

CM mourns journalist
PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan on Sunday expressed his deep grief and sorrow over the death of Senior Journalist Samin Jan. In a condolence message the Chief Minister prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and expressed sympathies with the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude.

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G20 asked to focus on ending HR abuses — demands to press India to settle Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick has urged the G20 countries to use the opportunity to force the worst human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and ensure a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute.

Mushaal, the wife of incarcerated Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik, in a statement on Sunday pressed the G20 member countries, including US, UK, EU, China, France, Russia, Canada, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Türkiye to play their proactive role to resolve the Kashmir dispute because regional peace could not possible without settlement of the issue.

She stressed that the international community should look at the ongoing human rights violations and massacres of innocent people instead of looking at their trade interests with India.

Mushaal demanded that the G-20 countries should make all political and social relations with India subject to the end of ongoing human rights violations in the occupied valley.

“Let’s say you had no G-20 statement, headlines would say G-20 is finished. G-20 could be replaced by blocs like BRICS and G-7. So in a way by having a statement we keep the platform and the organisation alive,” she said.

The SAPM said the Indian fascist government crossed all limits of barbarism and state terrorism and the world powers were well-aware of the fact that the occupied valley was turned into a largest open prisoner and torture cell.

She said many of the political figures, human rights defenders and journalists, including Yasim Malik, the Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), prominent political figures Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Farooq Dar and Khurram Parvez, the Program Coordinator of the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) and the Chairperson of the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD) and Irfan Meraj (journalist/human rights activist) were illegally detained in frivolous, bogus and politically motivated cases.

(Continued on Back Page)

7 terrorists killed in fire exchange, says ISPR

RAWALPINDI (INP): At least seven terrorists were killed in an exchange of fire with the security forces in district Chitral of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

According to military’s media wing, the security forces killed seven terrorists during an exchange of fire with the security forces in the Ursoon area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s (KP) Chitral district.

Another six terrorists were critically injured during the intense exchange of fire, ISPR added.

The sanitisation of the area was being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

“Locals of the area appreciated the operation by the security forces and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country,” it read.

Task force to determine sizes of federal and provincial govts: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Sunday said a task force headed by the finance minister would determine the sizes of federal and provincial governments, look at options to better manage pension funds, besides making efforts to rationalize public expenditure and increase revenue.

In an interview with a private television, he said, “We are convinced that there is a need to rationalise expenditure and increase the revenue of the government to create a viable state and lessen existential threats due to economic vulnerability.”

The Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq said the Special Investment Facilitation Council

(SIFC) was attempting to help achieve appropriate governance and address the reasons for ill governance in the past.

The civil institutions were laxed in their working in the past but now the army leadership with its organizational strength had increased the level of confidence of civil service which had renewed energy to implement policies and achieve goals, he added.

The Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said the government was optimistic about investment from Saudi Arabia in the backdrop of talks between Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad Bin Salman and Pakistan’s chief of army staff. The government was



planning for a visit of the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, adding the visit would be aimed at fully exploiting economic opportunities in the country.



HYDERABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party addressing to inauguration ceremony of 10 MGD Water Filter Plant Hussainabad.

Bilawal praised Sharjeel F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: The Chairman of the People’s Party, Bilawal Bhutto, praised the people of Hyderabad, especially former provincial minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. He mentioned that during the no-confidence motion in Islamabad, he observed that those aspiring to become the prime minister were trailing behind, but Sharjeel Memon was at the forefront.

Oil smuggling, hawala hundi report submitted

ISLAMABAD (INP): A report regarding smuggling of Iranian oil and hawala hundi business was submitted to PM House by a government agency on Sunday.

The report provides details about Iranian oil smuggling and hawala hundi business.

“In Pakistan total 722 currency dealers have been involved in hawala hundi business and Punjab have

maximum 205 hawala hundi dealers,” according to report.

“In KP 183 and Sindh 176 hawala dealers operating in this business,” report disclosed. “Moreover, 104 dealers working in Balochistan and 37 dealers involved in hawala hundi business in Azad Kashmir”.

Apart of it, 17 hawala dealers operating in federal capital Islamabad, Iranian

oil smuggling, the government agency has also unveiled details of the officers, politicians and dealers involved in Iranian oil smuggling.

According to report around 2.810 billion litres oil being smuggled from Iran to Pakistan in a year. This oil smuggling inflicts 60 billion rupees revenue losses per annum to the national exchequer.

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POWER TO THE PEOPLE
بالقادر عوام

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.

The Chairman, Board of Directors, Management and staff of Sindh Bank Limited extend their grief and heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family on the passing of



Muhammad Bilal Sheikh
Founder President & CEO
Sindh Bank Limited

On September 10th, 2023.

May ALLAH rest his soul in eternal peace and give solace and fortitude to his family to bear the irreparable loss.

For Condolence:

Muhammad Anwaar Sheikh & Javeria Anwaar: 0333-4410687
Roohina Imtiaz & Imtiaz Ahmad Shiekh: 0321-8458091
Grand Children: 0323-8479200, 0331-9988091

Massive crackdown launched to combat power theft

ISLAMABAD (APP): A massive crackdown has been launched by the Caretaker Government to combat the alarming surge in power theft and to take stern actions against the culprits involved.

On the directives of the government, the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has expedited the drive against power pilferage and caught 105 meters and imposed fine of Rs 7.567 million for stealing electricity in various areas of the company in the current month.

IESCO chief Dr Muhammad Amjad said that during the current crackdown against electricity thieves, the field formations checked 5,743 meters and found 105 meters of the electricity consumers involved in power theft through various means.

As many as 73 meters were found tampered while 22 were getting direct power supply, he said and added that a fine of Rs 7.567 million was imposed on the power pilferers while charging over 177,000 units.

He said on the directives of the Federal Minister for Energy, the IESCO launched the crackdown against electricity thieves and their facilitators in all circles including Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum and Chakwal circles.

All operation circles, including In-charge Executives and SDOs, were

rigorously inspecting industrial, commercial, domestic and other tariff categories within their respective areas, the IESCO chief said. He said that the local administration and police were also assisting the Company to carry out the operations. He expressed confidence in the success of this government-led campaign, with the full dedication of officers and staff.

He emphasized that electricity theft put extra burden on the public and government institutions adding that both the agencies and the public needed to work together to combat this menace.

Dr. Khan appealed to the consumers to demonstrate their national and moral responsibility by reporting electricity theft and facilitators to the Anti-Power Theft focal person at mobile number 03195991304 or to the Complaint and Monitoring Cell at numbers 0519252933.

Meanwhile, the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has taken strict action against eight officers; five Executive Engineers (XENs), two Sub-Divisional Officers (SDOs) and a Line Superintendent (LS) for conniving in electricity theft and giving new power connection to a dead defaulter, the LESCO spokesman disclosed.

He said LESCO Director (Customer Services) Rai Mohammad Asghar took

action against those officers after they were proved guilty in their respective departmental inquiries.

Sharing the details, the spokesman said that Mehmood Alam Qureshi, Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) of Qila Sattar Shah area has been removed from service for conniving in the electricity theft, and on the similar charges, an Executive Engineer (XEN) of Sheikhupura Rashid Soomro will not be considered for promotion in the next grade for two years and he will stick in Grade-18 during this period.

Director (Customer Services) Rai Muhammad Asghar also issued orders for stopping annual increment of XEN Manawala area Muhammad Rizwan for one year, as he was found involved in facilitating the electricity thieves.

After conducting a detailed inquiry, the Company also took departmental action against the following officers on the charge of giving new electricity connection to a dead defaulter, who owed more than Rs 30 million dues to LESCO, in the area of Kot Abdul Maalik.

Mohsin Ali of Gulshan Ravi (DDT Northern Circle) has been demoted from Executive Engineer of Grade-18 to an SDO of Grade-17; Muzamil Hussain, XEN of Kot Abdul Maalik area, will not be promoted for two years and he has been made per-

manent at Grade-18 for one year; the annual increment of XEN (M&T) Najamul Hasan has been stopped for one year; promotion of Ali Abbas, SDO Kot Abdul Maalik, has been stopped for two years and he has been made permanent at Grade-17 for one year; and Line Superintendent-1 (LS-1) Mirza Aqeel Baig, who was serving as Head Draftsman in Northern Circle, has been demoted to Line Superintendent-2 (LS-2) and made permanent as Line Superintendent for one year, the spokesman said.

Director (Customer Service) Rai Muhammad Asghar said that the LESCO was committed for observing zero tolerance policy on facilitation of power theft and the officer/official or field staff proved guilty of having connivance with electricity thieves would not be spared, adding that operation against electricity thieves would continue with full swing.

The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has also nabbed 87 people on the charge of power pilferage in different parts of its region during past 24 hours.

FESCO spokesman Tahir Sheikh said that Company’s anti-theft teams conducted surprise checking of electricity supply meters in eight districts of

(Continued on Back Page)

Pakistan, India rain-hit match to resume today

Monitoring Desk

COLOMBO: Amid incessant rain, umpires on Sunday decided to call off the Asia Cup 2023 Super 4 clash between arch-rivals Pakistan and India for today and the game will continue from the same point from today (Monday) with no overs lost.

Pakistan won the toss and decided to bowl first against India in the high-voltage clash. When the match was stopped due to rain, India

were 147/2 in 24.1 overs. At one stage it seemed that a 34-over match would be possible but rain once again returned to dash the hopes of cricket fans. According to the playing conditions, the game will continue from this point today with no overs lost. Pakistan have fielded an unchanged playing XI for this high-voltage clash. Meanwhile, India have made two changes with one of them being forced after Shreyas Iyer picked up a

spasm in the back moments before the toss and will be replaced by KL Rahul. Jasprit Bumrah has also replaced Mohammad Shami in India’s lineup.

After beating Bangladesh by seven wickets in their first Super Four match, the Men in Green will look forward to continuing their excellent form in the Asia Cup. “We will bowl first. I think there is a bit of moisture, we need to use that. Always, India-Pakistan is

high intensity, but we will take it match to match. As a team, we are playing well, we are focused on this one,” Pakistan captain Babar Azam said at the toss.

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Committee formed to curb power theft

KARACHI (INP): To curb the electricity theft incidents in Sindh, the provincial caretaker on Sunday constituted a committee.

The notification said that a provincial task force has been constituted under the chairmanship of the secretary interior to deal with power theft issue.

The members of committee will include secretary energy, power division, commissioners, DIGs, SSPs, and officials from Hesco and Sepco.

It is pertinent to mention here that the power division has initiated an unprecedented crackdown against corrupt officers to tackle power theft. The power division stated that the operation began against the officials who were facilitating the people in power theft. The spokesperson said that so far action was taken against 1914 corrupt officers, which includes 351 officers from LESCO, 138 officers from GEPCO, 195 officers from FESCO, 219 officers from IESCO, 314 officers from MEPCO and 299 officers from PESCO. Furthermore, more than 2,199 cases of power theft have been brought to light different distribution companies whereas FIRs have been registered against 1,955 individuals and 21 individuals have also been arrested.

Don't see Bilawal becoming country's PM: Hafiz Naeem

KARACHI (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said that he doesn't see PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari becoming the prime minister of country.

Addressing a press conference in Karachi on Sunday, he said the PPP Chairman talked about conducting elections on time while Asif Zardari was talking about constituencies. Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that Bilawal and Zardari should stop making the people fool any further. He said that K-Electric was working with local mafias and no action was taken against it. The JI demanded that the licence of K-Electric should be cancelled and K-Electric mafia should be caught first. The JI leader said that they would point out the cruelty of K-Electric in the Nepra hearing. The elected councillor was martyred for raising his voice against kunda mafia in Sarjani Town. Street crimes were increasing with every passing day in Karachi, the JI leader concluded.

Karachi man opens fire on toll plaza staff for stopping him

KARACHI (INP): An influential man opened fire on an employee of Karachi Toll Plaza after the latter stopped him from 'traveling in the wrong direction'. According to details, a man shot and injured an employee at Lucky Toll Plaza after he was stopped from 'travelling in the wrong direction'. In CCTV footage, the employee can be seen stopping a car driver at Toll Plaza. Following an altercation, the man pulled out a pistol from inside the vehicle and shot at the boy indiscriminately.



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

Welfare organisation Muslim Hands delegation meets CM Naqvi

LAHORE (APP): A six-member delegation of Muslim Hands Pakistan met Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at CM Office, here on Sunday.

Chairman Muslim Hands Syed Lakhte Husnain, while giving a briefing about welfare activities of the organisation, apprised that the Muslim Hands Pakistan was running 117 schools in Punjab while health and welfare projects of education were being run in different districts of south Punjab. Similarly, market-based IT skills have been arranged to drive the youth towards self-reliance. Around 18 schools of excellence and 35 model schools are being run in Punjab.

A principal decision was made during the meeting to hand over the arrangements of 1,000 schools to the Muslim Hands Pakistan. The CM directed Secretary Schools Education to settle rules and regulations with the Muslim Hands Pakistan.

Mohsin Naqvi ordered to give a final shape to the matters regarding signing of an memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Punjab government and Muslim Hands Pakistan within one week. The proposal to hand over the arrangements of orphanages and Dar-ul-Amaan to the Muslim Hands Pakistan was reviewed

during the meeting.

CM Mohsin Naqvi highlighted that the quality of education of government schools would be elevated with the cooperation of private sectors and welfare organisations. To upgrade emergencies of big hospitals with the cooperation of Muslim Hands Pakistan would also be reviewed. The CM assured that the Punjab government would encourage private organisations to bring improvements in the education and health sectors.

Chairman Muslim Hands Pakistan Lakhte Husnain said: "We are ready to serve people in collaboration with the Punjab government."

Provincial Information Minister Amir Mir, Director Programme Khalid Mehmood Qureshi, Syed Javed Gilani, Mian Omer Farooq, Rana Omer and Raja Arsalan Nusrat were present.

CM grieved at loss of lives: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has expressed a deep sense of sorrow and grief over the loss of precious human lives in a traffic accident near Khanqah Dogran Interchange.

Mohsin Naqvi expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolences with the heirs of deceased persons.

Karachi Mayor announces digitizing Hydrants Cell Water Corporation

KARACHI (NND): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that the main objective of digitizing Hydrants Cell Water Corporation is that citizens can easily get chlorinated and purified water tankers.

The Mayor on Sunday announced on Sunday that Water Corporation has for the first time moved towards real time information on water supply through hydrants. He expressed these views while visiting and inspecting Hydrants Management Center Water Corporation Karsaz today.

On this occasion, CEO Water Corporation Engineer Syed Sallahuddin Ahmed, PP leader Karamullah Waqasi, Sikandar Baloch, Nadeem Kirmani, Syed Sardar Shah and other senior officials of Water Corporation were present.

According to the spokesperson of Water Corporation, during the visit, Mayor Karachi was also given a detailed

briefing by CEO Water Corporation regarding Hydrants Management Center KW&SC.

On this occasion, Mayor Karachi appreciated the efforts of the CEO Water Corporation in connection with the establishment of Hydrants Management Center and said that the purpose of water tankers service is to provide immediate relief to common citizens living in loss.

He said that through the software, the public will receive an E-slip in which all the information of the tanker will be available. He said that 550 tankers have tracker systems and QR codes installed on the windscreen of tankers, QR code will allow the public and law enforcement agencies to identify which hydrant the tanker is registered to and what is its official rates, while illegal tankers will be easily identified by QR code, this will help to control the theft of water which is our main objective.

Sindh Health Minister to intensify efforts to prevent suicides at Karwan-e-Hayat seminar

F.P. Report

KARACHI: On the occasion of World Suicide Prevention Day, celebrated on September 10 globally, Karwan-e-Hayat, Institute for Mental Health Care, one of Pakistan's leading mental healthcare organizations, working towards the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of mental illness in the marginalized sections of the community, held a seminar at a leading hotel to raise awareness about suicide prevention, provide valuable insights, and encourage collective action to combat this national crisis.

Suicide remains a pressing issue worldwide, affecting millions of individuals and their families. This seminar effectively provided a platform to address this critical concern and promote understanding, compassion, and action within Pakistan.

The seminar featured a distinguished panel of experts, mental health advocates, and individuals who shared their insights, stories, and practical strategies for suicide prevention. Industry experts included Dr. Sana Siddiqi, Prof. Dr. Haider Naqvi, Prof. Dr. Qudsia Tarique, Prof. Dr. Naeem Siddiqi, Prof. Dr. Imran Bashir Chaudhary, Prof. Dr. Iqbal Afridi, Dr. Karim Khawaja, Dr. Ajmal Kazmi and Prof. Dr.Naeem Siddiqi. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions, ask

questions, and gain a deeper understanding of how they can make a difference in their communities.

Sindh Health Minister, Dr. Saad Khalid Niaz, was the Guest of Honour for the seminar. In his speech, he outlined the work that was presently being done to prevent suicides and promote mental wellbeing in the local communities. Sharing Pakistani statistics to make it more contextualized, Dr. Niaz explained the reasons for suicides in Pakistan and elaborated that majority of reported cases occur in young adults. He pledged to intensify efforts to raise awareness about suicide prevention and to promoting mental wellness. In the end he also thanked Karwan-e-Hayat for being a beacon of hope and a vital partner in the government's mission to prevent suicide and foster understanding and support.

About Karwan-e-Hayat: Karwan-e-Hayat - Institute for Mental Health Care (KeH) was established in 1983 and is a 110-bed hospital situated in Keamari. It is registered under section 42 of the Companies Act 2017 and has a tax-deductible status under section 2(36) of the Income Tax Ordinance 2001, read with Rules 212 and 220 of the Income Tax Rules 2002. It is an ISO 9001-2015 certified company and is fully Shariah-compliant.



KARACHI: Caretaker Balochistan Minister for Information and Public Relations Jan Achakzai addresses a press conference at Press Club.

Continuation of present momentum must for economic revival: Altaf

KARACHI (NNI): Due to very serious and dedicated efforts of the chief of army staff there is a strong hope that the national economy would get better in the coming days and this momentum should be continued and sustained at every cost, said Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor here Sunday.

He said these efforts have achieved a lot as the valuation of Pakistani rupee against the US dollar is on the rise, while steps are afoot to check smuggling and hoarding of essential commodities.

He said the previous political governments could have taken these steps but they sadly lacked this patriotism and instead focused on corruption and kickbacks.

Instead of serving the national interests, the economic hitmen of foreign powers sitting in these political parties looted the country with both hands. The shameful anti-people agreements with private power plants are an example of this economic hitmen approach of these elements.

Altaf Shakoor said the caretaker government backed by the establishment should continue the momentum to salvage the economy and check corruption and dishonesty at different

levels. He said oil, wheat flour, fertilizer and sugar mafias are fully backed by all major political parties of Pakistan and a strong and decisive action is needed to nab these politically backed mafias. He said the national economy should be preferred to appeasing the vested interests of political leaders.

He said the debt trap should be broken at all costs as without getting relief from foreign loans and their interests that devour 80 percent of our resources nothing could be done for the betterment of the poor people.

He said it is encouraging that the chief of the army staff is personally taking efforts to salvage the sagging economy and his efforts are also bearing fruits. He said the Pakistani armed forces are not only the defenders of our geographical and ideological boundaries but they must also defend the economic boundaries of the country.

They should create such internal mechanisms that the economic interests of Pakistan are also safeguarded on a permanent basis. In this era, safeguarding the economic interests of the nation are as important as defending its geographical boundaries. He said action should be taken

to the economic hitmen of foreign countries operating in Pakistan and who have marred our finances and made us economically enslaved. He said our economic sovereignty is badly compromised and we have to seek permission from the IMF even for a small relief to our electricity consumers. He asked what kind of independence is it, when we are practically ruled by the modern East India Companies. He said the utmost focus should be on the economy and not politics. He said the political parties should also take heed and cooperate in efforts of the caretaker government to improve the economy.

He demanded to privatize all loss making state entities, catch electricity and gas thieves and their patrons, nab tax evaders, hoarders and black marketers and purge bureaucracy from corrupt elements.

He said corruption kings and mafia patrons sitting in different political parties should not only be unmasked but also punished severely. He said Pakistan needs a deep reform program in all sectors and the present caretaker government and establishment should continue their good work so that the poor masses could also get some relief.

Over 67,000 candidates to take MDCAT today in 11 cities of Punjab

LAHORE (NNI): The University of Health Sciences (UHS) conducted the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT), today (Sunday) at 29 centres set up in 11 cities of the province.

