

Ali Wazir released on bail

ISLAMABAD (INP): An anti-terrorism court in Islamabad has accepted the bail plea of former lawmaker and co-founder of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) leader Ali Wazir in a fraud case registered at Bara Kahu police station in the federal capital. Anti-Terrorism Court Judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain on Monday heard the bail petition filed by the former MNA.

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ECP to decide polls date: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Monday said the Election Commission of Pakistan would decide about the date for the upcoming elections. The prime minister, in an interview with a private television, said the Parliament had passed a law according to which the ECP had the power to announce the date for new elections.

Speculations regarding the elections should end which would be held according to the prevalent law, he said, adding, "We have no intention to prolong the tenure of the caretaker government." He said as a student of the history of Pakistan, he would express gratitude to the Quaid-e-Azam for protecting rights of the Muslim minority and saving it from the domination of majority.

After seeing the attitude of bigger states against the minorities, he said, he could see that it would have been difficult to protect the religious and cultural identity of the Muslims if the Quaid had not secured an independent state for the Muslims. He said he admired the Quaid-e-Azam for his constitutionalism, all-inclusiveness and for protection of rights of minorities.

The prime minister assured that action against smuggling would continue and the writ of the state would be established. "We are taking these actions so that the new government with its mandate can easily continue our work for public interest."

He said the Apex Committee of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) included current military leadership, thus making the Council a strong constitutional and legal body which was taking firm actions and implementing decisions. The caretaker federal and provincial governments had good coordination which was helpful in implementing decisions, he noted.

He said the SIFC was focusing on economic revival and on sectors of agriculture and mineral extraction. However, work would be done on major plans of investment so that they could be at an advanced stage when the next government would take over, he added. PM Kakar said Pakistan had multifaceted relations

with Afghanistan and had regular discussions with it on issues of trade, terrorism, security and regional connectivity.

Both sides were talking with the realization that neighbours could not be changed, he added. To a question about rising incidents of terrorism in the country, he said the terrorists had now more latest weapons, night vision goggles and other equipment which had increased their capacity to fight.

However, he made it clear that the terrorists could not take away an inch of territory of Pakistan and the security forces would respond and manage the situation. The state would show its firmness against terrorists as in no condition anyone would be allowed to resort to violence, he stressed. PM Kakar said there was no restriction on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for taking part in the elections.

Talking about the incidents of May 9, he said miscreants resorted to vandalism and arson, and the whole incidents were reported by the local and international media. The accused involved in the incidents would be dealt with according to the law of the land, he added. He said Nawaz Sharif was a thrice elected prime minister and when he would come back to Pakistan he would be treated according to the law.

He clarified that he had no intention to start meetings with the leadership of political parties. To a question about the foreign policy, he said Pakistan had good relations with all countries, adding China was on the verge of becoming the largest economy of the world and the Western world led by the United States was anxious about it and wanted to contain its influence. Pakistan had adopted the policy of Look Africa to improve its relations with that continent which had a population of more than a billion people, he informed. He said Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman would visit Pakistan on a mutually agreed time when both sides would be ready to announce projects for investment.

Responding to a question, he said Kashmir was part of body, soul and collective memory of Pakistan and Kashmiris aligned themselves with

Pakistan. The PM said sports including cricket should not be politicized and the issues concerning cricket with India should only be raised by officials of the cricket board.

"We are making Pakistan a secure country for sports. But we cannot force a country to play in Pakistan," he commented. He said he met with vice chancellors of universities in a meeting during his visit to Quetta and now he would meet with officials of the Higher Education Commission to resolve issues facing the education sector with a focused attention. He said the government would soon decide about the issue of giving relief to the electricity consumers.

PM for necessary arrangements ahead of Hajj 2024: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar directed the Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and the secretary to finalize arrangements ahead of the coming season of Hajj, under their supervision.

The prime minister chaired a preparatory meeting regarding the Hajj 2024. The meeting was attended by Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmed, secretary and other relevant authorities, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He also asked for setting up a committee to review the Hajj arrangements and opined that there should be no compromise over the arrangements for the pilgrims.

The prime minister directed for submission of a comprehensive report over complaints of the pilgrims related to the Hajj 2023. A directive was also issued to the relevant ministry and the Ministry of Information Technology for the launch of a mobile application and website for offering facilitation and registration of complaints for the intending pilgrims in the upcoming season through their joint collaboration.

PM Kakar also directed for constitution of a reforms committee to submit a report regarding complaints about the private Hajj companies with suggestions. There was need to keep a vigil on the private Hajj companies so that the pilgrims sent by them should not face any difficulties, he added.

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The Frontier Post

Deputy chairman NAB quits

ISLAMABAD (PPI): After Prosecutor General NAB Justice (R) Syed Asghar Haider, Deputy Chairman National Accountability Bureau Zahir Shah on Monday also resigned from his office. Sources revealed that the Deputy Chairman NAB – Zahir Shah – submitted his resignation to Chairman NAB, meanwhile, the reasons for his resignation are still yet to be known.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Christian community called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq.

KP CM, cabinet visit Corps HQs

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan along with members of the provincial cabinet visited Corps Headquarters Peshawar on Monday.

The dignitaries were briefed about the overall security situation, ongoing development projects in Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) and capacity building of police. Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen. Hassan Azhar Hayat and other senior civil and military officials attended the meeting.

The participants reiterated the importance of socioeconomic development projects including the revival of tourism and mineral exploration in newly merged districts, which are vital for sustainable peace and growth in the area. The meeting also reviewed the mechanisms of border management including measures to curtail and curb the smuggling of goods and put forward a comprehensive approach to address the issues.

Participants underscored the importance of the capacity building of KP Police including Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and expressed satisfaction over the recent achievements of police in thwarting terrorist attacks across the province. Participants paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of martyrs who laid their lives for the safety, security and territorial integrity of the motherland.

LHC issues arrest warrants of IGP

LAHORE (PPI): Lahore High Court (LHC) Monday issued arrest warrant of Inspector General (IG) of Islamabad police in contempt case.

As per details, the arrest warrants of IG Islamabad were issued in contempt case over the arrest of former chief minister and PTI president Pervaiz Elahi. The court issued the written verdict of his arrest warrant for not appearing before court and ordered to present him on September 18 in LHC. Earlier, Lahore High Court (LHC) sought replies from Punjab police and Superintendent Jail regarding the re-arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Pervaiz Elahi. During the hearing, the Chief Police Officer (CPO) of Rawalpindi sought an apology from the court stating that, "We want the apology from the court to be accepted."

It is worth mentioning here that just one day ago, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) issued a suspension of PTI President Pervaiz Elahi's detention under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Ordinance, mandating his immediate release.

But shortly after his release from the police custody, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) president Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi re-arrested by the CTD in the judicial complex attack case. The case was registered against Pervaiz Elahi at CTD police station on September 3 and he will be presented before the ATC today [Wednesday].

Security forces vehicle targeted, FC soldier martyred, 8 injured in blast

Ishaq Khan

PESHAWAR: A Frontier Constabulary (FC) official was martyred while eight others, including two civilians, suffered injuries in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast targeted security forces vehicle on Peshawar's Warsak Road on Monday.

While talking to the media, Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohammad Arshad Khan confirmed that a vehicle of Mohmand Rifles Regiment was targeted around 10:30am near Prime Hospital on Warsak road of the provincial capital.

SP said that the vehicle of security forces was on its way to Peshawar from Machni when it was targeted, in a result one FC official was martyred while six officials and two civilians were wounded.

He said the blast was carried out using an improvised explosive device (IED). A report by the Bomb Disposal Unit would clarify the nature of the blast, he continued. Further investigation was under way, stated SP Khan.

The incident happened a day after interim Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti downplayed the rise in militancy in the country saying it was "a little surge [in terrorism]

and nothing to panic". It may be recalled that during the last couple of weeks, there were reports of almost daily skirmishes between the security forces and terrorists, the most recent being the infiltration attempt in Chitral in which over a dozen attackers were killed while several troops martyred.

Last week, a convoy of security forces was targeted on Miramshah Road in Bannu. In August, police and security forces repulsed three attacks by militants at as many locations in an area bordering Kohat district. PML-N president and former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif also condemned the "cowardly attack".

"The sacrifices of our valiant soldiers and resilient people will not go in vain and such terrorist attacks cannot stop us from completely getting rid of the militants," he said. Caretaker KP Chief Minister Mohammad Azam Khan condemned the incident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

In his statement, he directed hospital authorities to provide the injured with the best possible medical aid. The chief minister said such incidents won't demoralise the security

forces and that the entire nation was standing with the security forces.

Meanwhile, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali paid a visit CMH to enquire the health of the victims of a roadside explosion near the security forces convoy on Warsak Road here on Monday. The Governor expressed his heartfelt condolences and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The Governor, accompanied by hospital administration officials, met with the injured at the hospital. He inquired about their medical treatment and condition, assuring them of all necessary support for their recovery. Governor Haji Ghulam Ali strongly condemned the attack, which targeted security forces' vehicles.

He emphasized the need to stand united against terrorism and expressed his sorrow at the loss of security personnel in the incident. In a solemn moment, the Governor offered prayers for the security personnel who lost their lives, recognizing their sacrifices in the ongoing fight against terrorism. He also extended his condolences to the families of the martyred security personnel, reaffirming the nation's solidarity in the battle against terrorism.

President may to announce polls date

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Arif Alvi is expected to announce date for next general in the country anytime shortly, sources said on Monday. The proceeding came after meeting of the president with Caretaker Law Minister Ahmed Irfan Aslam to discuss the issue of general elections.

President Alvi was of the view that the continuation of the consultation process with good intentions will prove to be productive for the democracy in the country. During the meeting, Ahmed Irfan told the president that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had the authority to announce a date for elections, sources added.

Meanwhile, in a letter written to Dr Arif Alvi, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has urged him urged him to immediately give a date for polls in the country. It should be mentioned here that dissolution of the National Assembly last month before completion of its constitutional terms paved way for holding general elections within 90 days. As per Constitution of the country, election should be held within 60 days if assemblies are dissolved on completion of five-year term and in case of premature dissolution, the stipulated period is enhanced to 90 days.

According to the Constitution, the general elections in Pakistan must be held till November 2023 as the National Assembly had been dissolved prematurely on August 9, 2023. However, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has hinted at delay in the polls as it has decided to

go for fresh delimitation in line with the digital census. Last month, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sultan Sikandar Raja said a recent amendment to the Clause 57 of Election Act meant that giving election date was the sole prerogative of the ECP as he responded to the letter sent by President Arif Alvi.

According to the ECP [Election Commission of Pakistan] spokesperson, the CEC had sent a written response to the president, in which it mentioned that he [Raja] won't meet him to discuss the election date issue. The letter said the last National Assembly was dissolved under Article 58 (1) [just days before the completion of its tenure] on the advice of prime minister [Shehbaz Sharif]. Had the president dissolved the legislature after it completed the five-year term, he would have enjoyed the power to announce election date under Article 58 (2) which wasn't the case, it added.

Moreover, the CEC also noted in the letter that the process to carry out delimitation had started on the basis of new census. The response came after Mr Alvi invited Raja for a meeting to fix a date for elections – a move that raised many eyebrows as the electoral body has now been empowered to decide the matter without having to consult the president.

Alvi quoted Article 244 of the Constitution, saying he was duty-bound to get the elections conducted in the 90-day period once the National Assembly was dissolved prematurely. He also cited Article 48 (5) to argue his case.

Imran gets permission to talk with sons

ISLAMABAD (PPI): A special court on Monday issued orders, allowing the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman to have a phone conversation with his sons till September 15.

According to the details, a hearing was held on the petition of Chairman PTI against the Superintendent of Attock Jail in a special court established under the Official Secrets Act. The court has ordered a phone conversation with the PTI Chairman's sons by September 15, and Judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain has requested a progress report by September 15 as well.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain ordered the superintendent of jail to allow the PTI chairman to have a phone conversation with his sons till September 15, ensuring the implementation of court orders in all circumstances. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief filed a contempt of court petition against Attock Jail superintendent. The petition stated that despite the court orders, the superintendent jail did not allowed PTI chairman to hold meeting with his son via telephone.

Khadija Shah challenges her physical remand decision in LHC: PTI activist Khadija Shah has challenged an anti-terrorism court's decision of granting her physical remand in the Lahore High Court (LHC).

Barrister Sameer Khosa has filed Khadija Shah's petition in the high court pleading that the police had got physical remand of the petitioner in 9 May case for score of times.

Bilawal sees PPP to form next govt

F.P. Report

SUKKUR: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said that it is "evident" that his party will form the next government. Speaking at Sukkur's Jinnah Stadium on Monday, the PPP leader said, "It's writing on the wall" that the next government would be that of the PPP.

Expressing his views on the issue of the upcoming general elections and the controversy surrounding it, he said: "The general elections are inevitable." He added, "They [elections] will be held within 90 days, if not then 100 or even within 120 days at most."

Refuting the narrative that the PPP doesn't deliver, the former foreign minister — accentuating the Sindh government's National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) — said: "There's not even a single hospital even in Islamabad that is at par with NICVD." "If someone can't afford private hospitals, then they can visit Sindh government's hospitals that provide free of charge care," the PPP chairman said.

A day earlier, Bilawal while addressing the inauguration ceremony of a water filtration plant in Hyderabad, had said that his former political allies were running away from the elections. The PPP leader, without taking any names took a jibe against former ally Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) over their reluctance to support elections within the 90-day constitutional limit.

It is pertinent to know that Bilawal has repeatedly echoed his party's central executive committee's (CEC) stance in favour of holding elections within 90 days. The stance — however — has put Bilawal and PPP's CEC at odds with the former president and PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari who supports fresh delimitations under the new census and therefore effectively favouring holding of elections post the 90-day limit.



PESHAWAR: Security officials examining the spot after roadside bombing.

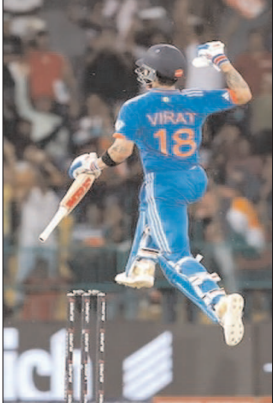
India crush Pakistan in rain-hit Asia Cup ODI

COLOMBO (Agencies): Much to the disappointment of Pakistani cricket fans, India handed the Men in Green a humiliating defeat to register biggest-ever ODI win against the arch-rivals at the R. Premadasa Stadium, Colombo on Monday.

Chasing a target of 357 runs, Pakistan were restricted to 128-8 in 32 overs with Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf not coming out to bat due to injuries. Spinner Kuldeep Yadav was the pick of the bowlers for India with figures of 5-25 in eight overs.

In a sorry batting display, Fakhar Zaman top-scored for Pakistan with 27 runs in 50 balls. Agha Salman and Ifthikhar Ahmed scored 23 runs each. Pakistan's star batter and captain Babar Azam scored 10 runs in 24 balls before being bowled by a beauty from Hardik Pandya.

Earlier, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul scored stunning centuries as India set Pakistan a massive target of 357 runs on Monday in Colombo during the Asia



Cup 2023. Play in the Pakistan-India match during the ongoing Asia Cup 2023 began after rain delay. However, India dominated proceedings as soon as the players stepped out on the field. India finished on 356-2 in their allotted 50 overs as Pakistan remained wicketless on the reserve day. Kohli remained unbeaten on 122 runs in 94 balls with the help of nine fours and three sixes.

Meanwhile, Rahul was not out on 111 runs in 106 balls which included 14 boundaries. Earlier,

Pakistani pacer Haris Rauf was ruled out of the India-Pakistan clash as a precautionary measure. He bowled only five overs in the innings.

"Haris Rauf will not be bowling any further in the Asia Cup Super 4 match against India as a precautionary measure. He felt a little discomfort in his right flank during the match yesterday," the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said in a brief statement. "He was subsequently taken for a precautionary MRI, which revealed no tear. He is under the observation of the team's medical panel," it added.

The Asia Cup 2023 Super 4 clash was called off yesterday due to persistent rain. It must be noted that Pakistan won the toss and decided to bowl first against India. When the match was stopped due to rain on Sunday, India were 147/2 in 24.1 overs. According to the playing conditions, the game continued from this point on the reserve day with no overs lost.

Sindh CM orders operation against drug mafia

KARACHI (PPI): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar presiding over a meeting of the Excise & Taxation department on Monday directed them to launch an operation against drug mafia and coordinate with other concerned agencies to avert the menace.

“The drug paddling in the educational institutions and presence of drug addicts in the parks and markets are unacceptable, therefore the Excise police in collaboration with district police and Anti-Narcotics Force must start a clean-up operation and keep him posting progress reports weekly.”

He issued these directives on Monday while presiding over a meeting of the Excise, Taxation & Narcotics Control Department here at CM House. The meeting was

attended by PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary Excise Atif Rehman, DG Excise Waheed Shaikh, and others.

The CM was told that the taxes levied and collected by the excise department include Motor Vehicle Tax, Infrastructure Cess, Excise Duty, Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employment, Entertainment Duty, and Cotton Fee.

The Secretary of Excise Atif Rehman talking about the Excise Duty said that his department controlled the manufacturing and sale of excisable articles such as Intoxicating liquor (PMFL & Beer), Rectified Spirit, Denatured Spirit, and Methanol.

The CM was told that the achievement of the excise dept, including payment of Motor Vehicle Tax through Online system / Portal Online Services

and alternate delivery mechanism, started in October 2020. Online verification of import documents for the registration of imported vehicles is also practiced to counter and plug in fake documentation, the CM was told.

The Excise dept has introduced Security Featured MVR Smart Cards recently, replacing Motor Vehicle Registration Books. Call Center Help Line for Excise, Taxation & Narcotics Department, Government of Sindh has also been introduced recently. The CM directed the Excise and Taxation dept to activate its narcotics control wing and develop close coordination with district police and ANF.

“You have their separate force and involve them in curbing drug trafficking and paddling.”

Rs32,000 minimum salary okayed

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Punjab cabinet has approved Rs32,000 minimum salary for a labourer in the province. For the first time in the provincial history, the meeting of the Punjab cabinet was held in Multan on Monday. A 39-point agenda was presented in the meeting.

Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi was given briefing on the development projects and road infrastructure projects in South Punjab.

The cabinet approved the minimum salary of a labourer at Rs32,000 directing the authorities to implement the order.

During the meeting, the agenda of the vice chancellor of Pir Mehr Ali Shah Agriculture University, Rawalpindi was presented.

Besides this, names of the recipients of the Quaid-e-Azam Police Medals and Presidential Police Medals were suggested.

The provincial cabinet also took up the agendas pertaining to the reconstitution of Board of Directors of Punjab Health Foundation, amendment to Punjab Mental Health Act of Punjab Mental Health Authority and 200-bed Centre of Excellence Gynecology in Rawalpindi.

Rangers seize huge quantity of smuggled goods, arrests 12

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Rangers Sindh in an anti-smuggling drive seized large quantity of smuggled goods from different areas of the megalopolis and arrested 12 allegedly involved accused.

According to spokesman for Sindh Rangers on Monday, the para-military force conducted the operations against smuggling in, Mehran Town, Shahnawaz

Bhutto Colony, Baldia Town, Hub check post, Hub River Road, Naya Nazimabad, Orangi and other areas of the city and Abdul Jabbar check post in Jacobabad.

During the operations, the Rangers seized 9559 litres of Iranian diesel/petrol, two pumping machines, 530 kg Indian gutka, a suzuki, a car, 4 motorcycles and two trucks.

Arrested 12 were identified as Asif Shah, Saeedullah, Muhammad Salman, Sanaullah, Muhammad Arif, Muhammad Imran, Saqib Hussain, Siraj Ahmed, Riaz Ahmed, Shahid Zaman, Haq Nawaz and Abbas.

The seized goods and arrested accused were handed over to Pakistan Customs authorities for further legal proceedings.

Karachi’s 65 SHOs blacklisted

KARACHI (INP): The police authorities in the wake making changes in Sindh Police have decided to blacklist over 65 Station House officers (SHOs) from different police stations across metropolises.

As per details, after renewing the performance of all officers and personnel in each district, lists have been prepared at the Karachi Police Headquarters.

After the review of the performance report, the higher authorities decided to blacklist over 65 police station chiefs across all three zones in Karachi.

According to officials,

the action will be taken against police station chiefs who are found to be involved with smuggling mafia, organized crime, and other illegal activities.

Last week, Sindh police conducted an operation at Karachi’s Bilal colony and arrested four suspected individuals.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in his statement claimed that all four arrested individuals were involved in street crime activities in the metropolises.

“The suspects used to open fire, if the victim resisted during robbery, and often used police caps dur-

ing their criminal activities,” SSP maintained.

The accused had also robbed Special Branch official Tanveer, and snatched his mobile phone, official weapon and flee from the scene. Tanveer’s mobile phone has also been recovered from the possession of the arrested accused.

SSP further added that the culprits used to sell the stolen mobile phones to Jehanzaib for Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000, adding that the buyer – an IT expert – used to change the IMEI [International Mobile Equipment Identity] of the stolen mobile phones.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Caretaker CM Justice retired Maqbool Baqir and members of Sindh Cabinet visited the mausoleum of father of the nation Quaid-e-Azam.

Aziz Bhatti’s 58th death anniversary today

LAHORE (INP): The 58th death anniversary of Major Raja Abdul Aziz Bhatti (Nishan-e-Haidar) would be observed on the country tomorrow (Tuesday).

On the occasion, his grave would be adorned with floral wreaths and ‘fatiha’ would be offered for him. In order to give tribute to the martyr, special prayer ceremony will be conducted different cities.

He was the commander of Pakistani troops in 1965 Pak-Indo war at Barki sector in Lahore. He fought with the enemies for 48 hours and caused great losses to Indian troops. He was martyred when enemy tank fired upon him.

Minister pays tribute to Quaid-e-Azam

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Minister for Health Dr Javed Akram has said the entire nation paid homage to the founder of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on Monday, he said the dream of an independent state for Muslims of the Sub-continent

was achieved due to the leadership of the Quaid-e-Azam.

The minister maintained that the life of Quaid-e-Azam was a practical demonstration of golden principles of constitutional struggle, faith, unity and discipline. “Our country is facing challenging time and we need to follow the principles of the Quaid-e-Azam,” he said.

Deputy Consul General Nakagawa Yashushi accompanied by the Japanese Consul General while Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad was also present during the meeting.

The Mayor Karachi welcomed the Japanese CG on his arrival at the KMC head office. On this occasion, the Mayor of Karachi and the Consul General of Japan exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Mayor Karachi said that the PHL surcharge was applied to all customers across Pakistan to cover markup on loans taken on by Power Holdings Ltd -a government entity – for power sector-related investments. He added that KE has no contribution to this

that the relationship between Pakistan and Japan was the best example of mutual cooperation between the nations. Japan has made amazing progress in a short period of time which was an example for other nations. Japan was helping Pakistan in various fields including development projects.

He said that Japanese investment companies will be provided with facilities to invest in Karachi. They want to utilize Japan’s development and technical expertise in urban affairs so that quality municipal facilities can be provided to the citizens of Karachi, the Mayor said.

He said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation was taking steps to provide better facilities to the citizens. They will welcome the cooperation of other countries including Japan in the development projects of Karachi, he added.

Wahab Murtaza said that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Japan will be more stable in the future. Odagiri Toshio said that the process of developing the infrastructure in Karachi was a positive effort. The Japanese government has good wishes for the development of the largest city of Pakistan and mutual cooperation between the two countries will continue.

ed by the Chairman, Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), Masroor Khan and Additional Secretary Incharge Ministry of Energy, Momin Agha.

Later on, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Muhammad Ali also held a meeting with the heads of Oil Marketing Companies(OMCs) headed by the Secretary General Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), Dr. Nazir Abbas Zaidi.

The delegation of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) raised their issues regarding foreign exchange losses, pricing formula, illegal outlets and turn over tax to be minimised. Mr. Mehmet Celepoglu, the Chief Executive Officer of Total Parco Pakistan also joined the meeting through

video conference. Mr. Mehmet also appealed the caretaker Minister for Energy to formulate the uniform policy and reimburse the amount of foreign loss after conducting audit in order to create uniformity among the companies.

The Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy ensuring his complete support, directed the Chairman, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) and Additional Secretary Incharge, Ministry of Energy, to address the issues on priority basis. Furthermore, the Minister appealed the Oil Marketing Companies to discourage the smuggling and the sug-gled item. A massive crack down had already been initiated against the smugglers, he said.

KE urged to add cheap power to their system

KARACHI (NNI): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar has urged K-Electric to generate cheap electricity by using local fuel, including renewable so that people could heave a sigh of relief in power bills.

He also urged the KE to guide their customers to use such appliances, including fans and LED bulbs which consume less electricity so that their burden of heavy bills could be curtailed.

This he said while presiding over a meeting of KE to resolve their issues and work out a strategy to provide uninterrupted cheap electricity to the people of Karachi. The meeting was attended by Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary Finance Kazim Jatoi, Commissioner Karachi Saleem Rajput, Adl IG Karachi Khadim Rind, Secretary Energy Fayaz Abbasi, KE CEO Monis Alvi, Tariq Shah of Energy dept, Shabar Zedi and others.

The chief minister said that the KE should add local fuel-based electricity in their system so that power tariff could be reduced. The CEO KE Moonis Alvi told the CM that the KE was going to add 2172 MW, including 1,182 MW from renewable energy.

The KE CEO told the CM that the tariff hike and power theft have shrunk power consumption by five percent and decreased recoveries by 3.4 percent. At this, the CM said that the ways and means should be explored to generate cheap electricity that the customers could afford to use.

Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab said that the PHL surcharge was applied to all customers across Pakistan to cover markup on loans taken on by Power Holdings Ltd -a government entity – for power sector-related investments. He added that KE has no contribution to this

debt, even then this surcharge (PHL) was levied on customers in Karachi as well.

Murtaza Wahab said that he would file suit in the NEPRA as Mayor of Karachi. CM said that he would also talk to the federal government to remove the burden of the Rs3.20 PHL surcharge.

The KE Chief told the CM that 174 instances of mob attacks on KE staff have been recorded, therefore he requested protection. At this, the CM directed Additional IGP Karachi Khadim Rind to provide protection to KE staff. The Additional IGP Police said that KE has a separate police station with an SHO, and ample police staff. The CM directed the Adl IGP to functionalise the KE Police station.

The chief minister also directed the KE to ensure the timely provision of electricity bills so that customers could have a few days to pay them. The KE Chief assured the chief minister that the provision of bills well in time would be ensured.

CM says govt promotes tech improvements: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar has said that his priority is centered on promoting continuous technological improvements and upgradation to increase the competitiveness of the agriculture sector, including the sugar industry.

He said that the Government of Pakistan recently established a high-powered ‘Special Investment Facilitation Council’ to attract investments from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in the fields of Defence, Agriculture, Minerals, IT, and Energy.

The caretaker CM said that as a member of SIFC’s Apex Committee, he was determined to focus on channeling investments to boost the productivity and competitiveness of Sindh’s agriculture sector, including the sugar industry.

Japanese CG calls on Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of Japan in Karachi Odagiri Toshio called on Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab at the KMC head office on Monday.

Deputy Consul General Nakagawa Yashushi accompanied by the Japanese Consul General while Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad was also present during the meeting.

The Mayor Karachi welcomed the Japanese CG on his arrival at the KMC head office. On this occasion, the Mayor of Karachi and the Consul General of Japan exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Mayor Karachi said

that the relationship between Pakistan and Japan was the best example of mutual cooperation between the nations. Japan has made amazing progress in a short period of time which was an example for other nations. Japan was helping Pakistan in various fields including development projects.

He said that Japanese investment companies will be provided with facilities to invest in Karachi. They want to utilize Japan’s development and technical expertise in urban affairs so that quality municipal facilities can be provided to the citizens of Karachi, the Mayor said.

He said that the Karachi

Metropolitan Corporation was taking steps to provide better facilities to the citizens. They will welcome the cooperation of other countries including Japan in the development projects of Karachi, he added.

Wahab Murtaza said that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Japan will be more stable in the future. Odagiri Toshio said that the process of developing the infrastructure in Karachi was a positive effort. The Japanese government has good wishes for the development of the largest city of Pakistan and mutual cooperation between the two countries will continue.

Management directed to minimise circular debt

F.P.Report

KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali hold important meeting with PSO management at PSO House Karachi. The Minister was briefed by the Managing Director Pakistan State Oil(PSO), Syed Muhammad Taha regarding overall performance and challenges being faced by the PSO.

The Managing Director of PSO apprised the Minister that the PSO had an extensive network of 3500 outlets nationwide.

The caretaker Federal Minister directed the PSO management to minimise the circular debt, being the Pakistan’s leading energy company.

The meeting was attend-

ed by the Chairman, Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), Masroor Khan and Additional Secretary Incharge Ministry of Energy, Momin Agha.

Later on, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Muhammad Ali also held a meeting with the heads of Oil Marketing Companies(OMCs) headed by the Secretary General Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), Dr. Nazir Abbas Zaidi.

The delegation of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) raised their issues regarding foreign exchange losses, pricing formula, illegal outlets and turn over tax to be minimised. Mr. Mehmet Celepoglu, the Chief Executive Officer of Total Parco Pakistan also joined the meeting through

video conference. Mr. Mehmet also appealed the caretaker Minister for Energy to formulate the uniform policy and reimburse the amount of foreign loss after conducting audit in order to create uniformity among the companies.

The Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy ensuring his complete support, directed the Chairman, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) and Additional Secretary Incharge, Ministry of Energy, to address the issues on priority basis. Furthermore, the Minister appealed the Oil Marketing Companies to discourage the smuggling and the sug-gled item. A massive crack down had already been initiated against the smugglers, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for State for Tourism Sayad Wasi Ahmad Fatimi (Wasi Shah) in a group photo after celebration of 2023 as the Year of Sino-Pakistan Tourism Exchanges organized by Pakistan China Friendship Association at KP’s House Islamabad. Chinese Cultural Counselor in Pakistan Zhang Heqing PCFA Secretary General Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani also present on occasion.

17 more dengue cases reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 17 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 420.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood on Monday said that, among the new cases, nine patients had arrived from Potohar town urban area, four from Rawalpindi Cantonment, three from Chaklala Cantonment, and one from Municipal Corporation area. He said 96 patients were admitted to the district’s hospitals, of which 65 were confirmed cases while 355 were discharged after treatment.

The health officer added that 16 patients were in critical position. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 24 FIRs and issued tickets to six against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. The health officer said that dengue cases were being reported across the district while the health authority along with allied departments was making efforts to control the spread of the lethal disease. He urged the residents to adopt precautionary measures and warned that September was crucial for dengue spread as Rawalpindi was a sensitive area regarding dengue.

LESCO detects 194 connections of power theft on fifth day operation

LAHORE (APP): LESCO (Lahore Electric Supply Company) is continuing with anti-power theft operation in all its circles of operation on fifth consecutive day (Monday) and detected 194 customers stealing electricity, according to the company’s spokesman here.

He added that LESCO has also submitted applications for registration of FIRs against all the electricity thieves in the respective police stations, out of which 97 FIRs (First Information Reports) have been registered and 25 suspects arrested.

The LESCO raiding teams managed to detect one industrial, one agricultural, seven commercial and 185 domestic connections from where the respective customers were stealing electricity.

The company, he said, also charged 528,700 units to electricity thieves caught on the fifth day in the form of detection bill amounting to Rs 24.168 million after disconnecting all the connections. Also on the fifth day of operation, he said, LESCO teams found some important figures involved in electricity theft.

Following directives of Prime Minister and the

Ministry of Energy (Power Division), he said, the LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider has launched massive operations against electricity thieves. The CEO is resolute to eliminate the evil of electricity theft from the LESCO region.

The spokesman said that on fifth day of operation, LESCO charged 52840 detection units of Rs 2,959 million to Muhammad Younas (Chaanan Dyna Mill), 50966 detection units of Rs 2,854 million to Abdul Rauf having a commercial connection, 25907 units of Rs 569,954 to Muhammad Bilal, 5431 units worth Rs 325,872 to Shabir Ahmad Liliani, 5303 units of Rs 265,150 to Kamran Madhulal, and 6270 units worth Rs 229,000 to Asghar Ali (Suhana Service Station).

The spokesman mentioned that a total of 1,273 connections were detected as stealing electricity during five-day operation in LESCO region. Out of 1272 FIR applications, 796 FIRs have so far been registered and 83 suspects arrested, he said, asserting that a total of 4,277,577 detection units worth Rs 181,028 million have been charged to all the electricity thieves.

The LESCO CEO said that grand operation against electricity theft would continue without discrimination, and the LESCO officers/officials and field staff conniving in the power theft would also be taken to task.

Inter Part-II results to be announced on Sept 13

LAHORE (APP): The date of Intermediate Part-I and II results has been finalised, Intermediate Part-II results will be announced on September 13, while Intermediate Part-I results will be announced on October 10. According to BISE Lahore official sources, Intermediate Second Annual Exams will be held on 20th October 2023, Admissions for the exams will be submitted from 14th September. Admission with single fee can be submitted till 25th September while admission with double fee can be submitted from 26th to 29th September. The admissions with triple fee can be submitted from September 30th to October 3.



Governor directs GIT to furnish detail report

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has directed the Chairman, Governor Inspection Team (GIT) for furnishing a detailed report regarding the academic programme, financial resources, staff, and number of students in the public sector universities and to present it to him.

He issued these directives during a meeting with the Chairman GIT, Dr Saad Sikandar Khan here in the Governor's House on Monday.

During the meeting, the Chairman GIT informed the Governor regarding the overall performance of the organization, financial & administrative irregularities in different universities, and inquiries conducted on the complaints filed by the students and general public.

During the meeting, they also discussed matters relating to surplus staff and less number of students in the universities.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said that offices are sacred trust of the county and nation, saying performing duties with honesty should be the mission of all of us.

He said that the prevailing financial problems of the universities are a matter of concern and that the situation of the public universities is hurting him.

He said universities prepare the future of the country, saying besides bringing improvement in financial and administrative matters are included in the responsibilities of the Vice Chancellors and faculty members and pledged to

take all possible steps in this regard.

He said that all facts would be looked into, and while keeping in view each aspect. He said that teachers and faculty members are respectful for them. He said neither anyone would be harassed nor the character assassination of anyone would be committed.

Governor visits CMH to enquire blast victims

Governor Haji Ghulam Ali paid a visit CMH to enquire the health of the victims of a roadside explosion near the security forces convoy on Warsak Road here on Monday.

The Governor expressed his heartfelt condolences and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The Governor, accompanied by hospital administration officials, met with the

injured at the hospital.

He inquired about their medical treatment and condition, assuring them of all necessary support for their recovery.

Governor Haji Ghulam Ali strongly condemned the attack, which targeted security forces' vehicles. He emphasized the need to stand united against terrorism and expressed his sorrow at the loss of security personnel in the incident.

In a solemn moment, the Governor offered prayers for the security personnel who lost their lives, recognizing their sacrifices in the ongoing fight against terrorism.

He also extended his condolences to the families of the martyred security personnel, reaffirming the nation's solidarity in the battle against terrorism.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan being briefed during their visit to Corps Headquarters Peshawar.

PPA plays appointment of doctor as Registrar

PESHAWAR: Provincial Paramedical Association (PPA) KP condemned the appointment of Lady Doctor as Registrar Faculty of Paramedical and Allied Health Sciences.

The appointment was condemned during PPA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet meeting chaired by Sharafat Ullah Yousafzai in which divisional presidents including Bannu, Hazara, Malakand and Peshawar were present. PPA general secretary Lauqman Gul Orakzai presented agenda and briefed the participants.

PPA claimed that dispute was settle during meeting caretaker Advisor Dr. Riaz Anwar at Secretary health office while constitution of a committee was decided for formulation rules for the Faculty of Paramedical and Allied Health Sciences. Unfortunately, some people within secretariat taking controversial decision to create problems for caretaker government.

Police arrest three street criminals

PESHAWAR (APP): Tehkal Police Station has arrested three street criminals and recovered over Rs400,000 in stolen money and other items from their possession. Under the special instructions of SP Cantt Division, Waqas Rafique, and under the supervision of DSP Town Sajjad Hussain, SHO Thana Tahkal Inamullah, and other investigative officers have successfully carried out operations against street crimes and thefts involving individuals.

During these operations in various areas of Tahkal, they apprehended three suspects involved in mobile snatching, robbery, and other criminal activities targeting the city's residents.

The arrested suspects are from Nasir Bagh and Tehkal who robbed business personalities and others with weapons during robberies. They were also found to be involved in theft cases. During initial investigations, they have confessed to being involved in multiple robberies, including cash and valuable items va from citizens in various parts of Peshawar.

The seized amount from the suspects is more than Rs400,000, and a motorcycle and a pistol used in these activities have also been recovered.

During the investigation, important and sensational revelations are expected from the suspects.

Contract employee serves RTS as Secretary

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: It is revealed that a contract Assistant Accountant at Right to Public Services Commission (RTPSC/RTS) has been promoted to Account Officer and now serving the commission as Secretary.

Moreover, Hafiz Ismat Ali obtained a promotion against the law and serves on two positions of Account Officer and Secretary at RTS, which is established to ensure accountability of public servants in delivery of service to ensure good governance in the province.

According to source, due

to negligence and ignorance of government audit of the RTS commission conducted while malpractices like nepotism at peak as well as talk of the day for every employee.

He added that senior most officer at RTS has challenged appointment of Hafiz Ismat Ali before Peshawar High Court in writ jurisdiction.

It is worthy to mention that, Ismat Ali recruited as Account Assistant at Basic Pay Scale (BPS-16) on contract basis but latterly promotion to BPS-17 as Account Officer while now serves two positions including secretary.

It is first promotion in history of Pakistan that a contract employee was promoted to next position as well as granted additional charge of the Secretary, the source disclosed.

He claimed that senior officials are waiting for promotion since seven years while on the other hand amended RTS rules illegally to favor the contract employee.

The source claimed that Ismat Ali is also mis-using official fund, driver, petrol and vehicle while added that Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) inquiry will be necessary to dig-out the malpractices.

Oil & Gas sector: KPOGCL asked to take steps for promotion, uplift

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Energy & Power and Mineral Development, Engineer Ahmad Jan Khan has directed the authorities of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Company Limited (KPOGCL) to take practical steps for the promotion and development of natural resources of oil and gas in the province.

He issued these directives while presiding over the first introductory meeting regarding Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Company Limited (KPOGCL) in the committee room of the Department of Energy and Power here on Monday.

Besides, Secretary Energy and Power, Zulfikar Ali Shah, the top officials of the company also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the

caretaker minister was given a detailed briefing on the goals, performance, future goals and challenges of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Company Limited, a company established for the discovery of oil and gas reserves in the province and its promotion.

The Caretaker Minister was told that the company was established in 2013 with the aim of promoting the exploration and production of oil and gas at the provincial level in the province.

The company is carrying out Oil and gas exploration activities at many places of the province.

The Caretaker Minister was informed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has vast potential of valuable natural oil and gas and currently the daily production of

oil in the whole country is about 71000 barrels, out of which Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is producing about 31000 barrels of oil per day.

It was further informed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also produces 13% of the total gas production of the country while KP is providing 41% of the total production in LPG.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister directed the company officials to intensify their practical efforts to fully utilize the natural resources of the province, as we can get economic stability through it.

The caretaker minister said that he believes in hard work and honesty and in capacity as the caretaker minister will support the company in its efforts for the development of the province.

Illegal forex trade, dollars mafia: Crackdown launched; 45 shops closed, 28 held

PESHAWAR (APP): A crackdown against illegal forex trade was launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa following reports of an artificial hike in the US dollar in Peshawar where 45 such shops were closed on charges of illegal trade.

To curb illegal forex trade and smuggling of US dollars, the Federal Investigation Agency has raided multiple shops in Chowk Yadgar Peshawar and closed more than 45 shops there.

Officials in FIA said the crackdown on illegal forex trade and US dollar smuggling was launched by the FIA's Commercial Banking

Circle. Peshawar police and other law-enforcement agencies assisted FIA during the crackdown.

The currency shops operating in the provincial capital without obtaining licences from the State Bank of Pakistan had been closed. FIA has carried out more than 27 raids in the last 23 days leading to the arrest of 28 people for doing hundi-hawala business.

Meanwhile, the lists of foreign currency dealers involved in the sale and purchase of dollars on a large scale at the national and international levels have been prepared so that strong action could be taken

against dollar mafia and illegal forex trade elements.

The list of currency dealers at Chowk Yadgar, the main hub of dollars and other currency exchange trade, was also compiled. The financial details of dollars and illegal forex trade mafia were also collected from banks.

Information regarding vehicles used by dollar hoarders was obtained from the Excise Department, their children education's expenses from private schools and property in the name of families from the Peshawar Development Authority and other housing societies.

Upto 7 years imprisonment, Rs10m fine to be imposed on power stealers

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) spokesman here Monday said stealing of electricity was a social crime and upto 7 years rigorous imprisonment and Rs10 million fine or both could be imposed against the power thieves.

"Like banks and houses' robberies, electricity's stealing was also a crime. Besides three to seven years rigorous imprisonment in jails, a fine of Rs one million to Rs10 million or both could be imposed against the power stealers under the law," Usman Aslam, PESCO spokesman told APP on Monday.

He said that videos of the direct hooks of accused involved in power pilferage were being prepared so that prompt legal action could be taken against them.

Usman said PESCO had suffered 42.10 percent losses due to electricity theft

this year against 42.15 percent in 2022, showing 0.5 percent reduction due to crackdown against electricity stealers this year.

The anti electricity theft operation has been intensified in KP where over 600 direct hooks were removed besides imposing over Rs eight million fine, he said.

He said applications for registration of FIRs against more than 300 persons involved in electricity theft were submitted by the SDOs.

"The electricity thieves, who were caught red handed, were handed over to police," he said.

"We are also concentrating on recovery of the outstanding dues in KP where 92pc recovery was achieved this year due to the company's successful strategies and actions against the defaulted domestic, agriculture and industrial consumers," he

said.

Keeping in view of the country's shabby economic situation, he said crackdown against electricity stealers were the best option to provide relief to consumers in billing.

"Protest is no solution to any problem. It is also the responsibility of the people to make a close vigil on their surrounding and inform PESCO authorities for timely action against power thieves," he said.

The spokesman urged people to call 118 for sharing of information against elements involved in power pilferage so that prompt action could be taken against the power thieves.

Besides social boycotts, he said that electricity stealers should be given the same treatment in society as being provided to the other thieves.

He said consumers who paid bills were also suf-

fered due to direct hooks in the shape of extra load shedding and urged masses to expose elements involved in electricity pilferage besides make their social boycotts.

He said that Deputy Commissioners and DPOs have provided security to the PESCO staff during ongoing campaign against power theft in the province.

"After seeing promptness in the anti theft electricity operations, several stealers have removed direct hooks voluntarily," he said.

Usman said power stealing were not only overloading the transformers but also caused fluctuations besides increase line losses.

The spokesman said the electricity demand and supply gap could be narrowed by removing illegal connections for which cooperation of consumers carried vital importance.

NAB-KP files corruption reference

PESHAWAR (APP): The National Accountability Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (NAB-KP) has filed a corruption reference of Rs 1098 million against 31 accused including 19 officials of Pak PWD in the accountability court after completing the investigation.

According to the NAB-KP spokesman, massive embezzlement in SDGs projects in the merged districts of Khyber, Bajaur and Mohmand were identified and investigated.

He said that the government had allocated around 1800 million rupees in 2021-22 for 52 development schemes in the three districts under SDGs programmes, adding that the accused illegally awarded 47 contracts and also made payments on fake measurement books. The accused have caused a loss of Rs1098 million to the national exchequer.

Advisor stresses for best project design, durability within limited resources

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Caretaker Chief Minister on Irrigation, Planning and Development and Communication and Works, Dr Sayyed Sarfaraz Ali while referring to the engineers and technical staff on Monday said the best design and durability of a project within less possible funds should be the prime objective during executing of a projects of people welfare. He said the newly inducted engineers would be provided necessary training to make their work praise worthy. He said the engineers who have been imparted training should work as the servants of the people.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Sayyed Sarfaraz Ali Shah addressing SDOs and trainers.

Education basic right of every child: Kitab Dost

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Our children are the future of our country. Basic education is the right of every child. ABPAW KP, a social enterprise run by women, under the auspices of Kitab Dost "Friends of Books" conducts different healthy activities like debates, art competitions, story writing, and story

reading in government primary schools and Ujala Schools Network.

Ujala free primary schools have been established in Peshawar for street children or children who do not have access to education. These extracurricular activities have helped develop a different and unique take on a 'Qaida in Urdu'.

The children's active contributions, involvement, and participation have helped develop the "Tasveeri Qaeda/Picture Qaida" from scratch to finish. A few minor wrongs might be visible to some but this being children's efforts, the publication went along with it.

Kitab Dost endeavors to ensure that children again start reading books, and make books their best friends. In this regard, a press briefing was arranged in the Peshawar Press Club, in which the children also participated. The President of the Association and other volunteers were also present. The formal launching of the Qaida took place in the press briefing.

Workshop on 'Needs Gaps Analysis for National Disaster Preparedness and Response' organized in University of Engineering Technology

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A one day workshop on "Needs Gaps Analysis for National Disaster Preparedness and Response" in collaboration with NDMA, PDMA and University of Engineering Technology Peshawar was held here on Monday.

The workshop was aimed to bring together experts and professionals to assess the policy gaps to garner global collaborations for innovative solutions for effective in all aspects of disaster management.

Jannat Gul, DG PDMA

Peshawar said, in order to create awareness on natural disasters, a unified response is needed with the help of academia, government and civil society.

He said, we do not have data of our local wisdom that has to be gathered by our Public Section Institutions to find out real life solutions.

The Vice Chancellor UET Prof. Dr. Ifthikhar Hussain said that the Department of civil engineering and EEC UET have worked with NDMA in the revision of seismic building code 2021 and helped the department towards devel-

oping seismic hazard map.

He said the in recent years we have witnessed the severe consequences of floods, earthquakes and climate change which call for a unified response for mitigation and response for devising disaster management strategies. Prof. Dr. Khan Shahzada, Department of Civil Engineering, gave away a detailed presentation on UET Peshawar's role in disaster preparedness and response. The Vice Chancellor appreciated the efforts of Prof. Dr. Rawid Khan, UET Peshawar for arranging the workshop.

Dr. Fazal Ahmad Khan, Rector GIK, Swabi urged for exploiting AI based solutions to deal with such challenges and create more awareness for policy making and engage academia to find out AI based solutions for a quick response and mitigate risks involved in Pakistan and the across the world.

He stressed to have a reliable data collection mechanism where universities are central to work on this area.

He said, our graduates in the field hold more importance besides technology to suggest sustain-

able solutions. He further urged to start a joint degree program in the field of disaster management and UET need to be at the central place in offering the same program where policy level recommendations to the government.

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Shah, Manager Risk Assessment NDMA, Islamabad also spoke on the occasion.

He said that Pakistan is in top ten countries affected and vulnerable by climate change according to the Global Vulnerability Index. Therefore, it calls for a more proactive approach



which has been helped by NDMA.

The NDMA has established seventeen satellites with the help of national and international agencies including NASA, EU and Japan and SUPARCO. All

these will help us in getting remote sensing data and model models.

The workshop included thematic sessions in which participants from NDMA, UET Peshawar, KUST, CDPM (UoP), MCE

Rasulpur, KUST, GIKI, Hazara University and Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan participated and gave presentations on different area with respect to disaster management and collaboration.



In brief

Employees hold protest
F.P. Report

LARKANA: The organization of employees at Benazir Bhutto Medical University in Larkana held a protest demonstration in front of the Mukhya Gate of the university in favor of their demands, on Monday. Abdul Jabbar Sial, Khalid Mahmood protested and said that allowances are not being given even though the university is in need. No facilities are available while MBBS posts are not being upgraded for the last 15 years. He further said that a case has been filed by the administration against Ali Pahlputu, the head of the employee organization for raising the voice of truth in Shah Latif University. They were also being threatened with dismissal from their jobs which is completely unfair and we strongly condemn this action. Go so that the puzzled restlessness among the employees ends.

