees of the children. All this could

not be done in one salary, he said.

Rashid said actually these were the people who were making Pakistan a state and they had come under serious economic and political stress.

Supporting a family and running the affairs of the house was now main problem of a poor man and no one was paying heed to this issue, said Rashid. It was government's first and foremost responsibility to solve issues of a poor man, he said.

6800 prisoners housed in Central Jail Rawalpindi: SAPM Mushaal

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Mushaal Hussein Malik, special assistant to the caretaker prime minister (SAPM) Saturday said that she would talk to the Prime Minister after getting the details of the innocent people imprisoned in the jail.

Talking to media persons after having a visit of Adiala Jail Rawalpindi, she said that a complaint cell has been established in the jail for the inmates where they can apply for justice.

Mushaal Hussein Malik, the wife of Kashmiri leader and freedom fighter Yasin Malik said that more people are imprisoned from the capacity of the jail because of the non-construction of

the jail in Islamabad.

She said that 6800 prisoners are currently housed in the Central Jail Rawalpindi.

"Prisoners are also human beings and it is the responsibility of the prison authorities to provide them with hygienic food and potable water, she added.

Mushaal said that Yaseen Malik has been behind bars for the last four and a half years and he was once taken out of jail when he was to be sentenced.

The SAPM vowed that she would now make a surprise visit to the jails in order to take firsthand information about the inmates. "I myself am a

victim of human rights violations," she hinted.

She told the media that she has devoted her whole life to the freedom of Kashmir. "Every inhabitant of Kashmir is a prisoner," she maintained.

He said that Amnesty International raised the issue of human rights violations in India in the letter adding it has been four and a half years since she has spoken to Yasin Malik.

Ms Malik said that forty thousand places of worship were targeted in India and attacks against minorities in India was supported by the state and the situation of human rights in India was worst.



ISLAMABAD: Skilled laborer busy in work to enhance the beauty of underpass wall at 7th Avenue during development work in Federal Capital. —APP Photo

PIMS new emergency block to be expanded

ISLAMABAD (APP): The management of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has decided to expand the new emergency block project of the hospital with the addition of one more floor to ensure the provision of the best emergency services to the citizens.

According to an official of the hospital, the decision was made on the direction of the Planning Commission of Pakistan as with this new plan, 75 additional beds will be added to

the project.

He said that after the approval from the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, the documents of the projects had been sent to the Planning Commission for allocation of funds.

He said that with the addition of 75 beds, the total number of beds would be 239 in the new emergency block of the hospital with state-of-the-art facilities including a laboratory,

operation theatre and x-ray.

He said that the new Emergency Block project would be completed next year. The project will be helpful in providing quality emergency services to patients of not only Islamabad but also from surrounding areas, he said and added the Executive Director PIMS has already directed the hospital administration to provide standard medical services to incoming patients by removing all hurdles.

IHRA continues operation against illegal HCEs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) has sealed six Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in different areas of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

The IHRA inspection teams carried out inspections of 47 Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in different areas of the Islamabad Capital Territory during the past two weeks.

Quest Medical Complex, Zia Dental Clinic, Abbas Clinic, First Aid Medical Center, Sana Clinic and Subhan Clinic

were sealed due to malpractices like the absence of qualified medical staff, unhygienic conditions and absence of a proper waste management system and non-registration with the IHRA.

The Authority suspended the services of two Healthcare Establishments over different medical non-compliance. Hassan Dental Cosmetic and Quality Labs were suspended while 27 Healthcare Establishments were served notices for minor non-compliance and instructed their manage-

ments to comply with the directions given by the inspections team.