More than 67,000 candidates appeared in the admission test. The question papers and other sensitive examination materials were dispatched to various cities under tight security arrangements. The examination papers were kept in sealed steel trunks.UHS Vice Chancellor Prof. Ahsan Waheed Rathore supervised all the arrangements. As many as 19,000 candidates in Lahore, 13,600 in Multan, 4,000 in Gujranwala, 5,000 in Bahawalpur, 7,500 in Faisalabad, 3,000 in D.G. Khan, 1,700 in Gujrat, 3,000 in Sargodha, 2,500 in Sialkot, 3,300 in Rawalpindi and 3,700 candidates in Sahiwal will take the test.The Punjab government has appointed around 5,000 supervisory and invigilation staff whereas UHS has deputed senior faculty members of the university as head couriers and couriers for conducting the test.Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice-

Chancellors, principals, and senior faculty members of government medical institutions in relevant cities will monitor the examination while officers of the Specialized Health Care and Medical Education department, deputy commissioners will supervise the arrangements.Section 144 has been imposed to prevent the entry

of unauthorized persons into the examination centres.The MDCAT exam started at 10:00 a.m. Examination centres remained open for the candidates at 8:00 am and were sealed at 9:00 am after which no one was allowed to enter. The duration of the exam was three and a half hours, which were concluded at 1.30 pm.The minimum


qualifying marks for admission to MBBS are 55pc and for BDS, 50pc. The question paper will have 200 multiple choice questions including Biology 68, Chemistry 54, Physics 54, English 18, and Logical Reasoning 6 questions as per the curriculum notified by the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC).

اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

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The Frontier Post


extend their grief and heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family on the passing of



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Construction of 200-bed emergency block extension starts at Mayo Hospital

LAHORE (APP): Construction work on an upgraded 200-bed state-of-the-art emergency block of Mayo Hospital has been started, Health Department official sources told APP on Sunday. The extension block would be constructed in four months in two phases, said the sources. An improvement plan of Mayo Hospital has also been sought by the caretaker Punjab CM within one week, they informed, adding that on his directions, children block would be renamed as 'Mayo Children Hospital'.

Meanwhile, during the reconstruction phase, emergency services would be temporarily relocated to the TB ward. As part of the upgrade, the emergency block's elevator will also be made operational.



MD CAT Test held: Dozens of students arrested for using bluetooth devices

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: On the instructions of the Chief Secretary, Secretary Higher Education Aneela Mahfooz Durrani foiled the cheating plot in the MD CAT test, with the timely actions of Executive Director Eta Imtiaz Ayub, dozens of students who were using the blue tooth device for copying were arrested red-handed. Dozens of students involved have been arrested, transparency of MD CAT test is the first priority, admission in medical colleges is the right of eligible and talented students, those who abuse merit will be dealt with iron hands: Secretary Higher Education Anila Mahfouz Durrani

On the instructions of the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Secretary Higher Education Aneela Mahfooz Durrani exposed

the cheating group using the new technology in the entrance test organized for admission to the medical colleges of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Secretary Higher Education Aneela Mahfooz Durrani has said in his statement issued from here that instructions were received from the Chief Secretary that a group is active in the entrance test to steal merits from the examination hall through a secret blue tooth device in the ears. "Activist group has extorted lakhs of rupees from the students for solving this paper through Bluetooth devices" she expressed.

According to her, the information was shared with the Executive Director of ETEA, Imtiaz Ayub, on

which the Executive Director, taking immediate action, organized special checking during the entry into the examination halls, while during the examination, the staff turned on the Bluetooth on their mobile phones to connect to the Bluetooth devices. The students who were copying were caught red-handed, she added.

Executive Director Imtiaz Ayub said that the purpose of these Bluetooth devices secretly installed in the ears was to issue the entry test paper by students sitting in different halls of the province.

After which the answers of these questions are told to the students through the same Bluetooth devices, which results in the calculation of merit.

According to ETA Director Yasir Imran, so far dozens of students have been caught red-handed from different exam halls of the province and handed over to the relevant police stations and FIRs have been filed against them. According to him, under these unfair means these students are not eligible to sit in any type of test of future conducting by Etea, while the relevant police station will take its own way for legal proceedings.

It should be noted that in this entry test, more than 46 thousand male and female students from across the province took the test in 44 examination halls established in seven divisions of the province.



PESHAWAR: Senior leader of PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Ayub Shah Farzand Ali Wazir meeting with party workers.

732 persons held, arms recovered

PESHAWAR (APP): The Capital City Police during the past month, amidst a crackdown operation on criminals apprehended 732 individuals, seizing a substantial cache of arms and ammunition.

Under the guidance of Peshawar's Chief Police Officer, Syed Ashfaq Anwar, and the vigilant oversight of SSP Operations, Aftab Abbasi, the police has intensified its efforts to ensure peace and neutralize individuals involved in anti-social activities.

During the crackdown significant achievements were made, resulting in the registration of 670 cases against various criminal elements and the apprehension of 732 suspects.

These arrested individuals are allegedly involved in a wide range of societal crimes, including the possession of 91 Kalashnikov rifles, 845 pistols, 16 shotguns, 40 rifles, 11 Kalakovs, two hand grenades, and more than 23,000 assorted rounds of ammunition.

Significant control on Dengue virus cases in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Secretary Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Aslam Wazir Sunday stated that due to timely efforts by the Health Department and full cooperation from the public, there have been significantly fewer cases of dengue reported this year compared to last year, which is a positive development.

He has appealed to the public not to underestimate dengue considering the seasonal conditions and to continue their efforts to control and prevent it together.

According to the statistics from the Health Department, as of September 2022, there were 6017 confirmed dengue cases reported across the province, while as of September 2023, there are only 156 reported cases, which is a result of the Health Department's timely actions.

Secretary Health further explained that medical

entomologists throughout the province are playing a technical role, particularly in dengue control and prevention.

He revealed that last week a total of 312,760 households were inspected across the province, out of which 710 households tested positive for dengue larvae, and they were promptly treated chemically and mechanically.

Similarly, Health Department teams shared precautionary messages and raised awareness about dengue control and prevention with 54,292 individuals in various areas, reaching 285,237 women with messages for dengue prevention and awareness through Lady Health Workers (LHW).

In areas where dengue-positive locations and cases were identified, 63 seminars and awareness sessions were held at different locations, and 19,533 brochures related to dengue infection were distributed during dengue sessions.

Secretary health expressed special thanks to the Divisional Commander's, Deputy Commissioners, honorable religious scholars and volunteers of civil defense.

He said that they all played their important roles in creating awareness among people about dengue, standing shoulder to shoulder with the Health Department.

He shared that the honorable religious scholars discussed the benefits of cleanliness and hygiene in special sermons on Friday. Similarly, the volunteers of civil defense went door-to-door, meeting people and educating them about the dangers of the dengue virus and how to prevent it.

He emphasized that this entire process was impossible without the cooperation of the public and urged them to support the Health Department in this endeavor, collaborate with their teams, so that our province can be free from these dangerous diseases.

FIA crackdowns on dollar smugglers

PESHAWAR (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) claims to have arrested more than 127 suspects and recovered a huge chunk of Rs679 million during a crackdown on illegal currency trading in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) region, says in media reports. During these operations, 127 suspects were apprehended, and cases were registered against 109 individuals.

The FIA teams initiated 109 cases against the individuals involved in dollar smuggling and illegal currency trading in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) region, says in media reports. During these operations, 127 suspects were apprehended, and cases were registered against 109 individuals.

The agency seized Rs679 million. The seized currency included US dollars and other foreign currencies.

Over 500 direct hooks removed: Fine of 7m charged against electricity stealers

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) has so far removed over 500 direct hooks during ongoing operations against electricity stealers in the province.

"More than 500 direct hooks have been removed so far while fines for more than 7 million have been charged against electricity theft," spokesman of PESCO told APP on Sunday.

As per the Govt directives, he said the anti electricity theft operations continued in the province on war footings basis and more than 250 requests to lodge FIR have been submitted.

Meanwhile, 10 superintendent engineers of PESCO were assigned the duties of focal persons with a direction to make contact with provincial task force and divisional commissioners to curb electricity theft

and provide relief to all those consumers who pay electricity bills.

The Provincial Task Force with an assistance of police, district administration and other relevant departments were directed to remove direct electricity hooks and make recovery from defaulters on priority basis.

In this regard, the deputy commissioners would lead the task force at their respective districts and report regarding removal of direct hooks and recovery of outstanding dues would be submitted to the caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on daily basis.

Directives were issued to the relevant authorities to take stern action against owners of hotels, traders, shopkeepers and vendors involved in taking illegal connections from the government departments,

schools, hospitals, railways pakkat and others.

The district administration and police were mobilized to assist PESCO field staff in removal of direct hooks and recovery of outstanding dues against domestic, agricultural and industrial consumers.

Strict disciplinary action were being taken against all those staff of PESCO involved in power stealing.

Meanwhile, the district administration of Khyber have registered FIRs against seven power stealers after they were caught red handed by stealing electricity through direct hooks.

The videos of power stealers and direct hooks were being prepared as evidence so that strong action should be taken against them.

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Higher Education Department (HED) has successfully concluded its dedicated week-long special monitoring drive, carried out from September 1st to 10th, 2023, in significant regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

Samin Jan passes away

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior Journalist and member of Peshawar Press Club Samin Jan passed away after long illness.

His funeral prayer will be offered at District Council Colony, Yousuf Abad Dalazak Road at 11pm on Sunday.

Politicians, civil society members and journalists expressed grief and sorrow over the death of Senior journalist and prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to bereaved family members to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude.

including Peshawar, Malakand, Hazara, and Southern Districts.

During this initiative, special monitoring teams, comprised of officers from various departments, conducted daily visits to both male and female colleges across diverse districts. A total of 75 colleges underwent meticulous assessments, with 17 in Malakand, Peshawar, and Southern regions each, and 14 in Hazara.

The resulting reports from these visits presented an overall picture of satisfaction while also highlighting major and minor concerns. A comprehensive report has been submitted to higher authorities, and a high-level meeting is being planned to devise strategic solutions based on the findings.

Under the esteemed guidance of the Secretary of the Higher Education Department and the capable leadership of Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, Additional Secretary of Colleges, the mission aimed to address challenges faced by educational institutions. It also focused on assessing operational quality, scrutinizing

attendance, and improving security arrangements. Furthermore, there was a significant emphasis on optimizing the ongoing online admissions campaign to maximize student enrollment.

The success of this commendable initiative can be attributed to the personal commitment of the

esteemed Secretary of the Higher Education Department, the able leadership of Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, Additional Secretary of Colleges, and the unwavering dedication of key officers within the HED. Notable individuals contributing to this success include Dr. Farid Ullah

Shah, Director of Higher Education, Dr. Amjad Rafiq, Director-General of Commerce Education, Dr. Fazli Hadi, Regional Director for the South, Dr. Muhammad Irshad, Regional Director for Hazara, and Syed Ishtiaq Hussain, Director of HEMIS, along with their dedicated teams.



PESHAWAR: Fans watching a live telecast screening of Asia Cup 2023 super four ODI cricket match between India and Pakistan.

Chowk Yadgar:

A historic monument of colonial era needs govt patronage to remove encroachment

PESHAWAR (APP): Being a gateway to Indo-Pakistan subcontinent with nearly 3,000 years old history, Peshawar carried a unique geographical location, historical buildings and archaeological heritage sites for the foreign and domestic tourists to explore.

Chowk Yadgar is among one of the key historical monuments at Peshawar City that drawn foreign tourists in the past due its political and cultural significance besides Mughal-British architectural design. Built in early 20th century near the historic Balahisar fort and Mohabat Khan Mosque, the visitor would be disappointed now to see piles of garbages, encroachment and traffic mess in its surrounding that marred its original beauty.

"Chowk Yadgar is the identity of Peshawar, the reclaiming of its encroached lands, shifting of washrooms and road would help restore its original

grendure and prestige," said Misal Khan, a former Information Officer while talking to APP on Sunday.

Almost in every election campaign in Pakistan since 1947, Chowk Yadgar and Jinnah Park were centre of political activities in Peshawar where top political leadership had addressed Peshawarties and informed them about their party manifestos," he said.

He said it was highly regrettable that the iconic square has been encroached by traders, currency dealers, vendors and shopkeepers after change of its historical design. He said the past governments had paid a deaf ear to address its poor road engineering and building designs issues.

"The historic monument had witnessed the vigour of Afridi tribesmen and British army after the former tried to expel the latter from Balahisar fort," said Bakhtzada Khan, senior research officer, Archeological

and Museums Department while talking to APP. It also saw international traders, who stayed at historic Qissa Khwani bazaar where they exchanged tales of each others culture, civilization, music and heritage besides political development in the region while enjoying the mouthwatering Chappli Kabab with traditional Qehwa before coming here.

The old name of chowk yadgar was Hastings Memorial. Famous historian S.M. Jaffar in his book "Peshawar City on the Frontier" states that Hasting Memorial was erected in 1892 in the memory of Col EC Hastings, who died on December 2, 1884. "The square was named after the heroes of 1965 war in 1969. The structure of chowk yadgar was changed several times in the past. It was famous venue for political rallies and protest demonstrations till recent past."

"Originally, chowk

yadgar had been constructed in the early 20th century to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to Peshawar in 1905," Bakhtzada said. Its main structure is a grand archway with four minarets and a dome at the top. The archway is decorated with intricate floral designs and calligraphy in Persian and Urdu languages.

The square is surrounded by several bazaars and traditional shops, giving it a vibrant and bustling atmosphere in the past.

He said its original structure was a grand archway that marked the entrance to the city, but it was destroyed in a flood in 1929.

The square is once a home to several traditional street food vendors, making it a popular destination for food lovers. Chowk yadgar has undergone several renovations and restorations to preserve its historical significance. It was completely renovated in 2017 with

the installation of new fountains, lighting, and seating areas that was now hardly seen.

"It hurts me to see that chowk yadgar has become a permanent abode of drug addicts, who could be seen sleeping here. The pedestrians are forced to cover their noses while passing through it to avoid foul smell of the garbages, washrooms and pollution," said former PESCO employee Qaisar Khan.

He demanded regular cleanliness, shifting of washrooms and removal of encroachment from chowk yadgar to restore its original grandure and make it again centre of cultural and political activities of Peshawar.

He also demanded showcasing such historical monuments through digital media to generate revenue through promotion of tourism and inclusion in curriculum for education of students.



PESHAWAR: Youngster juggling on bikes on Dalazak Road shows negligence of concerned authorities.



In brief

2 motorcyclists perished

BUREWALA (INP): Two people were killed after their motorcycle was struck by a trailer on Sheikh Fazil Road near Gaggio Mandi on Sunday, police said. The victims were transported to the tehsil headquarters hospital where they succumbed to their injuries. The trailer driver fled the scene. Police impounded the vehicle and launched investigation.

Young labourer died

JAMSHORO (INP): A young labourer died when chairlift at an oil mills collapsed during construction work here on Sunday. According to details, construction work of Kotri Oil Mills was in progress when one of its chairlift broke and fell down on ground. A young labourer engaged in the construction of the oil mills was killed on the spot in incident. Management of factory and contractor involved in the work escaped the scene after enraged relatives of the deceased reached the scene. Family of the deceased labourer alleged the contractor of deliberately killing their relative. Police collected the evidences from the scene and started an investigation into the incident.

Minor girl dead, 4 hurt

SHUJABAD (INP): A minor girl was killed, while four others suffered multiple injuries after a dilapidated wall of their locality collapsed in Khakhian Panjani area of Shujabad on Sunday, witnesses and rescuers said. The victims were going to bazaar at the time of the incident. The dead and the injured were pulled out of the debris by locals and were shifted to the Civil Hospital.

Four held in operation

QILLA ABDULLAH (INP): The ANF has accelerated the operations against cannabis crop and factories and held four people during raid in Gulistan area of Qilla Abdullah. According to ANF, over 1000 kilogram hashish has disposed off and five factories were demolished so far. The ANF, Pakistan Army, Levies and FC were participating in the operations which were being monitored through helicopters. The operation in the area was launched after approval of tribal jirga some two days earlier.

Youth drowns into canal

NANKANA SAHIB (INP): A youth drowned while another survived when a over speeding motorcycle fell into a canal in Sangla Hill on Sunday. Rescue sources said that the accident took place at March Balochan road when a motorcycle carrying two young brothers fell down Marriyamabad bridge. One of the youth came out of the canal while other drowned in deep water. Search for the body of the drowned youth was underway.

Youth killed, another injured

BHAKKAR (INP): A youth was killed while another person injured in firing of armed men over matrimonial dispute, police said on Sunday. According to details, the incident took place in Lak Kalan area of Darya Khan district Bhakkar where armed motorcyclists opened fire at two people. As a result of firing, a youth identified as Farooq was killed in the firing while his nephew sustained bullet wounds. The attackers sped the scene. The body and injured were shifted to hospital. Police said that the firing was outcome of matrimonial dispute.

Operation against hoarders continued

DIR LOWER (APP): Deputy Commissioner Dir Lower along with other staff from the food department has launched an operation against illegal hoarders in the district.

Talking to media men during his visit to different localities, Deputy Commissioner Itfikhah Ahmad said that they are raiding different areas to nip the hoarders and black marketers who created artificial shortages of sugar and other food items.

He said, Minister Food, Secretary Food Department Abid Khan, Director Food Department Muhammad Yasir Hassan along with officials of the food department including District Food Controller District Dir Lower Kashif Ehsan, Riaz Ahmed (Assistant Food Controller), Shabbir

Ahmad (Food Inspector) and Azam Khan (Food Inspector) checked the sugar stocks and bills in various mega marts, general stores and grain merchant warehouses and shops located in Gulabad and Chakdara Bazar Tehsil Adenzai.

Bills and stocks of all shopkeepers were checked and found to be satisfactory. Officials of the Food Department will continue to operate indiscriminately against the sugar mafia in different Tehsils on a daily basis so as to ensure easy availability of sugar to the general public on a government rate.

Ward attendant of Timergara hospital killed

A ward attendant in the Timergara hospital was killed with a sudden gunshot during checking of

guns in the gun-shop, Police said here Sunday.

According to detail given by the Police, one Sherzada, a ward attendant, visited a gun-shop in Latingarh area for buying a gun and in a checking guns, he injured with a sudden fire. He was taken to hospital by the officials of the Rescue 1122 but later on he succumbed to his bullet injury.

The official of the Timergara hospital and Police confirmed that Sherzada died while checking weapons in the arms shop in the market. Sherzada was brought to DHQ Timergara in an injured condition, the doctor on duty said. But during medical treatment, he died because of the bullet injury. Police have also registered a case with further investigation.

Police start mock exercises to deal with any situation

SWABI (APP): Swabi Police have conducted a mock exercise to deal with the sudden situation in police lines, Tarbila Camp, Tehsil Lahore, Tehsil Razar across the district here on Sunday.

The aim of the mock exercise is to test the performance of Police officers and Jawans. Under the supervision of DPOs Topi Mohammad Shafiq Khan, Ajab Khan, Jawad Khan, Mohammad Iqbal Khan, Taj Mohammad Khan, Rooh Ul Amin Khan, Swabi Police organized a mock exercise in various places, in which all SHOs, Elite Force, RRAF Squad, Rescuers 1122 participated.

The purpose of the mock-exercise is to test the efficiency of the institu-

tions, the efficiency of the officers and men to assess the minimum response time in an emergency situation, an official of the Police told media men.

PML-N Youth Wing convention held in Swabi

A convention was organized by Pakistan Muslim League (N) Youth Wing in Topi with the efforts of Tehsil Topi Youth Coordinator Aqibzada, in which a large number of youth and workers participated.

President PML-N Swabi District Shiraz Khan, General Secretary Babar Saleem, Haji Sajjad Khan, Nawabzada, Tehsil Chairman Adil Khan, Gulnawaz Khan, Asrar Advocate, Yasir Khan and Idris Khan were also present.

The local leaders in their

speeches said that they are always ready for elections and would fully participate in the forthcoming election. They said that the youth of Swabi are giving a message to former Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif that they would fully prepare for the next general election.

We, the youth, should spread the message of Mian Nawaz Sharif from street to street for the development and stability of the country. Slogans were raised in favor of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Engr. Amir Makam, Shiraz Khan, Sajjad Khan, Nawabzada and Gul Nawaz Khan.

Large number of youth turned for the Youth convention, later on, peacefully dispersed.

40th annual district Naat competition to be held

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Assistant Commissioner Abbottabad Saqleen Salim Sunday chaired a meeting regarding the successful organization of the 40th Annual District Naat Competition to be held on 16th September 2023.

During the meeting, it was decided that, in compliance with directives from the provincial government, the 40th Annual District Naat Competition will take place on September 16 at 10:00 AM within the premises of the District Council Abbottabad.

This competition will

encompass four distinct categories including children under 15 years old, girls under 15 years, youth between the ages of 15 and 25, and men and women within the same age group. To ensure the seamless and successful organization of this event, the district government has appointed Talal Salim, the District Youth Officer, as the focal person.

This competition serves as a platform for participants to showcase their talents in the art of reciting Naats, fostering a sense of cultural enrichment and

appreciation within the community in district Abbottabad.

In the meeting Additional Assistant Commissioner Zark Yar Khan Turo, representatives from the Hazara Arts Council Abbottabad, and the In-charge Naat Department Taher Munir Awan, Raja Qadeer Secretary of the Private Education Network Abbottabad and representatives from the Education Department, District Youth Officer, the District Sports Officer Abbottabad, and various other relevant officials were present.