5000 sugar bags recovered
F.P. Report

BANNU: The administration has crackdown against sugar hoarders and recovered five thousand bags from different warehouses in the Bannu district, on Monday. As per details, on the directions of DC Manzoor Ahmad Afridi, Additional Assistant Commissioner shams ur Rehman, DSP Imran Khattak and SHO Domel police station Zabeer Khan along with their team raided against the sugar hoarders of different markets of Domel and recovered more than five thousands of sugar bags. Their stores were seized and strict legal action was taken against the hoarders. While talking to the media personnel, DC Manzoor Ahmad Afridi told that strict action will be taken against the hoarders and no one will be spared. In addition to that, the administration is strictly working for the welfare of the people of Bannu, and no compromise is tolerated disturbing the welfare of the area.

Blood donation camp arranged
F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassaemia Hospital and Blood Transfusion Services Peshawar organized blood donation camp at Govt. Postgraduate College Timergara Dir Lower, with the help and cooperation of Prof. Murad Khan and Prof. Ijaz Khan, on Monday. On that occasion, 107 healthy volunteers blood donors Students donated their precious blood for saving lives of Thalassaemia Major kids and other blood disorder disease patients. Resource Mobilization officers of Hamza Foundation Ateeq ur Rehman and Ibrarullah Jan gave detail motivational lectures to the students regarding welfare services of Hamza Foundation, awareness and prevention of Thalassaemia disease and also about importance of Blood donation. After motivational speech, 107 healthy volunteers' donors Students donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1472 registered poor patients of Thalassaemia and Hemophilia patients. Founder Chairman Hamza Foundation Ijaz Khan, thanked and appreciated the sincere cooperation of the Management of the College and volunteer students blood donors for the arrangements of such a successful blood donation camp at such a remote area of KP. On that occasion Ateeq ur Rehman RMO, and Mr. Ibrarullah Jan of HF had presented Shield of Hamza Foundation to the Blood In-charge of the said college.

PHC CJ inaugurates anti-terrorism court, inspected jail

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mr. Justice Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, the Hon'ble Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court inaugurated newly constructed, state of the art and fully equipped Courts of Anti-Terrorism in Mardan on Monday.

The project is not only unique but first of its kind in

lordship added that "it is our duty, as the guardians of justice, to protect our people and preserve the fundamental principles upon which our society is built". These specialized courts will serve as a bastion of justice and a beacon of hope for all those affected by the aftermath of terrorism.

These will also be a

and coordinated approach involving all branches of government, law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, and the public at large".

He thus underscored that all these agencies must perform collectively to dismantle the networks that perpetrate these heinous acts, disrupt their financing, and counter the extremist ideologies that fuel their actions. During final remarks, his lordship accentuated never to waver in our pursuit of a province and country free from terrorism, where justice prevails, and where fear no longer threatens our way of life.

Later, he also visited central prison, Mardan where he examined and interviewed the inmates. He directed the worthy district and Sessions Judges to expedite the trials of Juvenile and females besides, of those prisoners who are involved in petty nature offences.

The District and Sessions, Judges Mardan, Nowshera and Charsadda were specifically ordered to take concrete steps and share their report whereas, the Superintendent Jail was directed to share the particulars of inmates immediately with the former. He also directed the district and sessions Judges to conduct regular unscheduled visits to Jail. At the end, his lordship extended thanks to all and reiterated that the district and sessions Judges shall not only keep a vigilant eye over the inmates but also closely monitor the affairs of jails. Compliance was assured in letter and spirit.



the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as, the courts are equipped with advance and up-to-date technology to enable the trial under Terrorism law is conducted according to the international norms.

During the inaugural speech, his lordship Hon'ble the Chief Justice highlighted that "Terrorism has worst affected the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in terms of slow down the economic progress, disruption of social structure, and bringing damage to politics of the province.

Loss in terms of sacred lives and infrastructure has been unimaginable". His

place where the lives lost in acts of terror will not be forgotten, and where the survivors will find solace, healing, and closure. To ensure fairness, impartiality, and efficiency, these courts consist of highly skilled judges, prosecutors, and experts in the field of counter-terrorism.

Moreover, they are also equipped with the necessary resources, training, and support to carry out their sacred duty of delivering justice. On the occasion, he emphasized that "fight against terrorism is not solely the responsibility of the judiciary but it required a comprehensive

HED special monitoring drive concluded

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Higher Education Department (HED) has successfully concluded its dedicated week-long special monitoring drive, in significant regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Peshawar, Malakand, Hazara, and southern districts.

During this initiative, special monitoring teams, composed 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. An official said on Sunday that a compre-

hensive report had been submitted to higher authorities, and a high-level meeting was being planned to devise strategic solutions based on the findings.

Under the esteemed guidance of the provincial secretary of the higher education department and the capable leadership of additional secretary of colleges Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, the mission aimed to address challenges faced by educational institutions", he claimed. He said that the visits by the special monitoring teams 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", he added. He attributed the success of this commendable initiative

to the personal commitment of the provincial secretary of the higher education department, the able leadership of additional secretary of colleges Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, director quality assurance Imran Ullah Marwat and the unwavering dedication of key officers within the department.

He said that higher education director Dr Farid Ullah Shah, director general of commerce education Dr Amjad Rafiq, regional director south Dr Fazli Hadi, regional director Hazara Dr Muhammad Irshad and director higher education information management system (HEMIS) Syed Ishiaq Hussain along with their dedicated teams also contributed to the achievement. "This endeavor reflects the department's commitment to enhancing public service delivery in higher education", he asserted.



SHANGLA: Lawyers along with political workers protesting against Deputy Commissioner's attitude and corruption. — F.P. photo

Socio-economic uplift of Waziristan key for prosperity

F.P. Report

WANA: Before the merger of Fata into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Waziristan had been controlled by the Federal Govt since the inception of Pakistan in 1947 as a separate state in the world. South Waziristan has great potential in all areas, but unfortunately, its potentials are not properly utilized owing to the slackness of officials of that time.

Now, civil administration has

chalked out a master plan for the merged district of South Waziristan to mitigate the longstanding deprivation of it. According to the proposed master plan, a network of roads, highways, bridges and transportation system will be enhanced to have sufficient intra-district connectivity and with other neighbouring regions." Roads, highways and transportation would facilitate trade, goods and accessibility to basic amenities in the vast South Waziristan."

It was learnt from a source that in the short & long term projects have encompassed in the prepared documents which will pave way for effective allocation and implementation of developmental projects in South Waziristan; and South Waziristan geographical and historical importance has been explicitly mentioned in the said master plan as it has borders with Afghanistan and can be used as a border crossing district for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asian countries.



MINGORA: PML-N KP president Amir Muqam wearing caps to chairman Zeli Ishlahi Committee Hassan and his friends following resign from PTI.

APCA demands hike in pension
F.P. Report

MARDAN: APCA Pakistan Central Secretary General Aurazzeb Kashmiri has said that government employees from all corners of the nation have risen up against the recent termination of pension commutation. This move, orchestrated at the behest of the IMF, has left the workforce incensed, pushing them to the brink of nationwide protests.

Aurazzeb Kashmiri, the Central Secretary General of APCA Pakistan, vehemently expressed his disapproval of this decision. He emphasized the decades of dedicated service employees commit to their organizations and the nation, only to face a distressing blow when it comes time to access their rightfully earned pension commutation.

Kashmiri did not mince words in condemning what he deemed an act of cruelty towards the very backbone of the nation. He pointed out the irony of rulers, who themselves had allegedly plundered the national coffers for three-quarters of a century, now burdening retired employees with the weight of their corruption. This resonant call for justice and fairness has transcended divisions among government employees, encompassing all scales from 1 to 22. A unified front has been established, with the intention to not only strike but also paralyze the administrative machinery of the nation until their rightful demands are met.

The Grand Alliance, a coalition of like-minded individuals and groups, is poised to convene a joint meeting in September, said Kashmiri. During this gathering, a unanimous call to action will be declared, amplifying the collective voice of employees seeking the reinstatement of their pension commutation.

Kashmiri said further that the urgency and determination of this movement cannot be overstated. The nation watches as its employees, who have dedicated their lives to public service, stand united in the face of adversity. The demands are clear, and the resolve is unwavering - it is time to rectify this perceived injustice and restore the dignity and security of those who have given so much.

Widow demands action against powerful occupiers: A widow hailing from Neighbourhood Council Bagh-e-ram has demanded and appealed to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to provide her speedy justice by taking action against some people who have illegally occupied and then sold out her land.

CEO reveiws FESCO's losses and recovery



F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: On the invitation of Chairman FESCO Board of Directors Malik Tahseen Awan, the Chairman Board of Directors of various Distribution Companies across Pakistan visited the FESCO Headquarters.

Chairman Board of Directors of LESCO (Lahore) Hafiz Muhammad Noman, Chairman Board of Directors QESCO (Quetta) Engineer Abdul Wahab Magsi, Chairman Board of Directors HESCO (Hyderabad) Engineer Sheikh Jamil Gul, Chairman Board of Directors of PESCO (Peshawar) Faizullah Khan and Chairman Board of Directors SEPCO (Sukkur) Agha Lal Bux Khan were present on this occasion.

Chief Executive Officer FESCO Engineer Bashir Ahmed briefed the distinguished guests regarding FESCO's losses, recovery, commercial and technical working, customer services, planning and ERP, which they appreciated and described as exemplary. On this occasion, it was decided that all such meetings will be held alternately in Distribution Companies and benefit from each other's experiences. And

mutual cooperation agreements will also be made to benefit from the expertise of the company in the field. So that these important institutions of the Power Sector move ahead with coordinated cooperation.

The Chairman Board of Directors, who participated in the meeting, welcomed the National Campaign against power theft by the Government of Pakistan, the Caretaker Prime Minister, the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) and the Caretaker Federal Minister of Energy and said that it is the need of the hour. This sector is under severe pressure due to continuous increase in circular debt, increase in theft rate. Power Sector has an integral role in running the industry without which it is difficult to run the wheels of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture. Industry and Agriculture are the source of employment and National Exports.

The burden of electricity theft of billions of rupees per year is falling on this sector and its consumers and is the reason for expensive electricity. They also expressed his commitment to implementation and joint struggle. They said that only by ending the scourge of electricity theft, all the

Distribution Companies can achieve their development goals and a revolution can be made in the country's economy with cheap electricity. The Chairmen Board of Directors also visited the state-of-the-art customer services center established at the FESCO Headquarters and reviewed the modern Kiosk Machines, Token Machines and other facilities installed for the convenience of customers and appreciated the performance of FESCO.

Later, Chairman FESCO BOD Malik Tahseen Awan presented commemorative shields to Chairman BOD LESCO Hafiz Muhammad Noman, Chairman BOD QESCO Engineer Abdul Wahab Magsi, Chairman BOD HESCO Engineer Sheikh Jamil Gul, Chairman BOD PESCO Faizullah Khan and Chairman BOD SEPCO Agha Lal Bux Khan. On this occasion, General Manager Operations FESCO Rana Muhammad Ayub, General Manager (C&CS) Umar Hayat Gondal, Chief Engineer (CS) Engineer Sadaf Naz, Director General (HR) Athar Ayub Chaudhry, Company Secretary Abid Rasheed and Deputy Company Secretary Muhammad Saeed Raza were also present.

ECP kicks off door-to-door voters verification campaign

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: District Election Commissioner Khalid Rasheed and Election Office Hafizabad Arifa Asghar said that door-to-door verification of voters would launch from 12 September and will continue till 30 September on the directions of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

DEC said that renewal of electoral rolls would start because numbers of block codes were increased and a block code was distributed into two or more codes. He said that expert schools teachers were deputed to renew and verify the electoral role and some teachers had performed census duty and well aware of census blocks already. DEC appealed the masses to cooperate with staff of election commission to correct and delete of votes and use their right of vote as responsible citizens.

Mehfil-e-Shabina arranged for prosperity of nation: District administration arranged 'Mehfil-e-Shabina' completion (Reciting of Quran Completions). Additional Deputy Commissioner (G) Ishfaq Rasul was chief guest on this occasion while students of different seminaries participated the 'Mehfil-e-Shabina'.

Qari Muhammad Hassan Goraya, Qari Faiz Rasul and Hafiz Husnain Ahmad were judges of the competitions. Abdul Rehman of Jammia Muhammadia, Hafiz Ahmad of Madrasah-tul-Madina and Muhammad Azam of Madrasah-tul-Madina got first, second and third positions in the competitions respectively. Position holder students would participate in divisional level competitions. ADCG Ishfaq Rasul gave away prizes to position holder students.

Addressing on this occasion, ADCG said that government was taking all possible measures to come students of seminaries in main stream to impart formal education besides religious education so that students of seminaries could be able to earn their livelihood after completing study religious and formal study as well as play their role in progress and

prosperity of the country. He said that to memorize the holy Quran is great auspiciousness for students and good fortune for their parents. Getting education of holy Quran was not only a big means of pleasure of almighty Allah but also success in this world and hereafter, he added.

EPA imposed fine for smog: Assistant Director Environment Protection Agency Hafizabad Naveed imposed fine of Rs. 384000/= causing smog and environmental pollution and sealed two industrial units in the district.

He chalaned 42 smoke emitting vehicles and booked three vehicles in police stations and received Rs.84000/- fine from vehicles whereas he sealed two bricks kilns working without Zigzag technology and collected one lakh rupees fine. He warned that crackdown of violators of smog SOPs would be ensured to protect atmosphere of the areas.

Crackdown against electricity pilferers continued: On the directions of the government, operation against electricity pilferers is continue in the district Hafizabad under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Umar Farooq Warraich.

Special raiding teams consisting of officers of district administration, police and GEPCO have caught 125 electricity pilferers in the district during last two days and police have registered separate cases against 75 accused while applications against 50 people are under process in different police stations of the district.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Farooq Warraich told that action against electricity pilferers and defaulters of GEPCO is underway indiscriminately while special teams headed by Assistant Commissioners Hafizabad and Pindi Bhattian were raided in Kassoki, Kaleki, Vaneki Tarar, Pindi Bhattian, Kassessay and other areas of the district and get registered more than 75 separate cases against electricity pilferers and action against GEPCO Defaulters was also expedite to recover longstanding areas of electricity bills.



Russian regional vote delivers strong result for Putin

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia wrapped up widely denounced regional and municipal elections, including in regions annexed from Ukraine, delivering strong support for President Vladimir Putin amidst criticism of vote rigging and Kyiv's push to reclaim its land.

The Council of Europe, Europe's leading rights group, called the week-long vote a flagrant violation of international law, and Kyiv and its allies say it was an illegal attempt to tighten Moscow's grip over regions in Ukraine's south and east. The overwhelming vote across Russia and in the annexed regions for the dominance of Putin's United Russia party has delivered on the Kremlin's long-repeated domestic message that Putin is by far the strongest guarantor of stability.

But in the regions voting, electoral competition was limited, as strong candidates, including some from Russia's main opposition Communist Party, were blocked from running by authorities. Stanislav Andreychuk, co-chair of Golos, a voter rights' group designated a "foreign agent" by the Russian government, said instances of vote rigging in many parts of the country showed that "these are not real elections". Andreychuk said his organisation had received

reports of opposition candidates being detained, having their cars vandalised, and, in one case, military draft papers being served to election observers.

"They are doing some absolutely unthinkable things", he said. The Kremlin says opinion polls and numerous election wins show that Putin is by far the most popular politician in Russia and that elections are free and fair. All significant, legal political forces in Russia, including the patchwork of opposition parties that provide a semblance of competition at the polls, are broadly loyal to Putin and his 18-month-old war in Ukraine. Across the country, United Russia won every provincial governor's race it contested. Among the regional chiefs re-elected was powerful Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, a close Putin ally. With virtually no opposition, early results showed that Sobyanin took more than 75% of the vote in the Russian capital, considered among the most opposition-leaning parts of the country.

Kremlin critics have said that elections in Moscow are easily rigged due to the capital's system of electronic voting, which they say is impossible to audit. Similar systems have been rolled out in many other Russian regions. Kremlin-backed

candidates were also winning in four war-ravaged Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, which Moscow declared its territory last year in an annexation denounced by Kyiv and its allies as illegal. "It is ... totally unacceptable for Russia to conduct such 'elections' in these regions on the basis of such an illegal 'annexation'," Japan's foreign minister, Yoshimasa Hayashi, said in statement over the weekend.

All but a handful of Russia's allies recognise the regions as part of Ukraine. According to Russian officials, United Russia received large majorities in the regions, taking at least 70% of the vote in each. Detailed voting figures were not immediately released. The results mean that Moscow's handpicked governors in the territories, a mixture of veteran separatist bosses and small-time local pro-Russian politicians, win full terms in office. None of the four regions are fully controlled by the Russian army. Ukraine, which in June began a gruelling counteroffensive to liberate the lands, has been slowly regaining territory in the Zaporizhzhia region and has also claimed some advances in Donetsk around the city of Bakhmut.

Egypt angry as Ethiopia fills Nile dam reservoir

CAIRO (BBC): Egypt has voiced anger after Ethiopia announced it had filled the reservoir at a highly controversial hydroelectric dam on the Blue Nile river. Ethiopia has been in dispute with Egypt and Sudan over the megaproject since its launch in 2011. Egypt relies on the Nile for nearly all its water needs. Egypt's foreign ministry said Ethiopia was disregarding the interests of the downstream countries.

Ethiopia says the \$4.2bn (£3.4bn) dam will not cut their share of Nile water. "It is with great pleasure that I announce the successful completion of the fourth and final filling of the Renaissance Dam," Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said on X, formerly Twitter. He admitted the project had faced "internal and external obstacles" but "we endured all that". The dam began generating electricity in February 2022. Ethiopia believes the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (Gerd) will double the country's electricity output, providing a vital development boost, as currently half the 127-million population lacks electricity. The plan is to generate more than 6,000 MW at the dam, which is about 30km (19 miles) from Ethiopia's border with Sudan. Egypt and Sudan argue that common rules for the operation of Gerd must be agreed, fearing that energy-hungry Ethiopia may exacerbate their existing water shortages. Negotiations over the project resumed last month, having been suspended in 2021.

Sudan - currently mired in fighting between rival armies - did not immediately react to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's announcement. In a statement on Facebook the Egyptian foreign ministry said Ethiopia's "unilateral" filling of the reservoir violated a declaration of principles signed by the three countries in 2015, and branded Ethiopia's action "illegal". "The declaration of principles stipulates the necessity of the three countries reaching an agreement on the rules for filling and operating the Gerd before commencing the filling process," the statement said. "Ethiopia's unilateral measures are considered a disregard for the interests and rights of the downstream countries and their water security, as guaranteed by principles of international law."

Lula says Putin will not be arrested

RIO DE JANEIRO (Agencies): Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has said that Russian leader Vladimir Putin will not be arrested in Brazil if he attends the Group of 20 meeting in Rio de Janeiro next year. Lula, speaking to the Firstpost news show at the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Delhi, said Putin would be invited to next year's event. He added that he himself planned to attend a BRICS bloc of developing nations meeting due in Russia before the Rio meeting.

"I believe that Putin can go easily to Brazil," Lula said. "What I can say to you is that if I'm president of Brazil, and he comes to Brazil, there's no way he will be arrested." The statement comes after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against Putin in March, accusing him of the war crime of illegally deporting hundreds of children from Ukraine. Russia has denied its forces have engaged in war crimes or forcibly taken Ukrainian children.

Morocco earthquake Baby starts life in tent as quake victims await aid

MOROCCO (BBC): Khadija's baby doesn't even have a name yet, but her first home is a tent by the side of the road. She was born just minutes before Morocco's deadly earthquake struck. Though the mother and daughter were unhurt, the hospital in Marrakesh they were in was evacuated. After a quick check up, they were asked to leave just three hours after the birth.

"They told us we had to go due to the fear of aftershocks," she said. With their new-born, Khadija and her husband tried to take a taxi to their home in Taddart in the Atlas Mountains, about 65km (40 miles) from Marrakesh. But on their way there they found that the roads were blocked by landslides, and only made it as far as the village of Asni. The family have been living in a tent by the side of the main road since. "I haven't received any help or assistance from authorities," she told us, holding her baby while sheltering from the sun under a flimsy piece of tarpaulin.

"We asked some people in this village for blankets so that we had something to cover us up." "We have only God," she added. Since then, they have managed to build a basic tent.

Khadija told us she has only has one set of clothes for the baby. Friends from their hometown have told the family that their house is badly damaged, and they have no idea when they might have somewhere suitable to stay. Not far from Khadija's tent there are signs of the growing frustration at the little help reaching towns and villages in the rural mountainous areas south of Marrakesh. Asni is just 50km (30 miles) from Marrakesh, but people say they urgently need aid to be delivered.



A scrum of angry people surrounded a local reporter, aiming their frustrations at him. "We don't have food, we don't have bread nor vegetables. We have nothing," said one man in the crowd who didn't want to give his name. "No-one came to us, we don't have anything. We only have God and the king." Since the earthquake he has been living on the side of the village's main road with his four children. His house is still standing, but all of the walls are badly cracked and are too scared to stay there. They have managed to return and take some blankets, which are now all they have to sleep on.

As a truck drove past the crowd some people tried to flag it down, desperately hoping it carried supplies. But it just headed on, followed by jeers. The reporter at the centre of the crowd was escorted away by police, still followed by people desperate to

vent their anger. Some people say they have received tents from authorities, but there are nowhere near enough for all the people in need. Nearby is Mbarka, another person living in a tent. She led us through side streets to her home that she can no longer live in. "I have no means to rebuild the house," Mbarka said. "At the moment, it's just local people who are helping us." She lived with her two daughters, son-in-law and three grandchildren.

As their house began to shake when the earthquake hit, they sprinted outside and were almost hit by a much larger home that started to slide down a hill towards them. "We think the government will help," her son-in-law Abdelhadi said, "but there are 120 villages in the area." With so many people needing help, a huge number of people will have to wait longer for assistance.

March to commemorate victims marred by violence

CHILE (Agencies): Rival protests are being held in Chile's capital ahead of the 50th anniversary of a military coup that ousted the democratically-elected President Salvador Allende and brought General Augusto Pinochet to power. "The crowds have been very very mixed and so have their messages. It's been a very violent day so far," Al Jazeera's Lucia Newman, reporting from Santiago, said.

"It was mayhem," she said. More than 3,200 people were killed or "disappeared" - abducted and presumed killed - by Pinochet's security forces. About 38,000 were tortured during his 17-year dictatorship. The general died of a heart attack on December 10, 2006, aged 91. He was never tried in court. March through the streets of the capital to the general cemetery that houses a memorial to the victims of Pinochet's brutal regime, stopped briefly at the presidential palace, La Moneda, where then-president Allende was overthrown on

September 11, 1973. Leftist President Gabriel Boric joined the procession of some 5,000 people, according to the government - becoming the first leader of Chile since the end of the dictatorship in 1990 to do so. "When the leftist president, who has a coalition similar to the one Allende had 50 years ago, started to honour the former president, people dressed in black balaclavas came throwing stones and almost broke into the presidential palace," Al Jazeera's Newman said. Inside the cemetery, some mausoleums were damaged, including the tomb of a right-wing senator killed in 1991. "Those responsible for this violence are adversaries of the government," said Deputy Interior Secretary Manuel Monsalve, adding three police officers had been injured. Three people were arrested, authorities said.

"We are hearing that members of the Communist Party and Socialist Party are peacefully marching while others [who support Pinochet] are carrying

rocks and Molotov cocktails," the Al Jazeera correspondent said. "So, it's becoming a day of not a peaceful march in homage to what happened 50 years ago to reject military coups, but rather yet another day of violence, unfortunately." The bulk of the participants, bearing Chilean flags and chanting slogans such as "Truth and justice now!" or "Allende lives!", marched peacefully. "September 11 is a date that fills us with memories but also gives us some anguish, because instead of advancing, we have regressed," 76-year-old Patricia Garzon, a former political prisoner, told AFP along the route. "With this march, we remember that 1973 broke democracy in Chile, and now we continue fighting to maintain and strengthen it," added Luis Pontigo, 72, a retired teacher. In the morning, Boric inaugurated an exhibition dedicated to Allende's memory at La Moneda, in the presence of the deceased Marxist leader's family members.

