

Gas tariff to be increased

ISLAMABAD (INP): After the approval of relief to electricity consumption, the IMF demanded Pakistani government a significant 45-50 percent rise in gas prices. According to the details, the IMF demanded an increase in gas tariff from 45 to 50 percent in the account of ‘Fuel Adjustment Charges’ from July 01 while emphasizing a crackdown on electricity and gas theft to improve recovery.

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing the 5th Apex Committee meeting of Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Caretaker govt continues to implement int’l pacts: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Friday said the caretaker government respected the international financial agreements and would continue to implement them in true letter and spirit.

Addressing a news conference here after the first session of two-day meeting of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the minister said deliberations were held on the measures which were essential for reducing the government's expenditures and circular debt. He was flanked by Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr Shamshad Akhtar, Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali, and Minister for Industry and Production Gohar Ijaz.

Solangi said discussions were also held on working out a schedule for implementing the decisions already taken to carry out privatization of some departments. He said measures to stop misuse of international agreements, if there is any, also came under discussion. Restructuring of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), measures for removing bottlenecks in foreign direct investment, including visa policy reforms, and steps to improve performance of different departments were also part of extensive discussion held on the first day of the SIFC meeting.

He said an issue of smuggling of commodities, petroleum products and dollars were discussed at length. At the outset of the press conference, the minister said traditionally, a press release was issued to highlight the decisions and discussions of the SIFC, but from now onward, the public would be informed by the caretaker government through briefings by the relevant ministers. The main objectives of SIFC were to boost foreign direct investment in different sectors including mining, information technology and agriculture, the minister remarked.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali on Friday stressed the need of exploring oil and gas reserves in order to reduce the import bill. The minister said since 2013 work on the exploration of gas and oil had been lessened while annual import bill to meet their shortage persistently increased with rising circular debt. "We have to focus on exploration of oil and gas so that we can reduce our dependence on the import of fuel," he added.

Muhammad Ali said the SIFC discussed ways and means to control the cost of electricity generation and its theft, and save capacity charges pay-

ment (to independent power producers) in the winter. "We want to give industries such a tariff in incremental supply so that we don't face losses in capacity charges payment even if they use more electricity as compared to previous years," the minister added.

He said matters related to governance and functioning of distribution companies (discos) and their privatization also came under discussion in the meeting. "We have to strengthen their governing boards and management, which will in turn help stop power theft and start recoveries," he said.

The SFIC reviewed the possibility of evolving a mechanism under which the power plants could supply electricity directly to the industry after paying the wheeling charges, he added. The minister said the gas sector was also facing alarmingly high losses. "We have to improve the gas pricing structure in order to save the government from losses." He said the meeting discussed as to how the industry could be provided the required gas despite its increased domestic consumption in the winter. "We have to install more liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals and also bring in more LNG in the coming days so that the industries can work to their full potential."

Audio leaks case: SC throws out PDM govt’s plea challenging bench

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday rejected the then-Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government's objection against the five-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial hearing the alleged audio leaks.

The five-member larger bench of the apex court, headed by CJP Bandial and comprising Justice Ijazul Ahsen, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed, was formed earlier in May this year to hear petitions against the then government's move to form inquiry commission led by senior puisne Judge Qazi Faez Isa to probe audio leaks involving the supreme court judges.

Subsequently, the then-PDM government filed a civil miscellaneous application (CMA) in the apex court requesting that CJP Bandial, Justice Ahsan and Justice Akhtar recuse themselves from the five-member larger bench hearing the instant matter. The short verdict, announced by Justice Ahsan on Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Abid Shahid Zubairi's petition requesting to declare the commission's formation illegal, said that the objections raised by the previous government against judges were tantamount to an "attack on the independence of the judiciary".

The apex court reserved the verdict on the then government's petition on June 6. On May 26, the larger bench suspended the operation of the government's notification, constituting a Judicial Commission for probing the veracity of alleged audios and halted until May 31 the proceedings of the commission.

"In the circumstances, till the next date of hearing, the operation of the impugned notification dated 19.05.2023 issued by the Federal Government is suspended as is the order dated 22.05.2023 made by the Commission and in consequence thereof proceedings of the Commission are stayed", Chief Justice Umer Ata Bandial had announced in a short order. The government, in its CMA, said: "Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar should not listen to the audio leak case," the petition appealed, adding that the "three respected judges should refuse to sit in the five-member larger bench."

The plea further added that the objection raised by the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan against the chief justice's presence in a hearing on May 25 was not accepted. Citing the fact that one of the leaked audios before the inquiry commission related to the CJP's family member, the federal government said that according to judicial decisions and the code of conduct, a judge cannot hear the actions of his relatives.

The petition further added that in the Arsalan Iftikhar case, the former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhary recused himself from the bench. Moreover, it added that the alleged audio leak is also related to Justice Ahsan and Justice Munib. Punjab's former chief justice Parvez Elahi's audio mentions Justice Ahsan, while the audio between the two women mentioned Justice Munib, the application contended reasons for why these two judges should recuse themselves. Judicial commission

A high-powered judicial commis-

sion comprising Justice Qazi Faez Isa along with Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Aamer Farooq was tasked on May 20 to probe the audio leaks related to the judiciary. The commission was tasked to complete the inquiry within 30 days. Among the multiple audio leaks, the commission will also probe into the veracity of the alleged call between former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi and a sitting top court judge as well as another call between CM Elahi and a Supreme Court lawyer over the constitution of an apex court bench.

Subsequently, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan questioned the government for the "deliberate omission" of the terms of reference (TORs) and challenged the formation of the three-member judicial commission on audio leaks. Babar Awan, the PTI chief's lawyer and party leader, had filed the plea on his behalf requesting the court to declare the notification for constituting the commission null and void. Similarly, Zubairi had also challenged the audio leaks commission to summon directing him to appear before the panel in connection with the inquiry.

Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tatar earlier said that the government did not consult CJP Bandial before forming the commission. In light of these petitions, the Supreme Court stayed the proceedings of the commission and suspended the federal government's notification of the commission's constitution. The order was issued by a five-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed.

Nawaz confirms homecoming next month

LONDON (Agencies): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has, for the first time, confirmed that he will be returning to Pakistan in October this year.

Nawaz — who has been in self-imposed exile in London since November 2019 owing to health reasons — said this for the first time on Friday during his meeting with his party workers and supporters at Stanhope House. Those in attendance included ex-PM Shehbaz Sharif and PML-N leaders Chaudhary Tanveer, Danyal Chaudhary, Chaudhary Nadeem Khan, Dr Anjum and others.

Sources present during the meeting at Stanhope House indicated

that Nawaz's travel to Pakistan is confirmed next month although no exact date has been fixed. A private TV channel had revealed three weeks ago that the PML-N supreme was set to return to Pakistan in the middle of October. The sources also shared with a private TV channel that the three-time premier will be returning in the "second half of October".

Two weeks ago, PML-N President Shehbaz said that his elder brother would be returning in October. "Nawaz Sharif will return to Pakistan in October and lead the election campaign and this has been decided after the PML-N party consultations," Shehbaz said as Nawaz stood next to him.

Shehbaz went on to say that Nawaz would face the law of the land when he is back in Pakistan. Nawaz reached London on November 19, 2019, when he fell critically ill in prison. It was alleged by the family that the Imran Khan-led government and his "backers" had tried to poison Nawaz.

He was treated at the Harley Street Clinic and London Bridge Hospital for four months. Nawaz had been diagnosed with an immune system disorder and doctors in Pakistan recommended that he should go abroad for treatment as his condition continued to deteriorate despite the best possible care in the country.

SIFC body focuses on ways to improve businesses

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The fifth meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council's (SIFC) Apex Committee held here on Friday with a special focus to improve the overall business and investment environment in the country being imperative for 'economic revival'.

The meeting was chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and attended by Chief of Army Staff, Federal Cabinet members, provincial chief ministers and high-level government officials. The ministries concerned presented their plans/roadmaps to overcome the macroeconomic challenges, governance related impediments and voids in regulatory mechanisms in a bid to attract both foreign and domestic investment, and stimulate economic growth.

The committee deliberated upon various measures to be taken in short, medium and long terms to reap the envisaged dividends. Various practical steps were approved by the prime minister that will be operationalized as soon as possible. The prime minister asked the ministries to deliver optimal results irrespective of the time that was available with the caretaker government and emphasized to lay a strong foundation for the future government.

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Nepra okays Rs1.46 per unit hike in power tariff

ISLAMABAD (PPI): National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Friday notified an increase of Rs1.46 per unit in electricity prices on account of fuel charges adjustment (FCA) for the month of July 2023.

The regulatory authority announced the decision on a petition filed by the Central Power Purchasing Authority (CPPA) after power distribution companies (DISCOs) demanded adjustment for the month. The additional amount will be collected in bills for the month of September 2023. This hike in power tariff under the head FCA will not be applicable to K-Electric and lifeline consumers while power distribution companies (DISCOs) will reflect the increase in power price separately in consumers' bills.

Earlier in the day, caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said consultation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was underway for the relief in electricity bills. Talking to a private channel, the minister said some final decisions for the purpose were taken during the last meeting of the Cabinet presided over by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar the other day. He said the prime minister had directed the relevant stakeholders to hold a consultation with the IMF which was underway. The minister said the position on the relief in the electricity bills for the masses would be clear within a few days.

FO hopes Afghan govt to fulfill its obligations

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Foreign Office has hoped the interim Afghan government will fulfill its obligations and deny the use of its soil by the terrorists for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan.

Responding to the queries of media persons in Islamabad today regarding the recent terrorist attack on military posts in Chitral, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan has communicated its concerns about the latest incident to the interim Afghan authorities.

Bilawal calls for timely polls

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that even before the announcement of the general election schedule, all the development funds including rehabilitation projects for flood victims in Sindh are being frozen and officers are being transferred, and demanded the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to look into why the duplicitous policy is being run only against Sindh, and why the above rules and regulations are not being implemented in the Center, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to the press release issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP visited the residence of party's Ex MNA late Sher Muhammed Baloch in Dawood Goth area of Malir and extended his condolence to the bereaved family. Later, speaking to the media, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the date of the election has not been announced yet, but the ECP is exercising powers that are not within its discretion. "I demand that restrictions on development work in Sindh be lifted, and until the ECP announces the schedule of upcoming general election, the ban on development work should be lifted", he demanded and adding that the funds for the flood victims shouldn't be freed in Sindh alike in Punjab and the Center.

Chairman PPP said that the ECP should announce the date of the next general elections without delay. He said that there is a difference of opinion among the PPP, ECP and PDM on the interpretation of the constitution regarding the holding of general elections, adding that the PPP believes that according to the constitution it is necessary to hold elections within 90 days, but the ECP and other parties maintain that it is necessary to delimit the constituencies before the elections.

In response to a question regarding Maulana Fazal Rehman's recent statement, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that his party was ready for elections earlier and as well as today, adding that PPP was ready for election on May 14 and also within 60 days. This question should be asked to those who run away

from every election.

In response to a journalist's question about the meeting of the business community with the COAS General Asim Munir, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that businessmen meeting the army chief is not a new thing in the country, as the business community has been meeting military chiefs in the past as well. "The country's business community has access to politicians and bureaucracy, including the army chief and the judiciary," he continued.