People always rendered sacrifices for peace

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Chairman District Peace Committee (DPC) Abdul Haleem Khan Qasuria has said the people of Dera Ismail Khan have always rendered sacrifices for the establishment of peace in the country.

He stated this during his visit to Regional Office of Press Information Department (PID) here the other day, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

Qasuria said that the people of this area had always played an active role in upholding the dignity of state institutions.

He said the role of government institutions increases along with the

responsibility of media during the difficult situation faced by the country.

He said the people of Dera Ismail Khan salute to the sacrifices of the security forces.

The public response from this area in favor of the Pak-Army after the May 9 tragedy has once again proved that anti-state elements could never create distance among the people and the security forces of the country, he added.

He appreciated the role of the PID for raising the issues of southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa nationwide, paying tribute to the Federal Information

Ministry for the restoration of PID regional office in Dera Ismail Khan.

He expressed the hope that all possible facilities would be extended to local journalists through the PID office.

Earlier on his arrival at PID office, the Chairman DPC was received by In-charge of PID Regional Office Dera Ismail Khan Muhammad Fazlur Rehman.

Fazl apprised the DPC Chairman that Federal Ministry of Information and its institutions were playing an effective role against the propaganda of anti-state elements and for the promotion of state narrative.

NCP goods, drugs and arms recovered in Dera

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The Dera police on Monday claimed to have seized Non-Custom Paid (NCP) goods worth Rs 15 million here in the limits of Yarik police station.

According to the Police spokesman, a team from Yarik police station supervised by SDPO Saddar Circle Muhammad Saleem Baloch along with SHO Zeeshan Iqbal Khan recovered NCP goods from a container bearing registration number (TLK-473). The recovered NCP goods

included 234 tyres, 605 sacks of plastic bags, 245 packets of 'Sipari', 30 green tea bags, and 20 bundles of parachute cloth. Later, the police handed over the recovered Non-Custom Paid (NCP) goods to the customs authorities.

Meanwhile, the Yarik police, taking action against criminal elements, also arrested three accused recovering one Kalashnikov along with ammunition, 2146 gram hashish, and 914 gram Ice drug from their possession.

The police arrested the accused of the murder case Mehtab Shah son of Ghulam Rabbani Shah recovering one Kalashnikov along with 15 cartridges from him.

In another action, the police arrested accused Rasool Khan son of Khoram Uddin with 1356 gram hashish and 473 gram Ice and accused Nasir Ali son of Shaukat Marwat with 790 gram hashish and 441 gram Ice drug from his possession.



HYDERABAD: Students solving question papers during pre-entry test for admission in LUMHS at Jamshoro.

Crackdown against smugglers continued

QUETTA (INP): A large-scale crackdown against smugglers continues across the country.

According to details, a joint operation by FC Balochistan, Anti-Narcotics Force, Levies, Law Enforcement Agencies and others achieved historic success against narcotics in Qila Abdullah district of Balochistan.

A total of forty-two targets have been achieved in the operation so far. During the operation, drug production, drug storage facilities and valuable machines were destroyed.

A total of 11 people were detained in the large-scale crackdown. Over 500 illegal Afghans were also found involved in this drug smuggling business.

Drugs worth millions rupees and prohibited chemical materials used in its manufacture were also seized. The local people welcomed this action against drug dealers in Qila Abdullah and Gulistan and thanked the security agencies.

20 injured as bus hit truck

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): At least 20 people got injured as a passenger bus met an accident here in Sara-Khawrah area on Dera-Zhob road on Sunday.

According to Rescue 1122 spokesman, a passenger bus heading to Peshawar from Quetta hit a truck in Sara-Khawrah area of Sub-division Darazinda after its driver lost his control over the long vehicle due to brake failure.

After receiving information, the medical team of Rescue 1122, Station-55 timely responded and reached the site. As a result of the accident, 20 people including eight children and four women got injured.

The rescue team shifted the injured to Darazinda Hospital after providing them first aid. Later, the rescue 1122 team shifted the seven seriously injured persons to DHQ hospital Dera Ismail Khan.

Secretary Mines chairs meeting

SARGODHA (APP): A meeting of the Steering Committee for Sargodha Sand Stone Drain scheme was held under the chairmanship of Secretary Mines Babar Aman Babar, here on Sunday.

The meeting was attended by the Director-General Mines, P&D, Agriculture Department, and Irrigation Department officers.

The consultant briefed the steering committee on the progress of the drain scheme's feasibility report.

The secretary said that the Mines Department had developed a viable revenue plan under the supervision of the Chief Minister of Punjab.

This scheme was also a part of the Mines Department's revenue generation plan, which is expected to significantly increase revenue, he said.

Babar Aman Babar said that under this scheme, an additional income of approximately two billion rupees was expected annually.

Protest held against drivers' abduction

KANDHKOT (INP): Citizens protesting against failure of police to recover truck drivers abducted last night here.

People blocked the Indus Highway with hurdles and staged a protest sit-in against abductions in the area, infamous for rampant kidnappings of common man by outlaws in cahoots with influential quarters.

The sit-in blocked traffic from Sindh to Balochistan and Punjab. Large lines of vehicles can be witnessed on both sides of the road.

Another protest sit-in being staged at Bakhsapur Indus Highway to press for

recovery of hostages from bandits. "We will continue this protest till recovery of the last hostage," protest leaders vowed.

Earlier on Wednesday people protested law enforcement agencies' (LEA) failure to recover all hostages and restore law and order to crime-infested Kandhkot-Kashmore district, were badly beaten by baton-wielding police and plain-clothed goons.

In an attempt to disperse protesters, mayhem ensued as police resorted to baton-charging as a result of which several protesters were injured. Some of the

injured persons were shifted to a hospital.

However, the protesters refused to end their sit-in despite baton-charging by police. They said the sit-in will continue until the recovery of the last hostage.

Earlier, police announced recovery of three abductees in Kashmore from bandits including Mukhi Jagdesh Kumar, Jaideep and Dr Muneer Naich.

In a media talk the district police official claimed that the police recovered abductees in an operation in katcha area at Ghelpur.

DIG Police assesses security measures at dam

KOHIATAN (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Hazara Police Muhammad Aijaz Khan Sunday conducted a comprehensive security assessment during his recent visit to the Diamer Bhasha Dam, emphasizing the critical role of law enforcement in ensuring the success of development projects.

DIG Muhammad Aijaz Khan, was accompanied by District Police Officer (DIG) Kohistan, Muhammad Khalid Khan, during the visit to Diamer Bhasha Dam.

The delegation engaged in meetings with military personnel, police officers and Chinese officials to exchange insights on security-related matters.

The DIG emphasized the paramount significance of Diamer Bhasha Dam project in Pakistan's development landscape.

He underscored the unwavering commitment to ensuring its success, positioning them as the "front line soldiers" dedicated to thwarting any malicious designs that could threaten the project's integrity.

Key discussions during the visit included security arrangements and the existing challenges faced in the region. He provided clear directives to strengthen security measures, directed for search and strike operations in surrounding areas and vigilant monitoring of suspicious individuals. Ajaz Kham particularly

stressed the importance of enhancing police patrolling along the Karakoram Highway (KKH), especially during the movement of Chinese workers involved in the project.

In the meetings with army officers, development project representatives and Chinese officials, discussions revolved around addressing ongoing issues and finding practical solutions.

One significant consensus reached was the maintenance of comprehensive police records on both local and foreign workers involved in the project, aiming to prevent any infiltration by malicious elements with sinister intentions.

FIA arrests currency smuggling suspect

MULTAN (APP): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)

Multan zone took action against elements involved in currency smuggling and arrested a suspect and recovered one lac Saudi Riyal from his possession.

The team under the supervision of Deputy Director Dera Ghazi Khan Zahid Mehmood raided and arrested the accused while conducting a raid at Ghazi Ghat check post.

The suspect named Muhammad Aleem resident of Okara was travelling to Quetta. The team on a tip-off raided and arrested

him during the search of the bus.

According to preliminary investigation, the accused had to smuggle foreign currency from Quetta to Iran and Afghanistan. Intelligence-based operation was underway against elements involved in the smuggling of foreign currency. The assistance of law enforcement agencies has also been obtained for the arrest of the accused.

Special raiding teams have been formed under the supervision of Deputy Directors.

The raiding teams were conducting operations against the accused involved in the smuggling of foreign currency based on secret information. Strict actions were also initiated against the facilitators, and cash carriers involved in hundi.

Those involved in the smuggling of foreign currency will be punished as per the law.

The FIA spokesperson said that all resources were being utilized to arrest the accused under the directions of Director General FIA Mohsin Hasan Butt.

Comprehensive strategy evolved to nab power theft

FAISALABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abdullah Nayyar Sheikh said that a comprehensive strategy had been evolved to nab electricity theft and the people could inform about power pilferage through helpline number 1718 and toll-free number 0800-00081 to curb this national crime.

Presiding over the first meeting of District Enforcement Committee for Anti Power Theft, he said that power pilferers were not only causing colossal loss to the national kitty but they were also creating numerous problems for the electricity consumers.

Therefore, the district

administration in collaboration with Faisalabad Electric Supply Company, police and other departments had chalked out a solid plan to take strict action against the power pilferers without any discrimination, he added.

He said that special committees had also been formed at Tehsil Level to arrest power theft and Assistant Commissioners would supervise these committees.

He directed the District Enforcement Committee for Anti Power Theft to launch a vigorous campaign against the power pilferage and directly monitor their drive as well as performance of Tehsil level

committees so that this societal evil could be weed out from the society at early as possible.

He further said that a District Emergency Operational Center had also been set up where representatives of FESCO, Police and other departments would remain present round the clock and the citizens could get their complaints lodged against power pilferers. The name of information providers would be kept in secrecy, he assured.

FESCO spokesperson Umar Hayat Gondal informed the meeting that FESCO had activated special teams against power theft.



Rescues underway in flood-hit Greek towns as toll rises to 11

PALAMAS KARDITSA (AFP/APP): Firefighters backed by the army were rescuing hundreds of people Saturday in villages in central Greece blocked off by floods, as the toll rose to 11 dead.

"More than 2,850 people have been rescued since the beginning of the bad weather," fire department spokesman Yannis Artopios told broadcaster Mega on Saturday.

"There are still many people in the villages around Karditsa, Palamas and toward Trikala. They are not missing, they are trapped," he said.

The body of a 77-year-old man,

found on a beach in Pelion, in the centre of the country, brings the death toll from the flooding to 11, the fire service announced.

Greek civil protection authorities said Saturday evening that another seven people were officially listed as missing, including an Austrian couple visiting the area around the picturesque peak of Pelion in the Thessaly region of northeastern Greece. Several houses remain under water in the village of Palamas and rescue workers were trying to reach marooned people, an AFP journalist said.

"It was truly hellish," said 54-

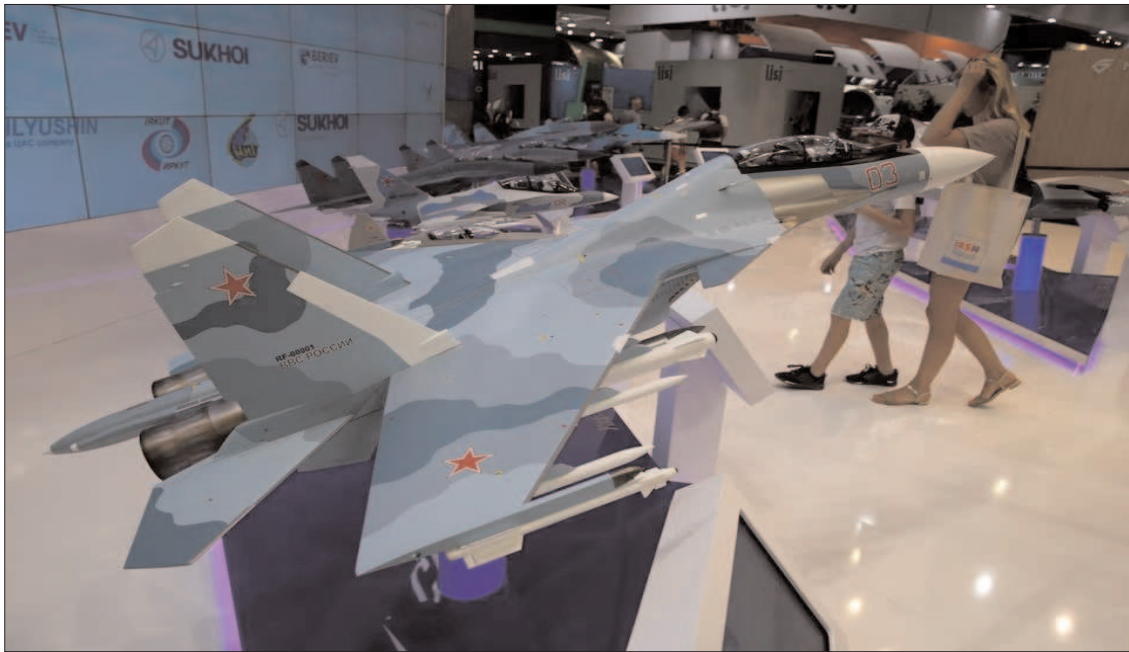
year-old Palamas resident Eleni Patouli.

"We were stuck without help or information for hours. The (emergency services) 112 message to evacuate arrived just as we were facing up to the flooding and we had no means of escape," she told AFP.

The situation also remains worrying near the city of Larissa, a few kilometers to the east.

"We are having great difficulties with the Pinios river, next to the city of Larissa, which has overflowed and reached a height of 2.5 metres (eight feet) on the outskirts of Larissa," Artopios said.

Myanmar receives first shipment of Russia's Su-30 fighter jets, RIA reports



MOSCOW (Reuters): Myanmar has received the first shipment of two Russian Su-30 fighter jets, Charlie Than, Myanmar's trade minister, told the Russian RIA state news agency in remarks published on Sunday.

"Two aircraft have already been delivered," Than told RIA on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum, Russia's annual forum aimed at developing economic cooperation in the region and encouraging foreign investment, which starts on Sunday in the port of Vladivostok.

Russia and Myanmar signed a

contract in September 2022 for the delivery of six Su-30SME fighter jets, RIA said. The Sukhoi Su-30SME multi-role fighter jet is designed for enemy's aerial targets engagement, aerial reconnaissance, combat employment and pilot training, according to Rosoboronexport, Russia's state-controlled arms exporter.

Separately, Than told the Russian TASS state news agency that a number of bilateral agreements will be signed at the East Economic Forum, including on developing tourism between the

two countries.

The Russian defence ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

The United States has warned that Russia's backing for Myanmar's military rulers is unacceptable and destabilising, with its supply of weapons helping to fuel a conflict that has become a catastrophe for the country. Russia's defence minister and top diplomat have visited Myanmar, while junta chief Min Aung Hlaing has been to Russia several times since 2021 and was given an honorary doctorate.

Beatification for Polish family murdered for sheltering Jews

BERLIN (BBC): A beatification Mass service has been held in Poland for a Catholic family murdered by Nazis for hiding Jews during World War Two.

Poland's president and more than 30,000 pilgrims attended the outdoor service, led by Pope Francis' envoy. This was the first time an entire family has been beatified, a great honour and a step towards sainthood. They were executed in 1944 with the Jews they sheltered in south-eastern Poland, after they were betrayed.



In late 1942, motivated by their Christian values, farmers Jozef and Wiktoria Ulma and their six young children - Stanislaw, Maria, Wladyslaw, Franciszek and Antoni - hid eight Jews in their farmhouse in the village of Markowa.

Saul Goldman, 70, was hiding with his sons Baruch, Mechel, Joachim and Mojzesz. Also there was Golda Grunfeld and her sister Lea Didner with her daughter Reszla, according to Poland's state Institute of National Remembrance.

Unlike in Nazi-occupied western Europe, the penalty for aiding Jews in occupied Poland was summary execution. In 1944 a Polish police officer is thought to have betrayed the family by informing the Nazis of their secret. German gendarmes shot the Jews hiding in the attic and then took the Ulma family outside,

shooting Jozef and Wiktoria, who was seven months pregnant at the time, in front of their young children - the oldest was eight, the youngest 18 months. The children were then shot dead.

Several months later, members of the Polish underground resistance executed the police officer who is believed to have denounced the family.

Sunday's outdoor Mass was led by Pope Francis' envoy, Cardinal Marcello Semeraro. Speaking at the Vatican, the Pope described the Ulmas as a "ray of light" in the darkness of the war and asked the crowd in St Peter's Square to give the family a round of applause.

The Pope's speech was broadcast live to the ceremony in Markowa.

In an address at the end, President Andrzej Duda

thanked Pope Francis for the "extraordinary" beatification of the whole family.

"Thank you for showing the historical truth about those times, about the fate of Poles under the German occupation. The death penalty was intended to instil terror," he said.

In 1995, Israel's Yad Vashem awarded Jozef and Wiktoria with the title "Righteous Among the Nations", and in 2003 the beatification process was launched. Beatification is a stage in the Roman Catholic Church towards canonisation or sainthood. Those beatified are declared "blessed" and worthy of public veneration. In 1939, Poland was home to Europe's largest Jewish community and more Poles (over 7,000) have been honoured by Israel for helping Jews dur-

ing the war than any other nationality. At the same time, under the extreme brutality of the Nazi occupation, some Poles denounced Jews or took part in their murders.

Some six million of Poland's citizens were killed during the war - half of them were Jews.

Leading members of the Polish government, including Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, attended the Mass. The government has been accused of trying to rewrite history by exclusively focusing on Polish suffering at the hands of the Nazis and the aid Poles provided to their Jewish neighbours during the war. It has been accused of trying to stifle historical research into cases of Poles who committed crimes against the country's Jewish population.

Italian PM: Strong partnership with China more important than Belt and Road Initiative

ROME (Reuters): Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on Sunday there was more to Italy's relationship with China than the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), adding that a final decision on whether to leave the BRI was still to be taken. Italian media reported earlier in the day that Italy would quit the BRI and instead seek to revitalise a strategic partnership agreement with China, aimed at fostering economic cooperation, that it first signed in 2004. Italy is the only G7 nation to sign up to the BRI, a global trade and infrastructure plan modelled on the old Silk Road that linked imperial China and the West.

Italy has the G7 presidency next year and recasting its relationship with Beijing would placate its Western allies, who are fearful of Chinese influence, while reducing the risk of a

backlash from Beijing. "There are European nations which in recent years haven't been part of the Belt and Road but have been able to forge more favourable relations (with China) than we have sometimes managed," Meloni told a press conference at the end of the

G20 summit of the world's major economies in New Delhi. Meloni met Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Saturday on the G20 sidelines and described the talks as polite and constructive. "The issue is how to guarantee a partnership that is beneficial for both sides, leaving



aside the decision that we will take on the BRI," she added. Meloni said the Chinese had renewed an invitation for her to visit Beijing but that no date had been set. The Italian government has also been invited to a BRI Forum that China will host in October, she added.

'It was total chaos': Voices from the earthquake



MARRAKESH (BBC): It was night when the earthquake hit Morocco, with many people already in bed. But the quake, measuring 6.8, soon led to people fleeing their homes in sheer panic. An aftershock, of 4.9 magnitude, struck 19 minutes later.

It is now known that thousands have died - but the final death toll is still unclear. While the epicentre was in the High Atlas Mountains, many died in Marrakesh, some 44 miles away. Abdelhak El Amrani, 33, who lives in Marrakesh, told AFP: "We felt a violent tremor, and I realised it was an earthquake. I could see buildings moving."

"Then I went outside and there were a lot of people there. People were all in shock and panic. The children were crying and the parents were distraught."

Michael Bizet, a French national who owns three properties in Marrakesh's old town, told the news agency: "I thought my bed was going to fly away. I went out into the street

half-naked and immediately went to see my riads [traditional Moroccan houses].

"It was total chaos, a real catastrophe, madness."

British journalist Martin Jay, who lives in Morocco, said he was woken by the sound of screams.

He told the BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "The first hint was my wife screaming. We both had nodded off to sleep - but not into deep sleep - just into that light slumber I suppose... and she started screaming, and I just sort of opened my eyes and couldn't quite join the dots up."

"I couldn't quite equate the situation, I couldn't imagine I was in the middle of an earthquake."

"Everything was vibrating, everything, the bed, the floor, the four walls."

He said people were told not to return to their homes.

"So you have this weird evening of almost every single town in Morocco, most people are sitting on the ground outside of their houses or apartment blocks,

because they were afraid of the second earthquake which they predicted would come two hours later. Thank God it didn't."

Fellow Marrakesh resident Fayssal Badour had been driving when the quake hit at 23:11 local time. "I stopped and realised what a disaster it was," he told AFP. "The screaming and crying was unbearable." Mina Metoui said that, in Marrakesh, the noise sounded like "a fighter jet", getting louder and louder. "The next thing I see, my room is moving, pictures, frames started falling off the wall," she told BBC News. "You know, things just started dropping off. That's when I realised we're going through some sort of an earthquake. It took a second what felt like minutes. Then I heard people screaming, getting out the property... it was really a horrible experience."

Rescue efforts are now ongoing, with many buildings seriously damaged.