Chilean and Mexican president call for democracy

SANTIAGO (Reuters): The presidents of Chile and Mexico called for the strengthening of democracy in Latin America during a joint address to commemorate the 50th anniversary of a 1973 coup in Chile, hours after a peaceful march culminated in violent clashes with police. Monday will mark half a century since the overthrow of President Salvador Allende by the regime of General Augusto Pinochet, which ushered in 17 years of brutal military rule that saw some 40,000 people imprisoned, disappeared, tortured or killed.

Mexico gave political refuge to 3,000 Chileans during the Pinochet regime. "The visit of President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador ... is a concrete example of this history that unites us and of his commitment to strengthening democracy in

Latin America," said Chilean President Gabriel Boric, referring to his Mexican counterpart. Lopez Obrador recalled how Pinochet's coup impacted him while he was a university student. He praised Allende and called his death during the coup a "horrendous crime." "We are united by history, brotherhood and the desire to continue building an authentic democracy," said Lopez Obrador.

The address by the two presidents at the La Moneda presidential palace in Santiago came hours after a peaceful march past the building erupted in clashes between civilians and law enforcement. The annual march, composed of relatives of victims of Pinochet's dictatorship, turned violent when small groups of people "sought to break up the demonstration," attacked

other demonstrators and "brutally violated graves in the general cemetery," said Boric in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter. Civilians threw Molotov cocktails at police vehicles and police fired water cannons at demonstrators, according to a Reuters witness. "I categorically condemn these events," Boris said in the post, noting that he had "proudly" participated in the march. "Their intolerance and violence should have no place in democracy and those who have participated in these acts must face the rule of law." Local security authorities said there was also damage to La Moneda, including broken windows, and the government would press charges for public disorder. In 2019, widespread protests against inequality in Chile left more than 30 people dead.

Tropical storm rains batter China for seventh day

BEIJING (Reuters): Heavy rains from former typhoon Haikui, now a tropical storm, kept southern China drenched for the seventh day as slow-moving storm clouds drifted from Guangdong on the coast to Guangxi, flooding low-lying areas, blocking roads and trapping residents. In the rural county of Bobai in Guangxi region, rescuers on assault boats were scrambled to pull people to safety as water more than 2 metres (6.6 feet) deep stranded residents in low-rise homes, state media reported on Monday.

In hillier areas, landslides destroyed roads and bridges collapsed. At one weather station in Bobai, local records were shattered when rainfall reached 511.2 mm (20 inches), more than a quarter of the region's annual precipitation. Haikui has weakened from a typhoon to a tropical storm since making landfall in Fujian province on Sept. 5, but its residual vortex has continued to wreak havoc in southern China, with the populous city of Shenzhen deluged by the heaviest rain since records began in 1952. Neighbouring Hong Kong was pelted by the worst storm in 140 years. Scientists warn that typhoons hitting China are becoming more intense and their paths growing more complex, escalating risk of disaster, even in coastal cities such as Shenzhen that regularly brave tropical cyclones and already have strong flood defence capabilities.

"Typhoons that move far inland affect regions historically less exposed to heavy rainfall and strong wind, often with lower disaster resilience, leading to more severe losses," said Shao Sun, a climatologist at the University of California, Irvine. "In this case of Shenzhen, the disaster was mainly due to the slow westward movement of Haikui's residual circulation, which nearly stagnated in its spatial position from the afternoon of Sept. 7 to the early hours of Sept. 8, and a 'train effect' of heavy rainfall occurred, causing the event to exceed its expected intensity."

Dozens killed in attack on Khartoum market

KHARTOUM (BBC): At least 35 people have been killed after a crowded market in Sudan's capital was hit with "explosive weapons", a medical charity says. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) described it as "carnage", saying that more than 60 people had also been wounded in the attack.

Local residents say a military aircraft bombarded the Qouro market in southern Khartoum. Rival military factions have been fighting since April. MSF's emergency co-ordinator Marie Burton said Khartoum "has been at war for almost six months". "But still, the volunteers and medical personnel in Bashair hospital are shocked and overwhelmed by the scale of horror that struck the city", she added on X, formerly Twitter.

MSF said "explosive weapons" had hit the market and that air strikes and shelling continued in "another day of unthinkable suffering and loss of life". "We're trying to save the lives of people whose body parts have been ripped off by the explosion. It was a carnage," MSF added.

Loretta Charles, an MSF medic at the Bashair Teaching Hospital in Khartoum, said she treated people with blast injuries. "We had traumatic amputations and penetrating trauma to the head, the chest, and the abdomen," she told the BBC's Newshour programme. Some estimates put the number of those killed in the strike closer to 50. Sudan plunged into a civil war in April after army chief Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the commander of the paramilitary Rapid

Support Forces (RSF) Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo fell out. About five million people have been forced to flee their homes, and thousands have been killed. Khartoum and the western region of Darfur have been worst hit by the conflict. The RSF controls much of Khartoum and the adjoining cities of Omdurman and Bahri.

The military has repeatedly carried out air strikes in a bid to regain control of the cities. An air strike killed at least 20 people, including two children, about a week ago, activists said. The US, Saudi Arabia, and other countries have been trying to mediate an end to the conflict, with no success. Several ceasefires have been announced to allow people to escape the fighting but these have been broken.

US and Vietnam ink historic partnership in Biden visit, with eyes on China

HANOI/WASHINGTON (Reuters): US President Joe Biden secured deals with Vietnam on semiconductors and minerals as the strategic Southeast Asian nation lifted Washington to Hanoi's highest diplomatic status alongside China and Russia. The US has been pushing for the upgrade for months as it sees the manufacturing dynamo as a key country in its strategy to secure global supply chains from China-related risks.

A half-century after a lengthy and brutal Cold War-era conflict, Biden arrived in Hanoi to a ceremony organ-

ised by the ruling Communist Party that included school children waving American flags and honour guards carrying bayoneted rifles. Biden noted the strides that had been taken toward improved ties. "We can trace a 50-year arc of progress between our nations, from conflict to normalization, to this new elevated status," he said. The partnership with Vietnam is part of the Biden administration's push "to demonstrate to our Indo-Pacific partners and to the world, the United States is a Pacific nation and we're not going anywhere," Biden told

reporters after the meeting in Hanoi. Vietnam is navigating frosty relations between Washington and Beijing as the tech and textile exporter seeks its own foothold in the international competition to be a low-cost manufacturing hub.

Top Chinese officials, possibly including President Xi Jinping, are expected to visit Vietnam in the coming days or weeks, officials and diplomats said, as Hanoi seeks to maintain good relations with all super powers. Biden also said in Hanoi he had talked with Xi's deputy at the G20, and that

the two talked about stability. Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, 79, remarked on the 80-year-old US president's appearance inside party headquarters, saying "You have nary aged a day and I would say you look even better than before." Vietnam's longstanding relationship with Russia faces tests over the war in Ukraine, including talks with Moscow over a new arms supply deal that could trigger US sanctions. Reuters has seen documents describing talks for a credit facility that Russia would extend to Vietnam to

buy heavy weaponry, including anti-ship missiles, antisubmarine aircraft and helicopters, antiaircraft missile systems and fighter jets. One of them, a letter sent in May by Vietnam's Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh to the Russian government, showed interest in the possible new deal. A Vietnamese military officer confirmed the authenticity of the letter and the talks for a new \$8 billion credit facility to buy heavy weaponry. A spokesperson for Vietnam's foreign ministry did not respond to multiple requests for comment on the docu-

ments, which show Moscow pushing for months for a loan deal that would bypass Western sanctions on Moscow. Hanoi is in similar talks with multiple arms suppliers, including the United States. In recent weeks, Vietnam has engaged in several high-level defence meetings with top Russian officials.

The US-Vietnam upgrade will include a security dimension, Jon Finer, the US principal deputy national security adviser, told reporters, while on the plane with Biden to Vietnam from a Group of 20 summit in India.

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The PLA, nation can't afford anymore

AMID worsening financial conditions, Pakistan International Airline (PIA) demanded a huge sum of money from the government to repair its planes and pay for ground services. The government is hesitant to accept the request because of the prevailing financial constraints that marred the whole nation. The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) also mum on the issue and constituted a sub-committee to weigh the pros and cons of the PIA plea which has been a recurrent phenomenon year-on-year basis. Currently, the PIA authorities fear reducing its operational fleet to 15 planes if it fails to get immediate and enormous financial assistance from the government.

White elephants, deadly monsters, metastatic cancers, or a herd of giant squids are terms equally suited to Pakistani state-owned entities that kneel the 230 million-strong nation on the ground. The colossal size of WAPDA, Pakistan Railway, the PIA, Pakistan Steel Mills, Pakistan Post, nearly a dozen Power distribution companies and diverse other government-run departments are the real reasons behind the ailing economy of the country. Poor nation each year funds hundred billion rupees to keep running the wheel of those entities, to pay salaries of employees and cater for other urgent expenses on one hand, while the government is compelled to adjust a bulk of circular debt that is another product of mismanagement and non-utilisation of those corporations. Whatever the account, the department or administrator might be, the ultimate victim would be the government, the end user and the common citizen.

Once, glorified around the globe, from the US's West Coast to Far East Australia, the PIA is now a sick man who has collapsed under its body weight. The PIA operational fleet has squeezed from 42 flying machines to merely 15 small-size air busses, age-ridden for aircraft, together with a few luxurious modern aircraft primarily for use of the ruling elite or top military generals for convenience and show off. Otherwise, a majority of Pakistani travellers except government employees use foreign airlines which offer cost-effective, comfortable and luxurious journeys. Meanwhile, the PIA itself sold out its air routes to other airlines because of scarcity of aeroplanes, shortage of aircrew or non-feasibility of the routes etc. Different governments used diverse strategies to revive the glorious period of the PIA history. Besides injecting billions of rupees in funds, the appointment of air force generals in a bid to use their aviation expertise for PIA's rebuilding. All those administrators only filled their pockets, appeased their bosses, colleagues, family and friends, many of them still enjoying lucrative service in the airline but the mission remained unaccomplished over the past several decades.

The PIA had been dragging under the heavy burden of nonproductive employees, non-licensed pilots and unskilled engineers whose colossal enumeration and no productivity ruined the institution. Presently, almost half of the PIA's inventory is grounded and the airline operates on leased aircraft, borrowed engines and borrowed administrators which is a matter of shame for the institution as well as for the nation. The so-called aviators had already submerged a renowned airline and now intend to sink the nation under the burden of their sins/corruption. In fact, the nation does not need a flagging career; it is an requirement of the ruling class that avails state protocol, instant and non-stop air travel. The nation could not afford such luxury and the PIA must be privatised at the earliest. That would not only save hard-earned public money but would also provide essential funds to steer the nation through the crucial period.

US-China tussle and Italy's first slogan

THE far-right Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni told the media after the widely advertised G-20 Summit, that there was more to Italy's relationship with China than the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and the matter is still under consideration with her government to make or break with the two decades old agreement between Rome and Beijing. Media forecasts that Italy under Meloni is preparing to assume the G7 presidency next year and recasting its relationship with Beijing would assuage its Western allies, however, it also fears backlash from Beijing if Rome unilaterally abandons its obligations regarding the BRI agreement.

The global tussle between East and West or the Russia-China alliance and the Western bloc and its allies across the globe worsen every other day. Every session of all multilateral forums commences with condemnation of Moscow, and criticism of Beijing and ends up with appeasement of Kyiv, further strengthening of the Western alliance and more consolidation of Western monopoly over the global politics, trade, tourism and technological spearhead. However, the Western bloc has completely ceased its trade with Russia and gradually reduced its imports from Beijing. Washington-led Strategists are resolutely working to isolate Asian authoritarian rules in Moscow and Beijing. Meanwhile, Xi and Putin tactfully expanded their economic and military influence in Asia and Africa along with engaging with European economies with converging economic interests.

Currently, Italy's Meloni has been caught between two warring blocs, as her predecessor Silvio Berlusconi has struck a BRI deal with China to revive global trade and infrastructure plan modelled on the old Silk Road that linked imperial China with Europe and Far West. Therefore, Beijing presses Rome to progress on a mutually conceived plan for the construction of the Silk Road while the Western bloc harrases Meloni to abandon the project that would crawl as a snake over mainland Europe when implemented on the ground. Italian Premier mulls on the issue of how to guarantee a partnership that benefits both sides, but misfits their neighbours.

Interestingly, the Italian Premier who reached the power corridor by inciting nationalism and sloganeering Italy and Italian First, is now rocked between the two blocs. She has either to secure Rome's strategic partnership with NATO and America or protect Italy's economic and trade interests linked to Beijing and Moscow. Each side vigorously attracts Rome in opposing directions and no middle way exists so far. The challenge is surely very tough, however, the statesmanship of Meloni's would be evident in the coming months.

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The Tories are mistaken if they believe that immigration is still their trump card

Andrew Rawnsley

IT is going to be nasty, brutish and very, very long. The general election is probably more than a year away, but the campaign has already begun. Sir Keir Starmer refettled his shadow cabinet with the main aim of having an election-ready top team. The Tories have spent the summer weeks straining - and failing - to induce voters to think better of them. Broken Britain was set to be a major electoral theme even before crumbling concrete in schools became so emblematic of the decayed state of the public realm. We head into the party conference season with Labour continuing to enjoy the double-digit poll lead that has been sustained for a year.

Seeking something, anything, to cheer themselves up, some Tories believe that they still have a few trump cards in their hand. Dog-eared political playbooks from past elections suggest to them that immigration can be weaponised to their advantage. So do memories of how the Leave crew in the Brexit referendum campaign exploited the issue with such toxic potency. There's a belief that making immigration one of the defining dividing lines of the contest could serve the Conservatives and hurt Sir Keir's party. Some in Labour's high command turn a bit queasy at the thought.

Are they right to believe this, though? It is true that immigration has historically been regarded as a "Tory issue" because voters who wanted a restrictive approach outnumbered those who preferred a permissive regime. The perception, though often not the reality, has been that a Conservative government means less immigration. At the 2010 election, the Tories enjoyed a whopping advantage of around 40 points over Labour when voters were asked which party was "best" on asylum and immigration. This was far from the only reason why Gordon Brown lost that contest, but it didn't help. This long period of Conservative rule began with David Cameron coming to office on a promise that he would limit net migration to the UK to "tens of thousands" a year.

He didn't. He came nowhere close to meeting his target and nor have any of his successors as Tory

leader. At the 2019 election, Boris Johnson issued one of his many dud pledges when he promised: "Overall numbers will come down. And we will ensure that the British people are always in control." In 2022, net migration hit a record high of 606,000. That figure reflects exceptional international circumstances because it includes a lot of people who have come from Hong Kong and Ukraine. As flows from those sources diminish, most analysts think the total will come down, but annual net migration will still be running in the hundreds of thousands, not the tens of thousands. For 13 years, Tory leaders have promised to curb immigration and then presided over the opposite, a crowd-pleaser neither with those who wanted the numbers down nor with those who thought the targets were stupid. That is one reason to think that there is now more risk to them than reward in trying to use it as an electoral weapon. More warnings to the Tories are to be found in insightful new polling and analysis that will be published this week by the thinktank British Future. Its findings strongly suggest that immigration is no longer a trump card for the Conservatives.

The first thing to note is that immigration will only be an issue with the potential to significantly move the electoral dial if a lot of voters really care about the subject. Psephologists call this salience. The salience graph over the past decade looks like a wonky mountain. The number of voters bothered about immigration started to rise from 2013 and reached a very high altitude in the run-up to the Brexit referendum in 2016. The Leave vote was part-fuelled by hostility to immigration. Given that Mr Cameron had so cynically stoked this when he thought it to his benefit, there was a poetic justice that it then cost him the premiership. Alas for Britain, everyone else is paying an enduring cost for his foolishness. After the vote to leave the EU, the salience of immigration dropped steeply. Public concern has started to rise again over the past year or so, which most observers put down to the huge amount of attention on the people hazarding their lives to get to the UK

by trying to cross the Channel and the government's lack of control over it. This rise in how much migration is bothering voters can only be encouraging for the Tories if they can be sure that the issue still plays in their favour. The evidence suggests that it doesn't. The typical voter is sceptical that either of the major parties have good immigration policies, but it is now the Conservatives who are the least trusted by the public and by a hefty margin. More than two-thirds of voters say they have little or no trust at all in the Tories. Their net distrust score is a crushing -46, which is more than twice as bad as that for Labour. That is a seismic shift in public attitudes since 2010.

This isn't entirely surprising when Tory leaders have spent the past 13 years repeatedly claiming that it was desirable to reduce immigration and then repeatedly not doing so because they found the consequences too unpalatable. It is within the power of government to dramatically reduce the number of foreign students coming to the UK. But that would mean making the already fragile finances of many universities even more shaky. A Tory backbench groupuscule calling themselves the New Conservatives recently presented a "12-point plan" to reduce immigration that included removing care workers from the list of shortage occupations. That only makes sense if you think it a brilliant idea to make the staffing crisis in the care sector even more acute, which would then deepen the crisis in the NHS. While a majority of people labelling themselves Conservative supporters want overall immigration to come down, support for reductions shrivels when they are asked about specifics. The British Future study finds that most Conservatives favour increasing the number of visas for doctors and nurses. On visas for fruit-pickers, just one in five Tories want them lowered. Fewer than one in five favour cutting visas for social care workers.

Though it is far from being the main source of population flow into the UK, the most visceral issue is what to do about people crossing the Channel. The

gulf between partisan views is widest on this subject. More than two-thirds of Labour voters say they have a great deal or a fair amount of sympathy for the asylum seekers. Just a third of Tory voters share the feeling and the government's inability to prevent the crossings is a major cause of anger among them. That's why Rishi Sunak made his reckless pledge to "stop the boats". In doing so, he broke one of the cardinal rules of politics, which is that no sensible leader should ask to be judged on that kind of promise unless they are certain that they will be able to fulfil it. The government's so-called "small boats week" in August saw more deaths in the Channel, the number of people crossing since 2018 topping 100,000 and the Tories' deputy chair confessing that the government had "failed". It is another rule of competitive politics that you should try to reduce the attention paid to your failures, not attract more of it.

The scheme to deport asylum seekers to Africa has so far brought satisfaction only to the Rwandan government, which is better off to the tune of £140m from the British taxpayer before a flight has taken off. If the supreme court rules that the scheme is unlawful, the Conservative party will be convulsed by division about whether or not it should go into the election with a manifesto commitment to rip up the UK's adherence to the European convention on human rights, which would put us in the company of Russia and Belarus. Winning in court could be even worse for the government. They'd then have to try to implement their costly and cruel scheme. The Home Office's own assessment reckons the bill will be £169,000 per person deported (the true figure will be higher) and that "it is not possible to estimate" whether it will have any deterrent effect on those desperate enough to imperil themselves by crossing the world's busiest shipping lane. If the Conservatives seek to make a big issue of immigration at the election, they will be focusing attention on an area where they have relentlessly broken their promises, visibly failed and are deeply mistrusted. That doesn't look like a winning card.

Clive Myrie

The world can solve this migration crisis

ARE the world's richer nations normalising the deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean? That's the fear of the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM), the body established in 1951 "out of the chaos and displacement of western Europe after the second world war". Eleven million people were uprooted and the IOM's job was to help European governments identify countries where people could be resettled.

In the 1950s, the IOM arranged transport for nearly a million migrants to their new home countries, with the success of the resettlement programme based on international cooperation, and the idea that the burden had to be shared. Fast forward more than 70 years from the IOM's creation, and we see a very different attitude

towards the world's various migration crises, when the climate crisis, along with war and poverty, is helping fuel displacement in unprecedented numbers. The Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reports that a record 71.1 million people worldwide in 2022 were fleeing their native communities in search of safety and shelter, a 20% increase on the year before. Nearly three-quarters of the world's displaced people live in just 10 countries, including Syria, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ukraine and Sudan, all racked by war. But most displacements last year, 32.6 million, were due to climate disasters, including floods, drought and landslides. Many of these people, unable to rebuild their lives at home, will inevitably try to build new lives abroad, but where is the international cooperation to help them?

The urge to seek opportunities beyond the seas is as old as time. Throughout history, humankind has been on the move. My own parents are members of the Windrush generation, and I chronicle their experience of migration from the Caribbean to the colonial "motherland" of England in my new memoir, Everything is Everything.

Just as in the great waves of Irish or Italian migration to the US through the mid 19th and early 20th centuries, my mum and dad were seeking a better life, pulled by the promise of a new land. But the UK was also desperate to fill a labour shortage in the 1950s and 60s caused by the second world war, and the decision of about 2 million white Britons to escape depressed, ration book Britain for other parts of the Commonwealth. The hostility and abuse many in the

Windrush generation suffered on arrival forged a determination to succeed, and a resilience that's helped transform this country.

The drive for foreign migrant workers, who were vital for postwar reconstruction, was a feature of much of northern Europe after 1945, hence the creation of the IOM. West Germany, for instance, from the 1950s, had a Gastarbeiter or migrant worker programme, which explains the presence of the vibrant Turkish community in the unified Germany of today. What's interesting is that labour shortages are back. The post-pandemic world has seen unemployment in richer nations fall to some of the lowest levels in decades, with vacancies near an all-time high and employers badly needing workers. Governments are now actively trying to

World must do more to address the use of child soldiers

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

THE recruitment and use of child soldiers remains one of the gravest violations and abuses against children. This globally critical issue ought to be confronted and addressed by the international community. In spite of the existence of an international mechanism to monitor and report violations against children, the recruitment and use of child soldiers has been on the rise.

The UN Security Council has identified six grave violations affecting children, one of which is the recruitment or use of children as soldiers. The other violations are: sexual violence against children; abduction of children; attacks against schools or hospitals; killing and maiming of children; and denial of humanitarian access for children. These violations against children are interconnected and intertwined. In other words, when a growing number of children are being recruited as soldiers in a specific country or area, this means that other violations against children, such as sexual abuse or killings and attacks on children, are likely to be on the rise as well.

It is worth noting that countries that witness internal conflict and war unfortunately become a ripe place for some groups to recruit boys or girls as soldiers. Conflict leads to political and economic instability, causing militias and terrorist groups to increase their activities. These groups exploit weak or failed states, as well as underdeveloped nations, and attempt to recruit more soldiers, including children, in order to gain, expand and consolidate power.

Unfortunately, children are considered more expendable, less likely to question orders and cheaper to recruit. Child soldiers often undergo harsh training that inflicts long-term mental and physical damage. This will undoubtedly have a negative impact on their families as well. This is why it is critical to help reintegrate child soldiers into society through effective rehabilitation centers and provide for physical and psychological recovery services.

Children are often sent to the front lines as combatants, but they are also forced to take on other responsibilities in the conflict or work in other positions, such as being a spy or messenger. Some girls and boys are also exploited sexually. Proactive measures ought to be taken to help prevent the recruitment of children as soldiers. These measures include empowering boys and girls through proper education, strengthening protective laws concerning children, addressing families' and communities' financial hardships, and creating political and economic stability, as well as brighter prospects for the future. It is also necessary to combat the spread of extremist ideologies and raise awareness about these threats, along with preventing internal disagreements from spiraling out of control and leading to full-

fledged conflict in the country.

One of the countries that is witnessing an increase in the recruitment of child soldiers is Syria. The conflict in Syria has been going on for more than 12 years and some parts of the country remain very unstable and insecure. This is particularly true of the southern areas, including the city of Deraa, which was the birthplace of the Syrian uprising and is also considered one of the most strategic places in the country. Deraa is close to the border with Jordan, as well as Syria's Golan Heights region of Quneitra. There is also a major route from Deraa to the capital Damascus. It should not come as a surprise that the recruitment of children as soldiers has also been witnessed in Sudan. According to the Darfur Bar Association, cases of child soldiers fighting for both parties in the conflict have been reported. In a statement issued last month, the association underscored that "international humanitarian law and various international treaties and norms prohibit the recruitment of children under the age of 15 into combat."