Eight HCEs were found closed upon arrival of inspection teams while four Healthcare Establishments were recommended for registration and revocation of suspension. The IHRA inspection teams also visited the Blood Bank of KRL Hospital and Islamabad Medical Complex (Nescom) and instructed their managements to comply with the directions given by the inspection teams for improvements.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors viewing Zebra while visiting Zoo in the Federal capital. —INP Photo

31 military vehicles repaired

KABUL (Agencies): The technical team of the Ministry of Defense has repaired and reactivated 31 military vehicles that had been damaged during past conflicts. According to a Defense Ministry statement, a total of 31 different types of military vehicles were repaired and made ready for deployment, thanks to the ministry's technical team's hard work. The repaired vehicles include 22 Humvee tanks, 5 International vehicles, and 4 Ranger pickups.

Jihadi hubs to be remembered

KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Minister of Information and Culture in Publication Affairs, Hayatullah Mohajer Farahi said that the ministry is working to write the history of major jihadi centers including Tora Bora, and present it to the future generation of the country. Mohajer Farahi, during his trip to Nangarhar province where he visited the Jihadi center of Tore Bora, said Tore Bora is historically a tourist site with natural beauty and high mountains.

China interested in Afghanistan car manufacturing investment

KABUL (Khaama Press): Chinese investors are keen on investing in Afghanistan's car manufacturing and electric car battery production, as stated by the Afghanistan Industrialists Association (AIA). Participating in a global exhibition in China, AIA officials said that Chinese investors' interest in Afghan car manufacturing and electric vehicle battery production is substantial. As reported by association officials, Chinese investors express readiness to invest in Afghanistan's car and electric vehicle battery production if banking challenges between the two countries are resolved. "The officials of the automobile company said that if the banking problems between China and Afghanistan are resolved, they will soon open their representative office in Afghanistan and start their production and sales in this country," according to Abdul Jabbar Safi, head of AIA. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce highlights Afghanistan's strong investment potential. Foreign investors are encouraged to explore opportunities in a favourable business environment. According to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, efforts are undertaken to facilitate domestic and foreign investment, aiming for robust economic growth and expanded investment-driven development. It highlights ongoing initiatives to enhance the investment landscape, signalling the Ministry's commitment to fostering a conducive environment that spurs economic activities and sustains growth. "We have created facilities for all domestic and foreign investors in the investment sector, and we are trying to expand this process for the development of investment and economic activities," said Abdulsalam Javad Akhundzada, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce spokesman.

Turkish businessmen coming to Afghanistan to consider investment



KABUL (TOLONews): The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment said that some Turkish investors will travel to Afghanistan in the near future. Mohammad Yonis Momand, the chamber's acting head, said that Turkey is interested in investing in road construction, energy, industry, and agriculture sectors in Afghanistan. "In the next few months, he will travel to Afghanistan and meet closely with the Afghan officials, and presentations will be made by the ministries about the opportunities in Afghanistan, and then a presentation will be made by the Deputy PM for Economic Affairs office," said Mohammad Yonis Momand. According to Momand, an exhibition will be held in Turkey with the participation of Afghan businessmen on September 18 this year. Meanwhile, some economists said that when the banking restrictions on transferring money abroad are removed, investments will actually start in the country. "Many national investors are currently facing problems in monetary transactions with the countries of the region, their large amount of money is blocked in the banks, and they cannot use it....," said Ahmad Hamid Ahmadi, an economist. Meantime, a member of the Board of Directors of the ACCI said that for the progress of commerce between Afghanistan and Turkey, it is necessary to establish a joint commerce chamber and start flights through the air corridors between the two countries. "Joint commerce chamber creates ease in trade relations and in transit facilities between Turkey and Afghanistan, but it also increases trade and attracts investment," said Khanjan Alokozai, a member of the Board of Directors of the ACCI. Based on the Ministry of Industry and Commerce statistics, in the first four months of 1402, the amount of trade between Afghanistan and Turkey reached \$28 million, of which only 5 million dollars were obtained from exports.