Montasir Itri, who lives in the mountain village of Asni, close to the epicentre, told Reuters: "Our neighbours are under the rubble and people are working hard to rescue them using available means in the village." Houda Outassaf had been walking around Jemaa el-Fna Square in Marrakesh when he felt the ground start to shake.

"It was a truly staggering sensation," he told AFP. "We're safe and sound but I'm still in shock."

"I have at least 10 members of my family who died... I can hardly believe it, as I was with them no more than two days ago."

The historic city of Marrakesh is popular with tourists, attracting thousands each year.

Lorella Palmer, a British woman on holiday there, told BBC News: "The room just started shaking."

"I think your brain doesn't register straight away what is happening until the picture frames and the bed start shaking," she said.

Niger junta accuses France of deploying troops for possible intervention

NIAMEY/NEW DELHI (Reuters): Niger's junta on Sunday accused France of deploying troops in several West African countries as part of preparations for a possible military intervention together with the regional bloc ECOWAS in Niger.

In a communique read on state television overnight, the junta also repeated its call for the departure of French troops from its territory - a major source of tension between the one-time allies since the July 26 ouster of president Mohamed Bazoum.

The statement appealed to "national and international opinion to witness the consequences of this aggressive, underhanded and contemptuous attitude adopted by France."

Relations between Niger and its former coloniser France have soured since Paris declared the junta illegitimate. Amid a wave of anti-French sentiment, the coup's leaders have also followed the strategy of juntas in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso in seeking to end long-standing military ties with France in the regionwide fight against Islamist insurgencies.

Asked about the junta's latest comments, French

President Emmanuel Macron said "we do not recognise any legitimacy in the statements of the putschists."

Regarding the some 1,500 French troops stationed in Niger, Macron said any decision about their deployment would only be made in coordination with Bazoum.

"If we ever redeploy... I would do so only at the request of President Bazoum," Macron told a news conference at the close of a two-day summit of G20 leaders in India.

He did not directly address the allegation that France was deploying troops elsewhere in West

Africa as part of a regional proposal to use force as a last resort to restore democracy.

The main regional bloc ECOWAS has slapped sanctions on Niger and activated a so-called standby force for the possible military intervention, although talks are ongoing to find a diplomatic solution.

Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu, who holds ECOWAS' revolving chairmanship, has suggested that a nine-month transition back to civilian rule could satisfy regional powers. Niger's junta has previously proposed a three-year timeline.

Daniel Khalife charged over Wandsworth prison escape

LONDON (BBC): Daniel Khalife has been charged with escaping from Wandsworth prison, after his four days on the run came to an end on Saturday. The 21-year-old former soldier is due to appear in Westminster Magistrates' Court on Monday. He was arrested on a towpath in Northolt after being pulled off a bicycle by a plain-clothed officer.

Mr Khalife escaped from the prison on Wednesday morning, seemingly by hiding under a food delivery lorry. The Met Police said he had been charged with escaping on September 6 while

on remand at HMP Wandsworth Prison awaiting trial at the Old Bailey, contrary to common law.

He was being held on remand at the prison in south-west London after previously being charged under the Official Secrets Act and the Terrorism Act.

Mr Khalife is accused of trying to spy for an enemy state, understood to be Iran, and obtaining information likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism. He is also charged with plotting a fake bomb hoax at MOD Stafford, where he had been based. He denies the charges against him. His

escape prompted questions about security at Wandsworth prison, with Justice Secretary Alex Chalk telling the BBC he has launched investigations into the incident.

Mr Chalk says preliminary inquiries into the getaway have determined that correct security protocols and staffing levels were in place at the time. Speaking to the BBC's Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg, he said: "The real question is whether the protocols were followed to the extent they should be."

The minister also revealed earlier that dozens of prisoners were moved from HMP

Wandsworth to other prisons after the escape, "out of an abundance of caution". Mr Chalk told the BBC that "approximately" 40 inmates on remand were transferred this week, amid questions about whether Mr Khalife should have been held on remand at the Category B jail. Police had offered a reward of up to £20,000 for information leading to Mr Khalife's arrest and detectives said they had received more than 100 calls from people offering information. He was detained at 10:41 BST on Saturday - about 14 miles from the prison.

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Stagnant educational growth and way forward

The education advisor for Save the Children has recently sensitized the Pakistani rulers that nearly 3 million students are out of school as the recent floods have destroyed 30,000 schools across the country, which merits leaders’ attention, necessary funds and public participation.

The education sector is the most neglected, least invested and poorly managed arena of Pakistan’s economy. Pakistan annually spends below 2% of GDP on education and related activities both at the federal as well as provincial levels, while the government share in the education sector gradually shrinks and the private education industry rapidly grows in the country. Although government leaders claim to attain a 62.3% literacy rate, however, that has no real impact on the national economy because of low-quality education, exaggeration of figures, mismanagement and conflicting policies of the successive governments in the country. Previously, the government failed to construct thousands of public schools in KP and Azad Kashmir that collapsed in the 2005 earthquake. The recent floods ruined thousands of public schools across the nation pushing millions of poor children out of alma maters. The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index has ranked Pakistan in the health and education sector at 129th position out of 138 countries in the world. This number is far fewer compared to other nations in the region and depicts an alarming situation in the education sector which is crucial in nation-building and economic growth of the country.

Literacy has a fundamental role in socio-economic uplift, character building as well as political and structural growth of any nation. Growing illiteracy creates a vicious cycle of problems and acts as a root cause of a majority of social and economic evils.

As of now, a bulk of the country’s issues including poverty, unemployment, overpopulation, rising inflation, housing and infrastructure, baradari politics, poor health care and bad governance, lawlessness, religious intolerance, corruption, crime and extremism all are outcomes of illiteracy, polarized and sub-standard education that had shaped our generations in diverse ethnicities, and divided communities instead of transforming them into a unified and single nation. At the same time, this curse adversely affects democracy, promotes the status quo and obstructs forces of change, modern development and innovations

Pakistan’s education sector faces multiple challenges ranging from insufficient funding to non-availability of qualified teachers, the non-existence of a unified curriculum, and the use of substandard teaching practices, together with corruption of bureaucracy and parents’ misperception about children’s education that continuously add to country’s woes by producing illiterate and unskilled generation instead of raising well-groomed children who play a role in the uplift of the country.

The current situation merits an education emergency along with massive funding by the government and International donor agencies are necessary to construct essential infrastructure, recruit and train talented teachers and admission of all children over 5 years of age. So, a nationwide crusade could be launched against the evil of illiteracy, ignorance and poverty that ultimately leads our nation toward literacy, economic growth and prosperity in the days to come.

G-20 and global climate agenda

The influential G-20 nations recently gathered in New Delhi to discuss their business plans, boost their cooperation and achieve the bloc’s monopoly over the global economy through joint work and coordinated strategies of the member nations. Before their huddle in India, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres sensitized the powerful bloc to act quickly on global warming because the climate crisis is worsening rapidly, time lapses as the priorities and focus of the world nations diverted significantly from their common goal that was set through Paris accord at Global Climate Summit in 2015.

The historic Paris Accord set a certain time frame for specific goals to protect all living species including mankind and animals from the worst effects of global warming. The globe was to cut its emissions of heat-trapping gases by 43% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, and 60% by 2035. Meanwhile, world nations agreed to gradually phase out unabated fossil fuels, the internal combustion engine, coal power plants etc. That still awaits the implementation of words into action.

Unfortunately, the global climate agenda was dishonoured and torn apart into pieces by the nationalist American President Donald J. Trump who preferred his country’s interest over the survival and well-being of worldwide humanity, and all other living creatures in the universe. Later, a majority of developed nations renounced their commitments concerning the global climate agenda because it hurt them the least despite the fact global warming was the sole creation of Western democracies in the past decades. The top 20 economies, whom leaders met in New Delhi are primarily responsible for 80% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions in the globe.

Interestingly, there was a one-phrase description of global climate risk at the G-20 huddle in India while the whole deliberations of G-20 leaders were regarding the war in Ukraine. The Western nations have diverted their entire resources to defeating their staunch enemy, thus global warming is not a priority for them anymore. The UN must hold all polluters accountable for their pollution according to their size and subscription, otherwise, no crooks would be ready to pay for their pranks.

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The election Prediction..



G20: Bold ideas to douse the flames of a world on fire

Bono and Lawrence H. Summers

Wildfires of all kinds. This has been the hottest summer, not just in both of our lives but possibly in 120,000 years, according to leading scientists. Yet it is likely to be the coolest we’ll experience for the rest of our lives.

It’s a startling thought and one to stop on before checking the exits — if we can find any.

That means more heat, more drought and more wildfires like this summer’s devastating blazes in Maui and the Mediterranean basin. But it also means more pressure on a global economy already feeling the strain.

Because the climate crisis unaddressed will become development in reverse, undoing decades of social and economic progress in regions that did nothing to cause it.

This is a time to plan, not panic. To organise, not agonise. There are strategies we can adopt before the next time we hear someone shout “Fire!” and we realise it’s the global economy itself that has gone up in flames.

Already, the world economy is faltering and fragmenting, with sticky inflation and a cost-of-living crunch continuing to bite hard. And if the still-lingering pandemic and climate change were not enough, the world’s low- and middle-income countries could face their second major food security shock in less than a year.

It’s hardly surprising that more countries across the Global South are losing patience with our model of rules-based freedom and democracy. Long lectures from richer to poorer countries, followed by little investment, just isn’t working as a formula for winning the benefit of the doubt for the idea of liberal democracy.

Geopolitical tensions

Consider this: When Greece, with a population of 10 million, faced profound banking and budget problems in 2010, the International Monetary Fund and European Union committed more than 100 billion euros to the rescue and to prevent financial contagion in Europe.

Vastly more was committed by European finance ministers and the European Central Bank. Yet, as the planet burns, as a generation’s progress against poverty in some of the world’s poorest countries erodes, and as thousands if not millions of lives are lost, no remotely comparable effort has been mounted.

A generation ago, we — a rock star and an economist — joined forces with millions of activists, faith leaders and the World Bank, IMF and their shareholders to secure the Jubilee debt deal, which offered budgetary space to countries saddled by debt so large and unyielding that they faced the real threat of collapse.

Now, we come together again because the need is even greater for decisive financial action on behalf of the world’s poorest people. The Group of 20 leaders’ summit in New Delhi offers a chance for us to connect the dots among the

climate crisis, growth and development, and the roles they play in geopolitical tensions.

Such strategising is only possible if low-income and vulnerable countries have a say. As we’ve seen time after time at these forums, either you’ve got a seat at the table or you’re on the menu. The African Union must have a permanent seat on the G-20. With Africa’s population expected to double to nearly 2.5 billion by 2050 and include 1 in 3 of the world’s youths, there can be no global solutions without African leadership and innovation.

As was headlined at Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, the African continent is home to 60 per cent

face ever-steeper costs to secure new investment.

With rising interest rates, African countries are paying 500 per cent more to borrow from the private market than they would pay if sufficient capital were available from the World Bank. More than half of the low-income countries that are in or at risk of debt distress are in Africa, forcing their governments to choose between servicing debt, investing in their people or protecting the planet.

So, big ideas for New Delhi that would help put out and prevent future economic fires:

— Ramp up all the multilateral development banks, starting with the World Bank. These institu-

With all the help a world on fire needs, it should not be acceptable that donor contributions to the World Bank’s arm for supporting the world’s poorest countries have failed to keep up with inflation over the past decade. Even more problematic is the reality that, at present, total lending from the development banks is roughly equivalent to the amount they are repaid by developing countries. During its year-long G-20 presidency, India convened an expert group on the multilateral development banks co-chaired by one of us (Summers), and its report calls for a triple agenda that, if adopted, would be transformative. The world could move to such a triple mandate by embracing global challenges such as climate and pandemics, along with shared prosperity and poverty reduction. It could respond to the African Finance Ministers’ call for a tripling of the World Bank’s International Development Association facility that provides very low-interest financing to the poorest countries. And it could use the power of modern finance, along with new capital infusions, to triple the volume of available and affordable lending to \$400 billion a year. — The G-20 should demand that the IMF move deeper on debt and further on flexibility. With scores of countries looking over the cliff at debilitating debt crises, the fund needs to accelerate its drive to fashion a solution at scale. The G-20s Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable, co-chaired by the IMF, World Bank and India, as current chair of the G-20, is making some progress, but it is modest and incremental.

of the world’s best solar potential, its rainforests absorb more carbon than the Amazon, and it accounts for 71 per cent of global cobalt production and 77 per cent of platinum, all vital to a green transition. Unleash this potential, and we open up possibilities for a cooler and brighter future for everyone.

Big funding squeeze

But that’s not where we are headed. African countries are confronting a “big funding squeeze,” according to the IMF. External finance has dried up, and when African governments aren’t locked out of international capital markets, they

tions are unique in their ability to leverage resources. Indeed, loan guarantees that would cost the US federal budget just \$1 for every American, or about \$300 million, would permit the World Bank to extend its lending by \$15 billion. And the efforts of any country are further magnified as all others contribute.

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Zambia recently reached a deal on its debt — but it took two years. We’re racing against the clock, and the clock is winning. The cost of debt is rising parallel to increases in interest rates, meaning that the price tag for Africa has now increased by \$56 billion. It’s like watching your adjustable mortgage rate go through the roof while managing a pay cut.

The IMF also needs to revamp its Resilience and Sustainability Trust, a new facility designed to help countries with constrained budgets tackle global challenges like climate change. As currently designed, it does not enable substantial resource transfers. Only \$614 million has been disbursed so far at a time when resource needs are measured in the hundreds of billions and committed future disbursements are less than \$5 billion.

Given all that emerging markets are facing, the IMF needs to establish a mechanism that can provide support at scale to countries facing external challenges that make them victims of problems beyond their control. When a country is suffering not primarily as the result of its own policy errors, it should not be required to accept IMF policy conditionality to receive support.

In New Delhi, where we hope the G-20 will become the G-21, some will simply admire the same problems that others are straining to solve. Some might even fan the flames.

But the world doesn’t need any more arsonists. The world needs its fire-fighters at last to leave the station, which means leadership that recognises the danger we’re all facing.

Libya-Israel fiasco highlights Washington’s misguided approach

Hafed Al-Ghwell

A clandestine meeting between the foreign ministers of Libya and Israel, Najla Al-Mangoush and Eli Cohen, respectively, opened a Pandora’s box, revealing yet again the convoluted maze that is Washington’s Middle East policy. The covert encounter, held in Rome, was intended to quietly keep things moving in the still turbulent waters of Arab-Israeli normalization. What was intended as a signal of a formal Libya-Israel engagement, dispensing with historic antagonism, has since emerged as an embarrassing diplomatic misstep of epic proportions, fueling protests within Libya and unsettling its precarious balance of power.

The weakening of Libyan interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah and the emboldening of militias, particularly those from the city of Zawiyah, have intensified the country’s domestic tensions.

It could potentially ignite a political firestorm in the North African country, while casting an even harsher spotlight on Israel, and dealing a severe blow to US strategic ambitions for the region.

The debacle underscores the inherent risks and complexities associated with Washington’s grand vision of anchoring Israel as the linchpin of a revised approach to the Middle East and North Africa that, for all the bluster and pomp, remains a work in progress.

It also exposes the flawed assumptions underpinning this strategy, particularly in a country as politically fragmented and volatile as Libya.

The fallout from the leaked meeting has not just rattled the already unstable power dynamics of Libya. The unforced error and the inevitable crisis that came afterward occurred amid a cauldron of rival militias, shifting alliances, and an uneasy balance of power. As a result, it will likely worsen a longstanding quagmire that the global community has failed to deal with for more than a decade.

It has also compromised Washington’s role in addressing the myriad intractable challenges that plague the North African country. These range from feuding political camps, governance issues, and security threats to broader regional and geopolitical dynamics.

Besides, persistent instability in Libya is also impeding progress on Maghreb integration, cross-border cooperation, and collaboration on critical issues such as climate change, migration, security and trade.

Adding an extra layer of complexity is the unwelcome presence of the Wagner mercenary group, foreign fighters sustaining the dizzying array of external interests that have also sponsored the emergence of sophisticated hybrid actors committed to disrupting Libya’s democratization, stability and unification.

Clearly, the reverberations of this diplomatic blunder extend far beyond the borders of Libya, threatening to undermine Washington’s priorities in the region, while simultaneously exposing how misguided its approach is to the broader Arab region. As the dust settles on this farrago, it demands an urgent introspection on the larger implications of this episode, even as its strange cast of characters are still workshoping how to deal with the consequences of a secretive meeting gone public.

The botched meeting, which reportedly discussed preserving the heritage of Libya’s former Jewish community and potential Israeli assistance for humanitarian issues, was an embarrassing unraveling of what should have been a confidential diplomatic process. This debacle serves as a stark reminder that the art of diplomacy demands more than just diplomats — it requires a nuanced understanding of regional complexities, sensitivity to

public sentiment, and a commitment to prioritizing the welfare of the nation involved over self-centered foreign policy objectives.

The US, a major actor in the Libyan affair, finds itself in the hot seat, having displayed limited engagement and intermittent concern for Libya’s near-term stability. This blinkered approach, however, is reflective of a larger global trend where nations exploit Libya’s predicament to advance their short-term interests. As the US seeks to further its diplomatic reach across the Arab world, the wind blowing from Libya presents a chilling defiance and a stark wake-up call.

This development undermines America’s Libya policy, dramatically revealing the disconnect between diplomacy enacted in palatial conference rooms and the deep-seated sentiments of the populace.

Washington’s role faces the specter of an unassailable gap in trust and confidence, raising questions about the viability of its influence in Libya — whatever is left of it.

Yet, contrary to fatalist narratives, this setback could catalyze a much-needed recalibration of US engagement with Libya. To win back the confidence of the Libyan populace, a paradigm shift is needed — one that sees the US and other global stakeholders subvert this injurious dynamic and prioritize collaborative endeavors aimed at restoring stability, rebuilding trust, and fostering grassroots empowerment in Libya.

The Libya-Israel diplomatic misstep serves as a timely cautionary tale, reminding us that effective diplomacy requires more than just “good” intentions — it demands a commitment to genuine engagement and a focus on the long-term stability of the nations involved. It also underlines that past Israeli normalization agreements with other Arab countries are still simply agreements with governments not the people of these countries.

To bridge the trust deficit, prioritizing direct dialogue with the Libyan populace, deepening understanding of their historical perspectives and present-day complexities, may foster mutual understanding. Moreover, revisiting the parameters of the Abraham Accords, with a humane recognition of the Palestinian cause, would signal an earnest attempt to address at least a part of the root of the dissent. Furthermore, expanding the spectrum of engagement beyond geopolitics to areas such as cultural diplomacy, education, trade, and infrastructural investment could also reignite the US-Libya relationship.

Ultimately, the US must demonstrate that its commitment to Libya extends beyond strategic interests, if it wishes to regain trust and energize its role in Libya, as well as within the pivotal Maghreb sub-region.

This also applies to the other major actors who must embody commitment toward collective efforts, with the objective of restoring stability, reinstating trust, and promoting local empowerment — not just in Libya.

Other vulnerable Arab states with equally out-of-touch political elites might cling to normalization or other similar ambitious endeavors to cultivate diplomatic capital as long as they toe the lines drawn either in Washington or Brussels.

The Libya-Israel diplomatic fumble, therefore, also provides the global community with a warning writ large. It is time to cease exploiting fragile states and focus on an honest assessment of the state of affairs — an introspection devoid of hidden agendas. Such a task demands nothing less than altering the current trajectory and charting a new path; one that promises hope over despair and long-term stability over fleeting alliances.

Staying part of the ECHR is a privilege, not a burden

Cometh the UK's political party conference season, cometh the pandering to grassroots members, pledging heaven on earth without cost or sacrifice. No more "blood, toil, tears and sweat" speeches; instead, things are more akin to visiting a fantasy sweetshop and filling one's bags with whatever one's heart desires, all free of charge. And nothing appeals more to the governing Conservative Party's rank and file than continuing to blame Europe for the government's own shortcomings, especially its failure to deal with the immigration crisis, with recent particular emphasis on those desperate ones arriving — not all of them alive — after crossing the English Channel in tiny boats, and the government hoping to be able to send them to Rwanda as part of an ill-conceived and probably illegal plan concocted between the governments in London and Kigali.

If anyone can be trusted to take the most hostile approach to both migrants and Europe, it must be the UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman. Back from her summer break, she renewed her attack on the European Court of Human Rights with full venom, calling it, in an interview with the BBC, "politicized and interventionist," and an encroachment on British sovereignty.