Chairman PPP said that the people of the country do not have direct access to the judiciary or anyone else, but the people have access to the PPP. "The people are crying and saying that they are drowning in the tsunami of inflation. They cannot pay the electricity bill, they cannot get treatment for their elders. The people demand that these problems be solved," he added and furthered that PPP represents the people, and people's problems can be solved only by PPP. "PPP has a manifesto, (and) a track record. We have always served the people," he pointed out.

In response to a reporter's question, Chairman PPP said that a politician who based his politics on the narrative that he will put everyone (politicians) in jail, today himself is in jail and this is a message for all politicians. "This is also a clear message for those who are ready to make puppets all the time," he added. He said that the puppet who had been invested for 30 years attacked Jinnah House and GHQ on May 9. This is a lesson. "I have heard that the politician who is in jail is facing difficulties. We encourage them, and want to tell them, "Ghabrana Nahin Hy" (Don't worry.)," he added.

Meanwhile, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari received warm welcome by the party workers and public on his arrival in Malir. Later, Chairman PPP visited the residence of late party leader and former Nazim of Sadder Town Karachi Farooq Faria late in Civil Lines area and consoled with his son Farhan Faria, son-in-law Salman Jangra and grandson Saim Salman. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari prayed for departed soul and extended his condolences to bereaved family.

President’s constitutional term completed

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The five-year constitutional term of the office of President Dr Arif Alvi completed on Friday. He assumed the office of President of Pakistan on September 9, 2018. However, President Alvi will not vacate the presidency and will continue to perform his duties till the election of the new president.

After holding some important consultative meetings last week, President Alvi agreed to perform his duties until the new president assumes charge. Yesterday, former federal minister Muhammad Ali Durrani also held a long meeting with President Alvi. The president has reached Islamabad after completing his visit to Lahore. He will perform his usual official assignments today.

The extended stay at Presidency will make Arif Alvi the only head of state in the country's history who have kept his post even after his term ends, though

Chaudhry Fazal Elahi also had spent an additional month in office as a figurehead before General Ziaul Haq became president on Sept 16, 1978.

Under the law, the president is elected by members of both houses of the parliament — i.e. the Senate and the National Assembly — and the four provincial assemblies. Article 44(1) of the Constitution says that the president will hold office for a term of five years from the day he assumes charge, but he continues to hold the office until a successor is chosen. Throughout his term, Dr Arif Alvi has remained at the heart of controversies, with critics accusing him of playing with the Constitution.

PTI demands President Alvi to announce election date: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) core committee has demanded President Dr Arif Alvi to announce election date without a delay and unanimously passed a resolution during a session.

The PTI core committee members said that the

country is facing constitutional, political, democratic, administrative and economic crises as the state infrastructure was shaken after the 'unconstitutional move' of April 2022.

The committee said that the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) assemblies had been dissolved on January 14 and 18 respectively but the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government did not fulfil its constitutional duty to organise polls in 90 days besides violating the Supreme Court's April 4 order. The political party urged for concrete steps to establish a democratic government to resolve the crisis.

The PTI core committee said that Article 48 bounds the president to finalise the election date in 90 days and the president should fulfil his constitutional duty. The core committee said that the president would be responsible for violating constitutional and democratic rights if he failed to give election date.

Biden and Modi pledge to deepen ties in talks

NEW DELHI (Agencies): US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have pledged to deepen ties between their two countries, as the leaders held direct talks ahead of a Group of 20 summit in New Delhi at the weekend.

In a joint statement on Friday, shortly after Biden landed in the Indian capital, the US and India reaffirmed their support for "a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific" as members of the Quad alliance, which also includes Australia and Japan.

The talks marked the second in-person meeting between Biden and Modi since June, when the Indian leader made an official state visit to the White House as part of the countries' push to bolster their alliance in the face of China's growing influence. "Many say that right now, it's really a kind of golden age when it comes to the ties between the US and

India. Things have almost never been better," Al Jazeera's Katrina Yu reported from New Delhi on Friday ahead of the Biden-Modi meeting.

"Undoubtedly, what's bringing these two sides together is their bonding over their shared concern over ... China's rising influence in the region," she said. The US is hoping to boost India "as a possible counterweight" to China, Yu said, as Washington views Beijing as its top global competitor and ties between the pair have been tested in recent years over a number of issues.

For his part, Modi is hoping "to project India ... as an alternative leader of the Global South, a title really that Beijing — arguably — currently holds", Yu added. India late last month lodged an objection through diplomatic channels with Beijing over China's new standard

map that lays claim to India's territory along their shared border. The map was released just days after Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met on the sidelines of a summit of the BRICS bloc of developing economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — and agreed to work to de-escalate tensions at their disputed border.

Biden welcomed a deal to allow General Electric to produce jet engines in India to power Indian military aircraft, according to the joint statement, as well as an agreement for India to purchase US drones. Biden and Modi also "re-emphasized the shared values of freedom, democracy, human rights, inclusion, pluralism, and equal opportunities for all citizens are critical to the success our countries enjoy and that these values strengthen our relationship", the statement said.

NAB summons Gandapur

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The National Accountability Bureau has summoned former federal minister Ali Amin Gandapur for the investigation into 90 million pounds scam against PTI Chairman Imran Khan, it emerged Friday. Through the office of Dera Ismail Khan DPO, the Rawalpindi NAB sent a call-up notice to Gandapur to appear before the bureau's Central Investigation Team on September 13.

Russian CG calls calls on Mayor

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of Russian Federation Andrey V. Fedorov called on the Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab here on Friday and discussed issues of mutual interest.

On this occasion, they expressed goodwill.