Traffic accident kills one, injures two in Kapisa

KAPISA (Khaama Press): At least one person was killed, and two others were injured in a road crash in Kapisa, Eastern Province of Afghanistan, according to a provincial statement on Saturday. The statement said that the incident occurred on late Friday, resulted in the death of one person and injured two others. The statement added that the incident occurred in the Nijrab district of Kapisa province on late Friday, killing one person on the spot and injuring two others. The initial investigation determined that the deadly crash was primarily caused by over-speeding. The statement also mentioned that the injured individuals undergo treatment at a local hospital. Recently, there has been a surge in the number of road accidents in the country due to several factors, including reckless driving. On Thursday, two traffic accidents claimed the lives of five people and left nine others injured in Samangan province. The traffic accident in the country can be attributed to several factors. Congested highways, reckless driving, aged vehicles, and a lack of attention to traffic rules and regulations all played a role. Additionally, the state of dilapidated roads and high speeds also contributed to the occurrence of these accidents. A combination of these issues has created a concerning situation on the roads, highlighting the need for comprehensive measures to improve road safety and reduce the frequency of accidents.

ICRC treats over 580,000 patients in Afghanistan



KABUL (Khaama Press): During the initial half of 2023, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported providing health care to 581,548 patients, mainly women and children, across 47 health facilities managed by the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) in collaboration with the ICRC. In a recently released report, the group highlighted its contribution to 33 hospitals, which collectively held a capacity of 7,057 beds and served a population of 26 million individuals. The support extended to these healthcare facilities encompassed two vital aspects. Firstly, salaries for approximately 10,900 health workers were covered, ensuring their continued commitment to patient care. Secondly, the group shouldered the operational expenses of these hospitals, ensuring their seamless functioning and accessibility to the communities they served. The report highlighted that 102,226 patients received assistance in 7 ICRC-supported physical rehabilitation centres. Additionally, the ICRC provided monthly food rations to cover three daily meals to around 12,000 detainees incarcerated in 11 prisons throughout the country. The group reported the successful resolution of 87 missing people's cases, locating their whereabouts. Additionally, the ICRC emphasized the pressing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, where over 55 per cent of the population requires aid, further exacerbated by "economic sanctions are intensifying an already dire circumstance."

Deputy PM urges local authorities to serve people

KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, in a meeting with several local officials from different provinces, called for continued efforts of authorities to serve the people and address their challenges. According to a statement released by his office, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Salam Hanafi during a meeting with local officials, scholars, and influential people from different provinces in Kabul, said that the Islamic Emirate has been re-established in the country as a result of the sacrifices and efforts of the people, who now deserve to be supported and their problems resolved. Deputy Prime Minister added that they are trying to implement new development projects, including the construction of water dams and educational centers in all provinces of the country, as well as create job opportunities. Provincial officials said that they make every effort to provide services and respond to the problems of the people, and called on the leaders of the Islamic Emirate to accelerate actions for implementation of development projects in underdeveloped regions of the country.

Victims of air strikes request help

URUZGAN (TOLONews): Families of the victims of air strikes by foreign forces in Uruzgan are demanding support and cooperation from the current government. Abdul Ali, a resident of Uruzgan, said that in 2007, 10 members of his family, including women and children, died and 4 others were injured in an air attack of foreign forces. "The air strikes started at 8:00 AM and by 9:00 AM everyone was martyred. 10 people from my family died and 4 others were injured," said Abdul Ali. Some residents of the Khas Uruzgan district said that a number of family members lost their lives due to the air strikes of foreign forces, and they are asking for help from the current government. "In the attack, they martyred 5 people, and a child was martyred in his mother's hands," said Shah Wali, a resident of the district. "These people are very tired of the war, there was a war for the last 20 years, especially in Uruzgan, and now you can see that in the village there is no water here," said Ehsanullah, a member of the victims' family. Meanwhile, the acting ministry of the interior ministry pledged that efforts are being made to help the families of victims of attacks by foreign forces in the last 20 years in Uruzgan.