Some groups implement different tactics to even recruit foreign children. They often prey on children and families who are vulnerable for various reasons. Some are kidnapped and coerced, while some families are lured to give up their children to fight in conflicts in exchange for financial incentives. In addition, many of these children come from lower socioeconomic classes and the recruiters exploit their poverty. In other words, militia groups will resort to any tool in order to achieve their goals.

Finally, legislation and policies to prohibit, criminalize and punish those who use children as soldiers should be strengthened. And the international community ought to more proactively enforce the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. This treaty focuses on the involvement of children in armed conflict and it was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000. It came into force in 2002 and has been ratified by 173 nations.

In a nutshell, the recruitment of children as soldiers remains one of the gravest abuses committed against children. The increasing recruitment of children to fight in conflicts not only has serious psychological and physical implications for the children and their families, but also inflicts serious damage on the security and stability of nations and broader regions. Boys and girls must be protected and empowered through education. It is crucial for the international community and human rights organizations to follow up on their promises by taking immediate action to hold to account those responsible for violating international law, abusing human rights and children, and committing war crimes. The abuse of children must stop.

The Guardian

As Iraq backslides on gender equality, where are its women MPs?

IN early August, the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission issued a directive banning the use of the term "gender" in all public communications. It also recommended the replacement of the word "homosexuality" with "sexual deviance". The decision came on the back of an organised disinformation campaign in Iraqi media outlets largely owned or controlled by the dominant post-2003 political parties. The campaign linked the use of the term "gender" in Iraq with the "proliferation" of homosexuality, the "promotion" of transgender identities, "moral decay" and the violation of religious and national values.

The ban has already had negative consequences on the work of academics in universities and staff at humanitarian organisations. Some professors teaching gender studies have had to suspend their courses, while NGO workers engaged in "gender programming" within the development sector have been warned to avoid using the term in their work. Moreover, it has led to a proposal within parliament to amend the anti-prostitution law to include a section criminalising homosexuality with penalties including death.

The backlash against the use of the term "gender" and the deliberate distortion of its meaning is not unique to Iraq. Conservative actors from across the world have attacked the word as part of a push-back against gender equality gains. But in Iraq, the "anti-gender" campaign also reflects growing efforts by mainstream parties to shrink Iraq's civic space in an attempt to reverse their own declining popularity. In recent years, they have instrumentalised broad and vague laws to target anyone - from activists to apolitical social media influencers - deemed to have violated "public morals".

This comes at a time when women legislators hold almost 30 percent of parliamentary seats for the first time since the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. But while holding a position of power, these women have been largely silent or even

encouraged some of these policies. Even women legislators, members of the Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children and Family, have not spoken up, including when the Communications and Media Commission issued its ban on "gender". Perhaps their silence is unsurprising given that those who have tried to counter the disinformation circulating about the meaning of the term have been viciously attacked in the media. For example, leading Iraqi feminist activist Hanaa Edwar has been subjected to insults and misogynistic slurs; she

most vocal in these debates. In the past, some women lawmakers have tried to push for the legislation, but at the cost of threats and intimidation. In 2019, when Haifa Al-Amin, a member of parliament from the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), called for the adoption of the domestic violence law, she faced an angry mob of Virtue Party supporters, calling for her execution and for the burning of the ICP's headquarters.

In the current parliament, only a few women legislators have tried to push for the law to be voted on

women within society and rigid expectations about how women should behave, it is often more dangerous for them to go against the agendas of those who helped them gain power than it is for men in the position, with transgressions on their part likely to be punished more severely.

Because of the dominance of the establishment political parties in parliamentary politics, very few of the women in parliament are independent or from opposition parties - and thus more likely to challenge regressive policies. In the 2021 elections, only 16.4 percent of the 946 women who ran for election did not have a party affiliation. Of those who won seats, five were independent and a further seven were from reformist parties such as Intidad, New Generation and Isharaqat Kanoon. Furthermore, the grip on Iraqi politics the mainstream parties have been able to maintain, despite being increasingly unpopular, has also helped undermine any efforts to bring reformist and independent forces together. After the exit of the Sadrist bloc in 2022 and the redistribution of its seats to the remaining forces in parliament, the proportion of independent legislators and those who are members of alternative parties rose to 26 percent. But the disunity in this group has made it impossible to push for more progressive legislation.

It has also allowed mainstream parties to usher in a series of socially conservative measures in a desperate attempt to win more popularity among conservative elements in society and maintain their grip on power. These efforts have only intensified as Iraq has drawn closer to the provincial elections scheduled to take place at the end of the year. To challenge the backsliding on women's rights in Iraq, and human rights more broadly, Iraqi women - and men - need more alternative routes into politics that do not involve the networks of the dominant post-2003 parties. And those would open up only if the mainstream parties' grip on power is loosened from below.

Aljazeera

This comes at a time when women legislators hold almost 30 percent of parliamentary seats for the first time since the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. But while holding a position of power, these women have been largely silent or even encouraged some of these policies. Even women legislators, members of the Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children and Family, have not spoken up, including when the Communications and Media Commission issued its ban on "gender".

has been called the "mother of homosexuality" in Iraq and labelled a foreign agent who "set the groundwork for planting homosexuality and moral depravity" in the country.

The past two years have also seen a string of much-publicised killings of women, which have reignited the public debate about the urgent need for a domestic violence law. Since 2015, drafts of such legislation have been vehemently opposed in parliament on the grounds that it would violate Islam, go against "national values" and would be "incompatible with Iraqi culture". Factions associated with the current governing alliance - the Shia Coordination Framework - including the Virtue Party, State of Law Coalition and the Fatah Alliance - have been the

and have so far failed to put it on the agenda. While gender concerns everyone and the onus to promote and protect human rights should not be put solely on the backs of women, this nevertheless begs the question: why despite their substantial presence in parliament, have women member of parliament not mounted a concerted effort to help protect women against domestic violence and oppose the backlash against "gender"? One answer is that Iraq's mainstream political parties are gatekeepers when it comes to the candidates selected to run for election. That is why, only those women who have pre-existing connections to local and national elites and are likely to toe the party line are nominated in the first place. Due to the low status afforded to

US support for Ukraine is about to run out

US support for Ukraine is about to undergo a significant test. This is playing out not on the Republican presidential debate stage or at the White House, but in Capitol Hill, in the Republican controlled House of Representatives.

The prevailing view is that US support for Ukraine will remain solid as long as Joe Biden is president, so at least until January 2025. But this overlooks the fact that it is congress that controls the purse strings. Since taking office in January, the Republican controlled congress has not passed a single Ukraine funding bill. To be fair, the White House has not asked it to, until now.

The new Republican majority, led by Kevin McCarthy, is incredibly narrow, giving McCarthy few votes to spare. This makes Ukraine funding problematic for McCarthy because the Republican Party is increasingly divided in its support for Ukraine, as was vividly demonstrated in the recent Republican presidential debate. This is part of a deeper rift on foreign policy, where Trumpian neo-isolationists clash with the hawkish internationalist and neoconservative schools embodied by McCain and Reagan. But this has meant that McCarthy, a weak speaker desperate to keep his caucus united, will be loathe to bring any divisive bills to the floor, such as Ukraine funding.

Before the previous congress led by Nancy Pelosi left office, it passed a massive support package in December of another \$25 billion. That gave the Biden administration a potentially long funding runway to support Ukraine, as long as it allocated the funding judiciously. Thus, instead of going back to Congress over the last nine months, the Administration has been watching its wallet and carefully managing its spend-rate. While this has ameliorated the need to go to congress, it has also been a major limiting factor on the administration's ability to provide expensive systems, such as F-16s or ATACMS. White House fury at Germany for forcing their hand to provide Abrams tanks in February was not because of escalation concerns or because it didn't want Ukraine to have tanks. Rather, in large part the problem was cost. Similarly, the administration wouldn't provide training to Ukrainians on F-16s if it weren't willing in principle to transfer the system. You don't train someone on a highly classified system for the fun of it. US support has thus focused on Ukraine's immediate basic needs, getting ammo and other key kit to the Ukrainians to fight tonight not on building or supporting a Ukrainian air force for 2025.

The problem now is that it is unclear whether the US will be able to sustain Ukraine in the short term. Because the money has now almost run out. This has finally forced Biden to go back to congress. The White House recently, and quietly submitted a limited \$10bn request that would keep the current pace of funding until early next year. The White House has deliberately kept this issue low profile, hoping it can slip through, and not wanting to have a public fight that puts Republicans on the spot. But with the Republican House seemingly intent on shutting down the government and with the 2024 election cycle already beginning, it is by no means certain that Ukraine funding will make it through congress. Ukraine's fortunes may be determined as much by Kevin McCarthy as by events on the battlefield.

Of course, US diplomats and officials assure Ukraine, as well as allies and partners of its steadfast commitment. And indeed, even if the Republican House refuses to act, the administration can still reallocate funds within the Pentagon's massive budget and use other budgetary tricks, such as declaring equipment for Ukraine to be excess to requirements and eligible to transfer. But this becomes bureaucratically more difficult

internally and will inevitably further slow the pace of US aid. It is therefore imperative that the UK and Europe do even more. The UK has led again and again in providing new advanced systems to Ukraine, such as the Challenger tank and Storm Shadow missiles. The EU for the first time has provided lethal aid and is investing in ramping up ammunition. But the UK and Europe collectively may be forced to reverse roles with the US, with Europe providing the majority of support and the US doing what it can. This will strain UK and European forces and defense industries, will require more funding, and political focus.

But Western support for Ukraine is equivalent to what US lend lease support was for the UK during World War II: a lifeline for a country standing up to tyranny. Allied military aid to Ukraine since the war began has been remarkable in its impact. But it is also an immense bargain for those providing it. This aid has not involved some grand sacrifice by the West and is sustainable indefinitely. But because of America's divided politics the US may be set to pullback its lifeline to Ukraine and commit a geo-political own goal by not passing more funding. If it does so, the UK, EU, and other European partners will have to fill the void.

The Telegraph

A 'food power' is born

THE 15th BRICS Summit held in South Africa from Aug 22 to 24 hit the headlines for two key reasons. First, it was the first time that in its current composition the BRICS boasted of the largest contribution to global GDP - 32 percent versus the G7's 31 percent. Second was its landmark decision to expand the membership by including six new countries - Argentina, Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

This latter outcome is part of a broader transition that the BRICS is making. From discussions of de-dollarization to expansion of its membership to African development - all of these are significant questions relating to BRICS' external engagement, not just cooperation among themselves which has been the primary focus of their summits till date. The G7, which first met as the G6 in 1975, made a similar transition between 1978 and 1979 - going beyond coordination of their own economies to discussing their external policies on aid, for instance.

But it was also important for another major reason, linked to a little-understood feature of the current BRICS - their centrality to global food production, supply and, crucially, food sovereignty. Indeed, this summit took place against the backdrop of a global cost-of-living crisis, and, more specifically, food inflation. In 2018, the founding BRICS countries accounted for over 50 percent of the world's gross agricultural production, yet just 40 percent of

the world's population. Brazil, for instance, was the fourth-largest agricultural producer as of 2020, valued at \$135.8 billion. Brazil is also the top exporter of soybeans, raw sugar and poultry produce. While India has self-sufficiency in grain production, it also has significant exports in cotton, meat and soybeans, and in 2019 was the ninth largest global agricultural exporter. China's 2019 agricultural output accounted for over a quarter of global output. New entrant Ethiopia became self-sufficient in wheat this year. The fact is, the BRICS of today is a real "food power" for the globe as well as for Africa, as they export significant amounts to the continent.

Within the group, Brazil was the largest exporter of agricultural products - worth almost \$9 billion in 2022 - to Africa, while importing products worth less than \$1 billion from the continent. Several African countries are more directly dependent on India - both the world's second-largest rice producer and exporter - for food security than they are on Ukraine. Out of 150 global buyers of Indian rice, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Guinea were among the top eight. Hence, when India restricted rice exports recently, these countries experienced significant food inflation. Other countries in similar situations as these African countries had to take significant steps to avoid inflation. For instance, Nepal requested an exemption from New Delhi's rice export restrictions and sent 30 tons of tomatoes to India in

exchange.

It is not just BRICS' policy decisions that matter. For instance, the recent heavy flooding in China hit major rice-producing areas, such as the Inner Mongolia autonomous region, and affected corn and rice supplies. Had African countries been more dependent on Chinese corn and rice, they would have felt this as well. In fact, among the founding members of BRICS, China is the only low-level exporter of agricultural products to African countries while it has increased the absolute value of imports from the continent over the past five years, backed by increasing investment in the continent on productivity and scale of diverse agricultural products. Why does this matter? The BRICS 11 have significant capacity individually and collectively to support Africa's agricultural development. But the key is to do so in a way that differs from how the G7 supports food security on the continent. In all G7 (in some years G8) statements and communiqués issued since 1979, the solution to food problems in low- and middle-income countries has usually been to ship more agricultural aid to these poor countries. Such helpful aid is effective in the short term, but it can also act as subsidy for agricultural exports, while undermining long-run incentives for local production in the receiving countries.

The key for BRICS is to focus on food sovereignty, not just food security. The experience of BRICS countries becoming successful

food producers as well as exporters - often being self-sufficient in key staples - are critical for African countries seeking to escape the grip of import dependency. From India's green revolution to China's poverty eradication model under which agricultural modernization played a key role - each BRICS country has some lessons and potential partnerships around specific agricultural products to offer when it comes to food sovereignty. An approach of collective development, much like China's win-win strategy, is a possible route for BRICS to explore in the new era of multipolarity.

Over the years, BRICS has grown in profile and its summits now command global attention. Owing to the fact that the BRICS bloc commands a significant section of global GDP, there is now a strong influence over the commodity and energy sectors, as opposed to the G7 which sees its influence mostly in financial services and markets. The new intake of six countries also bolsters this position because many countries therein are already working partners with China and Russia. Economic cooperation and global governance are a likely focus for the grouping, but specific issues like climate change will require different strategies from what the G7, for example, offered to Global South countries in the past. It can also be expected that BRICS will take a more gradual strategy to adopting food security measures as well as the induction of new members as has been observed.

The China Daily

What decolonization means for Russia's indigenous peoples

FOR the indigenous peoples of Russia, decolonizing the country is not just a matter of historical justice. In our eyes, it is a necessary precondition for moving past the obsolete narratives that the Russian state and society tell themselves; narratives that are founded in widespread misunderstandings of history, official propaganda, and outright lies.

In Russian historical narratives, the colonization of Siberia and the Far East is described as a "unification," as in "voluntary unification." Historians point to the relatively peaceful nature of Russia's eastward expansion, which they call the Cossack "March to Meet the Sun," in contrast to the brutal campaigns of Cortez in the lands of the Aztecs.

This whitewashing of history takes place at many levels. For example, in the late 1990s, Russia planned to celebrate the anniversary of the "voluntary unification" of Kamchatka and Russia. However, the Tkhanom, the council of the Itelmen peoples who are native to Kamchatka, took a formal decision to boycott the celebrations, on the grounds that the annexation of Kamchatka could in no way be described as voluntary. Instead, it was the violent conquest of the peninsula by the Russian Empire. When pressed at a 1997 academic conference in Kamchatka, Russian historians were unable to provide sufficient arguments in support of the myth of the region's "voluntary unification with imperial Russia." When it became clear just how tenuous their arguments were, one academic remarked, "Alright, so there was colonization, but it was good colonization." The participants of the conference were then left to guess what distinguishes "good colonization" from the usual kind.

In reality, as the testimony of numerous witnesses shows, the armed conflicts between the Russian state and the subjugated peoples of Siberia demonstrate that Russian colonization differs little from European colonialism in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The only apparent difference was how the colonizers treated the people they conquered. While the Spanish Conquistadors committed large-scale massacres in their pursuit of gold, the Siberian Cossacks were more interested in extracting lucrative tributes from locals. These tributes, paid in the form of furs collected by the legendary hunters of the conquered peoples, became a major source of wealth for the tsars. The legend that indigenous peoples were such expert hunters they could "shoot a squirrel in the eye" persists to this day. For the Indigenous peoples of Russia, it is vitally important that the Russian state and society recognize the historical fact of colonization. This could become the jumping-off point for a new, more just relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state. Such recognition is the first step toward the kind of national reconciliation that took place in Canada, Norway, Australia, and other countries with a history of injustice toward their indigenous peoples.

Moreover, acknowledging colonization as a process and the undeniable legacy of the Russian Empire and its successor states could be the starting point for the construction of a new state, one that dispenses with revisionist history in favor of historical truth. This would go a long way toward dismantling the particularly toxic myth of the God-given role of the Russian people in world history, and the special path of a Russia that acts as a lone bulwark of traditional values against a West that is mired in iniquity. It will be a great boon to Russian society when this perverse conception of patriotism is allowed to implode. It has been relentlessly amplified for decades by the powerful state propaganda machine in the service of Putin's criminal régime, and the wars of aggression against Russia's neighbors.

The Russian people must finally recognize that, by and large, they are no different from other European countries. There

is just one exception: the Russians' ancestors lived on the eastern frontiers of Europe, beyond which lived numerous indigenous peoples of Siberia. Those territories were only conquered thanks to military technologies that the Russians received from their European neighbors (facilitating its growth into a geographic giant, a source of continuing pride for modern-day Russians). Other European countries lacked vulnerable neighbors, and so had to look overseas for their expansionist aims. As the right of peoples to self-determination gained acceptance in the latter half of 20th century, culminating in its enshrinement in the United Nations Charter and then the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the overseas colonies of the European powers, one after another, started to gain their independence.

Meanwhile, Soviet leaders - who were happy to invoke those arguments when it suited them - liked to pretend that the Soviet Union itself was exempt from these principles. Those peoples who had the dubious privilege of finding themselves within the USSR, were kept busy building socialism. They would not have dreamed of demanding their independence from the Kremlin. Those that did were swiftly dealt with by the KGB. The Kremlin was happy to use UN declarations to actively promote "anti-imperialist" struggles around the world, but this didn't extend to how it treated its own people.

Today, a multitude of societal and political players are actively discussing the country's post-Putin political future. Their proposals range from an even greater role of the state and its repressive apparatus to the creation of a parliamentary republic, and include the suggestion that Russia be divided into separate independent ethno-states. This is not the place to go into the details of these various scenarios. Self-determination for the peoples living on the territory of the Russian Federation today is of course to be welcomed, as a matter of principle. However, there are two issues that should be a source of concern.

The first is raised by representatives of the Russian opposition who consider creating new states on the territory of the Federation to be either entirely unfeasible, or a proposition with marginal support in the ethnic republics. The opposition is debating this vital question without consulting any representatives of the colonized peoples themselves. This demonstrates the pervasiveness of the imperial mindset even among people of seemingly impeccably liberal credentials, and not just members of Putin's entourage.

It is worth asking what would happen if these opposition politicians came to power and found themselves in a situation where the majority of Chechens or Buryats pronounced themselves in favor of independence from Russia. Would they go to war to reassert control? Past experience is not encouraging. A second issue that should be a cause for alarm is the rhetoric of some ethnic national activists themselves. There have been calls from such figures for the dismantlement of Russia and the creation of separate ethnic states without giving sufficient thought towards what these new states will look like. Nor do they propose a mechanism for handling the dissolution. It is as though the only thing that matters is their separation from Russia.

The sad legacy of democracy-building efforts in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia should make them more cautious about the disintegration of the Russian Federation. The expectation that it will lead to a useful and favorable outcome for the peoples living on these territories and for the world as a whole should not be taken for granted. We suspect that many representatives of the Sakha people of Yakutia, for example, would be aghast at the prospect that

one day they might be liberated from Russia's authoritarian regime only to find themselves citizens of a new country styled after "democratic, law-based, secular" Turkmenistan. Despite boasting in its constitution that "the people are the only source of state power," the country is often compared to North Korea. Independence risks trading one authoritarian regime for another.

There will be no easy solutions to the political, legal, technological and military problems and risks that any new state entities will have to face. Where is the guarantee that the republic of Sakha will end up led by enlightened, liberal, pro-Western nationalists rather than its current leader? Aysen Nikolayev is a notorious Putin loyalist. His entourage is rife with corruption and he has centralized control of both enormous financial resources and even the security services. Will he take fright and run after the political death of his patron? Or will he seize the opportunity to re-enter politics under a different guise and assert his personal dominance over the new republic? The dissolution of the Soviet Union shows that, sadly, the former leaders of the republics, more often than not, are first in line to take up the reins of power. The West may have little inclination to step in. On the contrary, it would in all likelihood lose no time in establishing favorable economic relations, seeing that it is often more expedient to deal with authoritarian regimes than with democratic ones. That is, for as long as the dictator does not completely lose the plot and launch military adventures.

The bitter reality is that there is virtually no prospect that the relatively small populations of the indigenous peoples of Russia's Far North, of Siberia, and of the Far East will ever have the luxury of achieving self-determination in the form of independent states. Whichever way the political situation in Russia evolves, we are likely to find ourselves living in someone else's country. Numerous other problems stand between our peoples and self-determination. We suffer from the absence of qualified specialists, the geographical isolation of our traditional lands, the low level of education of our people, and inadequate financial and administrative resources. Additionally, we are for the most part but a minority of the population in the regions that are our ancestral homes.

For us, a key prerequisite for our survival and continued development as nations in our own right must thus be not a chance to create and govern our own states, but meaningful political participation in Russia. Our institutions of self-government must have the possibility of ensuring that our hunters, fishers, and herders have access to their traditional lands and traditional resources, that our cultures and languages are preserved, and that our peoples have an opportunity to pursue the realization of their political, economic, and social potential on the twin pillars of tradition and new knowledge and technologies. For us, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights are the basic principles that can help our peoples protect their collective rights for development and self-determination. Faced with an overwhelming power imbalance, the indigenous peoples essentially have no other recourse apart from international law to assert their rights.

This is why we believe that Russian civil society, political players, opposition leaders and ethnic activists should embark on a nationwide debate devoted to the processes of decolonizing Russia. We believe that such a debate can bring together people of diverse views around the same table, where we can begin grappling with our undeniable political differences. It will also look for a shared vision of our future and the future of the country of which we are citizens. The first step is to agree that Russia needs decolonization of its past, present, and future.

The Moscow Times



Pakistan Stock Exchange turns loses 147 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend and lost 147.76 points, showing negative growth of 0.32 percent, closing at 45,865.73 points against 46,013.49 points the previous trading day.

A total of 213,198,283 shares were traded during the day as compared to 149,572,246 shares, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs8.194 billion against Rs5.551 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 306 compa-

nies transacted their shares in the stock market; 114 of them recorded gains and 172 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 20 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Bank Al-Falah with 59,316,454 shares at Rs41.12 per share; K-Electric Ltd with 14,653,274 shares at Rs1.93 per share and Pak Petroleum with 11,683,396 shares at Rs73.68 per share.

Pak Services witnessed a maximum increase of Rs29.00 per share price, closing at Rs680.00, where-

as the runner-up was Reliance Cotton with Rs13.25 rise in its per share price to Rs540.00.

Mehmood Tex witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs46.36 per share closing at Rs571.77; followed by Indus Bata (Pak) with Rs25.00 decline to close at Rs1,710.97.

Gold rates decrease by Rs2,600 to Rs209,400 per tola: The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs2,600 and was sold at Rs209,400 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs212,000 on the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs2,229 to Rs179,527 from Rs181,756 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs165,544 from Rs166,610 the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola decreased by Rs50 to Rs2,500 whereas that of 10 grams silver went down by Rs42.87 to Rs2,143.34.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$7 to \$1,926 from \$1,919, the Association reported.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy Ali Muhammad chairing a meeting with officials of Pakistan State Oil.

Rupee on recovery path; gains Rs1.78 against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Corrective measures taken by the government have started yielding results as the Pakistani Rupee on Monday gained Rs1.78 against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs301.16 against the previous day's closing of 302.94.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs298.1 and Rs301 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.46 to

close at Rs323.02 against the last day's closing of Rs324.48, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and stood at Rs2.05, whereas a decline of Rs1.33 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs377.17 as compared to the last closing of Rs378.50.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 49 and 47 paisa to close at Rs81.99 and Rs80.29 respectively.