While exchanging views with the CJ, the mayor said that there was a lot of room for expansion in mutual relations between Pakistan and the Russian Federation, adding they wanted to benefit from the experiences and technical expertise of the Russian Federation in various fields related to civil affairs.

Attractive opportunities are available for investment companies belonging to the Russian Federation in Karachi where they would be provided with all kinds of support. He said that because of the international sea ports, Karachi was very suitable for trade with Central Asian countries, adding the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation was taking steps to modernize the basic infrastructure of the city.

He said a strategy for development projects of Karachi had been designed in view of the future requirements and to meet the challenges ahead. The CG described his stay in Karachi as pleasant and said that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and the Russian Federation would increase in the future. The development process carried out in Karachi would prove beneficial for its citizens, he added.

PHA starts preparing beds for winter flowers

LAHORE (APP): The Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) on Friday started to beautify the city as it began preparing flower beds for winter seedlings. PHA Director General Muhammad Tahir Watto also came to field to look after horticulture preparations.

Antirrhinum, Marigold, Flowering Cabbage, Chrysanthemum, Geranium, Dahlia, Gerbera, Hollyhock, Cosmos, Verbena, Zinnia and other seasonal flowers would be planted on beds.

During his inspection, DG Tahir Watto stressed the importance of maintaining cleanliness and horticulture standards, instructing beat officers to be vigilant in their duties.

His surprise inspection covered key areas such as Gulberg Main Market, Liberty Roundabout, Hussain Chowk, Mini Market, Zahoor Elahi Road, Jail Road and Ferozepur Road.

Watto emphasized the need for aesthetic and functional improvements, urging immediate attention to neglected parts of the city. In his efforts to enhance the city's visual appeal, Watto scrutinized various localities, focusing on maintenance of flower beds and green belts and called for comprehensive improvements. Watto also closely monitored progress of horticultural preparations, emphasizing the importance of preserving the city's green ambience and visual allure. Additionally, he encouraged officers to engage with residents who utilize parks for recreational activities, seeking their valuable input on their needs and preferences.

Court Notice

IN the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 158/1, Institution. 17/5/2023. Date of hearing. 21/9/2023. Fazal Akbar VS Said Zamen. Notice to No 1.Said Zamen s/o Sar Zamen 7.Said Zari d/o Sar Zamen resident of Pukhtanu Mera tehsel Chaghorzai district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 21/9/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Saad to intensify efforts to prevent suicides at Karwan-e-Hayat seminar

F.P. Report

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

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

The seminar featured a distinguished panel of experts, mental health advocates, and individuals who shared their insights, stories, and practical strategies for suicide prevention. Industry experts included Dr.

Sana Siddiqi, Prof. Dr. Haider Naqvi, Prof. Dr. Qudsia Tarique, Prof. Dr. Naeem Siddiqi, Prof. Dr. Imran Bashir Chaudhary, Prof. Dr. Iqbal Afridi, Dr. Karim Khawaja, Dr. Ajmal Kazmi and Prof. Dr. Naeem Siddiqi. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of how they can make a difference in their communities.

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

‘Rs. 2.25b worth of essential commodities seized’

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Essential Commodities including sugar and urea are smuggled from Pakistan and goods including POL are smuggled into Pakistan through unregulated routes spanning the bordering areas of Afghanistan and Iran. These smuggled goods are subsequently transported via trucks and in case of passenger vehicles in smaller quantities to the main urban centers.

Being cognizant of this phenomenon, Pakistan Customs has intensified the counter smuggling operations and started crackdown against the smuggled goods especially Essential Commodities, POL, Currency and other goods. During the last fortnight, Pakistan Customs seized large quantities of essential commodities worth approximately Rs. 2.25 Billion in various operations across the country including Quetta, D.I. Khan, Multan, Karachi, Sargodha and Lahore regions. The major seized essential commodities included sugar, urea, POL, Pak currency as well as tyres, black tea, betel nuts, vehicles, iron, steel and other goods.

In Balochistan region on 2nd September, Customs Enforcement-Quetta seized 1,637 tons of sugar worth approximately Rs. 1.0 billion from smugglers in a convoy of 15 trucks. This was followed by massive seizure of smuggled goods and vehicles, worth Rs. 519 million on Daraban-Darazinda Road DIK on 3rd Sep 2023 in collaboration with local police and 218,000 liters of smuggled POL / diesel, valuing approximately Rs. 137.6 Million by Customs Enforcement-D.I. Khan. During last week, Customs Enforcement – Karachi disrupted the flow of smuggled POL by seizing Iranian origin 115,000 litres diesel and 30,000 liters petrol.

Moreover, strict instructions to the anti-smuggling formations including mobile squads of the Collectorate and airports have been issued to keep vigilance on the illicit movement of essential goods / commodities, Iranian POL and currency.

Chairman FBR Malik Amjad Zubair Tiwana and Member Customs (Operations) Ms. Zeba Hai Azhar have appreciated the Pakistan Customs for taking timely action to thwart the smuggling of essential goods. Pakistan Customs is committed to eliminate the menace of smuggling and would continue intensifying its anti-smuggling operations across the country.