30-member trade team from Uzbekistan arrives in Kabul



KABUL (Agencies): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Afghanistan has announced that a 30-member trade delegation from Uzbekistan arrived in Kabul on Saturday. The ministry said in a statement the delegation is led by Nazem Jan Khalmuradov, the first deputy minister of trade of Uzbekistan. While welcoming the delegation at Kabul Airport, Qudrat Jamal, deputy trade minister of Afghanistan, said the visit is valuable for strengthening trade relations between the two countries. According to the statement, Uzbekistan has expressed its interest in cooperation in the fields of electricity, technology and foodstuffs, and these issues will be discussed during Uzbekistan delegation's two-day visit.

Disengaging with IEA will create vacuum in Afghanistan: Qatar PM

KABUL (Agencies): Disengaging with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) will create a bigger chaos and will create a vacuum in the country which unfortunately we are having it from time to time," Al-Thani said speaking at a lecture in Singapore. He said that Qatar has encouraging all the parties to continue engaging with IEA. The prime minister regretted that there was an absence of a clear roadmap for the way forward for Afghanistan following the withdrawal of foreign forces. He suggested that the international community should have come together at that time at the early stage and tried to engage in a constructive dialogue. "We will not be able to progress as long as our efforts just fragmented by trying to identify and address some tactical issues over the strategic issues that Afghanistan unfortunately will see it suffer from in the near future whether it is economic, social, and we are seeing this throughout the last two years," Al-Thani said.

WHO: 32 positive environmental samples of polio so far this year

KABUL (Agencies): There have been 32 positive environmental samples of polio found so far this year in Afghanistan, the World Health Organization said. WHO said in a statement there have been five new wild poliovirus cases reported in Afghanistan, all from Nangarhar province. However, there have been 32 positive environmental samples to date in 2023, all in the eastern region, except for one site in Kandahar in the southern region and one from Balkh in the north. "Although the number of positive samples in Afghanistan has increased in 2023 compared to the year 2022, this was in part due to more intensive surveillance in the country, with more sites being sampled and increased frequency of testing," the statement said. It said that a recent environmental detection in Kandahar in the southern region is a public health emergency with a significant risk of a large outbreak because house-to-house campaigns in the south have not been authorized. "Any setback in Afghanistan poses a risk to the programme in Pakistan due to high population movement," it warned. According to the statement, there have been two cases of polio in Pakistan in 2023, both occurring in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. There have been 15 environmental surveillance positive samples in 2023 in Pakistan.



Nimroz youth want industrial development and jobs creation

ZARANJ (Pajhwok): Some youth in southwestern Nimroz province have complained against unemployment and demanded the creation of factories in the province. They said due to the lack of industry, unemployment had surged in the province and daily tens of youth go to Iran and other countries illegally. Ahmad Wasai Noorzai, the resident of Zaranj City, told Pajhwok Afghan News he went to Iran three times until now but after six months he was sent back. He has the responsibility to look after and support eight member-family and daily go to the city for work but during the entire day he is just able to get work for three days. He said: "In Herat, Kandahar and Badakhshan industrial parks existed and hundreds of youth are working in a factory but unfortunately businessmen and industrialist never think about the establishment of industry in Nimroz province." He hoped that acting government would take steps towards industrializing Nimroz province. Shakaiab Sarwari, another Nimroz Youth, also complained against unemployment and said: "One or two weeks in a month we find work, I hope to find work in a factory permanently with a fixed salary." He called on industrialists and investors to establish factories in Nimroz instead of investing in foreign countries. He believed establishment of factories in the country would help generate jobs and prevent the import of below the standard items. Economic Affairs Expert Sakhi Shahbazi has stressed over the creation of factories and termed it vital for job generations and addressing economic problems faced by the people. He said Nimroz has the capacity and opportunities for investment, adding the province had the status of economic connectivity and linked Afghanistan with water as well. He added: "On the part of the previous government, measures were taken to attract investment, including the allocation of land for an industrial town, the construction of Zaranj Delaram road, the development of Zaranj port, the construction of 60-meter road, the development of infrastructure in Nimroz customs, the construction of Zaranj airport, the signing of contracts with the countries of Iran and India in the development of Chabahar commercial port in Iran and the allocation of land for Afghan businessmen and investors, etc." Referring to investment and business opportunities he said after political change in the country investors fled the country and got their investment out of the country. But Ishaq Joya, deputy head of the Industrial Park and in charge of trade affairs at Chamber of Commerce, said 27 factories were functional in Nimroz province that produce drinking water, electric equipment, cooking oil, oxygen and ice. He said each factory hired up to 25 persons considering their production and this employment percentage was little comparing to the average unemployment in the province. He liked the lack of factories in the province with the non-availability of industrial Park and unfriendly weather of the province. Najibullah Khashrudi, operation-in-charge of the Chamber of Commerce, said the number of factories in the province were limited which included small flour mill, shampoo production, oxygen and others. "There is no ease for businessmen to establish a factory, for example, in Iran they give free electricity for ten years to establish a factory in order to encourage businessmen to establish a factory, but in Afghanistan, our electricity is imported and it costs money for the investor," he said. He said currently 27 factories were functional in the province in which around 300 people are working.



KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi planting a Mango sapling at Mazar-e-Quaid.

Imran wanted to bring revolution against Army: Khattak

PESHAWAR (Agencies): In his latest salvo against his former political boss — Imran Khan — Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTI-P) chief Pervez Khattak on Saturday accused Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman of hatching a conspiracy to bring about a “revolution” against the Pakistan Army.

PTI-P Chairman Khattak made the remarks during an interaction with the journalists. The newly-formed political party’s vice chairman and KP former chief minister Mahmood Khan was also present during the interaction. Berating his former boss, Khattak — who launched his new political party last month — claimed that Khan was against the 18th Amendment.

It is pertinent to mention here that the PTI, on July 12, terminated the

basic party membership of Khattak after he failed to respond to a “show cause notice” issued to him. The notice was served on him for asking workers to quit the PTI. A few days later he launched the PTI-P. “Azam Khan [former principal secretary] ran the government and the rest used to help him,” revealed the ex-defence minister.

Refereeing to May 9 riots and attacks on the military in stations, Khattak said, “PTI may be banned.” The May 9 riots were triggered across the country after the deposed prime minister’s arrest in the £190 million settlement case. Hundreds of PTI workers and senior leaders were put behind bars for their involvement in violence and attacks on military installations.

During the protests, the miscre-

ants targeted the civil and military installations including — Jinnah House and the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. The military termed May 9 “Black Day” and decided to try the protesters under the Army Act. Responding to a question, Khattak said that the establishment had created an environment for elections but Khan did not agree to it.

Contrary to Khan’s allegations against the former chief of army staff (COAS) Gen (ret’d) Qamar Javed Bajwa, the ex-defence minister said, “Gen Bajwa supported us [PTI] a lot.” The former army chief, however, excused himself from further support as the Khan-led had failed to deliver, he added. To another query, the PTI-P chief said, “I see elections in February, 2024.”

ECP summons Sindh and Balochistan officials

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has summoned officials from Sindh and Balochistan for consultation on forthcoming general elections.

According to details, the electoral watchdog has summoned inspector-generals of police (IGPs) and chief secretaries of Sindh and Balochistan on August 29 (Tuesday).

Meanwhile, the ECP also summoned election commissioners of both the provinces for consultation on general elections. The Sindh election commissioner will apprise the electoral body about the election preparations.

Moreover, Sindh Chief Secretary will brief the officials about the appointment and transfer of officers. Sindh inspector general will inform about the law and order situation and security arrangements. Earlier, it was reported that the ECP decided to hold general elections in the second week of February 2024.

S Arabia announces new work visa

RIYADH (Agencies): Amidst the rapid development phase, Saudi Arabia has launched a new Temporary Work Visa as the demand for skilled short-term workers in the kingdom continues to grow.