In further sign of her government's isolationist mindset, Braverman suggested that the government would be prepared to withdraw from the ECHR, which is based in Strasbourg, for allegedly thwarting her grand plan of sending asylum-seekers to Rwanda. It is worth differentiating between the failed, immoral and impractical Rwanda policy

and the wider implications of quitting the ECHR. For the government to relinquish its responsibilities to refugees and asylum-seekers, and send them to Rwanda, was a stillborn idea to begin with, one that stood no chance of endorsement by a British court, but one that also at best could have solved a tiny fraction of the problem, and in any case would take years to implement. It enabled the

The attack on the ECHR is itself an attack on human rights. Undoubtedly, the "small boats issue" presents a challenge to both the UK and the EU in their efforts to regulate migration. It is a humanitarian issue, part of an international commitment to protect those who are fleeing persecution in accordance to international convention, and at the same time ensure that they are not exploited in their desperation by unscrupulous criminal networks of human traffickers, who cause thousands of migrant deaths by drowning every single year thanks to the boats they use being totally unfit for purpose.

government to be seen as acting tough on immigration, but with little return and in the process losing international respectability.

However, the attack on the ECHR is itself an attack on human rights. Undoubtedly, the "small boats issue" presents a challenge to both the UK and the EU in their efforts to regulate migration. It is a humanitarian issue, part of an international commitment to protect those who are fleeing persecution in accordance to international convention, and at the same time ensure that they are not exploited in their desperation by unscrupulous criminal networks of human traffickers, who cause thousands of migrant deaths by drowning every single year thanks to the boats they use being totally unfit for purpose.

Yossi Mekelberg

Moreover, trumpeting their populist anti-migrant rhetoric — and the British government does this more than most — governments conveniently forget that their economies require a constant stream of migrants to plug ever-growing holes in the labor market.

However, in the bigger picture, even if the UK government feels that it is the

cross-party resistance by MPs and peers, who argued that such an amendment would "damage people's ability to enforce their rights" both inside and outside the Strasbourg court. This leads me to the inevitable conclusion that while sending asylum-seekers to Rwanda, and generally maintaining anti-immigration policies, is one driving force behind the government's wish to opt out of

much of it due to their animosity to immigration and diversity, leads them to undermine some fundamental national interests.

In this case the party is even ready to sacrifice the peace in Northern Ireland at the altar of pleasing certain minority segments of the party and trying to retain the 2019 "red wall constituencies," which traditionally vote Labour, but voted for the Conservatives in the last general election because the latter were felt to be more effective at countering the perceived threat from immigration. In addition to further straining relations with our EU neighbors, any harm inflicted on the Northern Ireland peace agreement is one that will also damage relations with the US, which has made huge efforts to broker and maintain the agreement.

This irresponsible populist rhetoric of disengaging from the European system of human rights, which was established in the aftermath and among the ruins of the Second World War and was aimed at building a better world, could also end in the UK's departure from the European Council, which would leave the UK in the unflattering company of Russia and Belarus, the only countries in the region that are outside the Council of Europe. Now, in what looks like the twilight of the Tories' time in power, the party that used to be proud of its ability to win national elections resembles more the party of Little England as it not only drifts further away from playing a constructive part in building a world which is interconnected and adheres to the values of human rights and freedom, but also turns its back on being true to the laudable British traditions of pragmatism, compassion and, above all, common sense.

There would also be immediate and severe implications to leaving the ECHR and with it probably the Council of Europe. Specific issues are affected, such as the Good Friday Agreement on Northern Ireland, and how the UK is perceived as a leading force in global affairs. The ECHR is baked into the Northern Ireland peace process and the Belfast Agreement. Accordingly, any primary legislation passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly is subject to ECHR scrutiny. As has been the case with Brexit, the gung-ho approach by the Tories when it comes to Europe,

the ECHR, the British government is, ominously, more concerned to water down its commitment to individual rights while reinforcing those of the state and the big corporations. There would also be immediate and severe implications to leaving the ECHR and with it probably the Council of Europe. Specific issues are affected, such as the Good Friday Agreement on Northern Ireland, and how the UK is perceived as a leading force in global affairs. The ECHR is baked into the Northern Ireland peace process and the Belfast Agreement. Accordingly, any primary legislation passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly is subject to ECHR scrutiny. As has been the case with Brexit, the gung-ho approach by the Tories when it comes to Europe,

An attempt to replace that 1998 act last year with a bill of rights, through amending the Human Rights Act, encountered

Ranvir S. Nayar

G20 membership. This filled a void that existed in the bloc, which had lacked a single voice to represent the 18 percent of humanity that lives in Africa. The admission of the AU will go a long way to broaden the group and make it much more inclusive.

But the New Delhi meeting can be and should be used by India, as the host, and other developing nations to put forward their views on almost all the challenges facing the world.

On climate change, for example, the Global South should seize the opportunity to present its long-pending demands of the rich nations and highlight the repeated failure of developed countries to honor any of their commitments, be it in terms of cutting their own carbon emissions or providing the \$1 trillion needed every year by poorer countries to deal with the issue.

It is crucial to note that the G20 meeting is taking place barely eight weeks

before COP28 opens in Dubai. So, if the developing world is able to create some momentum on forcing rich countries to honor their commitments, it could go a long way toward ensuring the success of the November meeting.

Another issue where the Global South needs to make its voice heard is the global financial structure, especially regarding financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, that are currently under the control of the rich world. Here again, India has held preparatory discussions with other developing countries and is likely to push for a resolution, or at least the inclusion, of the issue at the summit.

Developing nations should also highlight another area of tremendous concern — the resumption of the global trade negotiations, which in recent years have been blocked by the rich world.

This included the torpedoing of any agreement on the Doha Development Round, which was aimed at

opening up wealthier markets for developing countries.

Then there are issues of global health and equality where, again, the developing countries need access to technologies and trained manpower, as well as funding to improve their health care infrastructure.

With so many issues ahead, developing countries need to promote their perspective clearly and in a united voice at New Delhi. The risk for developing nations is that they let their differences with other developing nations, such as the tensions between India and China, lead to a split in their approach.

As the host of the summit, India may need to go the extra mile to ensure that China is wholeheartedly with other developing nations in changing the narrative inside the G20.

If, on the other hand, the developing nations let their differences get the better of them, then the voice of the Global South is likely to be not only highly enfeebled, but also silenced, just as it has been for centuries.

Upheaval in the ‘coup belt’ will add to migrant flows

Dr. Theodore Karasik

power. These leaders inherit the wealth-generating sectors of the countries they now manage, but still fail to redistribute the benefits. When it comes to poverty in this part of Africa, a tragic situation has been worsened by the existing political plight of the Sahel. Those fleeing usually go north.

EU initiatives foresee stepping up joint work on the five priority domains of the 2017 Joint Valletta Action Plan, which aims to support African and European partners by enhancing migration governance. Several years later and the EU is still working on best practices based on this initial foray supported by Morocco. Rabat recognizes the impact of migration flows into Europe, and sees itself as a primary partner as a potential war between the coup states and ECOWAS breaks out. But there needs to be immediate preparation by relevant EU

The complexity of the situation on the ground in the Sahel only feeds this phenomena heading north toward Europe. With the Gabon coup, the security equation is changing with growing ground-level grievances. Migration issues are already a major problem on the seas and for governments, an issue that is only going to get compounded. The impact on the North Africa/Mediterranean maritime arena in terms of migration flows is already well documented, with drownings, mishaps and passport control processing centers being overwhelmed. Tens of thousands from different corners of the African continent, and especially the Sahel, have streamed into criminally run outlets in Libya and directed toward European shores.

Sahel migrants can be weaponized, as the region remains contested and dangerous. The emerging Gabon versus ECOWAS crisis marks the beginning of a dangerous new era in international power politics. From an international security perspective, coercive engineered migrations are cross-border population movements that are deliberately created or manipulated in order to induce political, military and/or economic concessions from a target state or states. In 2021, Belarus engaged in this disruptive behavior before by inviting refugees to the country, then releasing them into Poland. The instruments employed to carry out this kind of coercion are diverse and have been around for decades.

To be sure, Africa's youth bubble feeds into the support for coups and their leaders, depending on the ability of each country's armed forces and police to maintain law and order. When counter-demonstrators or Islamist groups take advantage of the environment, the security situation only lengthens the time coup leaders remain in

50 Burkina Faso soldiers were killed in a terror attack in the past week. In addition, Russia, China, Türkiye and the Gulf states are all competing for influence in this "hot zone." Depending on the outcomes in the Sahel, migration flows are going to increase. The Sahel's threat environment has only grown worse, and Western powers are falling behind. Enter Europe.

Research shows that the international community — the West — generally considers mass migrant population flows across nation states a primarily humanitarian crisis. But many times migrant flows are often an intentional tool of aggression used by state actors. The weaponization of migrants is the instrumentalization of population flow through both the threat and the actual migration of people into the territory of a target state, especially in Europe. Paris has suffered the most and will likely lose more as challenges to

There is no doubt that the Sahel faces growing fighting between terrorists, state actors, and outside actors, making the Libya model of warfare for the past decade a model for what happens next in this part of Africa. More than 50 Burkina Faso soldiers were killed in a terror attack in the past week. In addition, Russia, China, Türkiye and the Gulf states are all competing for influence in this "hot zone."

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organizations, as well as NATO, for whatever ultimately comes from the coup belt political-social mechanics.

This Sahel/coup belt confrontation is drawing outside powers who have been competing for a piece of the "financial pie" in mining, infrastructure development and trade. Russia is likely to be fielding supplies to their clients in this part of Africa, sometimes cooperating with China and other countries, sometimes not. Türkiye is another player, but not front and center currently.

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French law and order become more focused from Sahel upheaval and migration flows. The French ejection from the bulk of the Sahel region is a demonstration of one of the geopolitical games that is being played out now.

Overall, the coup belt states face numerous threats that given the current trajectory will result in increasing numbers of migrants heading into North Africa, with perhaps Libya as the focal point, challenging that state's political processes and infighting. Europe has to be ready for what comes next from the coup belt in terms of possible migrant weaponization. International agencies may need to be ready with constabulary missions to help with health, safety and security of families, women and children.

Developing nations must speak with one voice at New Delhi summit

Leaders of the G20 — a grouping of the world's 19 largest economies and the EU — who have traveled to New Delhi for the 2023 summit hosted by India, represent almost 67 percent of the global population, 75 percent of international trade and 80 percent of total economic output.

Over two days, Sept. 9 and 10, the forum will focus on global issues ranging from geostrategic and political challenges to climate change, health and access to technology.

Certainly, with seven of the largest developing nations, the G20 is a far more inclusive group than the G7, which is entirely a club of wealthy countries. However, the 13 developed national members have tended to dominate the agenda and outcomes of G20 gatherings so far, despite attempts by developing countries to bring their issues to the table.

For decades, India has rightly seen itself as the voice of the developing world, or Global South in the new parlance.

Sometimes alone and at other times in concert with other developing nations, it has carried on battles at various forums, ranging from negotiations at the Doha Development Round of the World Trade Organization or the struggle for climate justice and equity under the highly complex climate change discussions.

In this context, the New Delhi meeting presents a unique opportunity for India, and indeed the entire developing world, to make significant progress on the issue of giving a proper representation and adequate voice to developing nations at important international gatherings or through organizations such as the G20. Even before the summit opened on Saturday, India had managed to make progress on this issue, inviting a large number of Arab and African nations to take part as observers.

During the inaugural session of the summit, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that the African Union had been granted permanent

G20: How digital transformation is merging technology with ethics

India has surprised the world by leading in the development and deployment of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). Rather than just replacing paper forms with digital ones, India made a massive leap in how the government works and delivers services.

The Aadhar system identifies a billion people with biometrics, and UPI enables real-time payments. This isn't just about speed and convenience; it's about fundamentally changing how the government operates. Bureaucracy becomes leaner, operational costs drop, and corruption is more difficult to pull off. The state becomes more efficient and agile, able to adapt quickly because it operates on a data-driven platform that fosters trust.

Through initiatives like JAM (Jan Dhan, Aadhar, Mobile) trinity, within 6 years, India has achieved a remarkable 80% financial inclusion rate from a mea-

gre 35 per cent in 2011 — a feat that would have taken nearly five decades without a DPI approach.

The sprawling architecture of the India Stack — incorporating over 50 crore Jan Dhan bank accounts, 1.3 billion Aadhar identities, and a network of 800 million mobile connections — embodies an inclusive vision that transcends mere statistics.

Moreover, the nation's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has set a global precedent, facilitating 91 billion digital transactions in 2022 alone, marking an incredible ascent from just 1.2 billion in 2014. More than 9.41 billion transactions valuing about Rs14.89 trillion were transacted in May 2023 alone.

India's digital advancements, as underscored by the country's proficiency in IT, enabled the creation of Aadhaar in-house with support from the private sector. This step was not merely to

circumvent software costs but to exercise control, preventing issues like vendor lock-in and ensuring adaptability.

Yet, this innovation required substantial resources. The government then harnessed this digital platform for its social programs, propelling tech uptake. The interdependence between DPI and its users amplifies its value; as more providers use digital IDs, it spurs more people to get one.

With tools like UPI making adoption more affordable and attractive, and Direct Benefit Transfers pushing individuals to participate, the government ensures both wider acceptance and trust in the digital structure. India's Account Aggregator (AA) Framework boosts data infrastructure by allowing consent-based data sharing.

The system enhances operational efficiency, slashing costs and complexity for private firms.

For some nonbank financial companies, the AA ecosystem in India has led to an 8% uptick in SME lending conversion, 65% depreciation cost savings, and a 66% reduction in fraud detection expenses according to the World Bank.

The shifting paradigm, eloquently encapsulated by Marshall McLuhan's "The medium is the message," signifies that technology doesn't just serve society; it sculpts it. This resonates with Manuel Castells' insights on tech's societal role. With these advancements, India presents a model for the globe, indicating that DPI can enhance governance while simplifying citizens' lives.

This expertise is being shared with regions like Africa, Europe, and South America. More than mere tech transfer, it exemplifies South-South cooperation, vital for the shared self-

Aditya Sinha, Special to Gulf News

reliance of developing nations. Moreover, digital partnerships, including those with nations like the US, allow India to export its tech prowess while building a community where nations share their experiences in instituting digital public assets.

Against this backdrop, India has played a crucial role in influencing the G20s Digital Public Infrastructure Framework. The outcome document of Digital Economy Ministers Meeting is an eye opener and worth quoting.

"India has nudged G20 to adopt a definition of DPI. One should quote it—"Under the Indian Presidency's initiative, we recognise that digital public infrastructure, hereinafter referred to as DPI, is described as a set of shared digital systems that should be secure and interoperable, and can be built on

open standards and specifications to deliver and provide equitable access to public and / or private services at societal scale and are governed by applicable legal frameworks and enabling rules to drive development, inclusion, innovation, trust, and competition and respect human rights and fundamental freedoms".

Technology, Governance, and Community

The G20 Framework for Systems of DPI, structured around three core pillars — Technology, Governance, and Community — provides a comprehensive approach to digital transformation. The technology pillar emphasises building flexible and interoperable systems for sectors like health and finance, while the governance pillar integrates trust into digital interactions and safeguards individual rights.

Meanwhile, the community pillar emphasises the

importance of engagement from all societal sectors. Under the Indian Presidency, the G20's detailed framework addresses inclusivity, interoperability, and scalability, reflecting India's DPI initiatives. By promoting user-centric design, strong governance, and community participation, the G20 ensures the sustainability and widespread adoption of digital systems. Drawing inspiration from India's successful digital endeavours like Aadhaar and UPI, the G20 framework champions a comprehensive approach to digital innovation. These initiatives showcase how simplistic digital designs can spawn a plethora of services, spurring economic growth and inclusivity. The framework also underlines the importance of ethical considerations, including data privacy and intellectual property rights.

The inclusion of transparency, public welfare,

and grievance redressal mechanisms highlights the emphasis on ensuring the public's well-being. The G20's endorsement of this strategy represents a unified effort to harness technology for sustainable growth and development, presenting a versatile blueprint for global nations to sculpt their digital landscapes.

The G20's adoption of the Digital Public Infrastructure Framework, under India's Presidency, marks a global shift towards digital transformation merging technology with ethics. Going beyond conventional infrastructure, it emphasises community engagement, transparency, and data privacy standards.

This isn't merely guidelines; it's a blueprint for modernising global governance. India's success stories provide a beacon for the global south, steering nations towards a digital, inclusive era.



Mills owners agree to provide sugar to Punjab govt at Rs140kg

LAHORE (NNI): Sugar mill owners have announced to sell sugar to the Punjab government at Rs140 per kg after three-day-long successful negotiations on the commodity price with the government. In this regard, a delegation of sugar mill owners met with caretaker Punjab

Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday. On the occasion, Chief Minister Naqvi said that the Punjab government would sell sugar at special stalls in shopping centers, model bazaars and Sunday bazaars to give relief to the people. "We can feel the pain of the people due to the infla-

tion and the reduction in sugar prices will directly benefit the people of the province", says Naqvi. In the meeting, it was agreed to start the crushing season from October 28. The owners of sugar mills while briefing the Punjab Chief Minister said that there is an abundant

stock of sugar in Punjab. Haroon Akhtar, Zaka Ashraf, Fawad Mukhtar and others were included in the delegation of sugar mills owners while Punjab Minister for Industries SM Tanveer and Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman were also present on the occasion.

Currency dealers, transit trade behind economic instability: PEW

LAHORE (INP): President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Murtaza Mughal said on Sunday that currency exchange companies and Afghan transit trade were behind the economic instability of Pakistan. In a statement issued on Sunday, he said that many currency dealers provide all kinds of services to the corrupt elements and send the capital collected through plunder out of the country. This sector has become a hotbed for money launder-

ing, he added. Dr. Murtaza Mughal was of the view that the freedom given to exchange companies in Pakistan does not exist anywhere on earth. The developed countries do not dare adopt such a system that a debtor country like ours has adopted, which has shaken the foundations of the country. He said that goods worth billions of dollars are being smuggled through the Afghan transit trade that has no consumption in Afghanistan.

Hundreds of containers destined for Afghanistan are being emptied in Karachi and other cities, thereby depriving the local industry of its fair share and hitting revenue, he said, adding that many politicians and corrupt elements in almost all institutions are involved in this scam and are ruining the country to fill their pockets. Dr. Mughal said that the economy of Afghanistan has become stable. A dollar is available for 80 Afghanis there, while in Pakistan, the

dollar has crossed the triple century, so the Afghan government should be asked to import all the goods for their needs through Iran. If the trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan is restricted and strictly monitored, the local currency will stabilize, the dollar will weaken, and the crisis of flour, sugar, cooking oil, milk, pulses, and other commodities will stop in the country. It will also reduce the price of many items in Pakistan, including rice, steel bars, cement, urea, etc.



KARACHI: Caretaker Minister for Energy, Muhammad Ali in a group photo after the meeting with Pakistan Petroleum Dealer's Association. Abdus Sami Khan, Chairman of the Association, and other members are also in presence.

Punjab CM vows to provide facilities, resources to industrialists for trade promotion

LAHORE (NNI): Punjab's Caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi has assured the industrialists to provide all possible facilities and resources for the promotion of industries in Punjab. Presidents of Chambers of Commerce and Industries met with Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday and discussed proposals for the promotion of industries in the province. "There will be no problem to set up new industry and run the old industry", says Mohsin

Naqvi. The Chief Minister proposed the industrialists that 6 major chambers of commerce and industries will present comprehensive recommendations regarding one window operation in mutual consultation. "The recommendations of the Chambers of Commerce and Industries will be taken into consideration to make the One Window operation functional", CM said. He said issues related to the provincial departments of industries will

be resolved at one place and all NOCs for establishment of new industries and old industries will be issued from one window center. For matters related to electricity and gas, the federal departments will be given the facility to set up a desk at the One Window Center, he added. He said that in the first phase, Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Rawalpindi One Window operations will start. The provincial depart-

ments will be obliged to settle the issues related to the industries within the stipulated time, he concluded. The President of Lahore Chamber of Commerce Kashif Anwar, President of Gujranwala Chamber Zia ul Haq, President of Sialkot Chamber Abdul Ghaffar Malik, President of Faisalabad Chamber Dr. Khurram Tariq, President of Multan Chamber Mian Rashid Iqbal were among those who met with the Punjab Chief Minister.

Cut in taxes on real estate sector to attract US\$ 5-6 billion foreign investment: ICCI

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called upon the government to reduce heavy taxes on the real estate and construction sector that would bring US\$ 5-6 billion foreign investment within a short time and help revive the economy. He said that the business activities of around 70 allied industries are dependent on the real estate and construction sector, so its better growth would boost of the business activities of all allied industries and stimulate the economic growth of the country.

He said this while addressing as chief guest at a reception hosted in his honor by the prominent real estate developer Sial Sarfraz. The balloting of plots of his housing project was held and birthday cake of Ahsan Bakhtawari was also cut on the occasion. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the real estate sector is the major source of attracting remittances and foreign investment, however, the imposition of heavy taxes has caused significant decline in foreign remittances and the gap is increasing. He said that this situation has stagnated the business activities in the real estate and construction

sector due to which unemployment is rising. He said that cutting taxes on this sector can immediately attract billions of dollars to the country and revive the economy. He urged that the government should rationalize taxes on this sector, withdraw tax on deemed income on immovable property and create a conducive environment for this sector to spur the economic development of the country. Speaking on the occasion, Sarfraz Sial said that the overseas Pakistanis are interested in investing in the real estate sector, but heavy taxes are discouraging them. He emphasized that the government should

reconsider taxes on this sector and offer more attractive incentives that would boost foreign investment in the country and provide crucial support to the fragile economy. He said that the government can take the country's economy from recession to sustainable development by focusing on the real estate and construction sector. Zafar Bakhtawari former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan, Tahir Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry, Raja Imtiaz, Nasir Chaudhry and a large number of the business community were present in the reception. A Mehfil-e-Qawwali was also held on the occasion.