نوٹس اشیتار: بعدالمتحتمہ غیرین نوید صلیبہ جی بینک کورٹ 1 خیر پختونخوا پشاور
فیڈرل جوڈیشل پیکیس فیر 7 جات آباد پٹارک پ کورٹ مقام بول۔۔۔ مقدمہ نمبر 2023-60/1 آئندہ تاریخ چٹی
26-10-2023 HBL۔۔۔ سرانے نوٹک برائے۔۔۔ نامہ۔۔۔ مفت اللہ دعا عظیم۔ اشیتار نام۔ مفت اللہ نعر اللہ خان جی
نیل Plo، جتی خیل خیمیل وٹیل کی مرمت۔ مقدمہ مندرجہ ذیل میں بکے نے آپ کے خلاف ہوئی دلائیے
مبلغ 1503954 روپے خرچہ مقدمہ اور (Mark Up) تاوت وصول کیل تم داز کیا ہے لہذا آپ کو بڑی نوٹس بڑا مل گیا
بنا ہے کہ آپ اشیتار کی اشاعت کے 30 دن کے اندر برطانیہ کیس (210) ناقل انشیت (ریکوری آف ٹیکس) آڑی
نیش تحریر 2001۔۔۔ مرنہوکر بڑا ریورخواست اٹھل جواب ہوئی اجازت دافع مقدمہ حاصل کریں کہ کیوں نہ آپ کے خلاف
ڈگری حیدر صاوری جائے۔ درخواست بٹل جواب ہوئی عمر دعوایات، یان مقلی تصدیق شدہ موجودہ جس سے معلوم
ہوئے کہ دافع مقدمہ کیلے کوئی مقول بہ موجود ہے۔ آپ کو بڑی مقلی کیا جاتا ہے کہ بصورت دیگر آپ کے خلاف کیفر کرکے دلائی
بیروانی جائے گی آج تاریخ 19-7-2023 پر پست میرے دستخط و مہر عداوت سے جاری کیا گیا۔

GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUN KHTWA COMMUNICATION & WORKS DEPARTMENT. NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

(SINGLE STAGE SINGLE ENVELOP E-BIDDING SYSTEM)

C & W DEPARTMENT (DIVISION, DISTRICT BATTAGRAM), GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHTWA INVITES ELECTRONIC BIDS FROM ELIGIBLE FIRMS /CONTRACTOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH KPRA PROCUREMENT RULES 2014 ON SINGLE STAGE SINGLE ENVELOP PROCEDURE FOR THE FOLLOWING WORKS.

SI No.	Name of Work	Required category of PEC	Bid Security	Period of completion	Last date and time of submission of E-Bids.	Date of opening and time.
I-	ADP NO. 1146 / 220677- (2022-2023) DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BATTAGRAM SUB HEAD:-					
I-	SL.No.1= Black topping / Rehabilitation of bridges in UC's Banna, Biari, batlia, rashang, hutal batkuli, skarah, pashito, Jambarra, District Battagram Sub head:-					
1	BLACKTOPPING BANNA TO MAZARA TANDOL (1.80 km)	C-5	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
2	BLACKTOPPING MAZARA TO SAKARGAH (1.80 km)	C-5	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
3	BLACKTOPPING SAKARGAH TO KUND (2.45 km)	C-5	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
4	PCC TANDOL BALA (1 km)	C-6	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
5	BLACKTOPPING BIARI VILLAGE (850 m).(Rs.10.00(M)	C-6	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
2	PCC RAO ROAD(500-m) (Rs.5.00(M)					
6	PCC NAKHTAR ROAD THAKOT(1 km) (Rs.10.00(M)	C-6	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.
7	PCC ALAMI KANDAO THAKOT(1 km)(Rs.10.00(M)					
1	PCC AND CULVERT GANTARR TO GALAI (1 km)	C-6	2% of Estimated Cost.	(12)Twelve Months.	03-10-2023 At 12:00 hours.	On same day At 12:30 hours.

1. Bid documents and instruction to bidders can be downloaded from C&W web site (www.cwd.gkp.pk) and from the office of undersigned on demand before the submission date/time.

2. Scanned copy of bid security shall be submitted electronically along with the bid on E-bidding system.

3. Venue of Bids opening is office of the undersigned.

I. In case the contractors quoting their bids more than 10% below upto 20% below on Engineers' Estimate shall submit along with their bids 8% Additional Security of Engineer's Estimated cost in addition to 2% bid security. If the bid is not accompanied with the required amount of additional security then it will be considered as non-responsive and the 2% bid security shall be forfeited in favour of Government and the second lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.

II. [Similarly, a contractor quoting bid more than 20% below shall submit with his bid an additional security on Engineer's estimated cost equal to the differential amount of submitted bid and Engineers' Estimate along with detailed rate analysis]'. In case of more than 20% below bids, if the bid is not accompanied by the detailed rate analysis and/or required amount of additional security, then the said bid shall be considered as non-responsive. All the securities submitted along with such non-responsive bid shall be forfeited in favour of Government and the 2nd lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly. In light of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Notification No.S.R.O.(14)/Vol:1-24/2021-22/6058-71 dated 10-5-2022 which is available in the KPRA web site.

4 As per C&W Secretariat Notification No.S(B)/I-102/CMD/PBC/2020-21/C&WD dated 12-04-2021 the bidding entry fee @0.03% of the tender cost must be attached in shape of CASH which will be non-refundable at the time of bid submission.

5 "All bidders are required to be register with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority, established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act,2013 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No.XXI of 2013), for works, consulting and non-consulting services as listed in schedule-II of the Act ibid".

INF (P) 2222/23

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
C&W DIVISION BATTAGRAM.

‘Pakistan Air Force: Second to None’

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Lahore organized a commemorative seminar titled "Pakistan Air Force : Second to None" on September 7, 2023. This event paid tribute to the enduring legacy of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), rooted in Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of being 'Second to None'.

The 1965 and 1971 wars tested PAF's mettle, resulting in shining victories and showcasing professionalism. The seminar's goal was to extract invaluable lessons from these historical chapters, guiding the PAF's pursuit of becoming a topnotch air force, committed to defending the nation with unwavering excellence.