The new Temporary Work Visa aimed at streamlining and expediting the process of bringing in short-term labor. This marks a departure from the previous Work Visit Visa, which was primarily limited to technical and specific roles, such as engineering, often used in the oil industry’s rotational workforce in the eastern province. According to Sara Khoja, an attorney with Clyde & Co in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the new visa is a game-changer as it opens doors to a much wider range of individuals.

Working visas in the kingdom have predominantly been restricted to male workers or older female workers, usually above the age of 40. However, the introduction of the new Temporary Work Visa brings simplification to the invitation procedures, making it more accessible and flexible for a broader demographic of workers. Compared with the previous visa, the Temporary Work Visa is much easier for foreign workers to acquire. “You need someone in Saudi Arabia who actually invites you; they will be sponsoring the visa,” Köllisch said. “So that entity should have a commercial register with-in Saudi Arabia, that must be a Saudi commercial or Saudi entity, either a single merchant in Saudi Arabia, a branch of a company or an independent company itself; it should be distinct.”

“It’s not something that an individual could apply for or obtain by themselves,” Khoja said. “It has to [come from] a Saudi company, well-established, registered with all the relevant authorities, registered with the Ministry of HR. And it would apply through an electronic platform for this business of bringing an individual in on a temporary basis.”

Dengue goes out of control

LAHORE (INP): The spread of the dengue mosquito has gone out of control throughout Punjab, including Lahore. During the last 24 hours, 42 patients of dengue fever have been reported from across Punjab.

This year, the number of dengue patients in Punjab has increased to 888, according to the health department. It further said that Friday, 22 patients of dengue fever were reported in Lahore. This has increased the number of patients of the fever in Lahore just this year to 304.

The health department further said that during the last 24 hours, seven dengue patients were reported in Rawalpindi, three each in Multan and Gujranwala and two cases each in Attock and Gujrat. The department further said that currently, 40 dengue fever patients are under treatment in hospitals across Punjab. Out of these, 21 are admitted to hospitals in Lahore.

Pakistan Army’s sacrifices keeping the world safe: UK

ISLAMABAD (INP): British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott praised the sacrifices made by the Pakistan Army in the war against terrorism and asserted that the high price paid by the armed forces was not only to maintain peace in the country but to keep the world safe.

The British envoy’s resolve came during a special interview with a private TV news channel on Saturday wherein she stated that Pakistan is on the frontlines in the war against terrorism and her country’s most important ally.

“My condolences to the families of those who sacrificed their lives in the war against terrorism,” Marriott said. The envoy said that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other terrorist organisations, including the Haqqani Group, continued to operate in Afghan territory which was a matter of concern.

“Taliban should take action against them. If they are not stopped from terrorist activities, they are a threat not only to Pakistan but to the entire world, as everyone saw on 9/11,” she said. She further added that the war between Ukraine and Russia was the most watched on UK TV channels but that didn’t mean “we’ve forgotten about Afghanistan. The eyes of the world are still on the

problem and situation of Afghanistan. Britain is working on how to negotiate with the Taliban government in Afghanistan.”

“In Doha, all parties participated in dialogue with the Taliban. There is concern over the humanitarian situation in half of Afghanistan, particularly the lack of rights for girls and women, for which we will continue to negotiate with the Taliban government,” she explained. “We are told that the security situation in Afghanistan has improved with the arrival of Taliban, so this is because the Taliban used to attack the Afghan security forces and people, which worsened the security situation. However, the important development is that during the rule of the Taliban, there has been a huge reduction in the cultivation of heroin, which was destroying the lives of young people around the world. Their efforts should be recognised.”

Furthermore, on the rehabilitation of Ukraine, Marriott said that construction companies in Pakistan could play an important role in the reconstruction of the war-stricken country and it would be fully supported. “There is a large number of skilled labour in Pakistan who can work there for the reconstruction

of Ukraine. Russia attacked Ukraine a year and a half ago. Everyone has seen the horrific pictures of Russia’s bombing of Ukraine and the treatment of prisoners of war. Russia is a bad country that attacked its small neighbour. The West will continue to support Ukraine as an independent country. Ukraine never thought of attacking Russia. The war started when Russia attacked Ukraine,” she added.