To prevent smuggling and hoarding of dollars, the government launched a massive crackdown against the elements involved in dollar smuggling, hoarding and organized crime cartels, causing loss to the national economy.

Strict action is being taken after the identification of facilitators and patrons of government officials indulged in illegal economic activities.

It is evident from the data that the government strategy has started working as the Pakistani Rupee

is gaining gradual strength.

On September 5 rupee against dollar in the inter-bank trading stood at Rs307.09 and by September 11 it came down to Rs301.16, price of the Euro declined to Rs323.02 from Rs330.13, British Pound to Rs377.17 from Rs385.22, Emirate Dirham to Rs81.99 from Rs83.60 and Saudi Riyal to Rs80.29 from Rs81.87. Whereas the buying and selling of the dollar in the open market came down from Rs320.8 to Rs298.1 and Rs324 to Rs301 respectively.

SCCI chief hails private airline's plan — to launch direct flight to Muscat



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry acting president Ijaz Khan Afridi welcomed the plan of a private airline for launching a direct flight from Peshawar to Muscat and asked the airline to facilitate and provide special incentives to the business community.

He made these remarks during a meeting with Country Manager of a private airline 'Salam Air' Mirza Atif Baig here at the chamber's house on Monday. During the meeting the private airline senior officials from KP region and secretary general of the SCCI's Sajjad Aziz were also present.

Ijaz Afridi hailed 'Salam Air' for its plan to launch a direct flight from Peshawar to Muscat very soon.

He expressed the hope that the move will facilitate the business community and also further enhance bilateral trade relations between the business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Muscat.

The SCCI's acting chief emphasized that private airlines should announce special incentives and take proactive steps to facilitate the business community at optimal level, which could not only support enhancing revenue of the airline but it would also build up trust on the airline and improve the flight operations from KP.

Earlier, the country manager of the Salam Air, Mirza Atif Baig briefed the chamber's acting president Ijaz Afridi about the airline operations in Pakistan.

He informed that Salam Air, an Oman-based National-Carrier which had earlier launched its operation in Karachi, Multan and Sialkot. Now it is going to be the first direct flight from Peshawar to Muscat very shortly, he added.

The country manager of the Salam Air agreed with proposals of the SCCI's acting president Ijaz Khan Afridi. Atif Baig assured that the recommendations will be taken up by high-ups of the airline and implemented to facilitate the business community at every level.

Workers' remittances record \$2.1b inflow

ISLAMABAD (APP): The overseas workers' remittances recorded an inflow of US\$2.1 billion during August 2023, the State Bank of Pakistan on Monday said. In terms of growth, during the month under review, remittances increased by 3.1 percent on month on month basis.

Workers' remittances inflow of US\$ 4.1 billion has been recorded during the first two months on a cumulative basis.

Remittances inflows during August 2023 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (\$490.1 million), the United Kingdom (\$331.3 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$308.0 million) and the United States of America (\$262.4 million).

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, African Owl, Hua Wei-8, Lindsaylou and Simaisma, scheduled to load/offload Cement, Palm oil, Coal and LNG, berthed at Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Bulk Terminal and Elengy Terminal respectively on Sunday.

Meanwhile four more ships, Ulriken, Neutron Sound, ICE Fighter and Sea-peak Galicia with Palm oil, Gas oil, Chemicals and LNG are also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, PVT Flora, Simaisma, Limra and Skatzoura are expected to sail on Monday (today).

A cargo volume of 112,117 tonnes, comprising 107,969 tonnes imports Cargo and 4,148 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 359 Containers (115 TEUs Imports and 244 TEUs export) was handled during last 24 hours.

There are nine ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, ICE Fighter and Sea-Peak Galicia & two more ships, MSC Rania and Maersk Boston are expected to take berths at Gas Terminal, Oil Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on Monday, while another containers ship, Maersk Columbus is due to arrive at Port Qasim on Tuesday.

NPO to organize webinar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) will conduct a webinar on 'Internal Quality Auditing' on September 15 (Friday).

"Internal quality auditing course aims to give participants essential skills and knowledge necessary to perform effective internal quality auditing, according to an NPO document shared here Monday.

The objective of the training aimed at to equip participants with a foundational understanding of audit principles, processes and risk assessment enable them to contribute effectively to internal audit procedures and compliance efforts within organization.

The workshop provides information related to auditors skills, assessment techniques, reporting, non-conformance and PNAC policies.

PEW demands operation against hoarders

LAHORE (INP): Chairman of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Brig. (ret'd) Aslam

Khan on Monday said that the operation against hoarders and smugglers of dollars, oil, sugar, and urea is commendable, but it needs to be accelerated. In a statement issued here, he said if the influential mafia is not eliminated this time, it will destroy the country, adding that the people do not want elections but food and some relief. Aslam Khan said that India has become the fifth largest power in the world while Pakistan has become the fifth largest borrower, and according to the IMF, Pakistan will soon become the fourth largest borrower. After the crackdown against the criminal currency mafia, people are buying gold, so its trade should be

regularised because 100% of the gold in Pakistan is smuggled, due to which no tax is collected from the jewellers, maintained. Almost every politician, every organisation, and people from every sphere of life have contributed to the destruction of the economy, but now the situation has become very dangerous, and inaction or half-hearted action will result in regrets, he observed. The business leader said that the ruling elite is behind every crisis in the country, but they are never held accountable. India and Bangladesh were already far ahead of Pakistan, but now the conditions in Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bhutan, and Afghanistan are much better.

Inflation widening gap between rich and poor

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has said that the inflation was widening the gulf between the rich and the poor.

He said that the middle class has become poor, and the people were suffering under the burden of inflation, which was causing economic and social problems.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the business community cannot invest or plan for the future due to inflation, so this problem should be solved immediately. Inflation was a significant cause of economic instability, which was an obstacle to domestic and foreign investment, he maintained.

He said that unemployment will continue to rise

until there is no investment in the country, and the solution to unemployment is to promote technical education. The business leader said that there was a need to create a strategy to end inflation, in which the first priority should be given to speculation and hoarding while administrative measures should be taken.

Targeted subsidies for poor people should be increased because people can no longer feed themselves. SIFC is an excellent arrangement for prioritising foreign investment under which investors will be provided with a better environment so that they can provide employment to the people and also transfer technology, he observed.

While other measures are necessary to save the country's economy and attract domestic and foreign investors, it is also necessary to improve the broken energy sector.

KARACHI (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali on Monday held an important meeting with PSO management at PSO House Karachi during which Managing Director PSO, Syed Muhammad Taha briefed him regarding overall performance and challenges being faced by the PSO.

The Managing Director of PSO apprised the Minister that the PSO had an extensive network of

3500 outlets nationwide. The caretaker Federal Minister directed the PSO management to minimise the circular debt, being the Pakistan's leading energy company.

The meeting was attended by the Chairman, Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), Masroor Khan and Additional Secretary Incharge Ministry of Energy, Momin Agha.

Later, Muhammad Ali also held a meeting with the

heads of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) headed by the Secretary General Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), Dr. Nazir Abbas Zaidi.

The delegation of OMCs raised their issues. Mr. Mehmet Celepoglu, the Chief Executive Officer of Total Parco Pakistan also joined the meeting through video conference. Mr. Mehmet also appealed the caretaker Minister for Energy to formulate a uniform policy

Ensuring his complete support, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy directed the Chairman OGRA and Additional Secretary Incharge, Ministry of Energy to address the issues on priority basis.

The Minister appealed the Oil Marketing Companies to discourage the smuggling and the smuggled item. A massive crack down had already been initiated against the smugglers, he said.

UBL Al-Ameen Funds to be conducting awareness sessions

F.P. Report

KARACHI: UBL Al-Ameen Funds will be conducting awareness sessions on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Contributory Pension Scheme for new employees of KP government who joined on or after 7th June, 2022 in Shelton Hotel, Timergara (2 PM on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, at Serena Hotel, Saidi Sharif-Swat (4 PM on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023), at Hotel One, Abbottabad (4PM on Thursday, 14th September, 2023), in Usmania Hotel, Nowshera (2 PM on Friday, 15th September, 2023) and in Serena Hotel, Peshawar

(4 PM on Friday, 15th September, 2023). Employees will be briefed on features, investments and different aspects of the scheme and how to get registered and create profile on KP government portal.

Mufti Muhammad Najeer Khan, member Shariah Advisory Council (UBL Al-Ameen Funds) will highlight and brief regarding the Shariah guidelines and requirements from shariah perspective for an investment scheme to become complaint. Participants who are interested can join at the event or call UBL Funds for further details.

UBL Fund Managers

Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of UBL Bank Limited, is one of the leading Asset Management, Pension Funds Management, and Investment Advisory Company, managing more than Rs.160 billion (at end of July 2023) in both Conventional and Shariah-compliant Funds/Plans (excluding Advisory mandates). Al-Ameen Funds is the Shariah-compliant funds range under the supervision of the Shariah Advisory Council comprising of Mufti Mohammed Najeer Khan and Mufti Mohammad Hassan Kaleem.

UBL Funds was Pakistan's first AMC to have Global Investment

Performance Standards (of CFA Institute) compliant status in 2010 and also the first to launch a CPPI Fund based on internationally renowned methodology.

The following year in 2011, it went international and launched UBL Fund Managers in the Middle East. In 2017, it was assigned the 'AM1' rating by VIS, the highest Management Quality rating for an Asset Manager in Pakistan, and has been maintained since then. UBL Funds' mission is focused on superior returns, excellent customer service, and need-based products with the highest ethical and professional standards.

Oil edges lower, pressured by strong dollar, China economic woes

ANKARA (APP): Oil prices saw limited losses but maintained 10-month highs on Monday, as a strong US dollar and persistent concerns over China's economy weighed on prices, while OPEC+ output cuts limited further declines.

International benchmark crude Brent traded at \$90.44 per barrel at 10.13 a.m. local time (0713 GMT), a 0.23% loss from the closing price of \$90.65 a barrel in the previous trading session on Friday.

The American benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) traded at the same time at \$87.02 per barrel, down 0.56% from the previous session's close of \$87.51 per barrel.

Both benchmarks climbed over 2% last week on supply risks triggered by output cuts announced by the world's biggest producers, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

"Tightness in the physical market is also providing some support. US inventories fell 6,307 kbbbl last week to hit their lowest

level since December," according to Daniel Hynes, a commodity strategist at Australia and New Zealand Banking Group.

However, Hynes said concerns about China's poor economic growth weighed on sentiment across commodities.

On Thursday, the Chinese yuan sank to its lowest level against the US dollar in 16 years, echoing mounting skepticism about China's economy and financial markets.

The rising trend of the

US dollar since mid-July has been aiding dollar-indexed crude prices. However, markets remain wary ahead of US inflation data due on Wednesday, which could influence the US Federal Reserve's (Fed) interest rate actions.

According to analysts, this week's inflation figures will show the impact of supply interruptions in the energy industry. The Fed, meanwhile, is widely expected to keep the policy rate unchanged at its September meeting.

MENA doubles renewables but still needs more to replace oil and gas

ANKARA (APP): The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region needs to add approximately 500 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity to supplant generation from oil and gas plants, despite MENA's Arabic-speaking nations doubling renewables growth since May 2022, a report by Global Energy Monitor revealed on Monday.

The region's renewable energy installed capacity increased by 57% to 19 GW, adding 6.9 GW of

large utility-scale solar and wind power since last year, the report showed.

Furthermore, the 9 GW of renewable energy projects currently under construction and scheduled for completion by the end of 2024 are positioned to ensure continuous growth.

Over the last year, the majority of states in the MENA region have significantly increased their plans for wind and solar power. Eight countries in the region now have at least

three times more prospective capacity in terms of projects that are either announced, in pre-construction, or under construction compared to their capacity 12 months ago.

Currently, 343 GW of operating oil and gas power plants operate in this region, which is equivalent to 23% of the world's capacity. These power plants provide over 90% of the region's electricity but also emit 610 million tons of carbon dioxide annually.

The report finds that the region needs approximately 500 GW of solar and wind capacity to replace the electricity generation from these oil and gas power plants.

"While a step forward for the heartland of fossil fuels, the renewables capacity added in the last year is relatively unambitious compared to MENA's peers and dwarfed by the outsized role of oil and gas in the region," the report said.



Kohli races to 13,000 ODI runs, surpasses Tendulkar

COLOMBO (Agencies): India's Virat Kohli on Monday became the fastest cricketer to complete 13,000 ODI runs, surpassing legend Sachin Tendulkar.

The 34-year-old reached the landmark in his 267th innings during the Asia Cup Super 4 match against Pakistan at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Monday.

India were 147/2 in 24.1 overs after being asked to bat by Pakistan before rain prevented any further play on Sunday. Kohli, who was at 8, resumed his innings along with KL Rahul, who was unbeaten on 17 off 28 balls when rain interrupted proceedings on Sunday.

Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar had reached the landmark in 321 ODI innings. Tendulkar was followed by former Australian captain Ricky Ponting (341) and the Sri Lankan duo of Kumar Sangakkara (363) and Sanath Jayasuriya (416).

Overall, Kohli is fifth on the list of leading run-getters in ODIs. Only Tendulkar (18,426), Sangakkara (14,234), Ponting (13,704), and Jayasuriya (13,430) have scored more runs than the Indian cricketer in the 50-over format.

Kohli is also fifth on the illustrious list of players with the most international runs. He has amassed 25600 runs across formats so far. Tendulkar (34,357), Sangakkara (28,016), Ponting (27,483), and former Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene (25,957) are above Kohli on the list.

Williamson and Boult in New Zealand WC squad

AUCKLAND (Agencies): Kane Williamson has been included in New Zealand's squad for the Cricket World Cup in India after winning the race to prove his fitness.

The 33-year-old has not played since rupturing the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee in March.

Williamson's inclusion means there is no place for Finn Allen. Trent Boult, 34, who was last year released from a central contract, headlines the fast-bowling attack but Kyle Jamieson and Adam Milne miss out.

Test captain Tim Southee, 34, joins Boult in the bowling ranks and is due to play in a fourth 50-over World Cup, as is Williamson. Both were involved when India last hosted the tournament in 2011.

New Zealand open their campaign against defending champions England on 5 October in Ahmedabad, having been runners-up at the last two World Cups in 2019 and 2021.

"We haven't put a date on whether he will be available for that first game or not," New Zealand coach Gary Stead said of Williamson, who is set to captain the side. "That's still three or four weeks away and time will tell a little bit closer, but he is doing everything in his powers to make that happen." The Kiwis lost to hosts England in the 2019 final in dramatic fashion. Both teams scored 241 in their 50 overs and were level on 15 in the super over.

All-rounder Jimmy Neesham scored 13 in the super over but Martin Gupthill was run out on the last delivery as he attempted the winning run, with England crowned champions based on the amount of boundaries scored.

"I think it's motivated all of us," said Neesham.

"Trent has talked about it as well, around a few of the guys back then talking about giving it one more crack in four years' time."

"We've got that generation from 30 to 35-years-old. We've all played a huge amount over the last 10-12 years and there's certainly huge motivation from the guys to give it one last good crack." The families of the New Zealand players helped to announce the World Cup squad in a social media video.

New Zealand squad: Kane Williamson (captain), Trent Boult, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitch Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Will Young.



COLOMBO: Virat Kohli and KL Rahul piled on an unbeaten 233-run stand off 194 balls, Pakistan vs India Asia Cup Super Four.

Djokovic wins US Open for record equalling Grand Slam

NEW YORK (Reuters): Novak Djokovic would not let Daniil Medvedev spoil his date with history a second time as he battled past the Russian 6-3 7-6(5) 6-3 to win the U.S. Open on Sunday and equal Margaret Court's record haul of 24 Grand Slams.

Djokovic's victory, his fourth in 10 Flushing Meadows finals, capped another remarkable season after his wins at the Australian Open and Roland Garros, and he will return to the top of the world rankings when they are updated later on Monday.

No man has won a calendar Grand Slam in 54 years, though Djokovic came close once again, losing in five sets to Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final.

But for the moment he is savouring his 24th Slam.

"It obviously means the world to me," he said. "I'm really living my childhood dream. 'To make the history of this sport is something truly remarkable, it's hard to describe the words."

"I had the childhood dream when I was seven, eight, I wanted to become the best player in the world." As he continues to live his dream Djokovic is also staking his claim to the mantle of greatest tennis player of all time. At 36 Djokovic also becomes the oldest U.S. Open men's winner in the Open Era but the Serb's Grand Slam hunger has not dimmed and

he had some bad news for his younger rivals.

"Eventually one day I will leave tennis in about 23, 24 years," he joked. "Until then, I guess you'll



see me a bit more. 'I don't put any number right now in my mind on how many Slams I want to win. 'I'll continue to prioritize them as my most important tournaments and where I want to play the best tennis."

KOBE TRIBUTE

After clinching his historic title on Sunday Djokovic threw his racquet into the air and dropped to his knees as the crowd roared. He picked himself up and found his young daughter court-side for an emotional hug before going back to the bench and pulling out a T-shirt with 'Mamba Forever' on the front and the number 24 on the back.

The shirt was a tribute to both his achievement and to

his late friend Los Angeles Lakers great Kobe Bryant, who wore the number throughout much of his all-star career before dying in a helicopter crash.



"I thought of doing this T-shirt, eventually, if I get the chance to win the tournament," said Djokovic. "Kobe was a close friend, we chatted a lot about the winner's mentality. 'When I was struggling with injury he was one of the people I relied on the most."

Neither Djokovic nor Medvedev have been fully embraced by the New York crowds and until the end of the match there was little of the electricity that crackled through Arthur Ashe during the women's final on Saturday. As the match started Djokovic walked out onto court and stared across the net at Medvedev, the man once again standing between him and history just as he had two years ago.

The last time the two clashed at the U.S. Open was in the 2021 final, when the Russian captured his only major and denied the Serb that elusive calendar Grand Slam. Djokovic did not speak of revenge on the road to the final and only referenced that loss as a learning experience.

"I haven't played any tournament on American soil for two years," said Djokovic, who missed last year's Slam due to COVID-19 restrictions. "I really did my best in the last 48 hours not to allow the importance of the moment and what's on the line get to my head. "Two years ago that's what happened and I wasn't able to be at my best and I was outplayed. "So I learned my lesson."

KILLER INSTINCT

As expected of a contest featuring the sport's two premier hardcourt players, almost every point was contested with long rallies as both men pounded away from the baseline.

Djokovic came out playing with purpose and applied pressure right away, breaking the third seed at the first opportunity on his way to a 3-0 lead.

That would be the only break Djokovic would need against a surprisingly flat Medvedev, who could not raise his play to the "12 out of 10" level he said he reached in beating defending champion Alcaraz in the semi-finals.

Haris Rauf to miss action against India on reserve day due to injury

COLOMBO (Agencies): Haris Rauf hasn't taken the field against India on Monday's reserve day in the Asia Cup Super Four game in Colombo after feeling "a little discomfort in his right flank" on Sunday's scheduled match day. Only 24.1 overs were bowled on Sunday before rain pushed the game into the spare day.

The extent of Rauf's injury is not clear. The PCB statement that confirmed the injury said, "He was subsequently taken for a precautionary MRI, which revealed no tear. He is under the observation of the team's medical panel."

Morne Morkel, Pakistan's bowling coach,

said on the official broadcast that Rauf had "pulled an oblique muscle" and with the ODI World Cup around the corner, "we're going to put him on ice" for the moment. Morkel also said that Rauf had started feeling discomfort when he bowled his second over on Sunday.

As a result, for the rest of the India innings in Colombo, Pakistan will have to make do with the three pace options in Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah and Faheem Ashraf, with Shadab Khan their lead spinner and a combination of Iftikhar Ahmed and Agha Salman's part-time offspin.

Rauf bowled five wicket-less overs and conceded 27

runs on Sunday but brought some sense of control to an innings in which India's openers Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill scored half-centuries and put on 121 in a flying start. Pakistan fought back to dismiss both and control the run rate but India were 147 on board for the loss of two wickets.

Rauf's absence will be a cause of concern for Pakistan, given how significant a part he has become of Pakistan's bowling attack. He has been Pakistan's in-form bowler, and crucial at first change after Afridi and Naseem. He is also the tournament's joint-leading wicket-taker with nine wickets in four matches.

Pakistan ex-cricketer gets 12 years for inciting murder of Dutch MP

NETHERLANDS (Agencies): A Dutch court on Monday sentenced former Pakistan international cricketer Khalid Latif to 12 years in prison for urging the murder of anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders.

Latif, 37, had offered 21,000 euros (\$22,500) for the head of Wilders in an online video after the fire-brand lawmaker sought to arrange a competition for cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

"It was not a stretch to think that somebody around the world would have taken heed of the call to kill Mr Wilders," presiding judge G. Verbeek told the court. "The accused knew this and his call fuelled the fire to have Wilders killed."

It is extremely unlikely that Latif, who was convicted in absentia, will serve his sentence. Dutch authorities have sought in vain to question Latif over the case and requested legal assistance from Pakistan, also to no avail.

"It's a good sentence, but it's a pity that the accused is not here in court," Wilders told reporters outside, sporting his trademark peroxide hairdo. "It is no longer acceptable that the Pakistani authorities refuse



to cooperate. I am going to ask the prime minister to ensure that Khalid Latif is arrested in Pakistan and extradited to the Netherlands," he added.

Wilders cancelled the cartoon contest after protests broke out in Pakistan and he was inundated with death threats. He has been under 24-hour state protection since 2004.

In the Netherlands, the plan to stage the contest was criticised widely with politicians, local media and ordinary citizens slamming the idea as needlessly antagonising Muslims.

But the call to kill Wilders appeared to resonate in the real world, with a Pakistani man sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2019 for plotting his assassination in the wake of

the cancelled contest.

Judge Verbeek said Latif's video was not just an attack on Wilders personally, but also on the concept of free speech in the Netherlands.

Latif played five one-day internationals and 13 T20 internationals for Pakistan but was banned from cricket for five years in 2017 for spot-fixing in a Pakistan Super League match in Dubai.

His last Pakistan appearance was against the West Indies in Abu Dhabi in September 2016.

However, Verbeek said that Latif had benefitted from his fame as an international cricketer to "add oil to the fire" at a time when the Netherlands was already the target of several threats.

South Africa seal ODI series after winning the second match in Karachi

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): South Africa clinched the ODI series, after winning the second match by six wickets. Despite a magnificent partnership between Fatima Sana and Aliya Riaz, the hosts posted a below-par total of 168 in the first innings. South Africa comfortably chased the target with 16 overs remaining.

After winning the toss, Nida Dar opted to bat first. Muneeba Ali and Sidra Amin, opening for Pakistan, failed to damage the opposition. Nadine de Klerk set the tone for the rest of the bowlers in her team when she got Muneeba and Sadaf Shams on consecutive balls. In her next over, she got Sidra too. Veterans Bismah Maroof and Nida Dar also failed to settle, both getting out cheaply. Eventually, it was

the experienced Aliya Riaz and Fatima Sana who came to their team's aid. The two composed a brilliant partnership of 114 runs - the highest seventh-wicket stand for Pakistan in ODIs.

Fatima's 69 and Aliya's 53 thus were pivotal to the hosts, who were 49-6 for when Fatima joined Aliya on the crease. When the partnership was broken, they had climbed to 163. The Nida-led side only added five runs to their total after that.

Chasing a sub-par total, the visitors were comfortably placed at the start of the chase. Even after captain Laura Wolvaardt lost her wicket after partaking in a 41-run partnership, South Africa remained dominantly ahead with Tazmin Brits and Lara Goodall at the crease.

However, as the innings progressed, the Pakistani

spinners unleashed a counterattack; keeping the scoring rate in check and taking wickets periodically.

Despite the fight put up by the hosts in the second innings, the Wolvaardt-led side was able to reach their target with 96 balls to spare Pakistan and South Africa play the last ODI on 14 September 2023 at 3:30 PM (PST).

Scores in brief: South Africa win by 6 wickets and 96 balls remaining

Pakistan: 168 all out in 44.2 overs (Fatima Sana 69, Aliya Riaz 53; Nadine de Klerk 4-32, Masabata Klaas 3-14)

South Africa: 169-4 in 34 overs (Tazmin Brits 45, Lara Goodall 36; Sadia Iqbal 2-32)

Player of the match: Nadine de Klerk (South Africa).