PIDE Conference calls for abolishing distinction of filer, non-filer in income tax

ISLAMABAD (INP): Hosted by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) Macro Policy Lab, the Round Table Conference "Fixing Fiscal Policy" held in Islamabad addressed the persistent challenge of fiscal indiscipline in Pakistan and sought to chart a visionary path for the nation's fiscal policy. In his introductory remarks, Associate Prof. and Chief of Macro-Policy Lab, PIDE Dr. Nasir Iqbal said that the Round Table Conference, "Fixing Fiscal Policy," aims to unite policymakers and thought leaders to foster collaboration and develop local solutions in the fiscal framework of Pakistan. By bringing together academia and policymakers, we seek to chart a visionary path of fiscal policy in Pakistan for the future, transcending from short-term approaches and firefighting. Speaking on the occasion VC PIDE Dr. Nadeem ul Haque said that three things need to be focused

on for the fixation of fiscal policy. Firstly, the role of the government is crucial in ensuring effective fiscal management. Secondly, taxation and expenditure must be carried out in a transparent manner with accountability. This includes how to collect taxes, how to spend them, and where to allocate funds. Lastly, debt management is also an important aspect that requires attention. Dr. Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Principal of the School of Social Sciences & Humanities, NUST while speaking at the roundtable meeting said that to address economic challenges, it is important to immediately reset the role of the government from being an active player to a facilitator. This would involve eliminating the current regulation-based regime and transitioning towards a rule-based economy. The use of a regulatory guillotine would help in the elimination of unnecessary No Objection

Certificates (NOCs). A rule-based approach, coupled with monitoring and evaluation, would ensure a more efficient and effective economic system. Distinguished participants included senior economists, researchers, and fiscal experts from various institutions across the country, such as the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, P&D Baluchistan, QAU, SZABIST, the US Embassy, ADTMA, P&D Punjab, IUI, NUST, and COMSATS. In the first session titled "Role of Government and Economic Stagnation" while presenting the detailed presentation Muhammad Shaaf Najib, Research Fellow, PIDE said that Interest Payments account for a significant portion of the targeted tax revenue, amounting to 77.5%. The total federal liabilities, including Interest Payments, Pensions, and Grants to provinces, stand at PKR 9512 billion. These liabilities exceed the targeted tax revenue, indicating a lack of a

sufficient revenue base to support the functioning of the civil government, subsidies, and development spending. As a result, all development expenditure is entirely financed through debt. The remuneration of civil servants involves a basic salary and significant monetary and non-monetary benefits. The total reward is significantly higher than the base reward stated in the contract. However, the cost to the government for senior civil servants is much higher than the benefits they provide. In his detailed comments, Dr. Ashfaq Hasan Khan made a comment on the presentation and stated that "Within the constitutional limits, without improving the NFC Award, we cannot adequately address our fiscal issues. The speakers while commenting on the session said that the significant government intervention in economic activity/market, both as an active economic agent and through a regulatory regime, has been a prominent feature in the economy.

Buyers from 25 countries to join int'l carpet show in Lahore: PCMEA

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf said that buyers from 25 countries have confirmed their participation in the international exhibition of handmade carpets scheduled to be held in Pakistan next month and out of which 80 foreigners have been included in the list initially. Usman Ashraf said that the United States, Great Britain, Hungary, and Turkey and also among the 25 countries who have confirmed their participation so far. He said that the timely financial support from the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan

(TDAP) has greatly helped in the preparations to make the World Exhibition a success. He expressed these views while presiding over the review meeting regarding the 39th World Exhibition in the association's office. Chairman of Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Ejazur Rehman, senior central leader Abdul Latif Malik, senior member Riaz Ahmed, Shahid Hasan Sheikh, Saeed Khan, Umair Usman and others were also present on this occasion. Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf said that it is very gratifying that along with the traditional buyers of Pakistan's handwoven carpets, buyers from some non-

traditional countries are also willing to participate in the international exhibition to be held in Pakistan. "So far, buyers from 25 countries have expressed interest in participating in the exhibition and after screening, a list of 80 foreign buyers has been compiled. The final list will be drawn up soon after consultation with TDAP and other stakeholders," he added. He said that our effort is to strengthen relations with the buyers of different countries coming to participate in the world exhibition, for which a strategy has been formulated. He further said that it is strongly hoped that there will be massive deals at the World

Expo which will not only boost our industry but also earn valuable foreign exchange for Pakistan. He said that it is our request that the State Bank and other government institutions should eliminate the red tapes that are hindering exports so that arrangements can be made to bring more foreign exchange to the country, which will also provide stability to our economy. He said that there is an appeal to the government to stop the fluctuations of the dollar on a daily basis and keep it stable at a level so that the exporters do not hesitate while entering into foreign contracts.

Technology Empowered Educational Transformation

Ansa Javed Khan

John Dewey's Statement that "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself" perfectly sums up the importance of technology in the education system. In this digital age, the Industrial Revolution 4.0 is rapidly reshaping the digital economy and transforming the dynamics of Education System altogether. The dissemination, reception, and experience of education in the modern world have undergone a paradigm shift as a result of technological innovation and the predictions that IR 4.0 technologies will have a huge impact on learning potentials. According to the World Economic Forum, IR 4.0 calls for rethinking the future of work and education in order to diversify abilities and skills. Therefore, institutions and organizations must move to rapidly integrate innovative IR 4.0 products/technology such as big data, blockchain technology, and artificial intelligence in education instead of maintaining outdated practices. No doubt, these are future possibilities and a country like Pakistan in the context of education and technology must do much more than merely introduce digital learning platforms and implement Learning Management System in its educational institutions. It is also a fact that since the beginning of learning and development, technology has actually played a significant role at the fore-

front of education, right from carving symbols and figures on walls, to the traditional teaching techniques that ultimately emerged into modern modes by incorporating the latest available technology until this most recent innovation in Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence. The twenty-first century has ushered in beginning new challenges from technological development, for technology has become such an integral part of our lives, with babies becoming acquainted with cell phones at the age of one year, progressing to the ability of pressing/clicking to play songs, choosing videos from a list by the age of two, and then to the ability of using smart-phones for making calls, playing games, and so on, by the age of three. In the context of such acceptance and familiarity, the field of education is no exception; rather, it is embracing its own direct and indirect contributions from its current role in the classroom to future trends in enabling Personalized Learning experiences, which lie at the heart of technology-empowered educational transformation. The role of technology in education has not only flip the notion of basic direction from the Old Pedagogy of Teachers (Teacher-Centered Approach) to a New Pedagogy of Students (Student-Centered Learning) but it has expanded to include the use of new, highly effective tools from the ability to access information (the

Internet) on an individual basis to networking and collaboration (social media) with people around the world, without compromising the essence, integrity, and relevance of course presentation, all of which arise from the Integration of technology that in turn is using digital tools and media to enhance Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. Therefore, the role of technology in education is attaining new heights because education has gone from passive to active, to interactive as well as aggressive. Therefore, there is an urgent need to adapt to new ways of developing, communicating and interacting and the education system should focus on developing a set of skills including advanced critical thinking and problem-solving. Along with empowerment and transformation, there are obstacles and concerns, such as the digital gap and accessibility, as well as training and professional development for educators, to name just a few. I observed this digital divide firsthand at an online course for Master Trainers in 2021, when there was a noticeable disparity in the quality of delivery by the faculty, a lack of digital literacy abilities, and disruptions during the online sessions. This clearly hampered the majority, with the exception of a few, from being elevated to Master Trainers for the next phase of the Project. Despite such challenges and concerns, transformations are taking place, and technology is providing

advances in education. As a result of the Covid Pandemic, which not only expedited the adoption of these technologies, but also called conventional teaching techniques into question and forced educational institutions to adhere to distance learning as a standard norm. Enrollment in Massive Open Online Classes has increased dramatically, not only in terms of the number of students, but also in terms of the percentage of courses created, in comparison to the decade in which MOOCs burst onto the education scene. Moreover, technologies such as gamification, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality (AR/VR) and Artificial Intelligence are continuously revolutionizing education and encouraging collaboration and innovation in the field. In conclusion, John Dewey's statement still rings true with respect to the vitality of technology in the context of education. Technology enhances students' access to information, facilitates collaborative and personalized learning, enables new teaching methods, bridges the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications, and creates a culture of life-long learning. By embracing technology, we can ensure that education becomes more than merely a preparation for life; it becomes a vital part of life itself. Ansa Javed Khan Deputy Director Planning & Development Bacha Khan University Charsadda



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing vegetables from a stall at Sunday Bazar Peshawar Morr.



In brief

New heights in int'l market

GENEVA (Xinhua/APP): A series of all-time heights were reached in 2023 as the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA) published Friday its International Transfer Snapshot. A total of 7.36 billion U.S. dollars was spent on transfer fees in the 2023 mid-year window from June 1 to September 1, which is a record-breaking figure and also 26.8 percent increase compared to the previous record in 2019. England led the list of spending with 1.98 billion U.S. dollars, and Saudi Arabia was second with 875.4 million, ahead of France (859.7 million), Germany (762.4 million), Italy (711.0 million) and Spain (405.6 million). The women's transfers increased for the sixth year in a row with 829 transfers, 66 of which were with fees - both are new records. Agent fees also reached a new high, with 696.6 million U.S. dollars paid during the mid-year window, bringing the total for 2023 to date to 853 million.

Boxing Floodlight Championship

FAISALABAD (APP): The first Inter Club National Junior Girls & Boys Boxing Floodlight Championship has commenced at University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) here on Saturday. Secretary General Pakistan Boxing Federation Colonel (Retired) Muhammad Nasir Ejaz inaugurated the championship in which girls and boys teams of Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir, Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan would participate. On first day, 18 contests were arranged between 36 boxers and teams of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan defeated their rivals.

Amara Diouf makes history

LONDON (Agencies): Amara Diouf, a 15-year-old striker, made history by becoming the youngest player to play for Senegal when his team faced Rwanda on Saturday in a 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifier, according to the Confederation of African Football (CAF). Prior to being chosen by manager Aliou Cisse for the national squad, Diouf was the top goal scorer at the 2023 Under-17 Africa Cup of Nations, scoring five goals and aiding Senegal in winning the championship. Diouf, the captain of Senegal's Under-17 team, was brought in the 70th minute and was close to scoring in the 81st minute but was blocked by Rwanda's goalkeeper Fiacre Ntwari. Reuters reported. However, Senegal settled for a 1-1 draw against Rwanda. "A first of many caps for the youngster, who has certainly impressed in a star-studded Senegal side that heads to Cote d'Ivoire as defending champions of the CAF Africa Cup of Nations," CAF said in a statement. Senegal leads Group L in the Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers with 14 points in six matches. Diouf plays his club football for the famous Generation Foot academy which has produced the likes of Sadio Mane of Al-Nassr, Olympique Marseille's Ismaila Sarr and Tottenham Hotspur's breakout star Pape Matar Sarr, SNL24 reported. He also impressed at the U17 AFCON earlier this year and was named in the tournament's Best XI after winning the Golden Boot with five goals in six games helping the young Lions lift the trophy.



COLOMBO: Making use of the rain break - Babar Azam listens as Wasim Akram makes a point, Pakistan vs India Asia Cup, Super Four.

Sri Lanka slashes Asia Cup ticket prices to fill empty stadiums

COLOMBO (Agencies): Sri Lanka Cricket slashed ticket prices for the Asia Cup by up to 95 percent on Sunday after costs were hiked 40-fold and matches were played in near-empty stadiums.

Tickets for one-day internationals in crisis-hit Sri Lanka have generally cost around 250 rupees (\$0.78) previously.

That was hiked to 10,000 rupees for the Asia Cup, which is being organised by the Pakistan Cricket Board despite largely taking place in Sri Lanka, and fans in the cricket-mad island country have stayed away in droves.

Barely 7,000 home supporters turned out for Sri Lanka's Super Four clash against Bangladesh on Saturday at the 35,000-capacity R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, leaving the hosts facing the embarrassing sight of ranks of empty seats.

In an attempt to lure them, back Sri Lanka Cricket announced a price cut of up to 95 percent Sunday for all remaining Super Four games, including the day's marquee clash between arch-rivals India and Pakistan, with tickets

now costing as little as 500 rupees.

The stratospheric price hikes had infuriated fans.

Sri Lanka endured months of food, fuel and medicine shortages last year after a foreign exchange crunch, which sparked widespread protests culminating in the ouster of its president.

The 50-over Asia Cup is a precursor to the upcoming ODI World Cup, and most of the matches were moved to Sri Lanka after India refused to tour Pakistan due to political tensions.

"Pakistan have kept the ticket pricing too high and that has kept fans away from the stadiums," a local Sri Lankan official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"Ticket costs... are way beyond the reach of a common man," he added.

"This is bizarre. We tried to reason with the PCB but they had their reasons as they have lost out on money, maybe."

The PCB did not immediately respond to requests for comment by AFP.

- 'Love of cricket' -

There were still hardly any spectators Sunday for the India-Pakistan game,

for which grandstand tickets were priced at a whopping 64,000 rupees (\$200).

And fans were not amused.

"This is not good. We love cricket but cannot pay so much to watch a match," Supun Vijayarathnam, a tea seller outside the Colombo stadium, told AFP.

"I have watched many matches here for just 100 and 200 rupees. But this time I have to watch it on TV and just hear the noise, which of course is less."

Fans travelled from both India and Pakistan for the hotly anticipated clash after their first meeting was washed out in Palallekele.

"We paid 16,000 Sri Lankan rupees for this game. We were there in Kandy as well and had to pay 15,000 there," Arun Kumar Yadav, from the northern Indian city of Lucknow, told AFP.

"The prices are too high from the last time that we came here," added the 35-year-old. "But it's the love of cricket."

A street vendor selling India and Pakistan jerseys and flags said that despite the game being a blockbuster, there were "fewer fans and the buzz is less".

Bowling coach Morne Morkel lauds Pakistan's pace attack



COLOMBO (Monitoring Desk): As the Super-4 stage of the ongoing Asia Cup 2023 intensifies, Pakistan's bowling coach, Morne Morkel, emphasises the importance of making a statement against quality teams. This comes ahead of their much-anticipated match against India at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

In a video released by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on X (formerly known as Twitter), Morkel expressed his pleasure in working with the Pakistani pacers. He highlighted the importance of focusing on the basics and maintaining a fun environment, which he believes is the reason behind their successful execution on the field.

The former South African pacer praised Pakistan's pace attack, stating that each player has stepped up individually. Haris Rauf leads the wicket-taking tally in the ongoing Asia Cup with 9 scalps, closely followed by Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah with 7 each.

Morkel commended Rauf's performance against Bangladesh and Afridi's opening spell against India. He also appreciated Naseem Shah's supporting role from the other end. According to Morkel, this collective effort is what makes them a strong bowling unit.

The coach also shed light on their strategy for the tournament. "We sat down before the Asia Cup and identified certain goals that we want to achieve. The World Cup is our main focus. We're focused on arriving in India with everyone in a good space. Making a statement against quality teams is important," Morkel added.

Despite their previous match against India being rained out, Pakistan managed to bowl out India in their group-stage encounter. The match ended as a no-result after rain forced it to be abandoned without a single ball being bowled in the second innings.

Pakistan kicked off their Super-4 campaign with a resounding victory over Bangladesh by seven wickets in Lahore. As they gear up to face India again, fans are eagerly waiting to see if they can continue their winning streak.

The Asia Cup 2023 has now moved on to its second phase, with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and India advancing to the Super-4 stage.

Despite unpredictable weather conditions in Colombo, cricket enthusiasts across South Asia are hopeful for an exciting match between these two cricketing giants.

Gauff wins US Open to land first major title

NEW YORK (Agencies): American teenager Coco Gauff came from behind to win the US Open on Saturday, clinching her first Grand Slam title with a battling win over Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus.

Gauff, 19, produced a gutsy performance on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court to win 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 in 2hr 6min to complete a fairy-tale transformation in her season's fortunes.

The sixth seed from Florida had gone into the final as the underdog against the hard-hitting second seed Sabalenka, who will become world No. 1 in next week's rankings.

But with both players making a slew of mistakes throughout an error-strewn final watched by a star-studded record crowd of 28,143 it was Gauff who held her nerve when it mattered to seal a deserved victory.

The win completed a remarkable turnaround for Gauff, who was left distraught after a first round exit at Wimbledon in July.

However, she bounced back to win titles in Washington and Cincinnati and has now landed the biggest win of her career, after a shattering loss in her first Grand Slam final at the French Open last year.

"It means so much to me," an elated Gauff said afterwards. "I feel like I'm a little bit in shock in this moment. That French Open loss (last year) was a heart-break for me. This makes this moment even sweeter than I could imagine."

Gauff, the third American teenager to win the US Open after Tracy Austin and Serena Williams, also used her victory speech to thank those who doubted her talent.

"Honestly thank you to the people who didn't believe in me," she joked.



"To those who thought they were putting water on my fire, they were putting gas on my fire and I'm burning so bright right now," Sabalenka meanwhile blamed self-inflicted errors for her defeat, saying at times she was playing "me against me."

"She was moving just unbelievable today," Sabalenka said of Gauff. "But then the second set I start probably overthinking, and because of that I start kind of like losing my power. Then she start moving better. I start missing a lot of easy shots."

Gauff was in trouble in the opening game, Sabalenka breaking her straight away with a rasping backhand that drew a roar of "Come On!" from the Belarusian.

She held easily to take a 2-0 lead but Gauff then took advantage of a shaky service game from Sabalenka to break at 2-2 in the fourth. The Belarusian double-faulted twice to allow Gauff to get back on level terms.

But that hard-won parity was surrendered in the next game as Sabalenka broke back to go 3-2 ahead.

Australian Open champion Sabalenka then wobbled on her own serve once more as Gauff eked out two break points in the sixth game.

But Sabalenka got it back to duce with an ace

and then took a 4-2 lead with an emphatic smash. Gauff's problems on serve continued and Sabalenka broke for the third time to race 5-2 ahead, and she duly wrapped up the set by holding in the next game.

Yet with the match threatening to become a rout, Gauff finally clicked into gear in the second set, making fewer unforced errors and ironing out the kinks in her serve. Instead it was Sabalenka who began to show signs of brittleness as the tension mounted. She double-faulted to hand Gauff the only break of the set and a 3-1 lead.

Gauff fended off a break point in the next game to hold for 4-1 and went on to hold for the remainder of the set to level the match when Sabalenka smacked a forehand long. The momentum remained firmly with Gauff in the final set and she secured another crucial break in the opening game when she put away an underhit Sabalenka lob with a smash.

Gauff then held easily for a 2-0 lead as Sabalenka struggled to regain any semblance of composure.

She coughed up four unforced errors to gift Gauff a break and a 3-0 lead, and the American then held with ease to go 4-0 up.

Sabalenka stopped the rot by holding serve in the fifth game, before taking a medical timeout to receive treatment on her left thigh.

Gauff was in no mood to let her grip on the match slip though. Although Sabalenka held and broke Gauff to cut the lead to 4-2, Gauff hit back when Sabalenka double-faulted to present a break point.

Gauff cashed in to break and grab a 5-2 lead and then swept to victory in the next game, holding to love with a backhand winner.

Salman Advocate wins Badminton title of Hazrat Maaz Memorial Lawyers Festival

SWAT (APP): Salman Ahmad Advocate clinched the trophy of the badminton part of the overall Hazrat Maaz Memorial Lawyers Festival organized in District Swat wherein all the members of the Bar Council eagerly participated.

To pay homage and rich tribute to late Hazrat Maaz Advocate, former President of the District Bar Association, Swat, was died due to cancer recently for his valuable services he rendered in keeping all the members of the bars at one platform, a sports festival including games badminton, table tennis and carrom board.

Talking to APP, President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Badminton Association Zafar Ali, the brother of late Hazrat Maaz Advocate, said that it was a good opportunities for the members of the District Bar, Swat to participate in the healthy sports activities besides paying rich tribute to my brother Hazrat Maaz, who himself was so much active in sports.

He also appreciated young Advocate Salman Ahmad, also the winner of the badminton event, for organizing such a key festival. District Swat lacks such activities but Salman Ahmad Advocate has taken a vital step in holding the festival named after Hazrat Maaz Advocate, who also remained as President of the District Bar, Swat.

He said President District Bar Association, Swat Saeed Khan Advocate formally inaugurated the festival wherein the members of the Bar took part in Badminton, Table Tennis, Carrom Board and Ludo events. The ceremony was also attended by Senior Members of the lawyers community of the District Bar Association.