Moreover, in response to a question, Marriott said that climate change could not be ignored. “Pakistan’s position regarding climate change is very critical which is evidenced by the floods. Britain has seen the industrial revolution, so it has to work with the world to minimise the damage caused by climate change. Dealing with climate change requires money all over the world. In this regard, the UK will fully support Pakistan in international climate financing through private investors,” she said.

The envoy added that the current volume of trade between Pakistan and Great Britain was 4.4 billion pounds (£1.672 billion), which was a huge amount. “Pakistan and the UK understand each other’s needs, which makes us good trading partners,” Marriott concluded.

Palestinian dies during Israeli raid in West Bank

WEST BANK (Agencies): The Palestinian news agency has reported that a 20-year-old has died of wounds a month after being shot during an Israeli army raid in the occupied West Bank. The Wafa news agency said on Saturday that Ezzedin Kanan, from the town of Jaba near Jenin, was shot in the head on July 3 during one of the most intense Israeli military operations in the occupied West Bank since an armed Palestinian uprising against Israel’s open-ended occupation ended two decades ago.

An offshoot of the secular nationalist Fatah party, the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, claimed Kanan as one of its “fiercest fighters” and pledged to avenge his loss. Armed and masked fighters flanked the mourning procession for Kanan as his body, wrapped in a Palestinian flag and adorned with a headband from the group, was carried through his home village of Jaba.

Kanan’s death brings the total to 14 people killed in the raid, which lasted two days and included air attacks, hundreds of ground troops and bulldozers that were used to raze roads and buildings. The army claimed to have inflicted heavy damage on fighter groups in the Jenin refugee camp and that it had confiscated thousands of weapons, bomb-making materials and caches of money during the raid.

Since early 2022, Israel has been carrying out near-daily raids in the West Bank in response to a series of Palestinian attacks. It says the raids are meant to crack down on Palestinian fighters and said they are necessary because the Palestinian Authority is too weak. The continuing violence in the West Bank has surged with more than 170 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire since the start of 2023, according to a tally by The Associated Press.

Palestinians say such violence is the inevitable result of 56 years of illegal occupation and the absence of any political process with Israel. They also point to increased illegal settlement construction in the West Bank and violence by settlers. The United Nations Middle East envoy told the UN Security Council on Tuesday that the upswing in violence is being fuelled

by growing despair about the future, with the Palestinians still seeking an independent state. “The lack of progress towards a political horizon that addressed the core issues driving the conflict has left a dangerous and volatile vacuum, filled by extremists on all sides,” Tor Wennesland said.

Palestinian daily newspapers also highlighted confrontations in occupied East Jerusalem during the week including an attack on Muslim worshippers on their way to attend Friday prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque as well as the suppression of a weekly protest in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood.

Israel captured the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza, in 1967. Since then, it has built settlements housing hundreds of thousands of Israelis on the occupied lands, which Palestinians seek as part of their future state. International law explicitly prohibits occupying powers from transferring their civilian population into occupied territories. A UN expert has previously called Israeli settlements a “war crime”.

Caretaker govt to focus

(Continued from Page 1)

Balochistan province, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release issued here. The meeting was attended by Caretaker Ministers Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Shahid Ashraf Tarrar, Sami Saeed, Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mardan Khan Domki and the senior civil and military officials.

During the meeting, the prime minister also stressed upon further improvement of legislative framework with regard to strengthening of the state response on security matters. He also reiterated that people would be provided with the financial and economic opportunities at the federal and provincial levels, adding for the effective utilization of resources, the formulation of latest and innovative strategy was indispensable. The prime minister also lauded role of the provincial government and the law enforcement agencies for maintaining law and order situation in the province.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired a meeting to review the pace of progress on the irrigation and water supply projects of Balochistan. During the meeting, he said despite the economic difficulties of the country, all assistance would be provided for the completion of these projects. The meeting was briefed on ongoing projects of irrigation in Balochistan including the Kachhi Canal, Pat Feeder Canal, Awaran Dam, Gashkor Dam and Winder Dam.