Spanish football chief Rubiales resigned

BARCELONA (AFP): Spanish football federation president Luis Rubiales has resigned following fierce criticism for kissing Jenni Hermoso on the lips at the Women's World Cup victory ceremony.

The already suspended Rubiales sent his resignation to the federation's interim president, he said in an open letter, and also explained his decision to eventually step down in a television interview.

"I'm going to (resign), yes, because I cannot continue my work," the 46-year-old told television show "Piers Morgan Uncensored". "(Family and friends) say to me, 'Luis, you need to focus on your dignity and continue your life. If not you are going to damage people you love and the sport you love.'"

Rubiales sparked a worldwide backlash after forcibly kissing midfielder Hermoso during the medal ceremony following Spain's World Cup triumph in Sydney on August 20.

After he refused to resign, FIFA provisionally suspended him for 90 days, while Spanish public prosecutors have filed a lawsuit against him for alleged sexual assault and coercion.

Hermoso, 33, had filed a complaint at the National Court on Tuesday, formally accusing Rubiales of sexual assault. In an open letter published by Rubiales on Sunday night, he said he had informed the federation he was also stepping down as a vice-president of European football governing body UEFA.



"After the swift suspension carried out by FIFA, plus the rest of the procedures opened against me, it is evident that I will not be able to return to my position," said Rubiales in the letter.

"Insisting on waiting and clinging to it is not going to contribute to anything positive, neither for the federation nor for Spanish football. 'Among other things, because there are powers that be that will prevent my return.'"

Rubiales, who insists the kiss was consensual, said he did not want Spanish football to be hurt by "such a disproportionate campaign" against him.

"I have faith in the truth and I will do everything in my power so that it prevails," he wrote. Rubiales said his departure would contribute "stability" to the 2030 men's World Cup bid in which Spain are involved. As the pressure ramped up in recent weeks on him to quit, Rubiales' mother Angeles Bejar went on a hunger strike in protest, locking herself in a church. - 'It's Over' -

Some Spanish politicians hailed Rubiales' downfall.

"We are with you, Jenni,

and with all women," said second deputy prime minister Yolanda Diaz on social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

Spain's equality minister Irene Montero wrote "It's Over" on X, a slogan used by Hermoso and her fellow players in protest against Rubiales.

Over 80 players went on strike from the women's team in protest after Rubiales' fierce defensive speech following the incident, in which he had railed against "false feminism" and said he would not step down.

The players said they would not return until the leadership of the RFEF (Spanish football federation) was changed.

Controversial women's coach Jorge Vilda was sacked on Tuesday in the fallout from the scandal.

The RFEF, under interim president Pedro Rocha, also apologised for the "totally unacceptable behaviour" of Rubiales. Vilda's former assistant Montserrat Tome is the new coach — it is the first time a woman has led the team. Spain's women's team are due to play Nations League matches against Sweden and Switzerland on September 22 and 26 respectively.

Legal action —

Spanish prosecutors' lawsuit against Rubiales will be analysed by a National Court judge. If the judge accepts the request, a magistrate will be assigned to head an investigation which will end either with a recommendation for the case to go to trial or be dismissed.



Pakistan team secures gold, silver medals at European Long Range Championship

RAWALPINDI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's long-range team made history after winning the European Long Range Championship for the first time ever, said the Inter-Services Public Relation (ISPR) on Monday.

The military's media wing stated that the Pakistan team made its maiden appearance in the European championship to compete with over 80 international shooters from 12 nations in individual matches. The winning team also played against 12 teams in team matches.

Lieutenant Colonel Junaid Ali secured a gold medal while Lieutenant General Ahsan Gulrez and Colonel Junaid Waqas gloried silver medals. The three of them triumphed and won the nation its first-ever international medals to be won in an international long-range event.

The European Long Range Championship commenced on September 5 at Bisley in the United Kingdom. After the World Championship, the said European platform is considered to be the second biggest event in the long-range category.



In brief

Show cause issued

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on directives Director General (DG), Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa on Monday issued a show cause notice to a private marketing company namely Parwaz Marketing for running a social media campaign of an illegal housing scheme 'Ruden Enclave' at Mauza Badyal and Dhala Khasala on Adiala Road. According to a RDA spokesman, the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA issued show cause notice to the marketing company for violating the rules and running an illegal campaign. The DG taking notice of the violation, advised the citizens not to invest in private housing projects, he said adding, that the owners of the illegal housing scheme namely Ruden Enclave had announced balloting of the plots on September 16. He said that the DG had directed the RDA enforcement squad to take strict action against the violators and remain present at the site on the balloting date to take action in accordance with the law. The DG had also directed the MP&TE Directorate to take strict action against illegal advertisements and marketing of illegal housing schemes, he added.

Free camp to be organized

ISLAMABAD (INP): A free medical camp will be held here on October 06, 2023 (Friday) to treat Cleft lip and palate patients. It is being arranged by Islamabad Cleft Lip and Palate Association (ICLAPA). According to the Association's senior member Mrs. Farhat Akhtar Rehman, an ICLAPA's team of surgeons is also available to operate affected children. The parents of the affected children have been asked to contact Mrs. Farhat on her cell numbers 03335157676 and 0300-5192490 to get them registered for the normal treatment or surgery. The Association had been providing free medical facilities to the poor families since 2004 with the support of families, friends and philanthropists. The ICLAPA was a group of volunteers, which relied on donors to bring hope and happiness in the lives of people, for whom it was financially difficult to give treatment to their children.

111 cases registered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police have launched an intensified crackdown on drivers who are violating traffic rules, resulting in the registration of 111 cases against individuals engaged in serious traffic violations across various police stations during the last three days. Police spokesperson said that Islamabad capital police have initiated the process of registering cases against traffic rule violators involved in significant traffic infractions. During this enforcement period, the police issued a total of 11,708 challan tickets, and 201 vehicles along with 565 motorcycles were impounded. Over the last 24 hours, police teams issued 32 challan tickets for overcharging on traveling fares and 79 for overloading, leading to the impoundment of 75 vehicles and 97 motorcycles across various police stations. Furthermore, special squads have been deployed along major highways and important boulevards within the federal capital to address traffic congestion and violations. These cases were registered at Sangiani and Ramna police stations. Islamabad Capital Police FM radio 92.4 is broadcasting a dedicated program focused on educating the public about traffic rules.



RAWALPINDI: Minister for Defence Lt. General Anwar Ali Hyder (Retd) presenting a gift to Neil Hawkins Australian High Commissioner in Ministry of Defence.

ANF recovers 70 kg drugs; nets 11 accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11 operations across the country managed to recover over 70 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that over 600 grams Ice drug concealed in two water coolers was recovered from a parcel reached at a private cargo office in Jhelum.

The parcel was sent from Peshawar. 2.2 kg hashish was recovered from a local resident netted from Haq Bahu Hotel in Bhakkar.

The spokesman further informed that over 2.5 kg Ice drug was recovered from a passenger's trolley bag at Sialkot Airport. The accused, a resident of

Jhelum, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-769.

Three suspects were rounded up from a passenger bus near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad and drugs were recovered from their possession.

19 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Chiniot. In a joint operation with Punjab Rangers, five accused were netted in Kasur while 7.1 kg heroin was recovered from their possession. A motorcycle was also impounded during the operation.

In an operation conducted in Peshawar, 18 ecstasy tablets were recovered from a parcel booked for Murree through a courier office. 200 grams

hashish and 400 grams opium were recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Mastung arrested near Raja Bazar, Gilgit.

10 kg hashish concealed for smuggling was recovered in Bajor area while 10 kg hashish concealed near Sepina Morga border of Khyber area was also recovered. In 10th operation, 24 kg hashish hidden near Mazani area in Gwadar was recovered.

The spokesman said that in 11th operation, 15 kg opium hidden near Gardi forest in Chagai area was recovered.

Separate cases have been registered against the arrested accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act while further investigations are under process.

Famous Urdu writer Mumtaz Mufti remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Famous Urdu writer Mumtaz Mufti was remembered on the occasion of his birth anniversary on Monday.

Mumtaz Hussain Mufti was born on September 11, 1905 in Batala, east Punjab. He became a civil servant under British rule and started his career as a school teacher. At the time of partition, he migrated to Pakistan with his family.

Mumtaz Mufti started writing Urdu short stories while working as a school teacher before 1947. At the beginning of his literary career, he was considered, by other literary critics, a non-conformist writer having liberal views, who appeared influenced by Freud.

His transformation from liberalism to Sufism was due to his inspiration from a fellow writer Qudrat Ullah Shahab. All the same, he did manage to retain his individual point of view and wrote on subjects that were frowned upon by the conservative elements in the society.

The two phases of his life are witnessed by his autobiographies, "Ali Pur Ka Aeli" and "Alakh Nagri". According to forewords mentioned in his later autobiography, "Ali Pur Ka Aeli" is an account of a lover who challenged the social taboos of his times, and "Alakh Nagri" is an account of a devotee who is greatly influenced by mysticism. In recognition of his literary contribution, in 1986 he was given Sitara-e-Imtiaz and in 1989 Munshi Premchand Award.

Besides Ali Pur Ka Aeli and Alakh Nagri, his works include "Docter ka istemaal", "Ram Din", "Un Kahi", "Chup, Guria Ghar", "Ismaraeen", "Kahi Na Jai", "Labbaik", "Muftianey", "Nizam-e-Sakaa", "Roughani Putlay", "Samay Ka Bandhan", "Hind Yaatra", "Piyaaz Ke Chhilkey", "Okhay Awallay", "Okhay Log", and Talash.

Mumtaz Mufti died on October 27, 1995.

ECP now empowered to fix election date

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Deputy Secretary General Attaullah Tarar Monday said following the expiry of the constitutional term of President Arif Alvi, the powers to fix the date for general elections now rested with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The President's five-year term ended September 8, which meant that now the ECP was fully empowered to announce the election date, he told a press conference.

Tarar said as the notification for a new president had not been issued under Article 44 of the Constitution, Dr Alvi could now only carry out day-to-day duties of his office till the election of the new incumbent.

As per the Constitution, it was mandatory for the President to follow the advice of the Prime Minister and the government, while the Election Commission had no

more obligation to follow the President's directives concerning the elections, he added.

The PML-N leader mentioned that the value of the dollar was on a downward trend, while positive reports regarding foreign investment were pouring in. However, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf resorted to negative actions whenever the economy showed signs of improvement, he added.

He said the PTI was bent upon ruining the economy through propagating a fake narrative for its political advantage. Misconceptions about the agreement with the International Monetary Fund were willfully dished out to mislead the masses.

To a query, he said President Alvi would remain in office (till the election of new incumbent) for smooth functioning of day-to-day state affairs.

Three FIA officials injured in firing of illegal money exchangers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Three officials of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) were injured in firing of illegal money exchangers during operation against the dollar hoarders and illegal money exchange entities here on Monday.

According to details, the FIA conducted operations against illegal money exchanges in Blue Area of the federal capital during which it encountered fierce resistance from staff members working for illegal money exchange entities.

The clashes resulted in injuries to three FIA officers who were diligently executing their duties.

In a concerted effort to crack down on illegal dollar hoarding, the Federal Investigation Agency and several other agencies launched a series of operations in the capital city.

In a significant breakthrough, the FIA managed to recover a substantial amount of both local and foreign currencies during the raids, shedding light on the extensive scale of under-

ground financial activities.

Among the notable arrests made by the Federal Investigation Agency was the apprehension of hawala/hundi operatives Sheikh Mureed and Sheikh Ijaz, a father and son duo allegedly deeply involved in facilitating Hawala Hundi transactions.

Furthermore, the Federal Investigation Agency detained seven employees – including the owner – of the illegal money exchange in a raid conducted in Blue area of Islamabad.

IIUI president calls on Minister

ISLAMABAD (NNI): President, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi, Monday, called on Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi and congratulated him on his appointment.

During the meeting, issues of mutual interests including initiatives for promotion of quality education and role of universities in discouraging extremism were discussed. The meeting was also attended by Vice President Administration and Finance Dr. N.B. Jumani.

Honorable Minister, while appreciating the role of IIUI in society building and services, assured of maximum support to IIUI. He opined that universities can play vital role in curbing the extremism. He desired that the IIUI being the best platform should hold a conference on the life of Holy Prophet (PBUH).

The IIUI President said that university will be soon scheduling this conference in cooperation with the ministry. He also apprised that the university will hold another conference on Shariah that will be attended by Imam e Kaaba. He added

that another conference of the league of Islamic universities to be organized by IIUI is in the pipeline that will be attended Muslim World League chief.

Talking about the relations of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the Minister said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share a remarkable brethren history. He added that brotherly ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are getting stronger by every passing day. He said Arabic is the language that is one of the most expressive and rich languages. He also praised the vision of Govt of Saudi Arabia saying that contributions of His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed Bin Salman for dissemination of peace are laudable.

He said that His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman is a great leader of Muslim world with a unique vision. The Minister also appreciated the role of the university leadership in its progress. He also appreciated the IIUI President for making IIUI a peaceful true educational institution where officials and students have prime focus on education.

IMinister visits SSU HQ

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Interim Law Minister Sindh Barrister Umar Soomro visited the Special Security Unit headquarters where Commandant SSU Dr. Farrukh Ali and other senior officers welcomed him.

The Minister Sindh visited various sections of SSU and appreciated the standard of professionalism and management of SSU.

Commandant SSU Dr. Farrukh Ali briefing about the performance of various units of SSU informed about the establishment of the country's first SSU Sindh Police S.W.A.T Team, the team including lady commandos are well-trained and equipped with modern weapons remain alert to deal with any emergency situation.

DIG Security and Emergency Services Division Dr. Maqsood Ahmed also welcomed the Interim Law Minister and briefed him on the performance of the units working under the Security Division.

Moreover, the interim Law Minister of Sindh also observed the mock drills conducted by the S.W.A.T team to deal with any emergency situation.

Later, DIG Security presented an honorary shield to the interim Law Minister of Sindh.

PR completes 90% rehabilitation work of SRS platform

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has almost completed 90 per cent upgradation and rehabilitation work of the Shahdaddpur Railway Station platform which would facilitate the passengers of the area.

"The government has allocated around Rs 2 million more funds for completing the renovation of the platform of Shahdaddpur Railway Station, an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said Shahdaddpur Railway Station, operating with three platforms, is one of the important stations situated on the mainline where most of the mail and express trains have their stoppages.

The official said the contractor had stopped the construction work due to non-payment of bills and funds but now the funds have been arranged for the remaining rehabilitation work.

The official said the platform condition on the downside was dilapidated and therefore it was decided to carry out its repair under the head of improvement and welfare expenditure.

To a question, the official said Pakistan Railways was a big organization comprising of around 63,000 employees and its network stretched across the country.

He said the employees are well-cared under the welfare activities like health facilities through a wide network of hospitals, dispensaries and child healthcare units.

Elaborating, the official said the provision of government accommodation according to entitlement and priority list, staff benevolent funds, benefits and incentives were provided through the Prime Minister's Family Assistance Package policy

for families of deceased employees.

He said the other welfare activities included benefits and incentives provided through policy for disabled employees' families, monthly grants to widows scale-wise, the establishment of primary and high schools, industrial schools to teach handicrafts, sports activities through the constitution of Pakistan and pick and drop facility for schools/offices.

The official said the installation of water filtration plants, a special provision of five medical seats in Ripha Islamic Universities with a reduction of 50 per cent in admission and tuition fees, loans on easy instalments, availability of all recreational facilities, payment for burial and ambulance charges, marriage grant, farewell grant, free passes and concession in railways fares.

Parents urged to play active role in safeguarding children online

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a world increasingly shaped by the digital realm, parents have a key role in educating children about the potential risks of the internet usage and guiding them on safe online practices.

Director of the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA), Muhammad Farooq, in an article titled "Safe Spaces for Children in the Digital Age: The Vital Role of Parents," expressed deep concerns about the risks children face online, such as child exploitation.

Farooq said that parents should play a pivotal role in their children's lives, encompassing their physical, psychological, social, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing.

He emphasized that prioritizing quality time spent with children, both offline and online, had become more crucial than ever.

He said that parents should recognize that the internet could never

replace their role and that its risks often outweighed its benefits, potentially causing harm in the real world.

He also highlighted the disturbing increase in children falling victim to online dangers and engaging in unlawful activities. He stressed the urgent need to educate parents about these issues and provide comprehensive guidance on addressing this problem.

Encouraging open communication and fostering a friendly atmosphere at home was crucial, he said adding this environment enabled children to freely discuss negative internet experiences, allowing parents to educate them on handling such issues wisely and promptly.

To strike the right balance, parents can utilize tools like parental control software/applications. These tools provide an appropriate level of control over their child's online activities while

allowing them to harness the internet for educational and recreational purposes.

The PTA has taken steps to assist parents in this regard by compiling a list of parental control software, including free options, available on the PTA's website (www.pta.gov.pk).

He advised the parents to teach children not to disclose personal information and identity while using chat rooms, Instant Messaging (IM) programs, online games, or similar activities requiring a login. Encourage children to use a nickname as their username.

Instruct children to create strong passwords for online accounts and avoid using the same password for multiple sites.

In his article he advised children not to share personal information like photos, videos, or personal opinions online, as once it's online, it's available to the world.

Teach children never to meet online friends in person, as they may not be who they claim to be. Encourage children to behave ethically online, just as they do in the real world.

Urge them to authenticate the source of any content before sharing it.

Remind children that everything they do online is recorded and can be traced by anyone, including law enforcement agencies. Caution children not to click on suspicious links or download files from unknown sources, as they may contain malware or viruses. Only download software from reputable websites.

Make children aware of phishing emails or messages and instruct them never to disclose personal information such as their address, passwords, or financial details to anyone online, as legitimate organizations never request such information through unsolicited emails or messages.

Bird hunting banned in Balkh

BALKH (Agencies): Along with concerns about the declining numbers of birds and wild animals in Balkh province, the provincial environmental department has announced a ban on hunting birds. Officials in this department say that based on a decision by the government leadership, legal action will in future be taken against people who hunt birds. But hunters want the Islamic Emirate to impose a ban on hunting endangered birds only.

Afghan beats US opponent

KABUL (Khaama Press): Nasrat Haqqparast, a martial artist, secured victory against his American opponent in a UFC fight. The fight between Haqqparast and American athlete Landon Kinney occurred in Sydney, Australia, within the UFC organization. Haqqparast defeated his American opponent in a thrilling match, winning by a score. Nasrat Haqqparast boasts a professional record of 20 fights, with 15 wins and five losses, showcasing his fighting prowess.

Army Chief affirms MoD’s commitment to establishing well-organized army

KABUL (Agencies): The Chief of the Army Staff of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Qari Fasi-huddin Fitrat, during the graduation ceremony of 1,200 Mujahideen from combat training, emphasized that the Ministry of Defense is committed to establishing a well-organized army for the protection of the country’s national sovereignty and borders.

According to a statement released by the Defense Ministry 1,200 Mujahideen received their graduation

certificates today after completing a period of military and professional training at Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Masoud Combat Training Center.

The ceremony was also participated by representatives from the Prime Minister’s Office and officials of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Higher Education.

Sheikh Neda Mohammad Nadim, Acting Minister of Higher Education, talking to the graduates, encouraged the Mujahideen to serve the

nation and work for the defense of the Islamic government in the country.

He urged the graduates to be firm in their jobs, follow religious teachings, and implement orders of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate.

Qari Fasihuddin Fitrat, Chief of Army Staff, said, the leadership of the Ministry of National Defense is committed to forming a well-organized and professional army capable of defending national sovereignty and the country’s borders.

Maternal mortality rate decreased

KABUL (TOLNews): The acting Minister of Public Health at the opening of a maternal and children’s hospital in Kabul that cost nearly 300 million Afs, said that although the maternal mortality rate in Afghanistan is higher than in any other country, the maternal mortality rate last year reached more than five hundred people, and in 2023 it is 250 people so far.

Qalandar Ebad said that there is a need for female health professionals in the health sector, and the Islamic Emirate is trying to pay serious attention to the sector. “Providing good services at mother and child clinics and taking care of patients on time has caused the death rate of mothers and children in the country to decrease to 256,” said Qalandar Ebad, acting head of the Public Health Ministry.

Meanwhile, the head of the Bayat Foundation said that they built a standard hospital for children and mothers on the premises of the 100-bed Andhra Gandhi Hospital in Kabul in two years.

“The opening of the hospital helps to further reduce the deaths of mothers and children and will solve people’s problems in this field,” said Ehsanullah Bayat, head of the Bayat Foundation.

Abdul Salam Hanafi, the second deputy of the prime minister, asked the international community not to hinder the implementation of development projects in the country and added that everyone must obey the law.

“It is the moral duty of countries not to create obstacles for the development projects in the country so that the employment of the youth can be provided for by the implementation of the projects,” said Abdul Salam Hanafi, the second deputy of the prime minister.

Based on the information of the Ministry of Public Health, after the Islamic Emirate took over, 300 clinics have been built in different provinces of the country, and the ministry plans to build new clinics in three hundred districts of the country this year.

IEA officials urge students to stay in Afghanistan



KABUL (Agencies): Abdul Baqi Haqqani, the acting director of the National Examination Authority, said that the Islamic Emirate supports the youth and wants to provide them with better educational opportunities.

Haqqani stated this at a ceremony to honor the top scorers in this year’s university entrance exams and graduates of madrassas.

“Islamic Emirate is at your service, it tries to create facilities and provide a good education environment. Experience shows that in such situations people call and invite [students] from outside. Try not

to accept without consulting with the Islamic Emirate,” Haqqani said.

A number of other officials reiterated the IEA’s commitment to support both religious and modern studies. “We assure [the people] that the Islamic Emirate will support the students both in the religious sciences and in the modern sciences and will provide job opportunities,” Mohammad Nabi Omari, Deputy Minister of Interior Affairs, said.

Deputy Minister of Information and Culture for Youth Affairs Mohammad Yonus Rashid said the youth are an

important section of society and asked them to work for the unity and integrity of the country through science and knowledge. “Afghanistan will be built by the youth,” Rashid said.

Mohammad Faqir, deputy minister of the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, said: “The responsibility of scholars and university professors is to bridge the gap between the Islamic Emirate and the people.”

Meanwhile, top Kankor students asked the Islamic Emirate to provide them with the opportunity to study abroad.

Mahmood, who scored

the highest marks in Kankor, said: “Current conditions are such that education is not available for everyone. I hope that conditions will be provided as soon as possible so that we can all study together and contribute to the progress of the country.”

Abbas, who came second in the exam, said: “My demand from the Islamic Emirate is to provide us with the opportunity to study in better countries, so that we can study with better facilities and quality, and when we return to our country, we will serve the society and fulfill the aspirations of the nation.”

Protest held over closing of Torkham crossing



J A L A L A B A D (TOLNews): Dozens of people held a demonstration around Torkham area in Nangarhar province to protest the closing of the crossing by Pakistan.

The protestors said that Pakistan has been repeatedly closing the Torkham crossing under various pretexts during fruits and vegetable season.

They called on the officials of Afghanistan and Pakistan to resolve their political issues through diplomatic paths. “When the season of fruits and vegetables arrives, you (Pakistan) close the path, make problems. You attack our checkpoints. Why?” said Wahidullah, a trader.

“The problems which are among the governments, you should solve it by any means, we don’t

have any problems with it. But please don’t make obstacles for the transports,” said Farman Gul Shinwari, head of the free transport union in Nangarhar.

“Our call and proposal to Pakistan is to reopen the path so the problems of the people on both sides are solved,” said Faridun Khan Momand, a former member of the parliament.

Meanwhile, Mumtaz Zahra Baluch, spokesperson of Pakistan’s foreign ministry, reacted to the statement of the Afghanistan Foreign Ministry regarding the closure of Torkham crossing, saying that the statement comes as a “surprise as the Interim Afghan authorities know fully well the reasons for the temporary closure of the Pakistan-Afghanistan

border at Torkham.”