Group Captain Faisal ul Rehman, Director Ops and Admin, CASS Lahore, delivered the introductory remarks. His speech was followed by a keynote address by Air Commodore Kaiser Tufail (Retd), who highlighted accomplishments of the PAF in 1965 and 1971 wars. Following the keynote address, Air Commodore Khalid Chishti (Retd) shed light on the remarkable



achievements of PAF war heroes. Additionally, two distinguished war veterans, Air Commodore Abdul Basit (Retd) and Air Commodore Farooq Haider (Retd), shared their personal accounts from the 1965 and 1971 wars. An extensive question and answer session followed the statements by the guest speakers.

Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President CASS Lahore, in his concluding

remarks, said that for an effective, watchful, and hard-hitting air force, it is important to have focused training; state of the art equipment and weapons; and self-sufficient industrial base with indigenously developed technologies. Under the leadership of the current Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu, PAF has undergone a strategic reset in terms of combat training along with acqui-

sition of requisite equipment and infrastructure development, to maintain its legacy of having cutting edge combat capabilities. PAF has recently made extensive inductions to stay abreast with modern technologies and state of the art weapon systems. They include, induction of PL-15 air to air missiles and its integration to the launching platform, J10-C operationalization, offensive air and ground launched weapons, array of UAVs from strategic to tactical usage, variety of powerful EW equipment, cyber capability in all such domains and launching of PFX Pakistan's Advanced Flight etc. The inductions made in last two years are strategic in nature and vision of the Air Chief is to have a long lasting impact on the PAF's operational preparedness and combat readiness.



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
NADRA RHO PESHAWAR



CORRIGENDUM
Provision of Furniture and Fixtures for NADRA Field
Offices of RHO KP
PPRA - TENDER #177623
DATED 30-Aug-2023

Reference: PID(I) No. 1267/23 above captioned Tender Notice published in the PPRA website and Newspapers following amendment is being incorporated :-

FOR
Last date of submission of the said tender notice is 11th September 2023 at 1100 hours and will be opened on same day at 1130 hours.

READ
Last date of submission of the said tender notice is 19th September 2023 at 1100 hours and will be opened on same day at 1130 hours.

(Rizwan Shamim) Assistant Director (Procurement)
Regional Head Office, NADRA
Plot # 31-B, EOBI Building Phase V,
Hayatabad, Peshawar. Phone: 091-9217840 PID(I) 1562/23

نوٹس اشیتار: بعدالمتحتمہ غیرین نوید صلیبہ جی بینک کورٹ 1 خیر پختونخوا پشاور
فیڈرل جوڈیشل پیکیس فیر 7 جات آباد پٹارک پ کورٹ مقام بول۔۔۔ مقدمہ نمبر 2023-61/1 آئندہ تاریخ چٹی
26-10-2023 HBL۔۔۔ سرانے نوٹک برائے۔۔۔ نامہ۔۔۔ مفت اللہ دعا عظیم۔ اشیتار نام۔ مفت اللہ نعر اللہ خان جی
نیل Plo، جتی خیل خیمیل وٹیل کی مرمت۔ مقدمہ مندرجہ ذیل میں بکے نے آپ کے خلاف ہوئی دلائیے
مبلغ 649332 روپے خرچہ مقدمہ اور (Mark Up) تاوت وصول کیل تم داز کیا ہے لہذا آپ کو بڑی نوٹس بڑا مل گیا
بنا ہے کہ آپ اشیتار کی اشاعت کے 30 دن کے اندر برطانیہ کیس (210) ناقل انشیت (ریکوری آف ٹیکس) آڑی
نیش تحریر 2001۔۔۔ مرنہوکر بڑا ریورخواست اٹھل جواب ہوئی اجازت دافع مقدمہ حاصل کریں کہ کیوں نہ آپ کے خلاف
ڈگری حیدر صاوری جائے۔ درخواست بٹل جواب ہوئی عمر دعوایات، یان مقلی تصدیق شدہ موجودہ جس سے معلوم
ہوئے کہ دافع مقدمہ کیلے کوئی مقول بہ موجود ہے۔ آپ کو بڑی مقلی کیا جاتا ہے کہ بصورت دیگر آپ کے خلاف کیفر کرکے دلائی
بیروانی جائے گی آج تاریخ 19-7-2023 پر پست میرے دستخط و مہر عداوت سے جاری کیا گیا۔

SUIT NOTICE
In the Court of Miss Ambareen Navid Judge Banking Court-1 Peshawar Federal Judicial Complex, Phase-7 Hayatabad Peshawar. Case No: 75/1 of 2023 Date of hearing: 18-10-2023. Suit for the recovery of Rs. 2173982.27 BOK, IBB Islamic Banking Branch Hospital Road, Asamai gate Pesh Vs: Sher Muhammad city,Notice Versus:- Sher Muhammad son of Mian Jan, R/o:- Outside Lahori gate, circular road Peshawar City. Where as the plaintiff bank has instituted a suit for the recovery of Rs. 21,739,982/- against you under section 10(2) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001, you are hereby summoned to obtain leave of the court to appear and defend the suit within 30 days after receipt/publication of the notice in the newspapers. Failing which an ex-parte decree shall be passed in favour of the plaintiff Bank with costs.
Issued today On 06-09-2023 under my signature and seal of the Court.
Registrar
Banking Court, 1 Peshawar

Government of Pakistan
M/o National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF POPULATION STUDIES
JOB OPPORTUNITY

The National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) is implementing an activity titled "Longitudinal Panel Study using Performance Monitoring for Action (PMA) Framework in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Sindh". NIPS requires the services of suitable candidates. The detail is as under:-