The prime minister said Balochistan had huge potential for agriculture but complete advantage was not taken from it. He said issues related to the provision of clean drinking water should be resolved on a priority basis. He said inter-provincial concerns regarding irrigation would be removed so that the country could make progress speedily and the federation could get strong.

He directed the relevant authorities to complete the projects in the stipulated time. The caretaker federal ministers Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Shahid Ashraf Tarrar, Sami Saeed, Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Ali Mardan Domki, and provincial ministers and officials attended the meeting.

PM for creation of job opportunities in Balochistan: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar underlined the need for the creation of jobs and livelihood opportunities in Balochistan through an effective strategy.

He directed for keeping a balance in the budget and expenditures through a better mechanism in the future and stressed upon proper

utilization of resources. The prime minister chaired a meeting to review the development projects in Balochistan, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by the caretaker chief minister, ministers and the relevant authorities. During the meeting, the prime minister observed that the province had immense potential in minerals mining which could be utilized for the development of the country’s economy.

Mineral resources in the province could be fully tapped in the presence of effective communication infrastructure in those mineral-rich areas, he opined. The chief secretary briefed the prime minister on the proposed and ongoing uplift projects in the province.

The Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar also directed the National Highway Authority (NHA) to complete the reconstruction of the Pinjra bridge as soon as possible so that citizens travelling from Quetta to Jacobabad could be facilitated.



In a post on his X handle, he said work on the reconstruction of the Pinjra bridge was continuing at a fast pace. In another positive development, he said an alternative concrete bridge was completed from which heavy traffic was passing.

Facilitator of blast killed

PESHAWAR (APP): A facilitator involved in the Ali Masjid blast in Tehsil Jamrud, Khyber District was killed in an operation of Counter Terrorism Department against facilitators involved in Ali Masjid suicide blast.

During the operation, Ali Masjid’s suicide bomber facilitator was killed while another one wounded terrorist escaped in the encounter for which search is on for his arrest, an official of the CTD told media men here on Saturday. The CTD team was on its

way to recover more explosives from Abu Zar, identified as the facilitator, CTD spokesman said. Three terrorists were already present who attacked the CTD team soon after the arrival at the information place, the official said.



Undergraduate Semester Exchange Program for Pakistan

The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) is pleased to announce the 2024 Undergraduate Semester Exchange Program for Pakistan.

The program is intended to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of Pakistan. It provides full-time undergraduate students from Pakistan the opportunity to enrich their education and experience through one semester of full-time, non-degree academic study in the United States. The program will also expose students to the principles of social responsibility in the United States through a community service component.

Eligibility Criteria

- Pakistani citizens
- Younger than 25 years
- Currently enrolled in a college or university in Pakistan and committed to returning to their home university following the completion of the program
- In their 14th or 15th year of formal education
- Applicants are required to submit current/most recent, and old transcripts with application

Ineligibility

- Dual U.S./Pakistani nationals or U.S. permanent residents
- Employees of the Fulbright organization, the U.S. Department of State, or USAID and their spouses, children, dependents, and parents
- Students in their first or final year of university

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

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

Grant Benefits

- Round-trip airfare
- Tuition and fees
- Housing and meals
- A limited allowance for books
- Accident and sickness coverage
- Monthly maintenance allowance

Application Deadline:
**Wednesday,
September 27, 2023**

Please Note

Applications must be submitted online. Paper copies will not be considered. All application materials (including degrees, transcripts, certificates) must be uploaded with the online application. Reference letters will only be required from the selected candidates.

To Apply

For application and other details, visit www.usefp.org

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