Speaking on this occasion, Saeed Khan Advocate, lauded the members of the organizing committee headed by Salman Ahmad Advocate. Such activities are very productive and healthy for the lawyers community due to their hectic work, he added.

He said District Swat has

less sports activities overall but there is no dearth of talent in the Swat youth, both male and female, and if they would provide opportunities these youth could exhibit their talent at the national and international levels.

He said Swat has produced players like Olympian Rahim Khan in Hockey, Rameez and Shah Khan international in table tennis, Imran Khan Junior, Aimal Khan (volleyball), Muhammad Fayyaz in cricket and dozens of other players who excelled at the national and international levels.

Zafar Ali Khan on this occasion said that six to eight players recently represented Pakistan in badminton and visited Malaysia for training purposes. He said with the available resources the youth of Swat, despite face, militancy and insurgency, come up with excellent performances in different Games including badminton, table tennis, hockey, cricket, baseball, netball, volleyball.

He thanked all the lawyers' community for extending good support to his family and family of the late Hazrat Maaz. It is good to see the members of the bar council actively participating in different sports activities. He said Salman and his team did their hard work for the successful holding of the Sports Festival.

Earlier, in the badminton final Salman Ahmad Advocate defeated Sohail Sultan Advocate by 3-1, the score was 21-19, 22-24, 21-18 and 23-21. The final produced great thrill for the sitting spectators wherein both Salman and Sohail Sultan exhibited classic displays of forceful smashes and good serves.

In the Table Tennis event Babar Naem Advocate defeated Arsalan Advocate in the final, the score was 11-9, 8-11, 11-9 and 13-11. Asmat Ali Advocate and Hamza Advocate defeated Irfan Ullah and Sami Ullah in the final of the Carrom Board while Ludo Iqbal Idrees Advocate and Zarwar Khan Advocate beat Shakir Ullah and Sajid Khan Advocate by 2-1.

At the end, President

District Bar Association Saeed Khan and Zafar Ali along with other guests distributed trophies, cash prizes and certificates to the winners and runners-up. Salman Ahmad Advocate assured the lawyers community for holding the Festival on an annual basis.

Farah bows out with fourth-place

NEWCASTLE (Agencies): Britain's Mo Farah capped his illustrious competitive racing career with a fourth-place finish at the Great North Run half-marathon in Newcastle on Sunday.

Wearing a bib that read "Sir Mo," the six-times Great North Run winner crossed in one hour, three minutes and 28 seconds, high-fiving dozens of people lining the route down the home straight.

"There was a lot going through my mind today," Farah told the BBC.

"I wanted to end my career here in Newcastle. I've won it six times and come here off the back of Olympics and World Championships.

"It is very emotional. I get to go and enjoy my time with my wife and kids. Running is all I know. When you win something, you don't quite appreciate it as much as when you lose. I've struggled with injuries these last few years."

Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola, the 2022 world marathon champion, won in 59:58 to erase his disappointing marathon at the worlds last month in Budapest where he did not finish.

Peres Jepchirchir won the women's race in 1:06.45. The 40-year-old Farah is a six-times world champion and four times Olympic champion. He raced to gold medals in the 5,000m and 10,000m in both the 2013 and 2015 world championships and repeated the golden double at both the 2012 London and 2016 Rio Olympics.

"I shared my story of what I went through as a child.





In brief

Suicide prevention day observed

ISLAMABAD (INP): World Suicide Prevention Day was observed on Sunday to provide commitment and action to prevent suicide. The theme for the Day this year is 'Creating Hope through Action'. This theme serves as a powerful call to action and reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and through our actions we can encourage hope and strengthen prevention. Addressing a seminar on World Suicide Day in Karachi, Sindh Caretaker Health Minister Dr Saad Khalid Niaz has stressed need to eliminate the trend of suicide from the society. He said extensive use of social media and spread of fake news have put negative impact on people's psychology and as a result, the anxiety in people is increasing day by day. He emphasized to create awareness among public regarding means to tackle social and psychological issues.

Wanted member of snatcher gang held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police Koral police station team have arrested a wanted member of a snatcher gang involved in numerous snatching activities and recovered snatched mobile phones, cash, motorbike and weapon use in crime from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police had categorically started a crackdown against criminal elements in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens. Following these directions, the Koral police teams used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending a wanted member of a criminal gang involved in numerous snatching activities. The accused was identified as Muhammad Abbas. Police team also recovered snatched mobile phones, cash, motorbike and weapon use in crime from his possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. During the preliminary investigation the accused confessed to being involved in numerous criminal activities in various areas of the city. ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in criminal activities and said that safety of the lives and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard.

16 absconders involved in heinous crime held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police have arrested 16 absconders involved in heinous crime during the last week, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, special tasks were assigned to all seniors' police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes. During the crackdown, the Islamabad Capital Police station teams have arrested 16 absconders involved in heinous crime during the last week. ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the Islamabad Capital Police is taking all possible steps to eradicate crime from the city and those involved in heinous crimes and illegal activities will be dealt with iron hands. Safety to the lives and property of the citizens is the foremost priority of Islamabad Capital Police, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan addressing National Health research conference.

FBR busts inter-provincial gang involved in making fake sales tax invoices

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), in collaboration with an intelligence agency, has arrested four members of an inter-provincial gang who would make fake sales tax invoices.

The gang had made fake IDs on internet for the purpose, and had caused a loss of over Rs11 billion to the national exchequer.

The FBR has arrested one member of the gang from Faisalabad against

whom a criminal case was already registered.

The man would file fake sales tax returns of various dummy firms. The second suspect has been arrested from a call center in Islamabad. The broker or agent of the gang belongs to Karachi. Another gang member was also taken into custody from Faisalabad. The man had been dismissed from service in 2014 after he was involved in corrupt practices.

All the suspects, who were connected to each other on WhatsApp, would share false input/output tax data on Excel sheets. They are now imprisoned in Central Jail in Karachi on a physical remand. On the other hand, Directorate of I & IIR has said that the bureau was committed to eradicating the scourge of fake invoices. On the other hand, the FBR has formed teams to crackdown on tax defaulters as well as smugglers.

Police initiates crackdown against professional beggars

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police have initiated a massive crackdown against professional beggars and their handlers in the city to curb this menace, a public relations officer said.

He said that, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, ordered the all zonal DPO's to take action against professional beggars and handlers in their respective areas adding that cases should be registered against them.

He reiterated that the parents who send their children with these criminals will also face action according to the law, adding that criminals in the guise of begging were found involved in different criminal activities.

During the ongoing crackdown, the Islamabad capital police Noon, Golra, Karachi Company, Kirpa and Koral police station teams arrested 20 professional baggers during last week and registered cases against them under the beggar act.

Registration of house servants and tenants data

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Following the special orders of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police "Knock the Door" campaign for the registration of employees and tenants is in full swing, a public relations officer said.

He said that, during this campaign various teams of Islamabad Capital Police are going to the streets and door-to-door to ensure the registration of tenants and domestic workers as well as to inquire about the problems faced by the citizens. In this regard, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has registered a data of 119 house servants of 255 houses from Sumbal Police Station jurisdiction. The purpose of this campaign is to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the federal capital adding that the registration of tenants and domestic workers could not only keep a close watch on miscreants but also prevent the elements involved in any kind of suspicious activity.

Health research critical to achieve targets: Minister

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Sunday said that promoting and prioritizing health research was of critical important in achieving goals in the health sector.

Presiding over the closing session of two day national health research conference, the minister said that no one could deny the importance of research for the promotion of health sector.

While addressing top experts from the health sector and heads of organizations hailing from across the country who participated in this conference, Dr. Nadeem said the conference afforded deep confluence of knowledge, expertise and dedication. He appreciated the keynote speakers, invited talks and thought-provoking panel discussions, all of which have contributed to enriching the insights of health research in Pakistan. The conference has helped develop a better understanding of challenges and in comprehending the framework of health research, the minister remarked. Dr. Nadeem Jan said we have collectively contributed to share knowledge that has the potential to reshape our

nation's health landscape.

The minister appreciated Health Research Institute-National Institute of Health, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan Science Foundation and Pakistan Academy of Sciences for organizing this landmark conference.

The two-day moot had discussions around emerging areas of research, delving into pharmaceutical research and drug development showcasing the pivotal role of innovation in transforming healthcare delivery and outcomes, knowledge exchanged, collaborations established and ideas germinated. These activities aim to serve as the foundation upon which we build a stronger foundation for health research in Pakistan.

The meeting was a gateway to promote networking among funding agencies, researchers, policymakers and stakeholders besides being a platform for research innovations and necessary insights to steer the future of health research in Pakistan toward new horizons. The conference culminated with the issuance of Islamabad Declaration.

Pak-Kyrgyzstan cooperation in health sector to be promoted further: Dr. Zhumaliev

ISLAMABAD (INP): Bilateral ties between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan ties at highest degree of mutual interest and bilateral trade relations, particularly in the healthcare sector will be strengthened further.

This was stated by Dr Zhumaliev, Member Kyrgyz Republic Parliament and leader of the delegation currently visiting Pakistan on Sunday while speaking at a reception hosted in his honour by Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis. Dr. Zhumaliev said that the promotion of trade and industry between the two countries holds significant potential which needed to be availed.

"By identifying areas of common interest and fostering partnerships, we can pave the way for increased economic cooperation and

growth", he added.

The Member Kyrgyz Parliament said it was a significant and promising development in the realm of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan. "The possibilities for collaboration are vast and promising in the field of medical education, both countries can benefit from knowledge exchange, joint research projects, and student exchanges", he remarked. He said, "It will undoubtedly contribute to the development of our respective healthcare systems." He said, "He believes that the Kyrgyzstan Trade House in Pakistan, plays a pivotal role in facilitating such collaborations and promoting trade ties and its expertise and resources will be invaluable in

ensuring the success of these initiatives." Ulanbek Totuiaev, Ambassador Kyrgyzstan, Roza Amanova, deputy leader of delegation, Dr Shahid Hassan, president of Kyrgyzstan Trade House, and other leading industrialists were also present on the occasion.

Meher Kashif Younis in his welcome address said, "Dr Zhumaliev, is a tycoon in the healthcare sector of Kyrgyzstan, academician of the National Academy of Sciences and winner of best awards brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge." He said, "He looks forward to the positive outcomes this visit may yield and the lasting benefits it can bring to both countries." "He remains optimistic about the future of Pakistan-Kyrgyzstan collaboration," he concluded.

Making internet safer for all age groups in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (NNI): In today's fame-driven world, where one's worth is often measured by their social media followers, Pakistan has emerged as a prominent player with over 72 million internet users.

However, this growing access to free social media platforms has brought about significant concerns regarding e-security.

Pakistan ranks as the 5th largest mobile phone market in Asia. Internet regulation falls under the jurisdiction of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Data from these authorities highlights alarming issues within our society, ranging from privacy breaches and disagreements to political rivalries, disinformation, and the targeting of religious and gender minorities. The UN Broadband Commission for Digital Development's Working Group on Broadband and Gender defines cyber violence against women, encompassing hate speech, publishing blasphemous content, hacking, intercepting private communications, identity theft, online stalking (criminal harassment), and uttering threats, which can even lead to convincing a target to end their own life.

It is crucial to acknowledge the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which recognizes online intimidation, threats, privacy breaches, and identity theft against vulnerable groups, primarily

women. In 2020, the FIA's cybercrime wing received over 85,000 complaints, primarily concerning financial fraud, fake profiles, identity theft, defamation, hate speech, cyber harassment threats, and cyber blackmail.

According to the Digital Rights Foundation (DRF), they report over 146 monthly calls to their cyber harassment helpline, with 57 per cent of the complaints coming from women and 30 per cent from men. Punjab accounts for 57 per cent of the reported cases, followed by Sindh with 15 per cent.

The most concerning aspect of the DRF's report is the age group between 21 and 25, with the majority of victims falling in the youth bracket. The exponential spike in cyber harassment cases was noted with the advent of the coronavirus pandemic and increased internet accessibility.

Research Gate suggests that individuals subjected to social media trolling or cyberbullying are 1.9 times more likely to contemplate suicide. Nearly 90 per cent of Pakistani university students surveyed reported experiencing cyberbullying, with higher socioeconomic status individuals being more susceptible. Cyberbullying knows no boundaries and affects individuals across all age groups and backgrounds. Even prominent figures, including politicians, celebrities, and internet personalities, have not been immune to its harmful impact.

5-days training workshop on productivity assessment concludes

ISLAMABAD (APP): A 5-day international training workshop for assessors of the productivity specialist's certification programme concluded here, the other day. National Productivity Organization (NPO) in collaboration with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), in Japan organized the training workshop.

Seventeen from APO member countries and five local participants attended the training while resource speakers from Singapore, Malaysia, and Mongolia delivered the lectures.

The workshop was aimed at developing qualified assessors in national productivity organizations that can serve as APO-

accredited certification bodies and explain the methods, criteria, and competencies required to conduct assessments for the certification of productivity specialists. The speakers addressing the closing ceremony of the event were of the viewpoint that the programme would help in promoting the cause of producing certified productivity professionals to support the agenda of creating a productivity improvement culture in Pakistan.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) lauded the role of APO in the development of

the Asia-Pacific region.

"It was time to revitalize our commitment to achieve its vision of inclusive and innovation-led productivity growth in the region."

"Working in tandem with APO, Pakistan will be able to find solutions to long-standing issues of productivity", he added. Zafarullah Khan, program officer, APO Tokyo, Japan expressed his gratitude to the government for its efforts to continue the productivity movement and apprised the participants about the APO's journey of success stories and major achievements in the region. CEO NPO, Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry thanked guests and participants for their presence.

China, Pakistan to establish 'Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences'

ISLAMABAD (NNI): China and Pakistan will establish a joint research center in October to promote the study of Earth sciences and sci-tech exchanges, an official in charge of the center's preparatory work said during the 2023 China International Fair for Trade in Services.

Hong Tianhua said, "China-Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences will be established in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, in October as a high-level scientific and technological innovation platform between the two countries to promote sci-tech cooperation and talent cultivation." "The center is being initiated by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, and supported by the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment under the CAS and Quid-i-Azam University in Pakistan," Xinhua reported.

Its establishment also involves CAS-affiliated institutes and other Chinese research institutions, as well as universities in Pakistan, such as the University of Peshawar. The center will carry out joint research in four areas: natural disaster and risk management; geological structures and tectonic activities; climate change and environmental effects; and resources, environment, and green development. The center will also serve as a matchmaker for the investment and technologies of Chinese and Pakistani enterprises and institutions. "We hope to build a high-level platform for sci-tech cooperation between the two countries, and gradually extend it to neighboring countries to provide sci-tech and human resources support for the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor," Hong said.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying bird nests and wooden stools to attract customers at his roadside setup in the Federal Capital.

MoFA expresses condolences

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate has extended its condolences to the people and government of Morocco following a devastating earthquake. The ministry released a statement expressing its sorrow upon learning about the tragic disaster. The Islamic Emirate offered prayers for the souls of those who lost their lives in the incident and wished for a swift recovery for those injured.

80 oil and LPG tankers returned

KABUL (BNA): The National Standards Authority (ANSA) has reported that 80 trucks carrying substandard oil and liquified petroleum gas (LPG) have been returned to Turkmenistan over the past four months. These trucks had initially been imported through the port of Hairatan from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan. The decision to reject and send back these substandard oil and LPG trucks is part of an increased effort to supervise the country's ports and prevent the entry of substandard goods into Afghanistan.

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

Traders complain of major losses from Torkham closing



KABUL (TOLOnews): The continued closure of Torkham crossing has inflicted heavy financial losses on traders on both sides of the Torkham crossing, according to officials.

The Afghanistan and Pakistan Joint Chamber of Industry and Commerce said that since the closure of the Torkham gate, the traders on both sides sustained more than \$1 million in financial losses.

"We trade domestic products to Pakistan. There are goods both exported from Afghanistan to Pakistan and imported from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Both sides have suffered. We have transit of Afghan products to Karachi Waga port and Pakistan traders export to Central Asia, both are stopped now," said Khanjan Alokozai, head of the chamber.

The traders said that vegetable and fruits are typically exported to Pakistan at this time.

"The Torkham gate has been closed for the past five years due to security issues. The export of goods of Afghanistan to Pakistan in this season includes grapes and vegetables. The products are stranded in trucks at Torkham crossing. Some of the products, especially the fruits, have been spoiled. Some of the fruits are being in Nangarhar," said Zalmai Azimi, a trader.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) said that negotiations are underway with the Pakistani officials to reopen Torkham crossing. "The leaders of the Islamic Emirate, particularly the Minister of Industry and Commerce, are in contact with the Pakistani ambassador and also with the Secretary of Commerce of Pakistan. Our attaché in Pakistan is also working in this regard," said Akhundzada Abdul Salam Javad, a spokesman for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Earlier, the MoIC said that within the first five months of the current solar year, trade rates between Afghanistan and Pakistan reached \$842 million.

Retirees continue to call for payment of pensions

KABUL (TOLOnews): Retirees at a gathering in capital Kabul voiced concerns over continued unpaid pensions, saying that they have not been paid their pensions since the fall of the former government.

The retirees said that despite their protests and calls for their rights, they have not received their pensions. "I have worked for 45 years. I don't have food now to eat like my other peers. Either they are retired civilians or military retired personnel, they don't have food to eat and medicine to heal," said Abdul Khaliq, a retiree.

"There is nothing left behind, I sold everything including home appliances and furniture. The government says it will pay our pensions, but when? Why don't you give it to us?" said Omar, a retiree.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Finance (MoF)



said the payment of pensions for the retirees is waiting on approval from the Islamic Emirate's leader.

"The plan for the payment of the pensions has been sent to the leadership of the Islamic Emirate. According to Mr. Mujahid, the Darul Iftah has also approved it. We hope to soon receive instruction from the leadership, so we will start our work," said Ahmad Wali Haqmal, a spokesman for the MoF.

Earlier, the MoF said that the number of retirees is 49,000 with 10,000 of them women.

Nangarhar youth wants to take his mobile library everywhere



JALALABAD (Pajhwok): A young man has built a mobile library at his own expenses with limited resources to encourage people to study books in eastern Nangarhar province.

Rahmanullah Atal has so far organized more than 20 book exhibitions in public places, schools, universities, parks and educational centers in Nangarhar and Kabul provinces, providing free study opportunity to people. He said his aim was to popularize reading culture in the society and to provide a place to study for girls who have been away from books due to the closure of schools and universities. Information and Culture Department officials say they support the effort of the young man and assure him of help.

Rahmanullah Atal sold his mobile phone his father had given him about 18 months ago and built the mobile library spending 9,500 afghanis. So far, he has arranged 20 book exhibitions in Nangarhar alone.

Atal told Pajhwok Afghan News: "I want to promote book reading culture in society and to provide my sisters the chance to read books".

He said he used to set up his exhibitions in public places, parks, universities, schools and educational institutes where the youth existed in great numbers.

Atal said he had bought all his books, but he spent more money on exhibitions. He was able to arrange two exhibitions in Kabul. "There are no other expenses on exhibitions except the rent of chairs and tables, and I often use chairs and tables of universities, schools and educational centers," Atal added.

He plans to organize book exhibitions in all parts of the country, but he faces problems in transportation of books.

"I want to take this library to all provinces, districts and villages of Afghanistan, but I don't have the means to transfer the books and another problem is the arrangement of tables and chairs."

On the other hand, Nangarhar residents consider the mobile library of Atal useful in promoting the book reading culture.

Fazal Rahman, who visited a book exhibition arranged by Atal, said such activities were useful for the development of the society and reading culture.

He said: "My request to the youth is to participate in such programs, besides using mobile phones, they should also study books".

Wais Ahmad, another resident, said he studied many useful books in one of the exhibitions.

He said such exhibitions should be increased so that young people could read books for free and develop interest in studying.

Sediqullah Qureshi, Information Department Director, told Pajhwok: "We support every youth like Atal who spends his time and resources to promote scientific, literary works, especially book reading". Qureshi said to promote book reading in Nangarhar, his department has established a large library in Jalalabad city, where dozens of young people visit every day.

Gathering held in Kabul by hemophilia illness patients

KABUL (TOLOnews): Patients who are suffering from hemophilia disease and their family members held a gathering in capital Kabul to protest lack of sufficient blood factors (proteins in blood that contribute to clotting) in the country as they are facing severe challenges.

Some of the patients expressed concerns over the suspension of assistance of the aid organizations, saying that the assistance provided by the aid organizations should not be politicized. "The assistance to us should not be politicized. We should persevere and be neutral. We call on the WHO to help us. We are going towards penalization," said Musa, a patient.

"If you don't recognize our government, we are human after all and a nation. There is no injection, the factor. There is no factor 8 and factor 13 and factor 7. There is no factor. It has been six months, my foot is in pain," said Mohammad Sami, a patient.

20-year-old Bahman said that he is



unable to properly walk because of the effects of hemophilia.