S #	Detail of Posts	Duration	No. of Posts	Pay	Qualification(s) / Experience Required
1	Project Advisor	04 Months	01	600,000/- per month	Ph.D. in Social Sciences i.e.; Demography, Economics, Statistics, Anthropology or Sociology, and Public Health from a reputable recognized foreign/local university with at least twenty-five years of post-Ph.D. experience in research. The candidate should have previous work experience in family planning, strong project management, and analytical writing skills.
2	Data Processing Manager	04 months	01	300,000/- per month	MSc / BS (Honors) in computer science or Economics/ Statistics with a minimum of five years of experience in data analysis and application development. Should have a complete familiarity with SPSS, STATA, CSPro, etc., and should have worked as a team member of an IT unit in a field data collection at the national level with clear concepts of application-based quality data collection monitoring.
3	Office Coordinator	04 months	01	100,000/- per month	M.Phil. or Master's degree in Social Sciences from a reputable recognized foreign/local university with strong analytical skills and coordination of field teams.
4	Provincial Coordinators	04 months	02	100,000/- per month	M.Phil. or Master's degree in Social Sciences from a reputable recognized foreign/local university with strong analytical skills and coordination of field teams.
5	Admin/Finance Assistant	04 months	01	80,000/- per month	B.A, B.Sc. BBA with computer skills and good typing speed and experience in Administrative / Accounts matters.
6	Admin Support Staff	04 months	01	70,000/- per month	B.A, B.Sc. BBA with computer skills and good typing speed and experience in Administrative.
7	Office Editors / QCs	04 months	15	75,000/- per month	Master's degree / BS (Honors) in Social Sciences and experience in household survey data collection, editing, and field monitoring.
8	Data Entry Operators	04 months	15	55,000/- per month	Should have Bachelor's and expertise in MS Office, CSPro. The candidate must have typing speed of 10,000 key depressions per hour.
9	Female Enumerators	25 days		5,000/- per day (DA 4000/- TA 1000/-)	Master / BS Honors degree in Social Sciences and experience in conducting interviews. Only residents of relevant/concerned tehsils can apply (See NIPS website for detailed tehsils). KP: Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Mansehra, Karak, Mardan, Charsadda, Lower Dir Balochistan: Kech, Khuzdar, Mastang, Kachhi, Quetta, Ziarat, Zhob Sindh: Badin, Dadu, Karachi Central, Karachi East, Khairpur, Shikarpur, Sanghar
	KP		48		
	Balochistan		46		
	Sindh		64		
10	Driver	4 months	01	35000/- per month	Matric pass, should possess a valid driving license for both light and heavy vehicles and be well versed in traffic rules.
11	Peon	4 months	01	35000/- per month	Middle pass and having previous experience.

1. No TA/DA will be admissible for the candidates. 2. Applicants who do not fulfill the criteria will not be entertained. 3. For any query, please contact to Admin, NIPS during office timings i.e. 07:30 am to 15:30 pm. 4. The Institute reserves the right to stop the recruitment process at any stage and also to increase or decrease the number of vacancies/duration according to the rules.

Apply online within 15 days of this advertisement, online application form and Details of TORs are available at NIPS website; www.nips.org.pk

Syed Dilnawaz Hussain Shah, Administrative Officer
Address: National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS),
NIH, Building, Park Road, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad Contact No #. 051-9255937 & 051-9255940 PID(I) 1573/23



PESHAWAR: Caretaker KP Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan distributing financial assistance from his special funds amongst the deserving people of the newly merged districts.

5 days CPCMR system training workshop for CPOs concludes

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Trainers at a training workshop urged the participants to utilize the skills get on Child Protection Case Management & Referral System aimed at protecting the children at risk in the society.

The five days training workshop organized by Directorate of Social Welfare for Merged Areas in collaboration with UNICEF for the Staff of newly established Child Protection Units in Newly Merged Districts(NMDs) and 6 Subdivisions. The main aim and purpose of the training was to equip the staff of Child Protection Units with essential skills and knowledge to coordinate and provide child protection services effectively, including addressing the needs of children on the move and Afghan refugees.

The 40 participants from merged tribal district and other staff including Program Manager - PMU, information Management Officer, Child Protection Officers, Social Case worker, Psychologist of NMDs and Child Protection and Welfare Commission KP attended the workshop. Senior Planning Officer Hamayun Khan was chief guest of the closing ceremony of the training workshop while Chief Protection Officer Ijaz Khan, Deputy Director Ubaid Ullah and Child Protection Specialist of UNICEF Sohail Ahmad also addressed on the occasion.

In his concluding remarks Hamayun Khan expressed his appreciation for the dedication and commitment of all participants to the cause of Child Protection in NMDs, including addressing the unique

needs of children on the move and Afghan refugees. He encouraged them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the training in their respective roles, thereby safeguarding the rights of all children, and to actively engage with parents and communities in their efforts. He also stressed the importance of collective action in addressing the complex challenges of child abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect. He urged all relevant line Departments to closely collaborate with the CPUs in NMDs and also emphasized the significance of building strong partnerships with parents and communities to create a protective environment for children.

"This training program represents a significant stride, first of its kind, towards protecting the rights and well-being of all children in NMDs, regardless of their circumstances, and reaffirms and Governments' and UNICEF's commitment to ensuring a safer environment for every child" he concluded. Ejaz Khan highlighted the importance and implementation of the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 emphasizing that it provides essential protection for all children in the province, irrespective of their status and nationalities.

Sohail Ahmad also underscored the critical importance of engaging parents and communities in the child protection process. He emphasized that CPUs must connect with parents and communities to build a strong support network for ensuring the protection and welfare of children. "Parents and communities play a vital role in identifying and reporting child protection issues and providing

a safe environment for children. Their active involvement is essential to the success of child protection efforts" he further said. He said that the training focused on enhancing the capabilities of CPU staff in identifying and registering cases of children at risk, including those on the move and Afghan refugees. "It covered conducting assessment, monitoring and following up on interventions and referrals, and facilitating the rehabilitation of children who have suffered various forms of abuse" Sohail said.