Baluch said in a statement that Pakistan cannot accept the construction of any structures by “Interim Afghan Government inside its territory since these violate its sovereignty.”

“On the 6th of September, instead of a peaceful resolution, Afghan troops resorted to indiscriminate firing, targeting Pakistan military posts, damaging the infrastructure at the Torkham Border Terminal, and putting the lives of both Pakistani and Afghan civilians at risk, when they were stopped from erecting such unlawful structures,” the statement claimed. This comes as the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said that due to the closure of Torkham, the traders on both sides of the crossing have suffered around \$1 million.

“Right now, it is estimated that both Pakistan and Afghanistan suffered more than \$1 million,” said Khanjan Alokozai, head of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce. This comes as the meeting which was held between the officials of Afghanistan and Pakistan about the reopening of Torkham crossing ended with no result.

Prices still high in Herat despite dollar’s depreciation: Residents

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): Some residents of western Herat province complain that despite increase in the afghani value against US dollar in recent days, the prices of essential daily-use items and fuel remain high.

They urge the government to act seriously and control the prices of essential commodities. Baqor Laali, a resident of Herat City, the provincial capital, told Pajhwok that in Afghanistan market economy was dependent on dollar’s value and any increase or decrease in the green-back’s value had an impact on prices of commodities.

“When dollar’s rate decreases, prices of food and fuel also decrease, when its value increases, prices go up and the government has no control in this regard,” He added although the dollar’s rate had decreased these days,

but the prices of many commodities remained high.

Abdul Rahim, another resident, who wanted to buy food, said prices of food remained unchanged despite the drop in dollar’s rate. He added: “At least a month ago when dollar’s rate was 90 afghanis, I bought a five-kilogram oil for 580 afghanis, but now the dollar’s rate is close to 77 afghanis, the same cooking oil is sold for 560 afghanis, which shows a very small decrease.”

He also said a bag of flour was previously sold for 1,400afs, but now it was sold at the same price and no change had taken place in its price. Wakil Ahmad, another resident, said before a bag of good quality rice cost 2,600afs, but now it was sold at the same price.

“When dollar’s value increases slightly, the prices increase several times,

but no matter how much the dollar’s rate decreases, no change is seen in the prices of food and fuel.”

Wali Ahmad Wasim, a resident of the 4th police district, also told Pajhwok that a little increase in dollar’s value triggers up to 30 percent increase in prices.

“The dollar’s rate has decreased, but prices of essential goods remain high.” Referring to fuel prices in the market, he said: “Some time ago, one dollar was exchanged for 80 afghanis, when one liter of gasoline was sold for 63 to 65 afghanis, but now the dollar’s rate has decreased, but no changes occur in fuel prices.” Speaking to Pajhwok, Mohammad Hassan Zarifi, an expert on economic affairs, said increase or decrease in dollar’s value would not benefit the people until the government adopted right economic policy.

According to Zarifi, some businessmen take advantage of this situation, they increase rates when the value of dollar increases, but when its value decreases, they bring no changes in the prices of food and fuel.

Local officials in Herat, without referring to dollar’s rate which has a direct role in the market, said they seriously monitor the market and control the prices of food and fuel on a daily and weekly basis. Speaking to Pajhwok, Maulvi Akbar Furqani, the manager of the market regulation of Herat Municipality, said a big difference had occurred in prices recently.

He said the municipality teams monitor price and quality of food and fuel products every day and take action against violators who sell items against the municipal price list.

ARCS president appeals for continued Turkish support to Afghanistan

KABUL (Agencies): Mawlawi Muti-ul-Haq Khalis, the President of the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), met with Turkish Envoy Cihad Erginay in a farewell meeting. During the meeting, Khalis requested Erginay for his country’s continued cooperation with Afghanistan.

The meeting was attended by several dignitaries, including Fazil Akin, head of TIKA, and Farid Ahmed Zia, President of the Turkish Red Crescent for Afghanistan, among other Turkish representatives. Khalis praised Erginay’s mission in Afghanistan as productive and full of achievements. Khalis



expressed his gratitude to the Turkish Red Crescent and other Turkish charities for their vital assistance to vulnerable communities in Afghanistan. He urged Erginay to share the realities about the humanitarian

needs of the Afghan people with the world.

Turkish Ambassador Cihad Erginay reaffirmed Turkey’s close brotherly relations with Afghanistan and assured that his country would always cooperate

with the Afghan people.

He pledged that Turkey would continue to support programs aimed at establishing orphanages and creating employment opportunities for widowed women in Afghanistan.

Bayat foundation officially opens new hospital in Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): Bayat Foundation inaugurated a Maternity and Neonatal Hospital on the campus of Indira Gandhi Children’s Hospital in Kabul and officially handed over the facility to the health ministry.

Bayat Foundation officials say the aim of establishing the hospital is to reduce infant and maternal mortality rates.

Dr. Ehsanullah Bayat, Chairman of the Bayat Foundation, said at the ceremony that according to statistics, three million mothers and children have been treated at hospitals built by the foundation across the country.

“Bayat Foundation hopes that the Ministry of Public Health will pay serious attention to procurement, required professional personnel and other requirements for the normal operation of the hospital and provide services to mothers and babies in need that are on a par with regional and world



standards,” said Dr. Bayat.

The new hospital comprises four floors that cover an area of 3,200 square meters and cost 296 million AFN. It is also equipped with modern medical equipment, officials said.

“On the occasion of the completion of this four-story hospital, which was

completed with an estimated investment of 296 million afghanis, I would like to thank Bayat Foundation,” said Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the administrative deputy prime minister.

Meanwhile, Qalandar Ebad, the acting minister of health said at the ceremony that maternal and infant mortality rates have

dropped in the country in the past two years.

Ebad said that the ministry has plans to provide health services in all provinces.

Islamic Emirate’s officials meanwhile also thanked Bayat Foundation for their assistance in various sectors including health, social and humanitarian sectors.

Afghanistan’s quest for economic recovery amidst challenges

KABUL (Khaama Press): A few months ago, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, Afghanistan’s acting Deputy Prime Minister for economic affairs, thanked the World Bank for its thorough evaluation of the nation’s economy. The international institution highlighted that Afghanistan managed to curtail inflation to 18.3% in 2022, which further subsided to 1.94% in March 2023, down from 3.5% the preceding month. As per the national records, exports between January and April 2023 reached USD 600 million, marking a growth of over 4% from the previous year, whereas imports in the period between January and July 2023 surged by 32% from the same timeframe in 2022.

The promising economic indicators, which include local food production enhancement, banking system improvements, and regularized salaries for public servants, led Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhundzada, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), to issue a decree on

August 22. This decree mandates all ministries and relevant agencies to foster trade facilitation at ports, transit points, and highways, with a keen eye on the country’s commercial and economic interests. The decree further emphasized treating the private sector favorably and prioritizing domestic products to bolster local industry growth and self-sufficiency.

The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment (ACCI) lauded this decree, with Chairman Mohammad Yunus Momand expressing optimism about future export increases. The ACCI also acknowledged the recent spike in transit transport and made pleas for tax reductions, improved monetary transfer processes abroad, and the promotion of Afghanistan’s clothing manufacturing.

Representatives from the Afghanistan Industry Association highlight the country’s self-sufficiency in 52 sectors, emphasizing the need to address the scarcity of land and energy to bolster local production.

Key economic reforms initiated by the “Taliban 2.0” have contributed to stabilization efforts. These include effective revenue collection, preventing multiple taxation by issuing tax receipts to transporters, and stringent measures against smuggling and corruption.

Despite initial economic downturns, stabilizing signs emerged, attributed partly to UN cash injections for humanitarian assistance, governmental restrictions on illicit imports, and sound macro-economic management. Yet, the balance remains delicate. A considerable portion of Afghans still struggle to meet basic needs, relying heavily on humanitarian aid.

William Biard, an Afghanistan specialist at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), commends the Taliban’s economic management but warns of potential future declines reminiscent of the chaos post the Taliban’s takeover in August 2021. The economic plunge was aggravated by factors such as the termination of financial aid, sanctions,

and freezing of Afghanistan’s foreign exchange reserves.

Remarkably, despite these adversities, the Taliban’s economic governance has outperformed many expectations. A significant catalyst for this resilience is their inheritance of functional macro-economic institutions. However, their lackluster attention to social service delivery and limited support for the needy are areas of concern, which now heavily depend on international humanitarian aid.

According to USIP’s analysis, Afghanistan’s fragile economy faces threats from declining humanitarian assistance and the effects of the Taliban’s opium poppy cultivation ban. These factors, combined with depleting household coping mechanisms, suggest a challenging winter ahead for Afghanistan.

To bolster economic recovery, USIP recommends sustained humanitarian support, efficient aid usage, and greater international cooperation focused on private sectors and the broader economy.

Responsible journalism need of the hour: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday appreciated the services of court reporters in providing awareness of legal matters and important court decisions to the masses.

During a meeting with a delegation of the Press Association of the Supreme Court of Pakistan which met with him here, the minister said the main objective of the media was to convey correct information to the general public. He stressed that responsible journalism was need of the hour which could help the society move forward in the right direction.

The role of court reporters in journalism, he said, was very important. Court reporting was a technical field and like lawyers, journalists covering court proceedings should be well versed in law, he added. Covering the Supreme Court's proceedings was equally important and sensitive, and the court reporters were doing the job very efficiently, the minister remarked.

Solangi said the caretaker government fully believed in freedom of press and it would solve the problems of journalists working in the field. The minister congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the Press Association of the Supreme Court, including President Tayyab Baloch, General Secretary Azam Gul, Information

Secretary Shahryar Shoaib Bukhari and others.

Solangi reaffirms govt's commitment to foster positive relationships with all political parties: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi reiterated the caretaker government's commitment to fostering positive relationships with all political parties.

The minister, in a television interview, stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was a duly registered political party and there was restriction on its participation in the electoral process. He underlined that there was no discord among political stakeholders, as the current situation is notably favorable, with no visible signs of apprehension. The caretaker government's primary objective was to ensure that the general election results were accepted by all the quarters concerned.

Solangi stressed that the ultimate choice of supporting a certain political party rested with the people. The incumbent government's focus was on how to hold impartial, fair and transparent elections and the Election Commission of Pakistan's role in that regard would also be crucial, he added.

The minister said as the elections were being held according to the latest census data then the ECP was constitutionally authorized to fix the polling date. Regarding the constituency delimitation process, Solangi said the ECP had published the schedule in

that regard. Once the delimitation process completed, then the political parties would have 54 days to conduct their election campaigns, he added.

He expressed the caretaker government's commitment to work closely with the Election Commission for creating a conducive atmosphere for political activities. It was their goal to leave the country in a better state for the next elected government, he added.

The caretaker government would hand over the reigns to the people's elected representatives and there should be no ambiguity in that regard, he remarked. Solangi said the caretaker government was operating within the bounds of the law and the Constitution. "The concept of a caretaker setup is enshrined in parliamentary procedures, and its tenure is defined by constitutional regulations and bodies."

Regarding Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and his political party, the minister said in a democratic framework, the political parties and their leaders had the right to express their opinions freely. To a question, Solangi said the caretaker law minister's meeting with the president was the part of his official duties. The last government had made amendments in the Election Act, empowering the caretaker setup to take certain significant decisions such as enforcing international agreements and obligations, he added.

Dr Kausar takes oath as Federal Minister

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik took oath as the Caretaker Federal Minister here on Monday.

President Dr Arif Alvi administered him the oath at a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad. Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik is a noted agricultural scientist and educationist. On September 9, President Dr Arif Alvi appointed Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik as the federal minister in the caretaker federal cabinet on the advice of the caretaker prime minister under Article 224 (1a) of the Constitution.

Electricity thieves get Rs350m in fines

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a crackdown to combat electricity theft, a total of 800,000 units of stolen electricity were detected, leading to fines of more than Rs 350 million in account of power theft nationwide, reported on Monday.

In a bid to curb power theft, the task force formed by the interim government – registered a total of 1,529 First Information Reports (FIRs), while 4,702 cases of electricity theft were being exposed across the country.

The Secretary power division revealed that at least 194 individuals were apprehended during the operation, while an employee of the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) was also arrested for assisting in power theft. The power division officials further revealed that the most significant cases of electricity theft were detected in the regions served by the Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO) and Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO). As MEPCO reported 1,317 cases of electricity theft, with FIRs lodged against 556 individuals, while LESCO disclosed 1,159 cases and registered 715 FIRs.

Meanwhile, Other regions affected by electricity theft included Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO) with 128 cases, Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) with 201 cases, and Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) with 95 cases. The crackdown extended further to Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO), where 296 cases were reported, meanwhile, a total of 627 cases of power theft were unearthed at Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO).

PTI demands poll date from President

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Monday demanded an immediate announcement of the election date in a letter sent to President Arif Alvi. Secretary General PTI Omar Ayub Khan wrote to Dr Arif Alvi saying that under Article 48(5) of the constitution of Pakistan 1973, he has to appoint a date for holding the general elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the National Assembly.

He said that the announcement of the date is a constitutional obligation and mandatory for the President of Pakistan. According to the constitution, the state should implement its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people and conduct the elections for the National Assembly as it is the basic foundation of democracy.

Since the National Assembly was dissolved by President Alvi on August 9, 2023 on the advice of the Prime Minister, the election date has to be given by him according to the constitution and the law as well as the judgements of the Supreme Court, said PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan.

He also said that under Section 57 of the Elections Act, 2017, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has been given the right to appoint and announce the poll date but it is subject to the constitution. However, the right of ECP to fix a date for elections is subject to Article 48(5), therefore, when the National Assembly is dissolved by the President, it is the President alone who can fix the date.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi administering the oath of office to Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik as Caretaker Federal Minister, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Border with Afghanistan to be a border of peace

— Pakistan can't accept construction of any structures by Afghan govt inside its territory: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): The spokesperson Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FO) Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has made it clear that Pakistan cannot accept the construction of any structures by the Interim Afghan Government inside its territory.

She expressed this while responding to media queries regarding the recent statement by the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the closure of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border at Torkham. Zahra Baloch stated, "the statement of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs comes as a surprise as the Interim Afghan authorities know fully well the reasons for the temporary closure of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border at Torkham".

She viewed, "Pakistan cannot accept the construction of any structures by the Interim Afghan Government inside its territory since these violate its sovereignty. On the 6th of September, instead of a peaceful resolution, Afghan troops resorted to indiscriminate firing, targeting Pakistan military posts, damaging the infrastructure

at the Torkham Border Terminal, and putting the lives of both Pakistani and Afghan civilians at risk, when they were stopped from erecting such unlawful structures' she questioned. Such unprovoked and indiscriminate firing on Pakistani border posts cannot be justified under any circumstances. The unprovoked firing by Afghan border security forces invariably emboldens the terrorist elements, she added.

She told that these elements are enjoying sanctuaries inside Afghanistan as confirmed by the UN Security Council's Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team in its latest report. "We have always said that we wish the border with Afghanistan to be a border of peace and amity between the two countries. We have welcomed our Afghan brothers and sisters with open arms for decades. Pakistan has continued to exercise restraint and prioritize dialogue in the face of persistent unwarranted provocations by Afghan troops deployed along the Pakistan-Afghanistan

Border. Temporary closures take place only in extreme cases such as the 6th September 2023 incident on the border or when Afghan soil is used to launch terror attacks inside Pakistan.

She said that the statement of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs also includes some irrelevant comments and unsolicited advice about Pakistan's economy and foreign trade. For the last several decades, Pakistan has facilitated Afghan transit trade and will continue to do so. However, Pakistan cannot allow the misuse of the transit trade agreement. She reiterated that Pakistan stands ready to resolve all bilateral issues and concerns through constructive dialogue so that both countries can reap the dividends of economic connectivity and resultant prosperity. We expect the Afghan interim authorities to be mindful of Pakistan's concerns, respect the territorial integrity of Pakistan and ensure that the Afghan territory is not used as a launching pad for terrorist attacks against Pakistan."

NEPRA reserves decision on govt's plea

KARACHI (PPI): National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Monday reserved its decision after hearing the government's plea to increase the price of electricity for Karachi residents.

According to reports, NEPRA officials concluded a contentious hearing on the government's request to increase electricity prices in Karachi, raising concerns among industrial and domestic consumers alike. NEPRA officials confirmed that adjustments have been received from Distribution Companies (DISCOS) users, resulting in a substantial tariff increase of over Rs 8. After the adjustment, the unit rate for electricity will surge from Rs 37 to Rs 47 for industries, excluding taxes.

NEPRA member, Mohtar Rana questioned the ability of industries to operate effectively under the new tariff structure. He said that the rate demanded by the government has a bad impact on the struggling industrial sector.

Contrary to the government's estimate of a Rs 2,000 bill for 200 units of electricity, NEPRA officials expressed their astonishment at the figure. NEPRA member, Rafiq Shaikh, challenged the claim by asking how many individuals had an electricity bill below Rs 2,000 in August. K-Electric officials disclosed that approximately 1.3 lakh users in Karachi fell within the protected category. NEPRA member Maqsood Anwar questioned the rationale behind nationwide protests given this information.

It was revealed in the hearing that 40% of electricity consumers in the country consumed less than 200 units of electricity. NEPRA member Rafiq Shaikh pointed out that the data clearly suggests that power companies may have their own role to play in the situation. Chairman of NEPRA, Waseem Mukhtar said that NEPRA's role is to make decisions on the

government's request in accordance with regulations.

Out of 28 lakh domestic consumers, officials reported that the bills for 12 lakhs had already been below Rs 3,000. Moreover, in August, 60% of commercial customers had bills below Rs 6,000, they added. The Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed its rejection of the proposed tariff hike, reflecting the mounting discontent among industrial and domestic consumers. Complaints against the price hike flooded the hearing at NEPRA, with consumers vehemently demanding its rejection.

Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Islami leader Hafiz Naemur-Rehman, who has been vocally opposing the electricity price increase, alleged that some stakeholders, including K-Electric, had failed to honor investment agreements and had even engaged in electricity theft.

Foreign rescuers join Morocco quake race against time

MARRAKESH (Agencies): Rescuers on Monday faced a growing race against time to dig any survivors from the rubble of devastated villages in Morocco's Atlas mountains, three days after the country's strongest-ever earthquake.

The 6.8-magnitude quake that struck late on Friday southwest of the city of Marrakesh has claimed more than 2,100 lives and injured over 2,400, many seriously, according to official figures updated late on Sunday. Rabat on Sunday announced it had accepted aid offers from four foreign nations, while many other countries have also said they were willing to send assistance.

Authorities have responded favourably "at this stage" to offers from Spain, Britain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates "to send search and rescue teams", the interior ministry said. It noted the foreign teams were in contact with Moroccan authorities to coordinate efforts, and said only four offers had been accepted because "a lack of coordination could be counterproductive".

Other offers may be accepted in the future "if the needs evolve", according to the ministry. France was willing to provide aid "the second" Morocco requested it, President Emmanuel Macron said. A Qatari aid flight left from Al-Udeid air base outside Doha on Sunday evening, an AFP journalist said.

Spain has sent 86 rescuers and eight search dogs to Morocco to "help in the search and rescue of survivors of the devastating earthquake suffered in our neighbouring country", said a defence ministry statement. "We will send whatever is needed because everyone knows that these first hours are key, especially if there are people buried under rubble," Spanish Defence Minister Margarita Robles told public television. The earthquake wiped out entire villages in the hills of the Atlas mountain range, where civilian rescuers and members of Morocco's armed forces have searched for survivors and the bodies of the dead. Many houses in remote mountain villages were built from mud bricks. The remote village of Tafeghaghte, 60 kilometres from Marrakesh in Al-Haouz province, was almost entirely destroyed, an AFP team reported, with very few buildings still standing.

NAB files Rs1098 reference for malpractices in SDGs

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has filed a reference over alleged Rs1098 million embezzlement in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at merged districts of erstwhile Fata at Accountability Court Peshawar, on Monday.

Moreover, NAB Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has nominated 31 officials in the reference including 19 from Public Works Department (PWD) for their involvement in malpractice during provision of contracts following conclusion of inquiry in this regard.

The government has allocated Rs1800 million for SDGs for three districts of erstwhile Fata including Bajaur, Khyber and Mohmand for 52 developmental projects in 2021-22

fiscal year.

According to NAB, the alleged culprits had granted 47 contracts on nepotism and release payment on fake demarcation which has cost national exchequer with Rs1098 million. NAB has filed reference after conclusion of inquiry while in upcoming days hearing is expected on the plea.

PHC adjourns hearing on former Special Assistant plea: Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim has refused to hear plea of former Special Assistant for Commerce Abdul Karim and forwarded the petition to the Chief Justice while adjourning the hearing till 20th September.

During hearing, Abdul Karim along with his counsel appeared before PHC but Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim refused the case to be heard in his court while observed

that the petitioner was his classmate and can't hear the plea which is also legal obligation.

Meanwhile, PHC's divisional bench also adjourned hearing in former MNA Anwar Taj plea and forwarded the petition to Justice Arshad Ali in Anti-corruption along with other cases.

The counsel Sher Afzal Marwat Advocate requested PHC to decide the plea Yesterday (on Monday) because he coming from other city/station. However, PHC's divisional bench observed that court will issue appropriate orders in this regard. The bench forwarded all four cases of Anwar Taj to Justice Syed Arshad Ali court because he (Justice Arshad Ali) has heard initial arguments in the case while adjourned further hearing.

ECP to decide polls date

(Continued from Page 1)

During the meeting, the caretaker prime minister also asked the minister and the secretary to personally visit Saudi Arabia, supervise the arrangements for the upcoming Hajj 2024 and submit a comprehensive report in that regard.

Minorities enjoy equal rights in Pakistan: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar reiterated that all minorities enjoyed equal rights in Pakistan and assured them of complete protection of their rights and security.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of the Christian community that called on him. Caretaker Minister for Human Rights Khalil George and other relevant authorities were also present during the meeting, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. PM Kakar said that those responsible for the Jaranwala incident would be made an example so that such incidents would not occur in future.

He also asked the minorities to give proposals for the resolution of their issues and problems to the government so that the same could be solved. The caretaker prime minister said that the Constitution of Pakistan ensured equal social, religious and political rights to all citizens without any racial, caste, creed and ethnic discrimination, adding with due respect to each others' faith, a peaceful and prosperous society could be formed.

He also called upon all

the segments of society to play their role in the elimination of extremism. The delegation welcomed the appointment of Khalil George as Caretaker Minister for Human Rights.

They also thanked the prime minister for visiting and taking immediate measures in the wake of Jaranwala incident. The delegation included Ijaz Augustin, a former provincial minister, Asia Ansar, a former Member of the National Assembly, bishops and pastors.

Uplift of backward areas among govt priorities: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said that the government was prioritising to uplift the backward areas at par with the developed parts of the country.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Country Director of World Bank Najib Benhassane, appreciated the World Bank's role for the development of backward areas particularly the remote parts of Balochistan. He said that the World Bank had played its role in relief and rehabilitation of the people affected by the unprecedented floods in 2022.

Prime Minister Kakar said the government would extend all possible administrative support for the early completion of rehabilitation work in the flood-affected areas. The World Bank country director apprised the prime minister of development work for uplift of Balochistan's backward areas, flood rehabilitation work in Sindh, and the provision of funds pledged by the World Bank in Geneva.

Interim Finance Minister Dr Shamshad Akhtar also attended the meeting.

Balochistan Caretaker Minister calls on Kakar: Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Asif -ur-Rehman was called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar -ul-Haq Kakar. Former chief minister Balochistan Jam Kamal Khan was also present during the meeting, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

PM, Turkmenistan envoy discuss bilateral ties: Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan Movlammov called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The ambassador conveyed the congratulations of the Turkmen leadership to the prime minister on his appointment to the august office. The warm wishes were reciprocated by the prime minister.

During the meeting, the prime minister emphasised that Pakistan and Turkmenistan enjoyed excellent brotherly ties, which, he hoped, would continue to grow further. He particularly highlighted the need to focus on cooperation in trade, energy, economic connectivity and people-to-people contacts. PM Kakar also underscored the need for early completion of energy and power projects. The Turkmenistan ambassador reaffirmed the desire to cooperate on the specific initiatives as well as to enhance the overall scope and breadth of bilateral relations.