"Since the factors have been suspended, I am going through severe pain. Both of my feet are harmed. I also have economic challenges and I am unable to purchase the medicine," he said. This comes as the Afghanistan National Blood Bank (ANBB) said that 98 percent of the patients are at risk of paralysis and death.

"We have passed severe pain. We are awake from night till morning. My mom also stayed awake with me," said Farhad, a patient. "There is a possibility that between 3,000 to 4,000 hemophilia patients are in Afghanistan. When we assess how many of the patients have been harmed or paralyzed, 98 percent of the patients have become severe," said Mohammad Nasir Sadiq, head of the ANBB. Hemophilia is a rare disorder in which the blood doesn't clot in the typical way because it doesn't have enough blood-clotting proteins (clotting factors). The disease may also cause bleeding for a longer time after an injury.

Youth organization holds conference on economics in Kabul



KABUL (TOLOnews): The Elite Youth Scientific and Cultural Association in Kabul has organized a seminar titled "Economics for Youth and Young Students."

The organizers said that the aim of launching the seminar is to raise the level of awareness of the youth, for both male and female students, about the country's economic issues.

"Economic growth is not possible unless it is a collective commitment. The collective commitment needs to be presented and delivered to the people," said Zahir Sulimani, an organizer.

"As long as you have a great workforce and this workforce practically enters the production cycle and markets services, you have taken an important step towards economic growth," said Asadullah Saadati, an official of the previous government. Some of the participants of the seminar said it is beneficial to launch such programs in order

to raise the level of awareness among young people. "Our goal in launching these programs is to popularize economic growth and development in society because our youth need a modern economic society," said Yahya Mahrhani, a student. "Our request to the Islamic Emirate is to provide young people with the opportunity to take steps in the field of economic growth," said Mohammad Samim Mudabir, a participant. A number of girls said they find it beneficial to provide economic education for girls in line with the economic growth of their families. "These programs help young people progress and increase their information," said Frozan, Haqia, a participant.

"These programs are beneficial, especially for youth," said Norya Hakimi, a participant. Schools over the 6th grade and universities are closed to girls, and women are prohibited from working in non-governmental organizations and foreign organizations, and many girls in various provinces of the country have had to create various jobs to play a role in the family economy, with tailoring, carpet weaving, and other trades and crafts.

Students' strength at English Language Academies down by 50pc

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some owners of the English Language Academies in capital Kabul are concerned about the decline in the number of their students now comparing to two years ago.

They also talked about the decline in their fee and asked the acting government to allow girls study in these courses.

During an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News owners of these academies said the number of their students declined by 50 percent now comparing to the past two years. One of these English Language Academies are the Atarud Academy. The number of its students had declined by 50 percent now comparing to the past two years. Sanjar Khalid, executive director of the Atarud English Language Academy, said two years ago 4,000 students were recruited for one batch while now the number of student recruited for one batch declined to 2,800.

He said growing economic problems and ban on girls to attend language courses were the main reasons behind the decline of students at English Language Academies.

He, however, said due to economic problems they declined fee from 2,500 to 800. He hailed the Ministry of Finance (MoF) decision tax exemption to private Lounge Academies and asked the acting government to allow girls attend their language courses.

The Ama-e-Shamal English Language Academy founded 12 years ago also suffer from the lack of students.

Nooruddin Zaiwar, head of this academy, said: "Two years ago the number of our student was high because their economic situation was good."

He said two years ago in very batch they enrolled 1,700 students but lately this number had dropped to 500. He also linked the decline of students with economic problems and ban of girls to attend educational institutions.

Zaiwar said due to economic problems the amount of fee had been declined by 50 percent.



He also hailed tax exemption and asked the acting government: "Formulate a curriculum so that girls could also attend academies."

Noor Ahmad Rahimi, head of the UCAC English Language Academy, which is active from the past six years in Kabul, said: "Most of our classes are special and currently there are no more than 10 percent students in our classes, the total number of students in our lasses is not more than 50." He said: "Our ILETs and TOFFEL classes fee was \$150 two years ago while currently we have declined our fee to \$50 because the economic condition of people is not good." He said the fee of English Language classes was 7,000 Afs which now reduced to 4,000 afs.

Jamshid Ahmadzai, one of the students said: "From the past three months I learn English hear and I learn it very well."

He welcomed decline in the tuition fee.

Mosawif Obaidi, one of the students at the English Shamal Ama Academy, was also thrilled by the decrease in the tuition fee and asked the acting government to allow girls attend their education. Acting government officials often reaffirmed that they were not against girls education and after the formation of strategy and a roadmap girls would be allowed to get education.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti and Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Salongi addressing a press conference.

G20 declaration as ‘balanced’: Russia

NEW DELHI (INP): Russia praised a G20 summit declaration that stopped short of directly criticising Moscow for the war in Ukraine and said the bloc’s leaders had acted in the interest of conflict resolution as deliberations headed into a second day on Sunday.

The group adopted a consensus declaration in New Delhi on Saturday that avoided condemning Russia for the war but called on all states not to use force to grab territory. Russia says it is conducting a “special military operation” there.

“There were very difficult negotiations on the Ukraine issue; first of all, the collective position of the BRICS countries and partners worked, everything was reflected in a balanced form”, Svetlana Lukash, the Russian G20 sherpa, or government negotiator, was quoted as

saying by Russian news agency Interfax. BRICS groups Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

In the weeks leading to the summit, G20 countries had struggled to find a consensus on the Ukraine conflict with the West demanding countries call out Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine and Russia saying it would block any resolution that did not reflect its views. “This was one of the most difficult G20 summits in the almost twenty-year history of the forum it took almost 20 days to agree on the declaration before the summit and five days here on the spot,” Lukash said.

“This was not only due to some disagreements on the Ukraine subject, but also due to differences in positions on all key issues, primarily the issues of climate change and the transition to low-carbon energy systems.” A European

Union official, who did not want to be identified, said on Sunday discussions on the G20 leaders’ declaration went on until the last moment and the Ukraine war was the most contentious issue before a consensus was reached. The official praised India’s strong leadership, adding that Brazil and South Africa also played a crucial role in the negotiations.

US President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak are among those attending the summit hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has sought to play a pivotal role balancing the interests of the global south with those of the West. Ukraine’s foreign ministry said the Delhi declaration was “nothing to be proud of”, adding that a Ukrainian presence would have given participants a better understanding of the situation.

POL price likely to be increased

ISLAMABAD (INP): The prices of petroleum products are likely to be increased by Rs 15 per liter from next week, according to a private TV channel. The channel reported that the price of crude oil in the global market has increased by 5 dollars per barrel in the last one week.

The price of crude oil in the Gulf market has increased from 88 dollars per barrel to 93 dollars. This increase in the price of crude oil is likely to have a cascading effect on the prices of petroleum products in Pakistan.

If the value of the dollar does not decrease further, the prices of petroleum products may increase further from September 16. The government is currently reviewing the prices of petroleum products and a decision on the new prices is likely to be taken in the next few days.

The increase in the prices of petroleum products will have a negative impact on the economy. It will increase the cost of transportation and other essential commodities, which will put further pressure on the already high inflation.

32 Russian drones attacked Ukraine: Kyiv

KYIV (INP): Thirty-two Russian drones attacked Ukraine, Kyiv military authorities said Sunday, adding that 25 were downed.

“The occupiers attacked Ukraine with 32 kamikaze drones... of which 25 were destroyed by Ukrainian air defence forces. The Russian occupiers directed most of the attack UAVs to the Kyiv region,” Ukraine’s armed forces said in a statement.

Ukrainian air defence forces downed drones targeting Kyiv overnight, city authorities said Sunday morning.

“Drones entered the capital in groups and from different directions,” Sergiy Popko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration, wrote on Telegram.

“Air defence forces managed to destroy more than two dozen enemy UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles),” he said.

Authorities had urged people to remain in shelters as the air defence system rained debris on the capital.

In central Podilskyi district, doctors treated a person suffering from an “acute stress attack” after debris fell in an open area, Mayor Vitali Klitschko wrote on Telegram.

Biden admin not interfering in Pak’s political matters

ISLAMABAD (INP): US Senator Chris Van Hollen Sunday said the US President Joe Biden-led administration has no intentions of interfering in the internal politics of Pakistan and denied all allegations of political engineering.

“I have been in contact with the Biden administration for a long time and can confidently say that there was no attempt made to engineer anything related to Pakistani politics,” the senator said while speaking with Pakistan journalists during the annual meeting and gala dinner of the DC, Maryland, Virginia (DMV) chapter of the Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America.

The senator’s statement comes as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan is being investigated regarding a diplomatic cipher that the party chief claimed contained the evidence of alleged US involvement in his ouster from power in April last year through a no-confidence vote.

Senator Hollen was the guest of honor at the ceremony, which was also attended by Pakistan’s Ambassador to the US Masood Khan. The event, meanwhile, became a platform for the American politician to address critical issues related to US-Pakistan relations and the role of the Biden administration in Pakistani politics.

He iterated that it is up to the people of Pakistan to decide their leaders and further expressed the need to ensure that the will of the Pakistani people is heard and reflected, advocating for free and fair elections.

Highlighting the global importance of transparent elections, the US senator said: “The US, other democracies, and the people of Pakistan have an interest in ensuring that elections are free and fair.”

Commenting on bilateral relations between the two countries, the senator affirmed the Biden administration’s desire for a strong partnership with Pakistan. He spoke about the recent assistance provided by the US after the devastating floods in Pakistan as an example of

the American government’s commitment towards the calamity-stricken nation. He also praised the US’s role in supporting Pakistan to secure the \$3 billion International Monetary Fund’s bailout package. The senator underlined the significance of maintaining good relations with Pakistan, stressing that such relations were essential for global stability and security. The cipher controversy first emerged on March 27, 2022, when Khan — just days before his ouster after a no-confidence motion against him — brandished a letter, claiming that it was a cipher from a foreign nation, which mentioned that his government should be removed from power.

He did not reveal the contents of the letter nor mention the name of the nation that had sent it. But a few days later, he named the United States and said that Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Affairs Donald Lu had sought his removal.

The cipher was about former Pakistan ambassa-

dor to the US Asad Majeed’s meeting with Lu.

The former prime minister, claiming that he was reading contents from the cipher, said that “all will be forgiven for Pakistan if Imran Khan is removed from power”. Then on March 31, the NSC took up the matter and decided to issue a “strong demarche” to the country for its “blatant interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan”.

Later, after his removal, then prime minister Shehbaz Sharif convened a meeting of the NSC, which came to the conclusion that it had found no evidence of a foreign conspiracy in the cipher. The cipher case against the former premier became serious after his principal secretary Azam Khan stated before a magistrate as well as the FIA that the former PM had used the US cipher for his ‘political gains’ and to avert a vote of no-confidence against him.

The ex-bureaucrat, in his confession, said when he provided the ex-premier with the cipher, he was “euphoric” and termed the language a “US blunder”.

PIA’s financial crisis, national airline fleet feared to shrink to 15 planes

ISLAMABAD (INP): Amid worsening financial condition, Pakistan International Airline (PIA) fleet was feared to be reduced to 15 operational planes if it fails to get an immediate and immense financial assistance from the government. Out of PIA’s 35 planes fleet, 15 are grounded at present of which nine planes including two Boeing, four A320 and three ATR have been acquired on lease.

On the other handed, keeping in view of Pakistan’s poor economic situation, the leasing company has also requested to return five of its aircrafts and it has already taken back two of the leased engines resultantly two of the PIA aircrafts were grounded.

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), meeting also failed to take any decision regarding extending financial assistance to the national airline.

According to research of the Independent News Pakistan (INP), the fleet of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) includes a total of 35 aircrafts, which include 12 Boeing 777, 17 Airbus 320 and six ATR of which two Boeing 777 aircrafts, 11 Airbus 320 and three ATR aircrafts have acquired on lease.

In PIA’s fleet of 35 aircraft, 20 aircraft are operational and the remaining 15 aircraft are grounded. The grounded aircrafts included five Boeing 777, six Airbus 320 and four ATR aircrafts.

Despite being on lease, two Boeing 777 planes, six Airbus 320 planes are grounded while two planes are present in Jakarta due to the lack of agreement with the leasing company.

Out of the four grounded ATR aircraft, three ATR 72 planes are on lease, out of which PIA wants to repair two aircraft and hand them over to Pakistan Navy. The registration number of PIA ground Boeing 777 aircraft is AP-BGL, AP-BHX, AP-BID, AP-BMS and AP-BHW of which two of planes with registration numbers AP-BMS and AP-

BHX on lease. The registration number of ground Airbus 320 of PIA is AP-BLA, AP-BLT, AP-BLW, AP-BOL, AP-BLY and AP-BLZ. The planes parked at Jakarta due to dispute with lease company have registration number AP-BLY and AP-BLZ. Four grounded ATR’s registration numbers include AP-BHM, AP-BKX, AP-BKY and AP-BKZ.

Among them, one aircraft with registration number AP-BHM is owned by PIA, the other three are on lease and PIA wants to repair them and give them to Pakistan Navy.

It has happened that one of their engines was taken on lease, which the leasing company demanded back after observing the poor economic conditions of Pakistan, due to which two personal planes of PIA were grounded and both engines were returned to them.

Meanwhile, the leasing company in the backdrop of Pakistan’s poor economic condition, has demanded

back five more of its planes. If PIA returns these five ships, the number of operational ships in PIA’s fleet will be reduced to 15.

Therefore, Pakistan International Airlines needs urgent government support to continue its operations.

However, during meeting with the Prime Minister, he forwarded the matter to ECC to look into it. The ECC instead of approving financial assistance to PIA has formed a special committee.

The national airline urgently needs a huge sum of money to repair its planes and pay for ground services, but the government is hesitant in this regard due to the prevailing economic crisis.

On the other hand, due to Pakistan’s global triple C rating, the leasing companies also want to take back their planes and it has already taken back two leased engines of the aircraft. The PIA spokesperson was also contacted to get his stance in this regard, but he did not reply.

Aneeq affirms complete religious freedom for all communities

NANKANA SAHIB (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Sunday said Pakistan ensured complete religious freedom for all minority communities emphasizing that there were no hindrances for Sikh pilgrims in Pakistan and the government welcomed them with open arms.

He made these remarks during a visit to Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak, where he met with Ata ur Rahman, Chairman of the Evacuee Trust Property Board and Sardar Amir Singh, Chairman of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, in the presence of the media.

The minister stated that Pakistan granted special visas to Sikh pilgrims for the visitation of their holy shrines, with an allocation of

three thousand visas. Regardless of which government was in power in Pakistan, the Sikh community could rest assured of their warm reception, he added.

He underscored his commitment, saying, “I am not just a minister for Muslims; I am also the minister for all minority communities. We are ready to cooperate with our Sikh brothers in every possible way, and we encourage them to visit Baba Guru Nanak’s birthplace and Samadhi at least once in their lifetime.”

Furthermore, he expressed the intention to request the Indian government to increase the quota of visas for Sikhs to visit Pakistan.

He stressed that every effort would be made to provide the Sikh community with all necessary facilities for their pilgrimage.

Addressing the funda-

mental issues of Sikh brothers in Pakistan, he pledged to provide all possible means to resolve their concerns. He stated, “While we are Muslims living in Pakistan and hold our faith dearly, we do not consider non-Muslims, be they Hindu, Christian, Sikh, or of any other faith, as outsiders. As far as Muslims are concerned, they are our brethren in faith, while non-Muslims are our companions in humanity.”

Aneeq Ahmed highlighted the government’s commitment to work together with all minority communities to make Pakistan a beautiful and inclusive nation, moving forward.

Sardar Amir Singh, at the occasion, welcomed the Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony to Nankana Sahib and appreciated his efforts. He emphasized the sacredness

of Pakistan’s land for Sikhs and praised the government’s efforts to ensure peace.

He said, “We extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony at Nankana Sahib.

G20 asked...

(Cont: from Front Page)

Mushaal said the notorious occupation authorities unleashed a reign of terror and used the rapes of women as the weapon of war, besides committing the worst war crimes. The SAPM on HR and Women Empowerment said that the people of Kashmir had been facing these inhuman treatments for over seven decades due to their struggle for the right to self-determination.

She recalled that since August 2019, the Indian government alarmingly intensified and continued its repressive policies to hide the world’s worst human rights abuses and war crimes being committed by brutal Indian forces in the valley.

However, Mushaal said that the Kashmir was a disputed territory, and this dispute had been acknowledged through the United Nations resolutions but Indian occupation forces were trying to suppress the people through brutalities.

She called upon the G20 members to exert pressure on the notorious Narendra Modi-led supremacist Indian government to release the Kashmir prisoners and allow the international human rights organizations and international media groups to visit the blood-soaked Kashmir valley freely and independently and permit the people of Jammu and Kashmir to decide their political future through a plebiscite under international supervision.

Six killed in accident

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): At least six people were killed and more than 50 injured when a bus turned turtle near Khanka Dogran Interchange Sheikhupura Motorway on Saturday night. The ill-fated bus was coming from Sialkot and Christian pilgrims were on board the bus.

Soon after the incident, the rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the injured to hospital. The police have registered a case against the bus driver

and conductor. However, the National Highways and Motorway Police refuted the happening of incident on the motorway, saying the accident happened on Khanqah Dogran road.

Sector Commander Faisal Akram said Rescue 1122 fed the wrong information to the media about the location of the accident.

In a separate traffic accident on September 6, at least four people died as a car fell into the Neelum River near Pathka Chhun, a

suburb of Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir.

The officials said the car was on its way from Muzaffarabad to Jheng when it slipped due to heavy rain and fell into the Neelum River at night. Resultantly, four people were killed and a woman sustained injuries. The bodies were sent to their native village, Jheng.

The identities of the deceased and injured could not be ascertained as per initial reports.

Massive crackdown launched to combat power theft

(Cont: from Front Page)

the region and detected electricity theft at 87 points. The power pilferers were stealing electricity through various modes. Therefore, the FESCO teams removed their electricity supply meters and confiscated their entire material in this regard.

The FESCO also imposed Rs.13 million as fine on more than 310,000 detection units. Separate cases were also got registered against the power pilferers while further action against them was under progress, he said.

The Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) has so far removed over 500 direct hooks during ongoing operations against electricity pilferers in the province.

“More than 500 direct hooks have been removed

so far while fines for more than 7 million have been charged against electricity theft,” spokesman PESCO told APP. As per the government’s directives, he said the anti-electricity theft operations continued in the province on war footings and more than 250 requests for lodging FIR have been submitted.

Meanwhile, 10 superintendent engineers of PESCO were assigned the duties of focal persons with a direction to make contact with provincial task force and divisional commissioners to curb electricity theft and provide relief to all those consumers who pay electricity bills.

The Provincial Task Force with an assistance of police, district administration and other relevant departments were directed to remove direct electricity hooks and make recovery

from defaulters on the priority basis.

In this regard, the deputy commissioners would lead the task force at their respective districts and report regarding the removal of direct hooks and recovery of outstanding dues would be submitted to the caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on daily basis.

The Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) has launched a crackdown against power theft in the HESCO region.

Large-scale crackdown against electricity thieves was continued on in HESCO region on Sunday. According to spokesperson, raids were conducted in several areas of region including Hyderabad, Tatta, Umarkot, Badin, Mirpur Khas, Khipro, Dgri, Nawab Shah, Tando Allahyar, Sakrand, Tando Jam, Cha-

mnbar, Kotri, Jamshoro, Nooriabad, Sehwan, Bhan Syedabad, Sanghar, Qazi Ahmad, Daulatpur, Saeedabad, Tando Adam, Shahdadpur, Matiari, and other areas, witnessed the disconnection of 4,891 illegal connections.

Furthermore, 27 transformers were removed and 3 remote control devices used for electricity theft were seized. These devices were being used for illicit power consumption. In addition to these actions, a recovery of more than 35.6 million rupees was also made from defaulters and the letters were submitted to the respective police stations for the registration of FIRs against 167 individuals.

The crackdown against electricity thieves would continue to eliminate electricity theft while the campaign has been intensified for the 100 percent recov-

ery of 169 billion dues.

The Caretaker Sindh government has also launched a crackdown against electricity theft across the province. The provincial government has formed a task force under the chairmanship of Sindh Home Secretary for anti-theft electricity campaign.

The provincial Secretary of Energy, representative of Power Division, Government of Pakistan, Additional IG Police Sindh, Commissioner, DIG (concerned regions), CEO of HESCO/SEPCO and any other co-opted member to be nominated by the convener, will be among the members of the task force.

The task force would be authorized to devise a strategy and an effective mechanism for focused and sustainable campaign/initiative throughout the province against electricity

theft by targeting high-loss commercial, agriculture, industrial and domestic connections and non-recovery from defaulters.

The task force would also monitor, supervise and coordinate the operation/initiative undertaken by the divisional/district enforcement committee (DEC).

Meanwhile, the Police registered cases against 731 power pilferers across the district including 229 in Burewala Circle from January to September 10.

The police department has also accelerated operations during the ongoing crackdown against power pilferers across the country. More than 40 pending cases of electricity theft have also been registered in seven different police stations of Burewala Circle.

On the special directives of Punjab Government, the