He also highlighted the importance of the Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS), which will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Case Management and Referral System, ensuring that children on the move and Afghan refugees receive the support they need. The Directorate of Social Welfare Merged Areas is mandated on the Child Protection issues in the communities, for the purpose, Department has approved PC-I on the establishment of Child Protection Units and Provision of Support to Orphans (including home based care) in NMDs.

To Protect and ensuring the Protection, welfare, rehabilitation and reintegration of the Child at Risk, 09 Child Protection Units are established in Merged Areas namely, Kurram, Khyber, Mohmand, Orakzai, South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Bajaur, Sub division Peshawar and Sub Division Lakki. At the end of the training workshop certificates were distributed among the participants of 5 days training course.

Dept of Religious affairs hold training F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Department of Religious Affairs, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa organized a 5-day training program for the teachers and students of Madarrash in Mardan. Under the program, the teachers and students of different Madarrash are imparted personality development, social empowerment, employment guidance, effective expression, entrepreneurship, inter-faith and inter-faith harmony, citizenship and personal & Social responsibilities, right to serve and vote, differences & mutual Respect and search for commonalities, use of technology, importance of different vaccination & Role of Ulama and other topics were discussed and leading scholars and experts of the country served in workshops and sessions for training teachers and students.

A five-day training program was organized at Darul Uloom Jamia Islamia Tafheem Al-Qur'an, Mardan. A simple and solemn ceremony was organized on the last day of the program. Maulana Yusuf Shah, chairman of Muttahida Ulema Board Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was the chief guest of the ceremony, while Chief Khatib Maulana Tayyab Qureshi, Additional Director General Health Dr. Ikramullah Khan, Additional Assistant Commissioner Baraq Awan Mardan and other guests, teachers and students were present.

Addressing the ceremony, the speakers highlighted the various aspects of the program and said that the importance of contemporary and modern technology along with religious studies cannot be denied. These kinds of programs will help the students of madaris in global life. The Jaid scholars emphasized the importance of vaccination, immunization and population discipline in the light of the Islamic Ideological Council's guidelines. Mian Asjad, Monitoring Officer of Department of Auqaf and Religious Affairs, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said that the provincial government is taking steps to make the students of religious madaris useful citizens and increase the capacity of students so that they can addresses employment and other social issues.

The Department of Religious Affairs is trying to provide scholarships and other facilities for students of Madaris. Despite limited resources, the department is taking more steps to bring madaris students into the mainstream. Additional Director General Health Ikramullah Khan described the important role of scholars in vaccination and disease prevention. Chief guest Maulana Yusuf Shah while addressing said that the Department of Religious Affairs appreciates the efforts and paid tribute to these initiatives.

With these measures, students of Madaris will be included in the national stream. The chief guest further said that scholars are united for the development of Pakistan, scholars agree on commonality and scholars are united for peace. Our effort is to eliminate communalism completely. No one will be allowed to create division. Maulana Yusuf Shah further said that scholars have always sacrificed for the survival of Pakistan. At the end of the ceremony, training certificates were given to the teachers and students and commemorative shields to the guests.

Rraining workshops arranged F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Preparations for the general elections, two-day training workshops of master trainers have started in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa like across the country. These master trainers have been taken from the education and other departments.

These training workshops will be concluded on 22nd September 2023 across the province. Certificates will be distributed among the participants at the end of the workshop. As many as total of 467 Master Trainers will be trained on electoral process/ matters.

New industrial estate established in Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In order to develop small and cottage industries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a new grand industrial estate has been established on an area of about one thousands kanals in the suburbs of Peshawar, namely Sra Khawra Zangli, wherein industrial plots will be distributed by draw, while the last date for submission of applications has been fixed October 6, 2023.

This was revealed by Ghazanfar Ali, Managing Director of Small Industries Development Board Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPSIDP) while answering various questions of the host Hasnain Malik in the program Studio 92 of Pakhtunkhwa Radio. SIDB Deputy MD Nauman Fayaz and Station Director Ghulam Hussain Ghazi were also present on the occasion.

Ghazanfar Ali said that 17 categories relating to small industries will be given priority in plot allotment while application can also be submitted in general quota. He said that the best investment opportunities are being provided in this industrial park for local businessmen, women, inside and outside Pakistan people. He said that after 50 years in the history of the province, the second largest city was being established for small industries, inviting overseas Pakistanis to invest heavily and contribute to the economy of the province. He said that this unique project is a golden opportunity to promote industrialization and investment in the provincial capital.

Ghazanfar Ali further said that plots of 1 kanal, 22 marla, 88 marla, 44 marla and 11 marla are being prepared in Industrial Park Peshawar for which the last date of submission of online application form has been fixed as October 6, 2023. The estimated cost of the two years mega project of Peshawar Industrial Park project covering 941 kanals is three billion rupees.

Ghazanfar Ali said that Peshawar, being the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was in dire need of a second industrial estate at the level of small industry for economic development, employment opportunities and encouraging investment at the local level. He said that SIDB decided to set up a second small industry level mega project in Peshawar for catering the needs of local industrialists and economic development, which is now being implemented.

When asked about the feasibility of this township, the managing director of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Small Industries Development Board said that after much deliberation and survey, it has been decided to establish this new industrial estate on Zangli Kohat Road. The distance between Industrial Park Peshawar and Small Industries Estate Kohat Road

is 14 km on the same highway.

It is a unique and ideal industrial estate of its kind, he said adding that all possible facilities, are being provided to the industrialists in it including uninterrupted supply of electricity and gas, security, water, establishment of commercial plazas and bypass roads, while efforts are also being made to complete this project in the shortest possible time, he added. To a question, MD SIDB said that since this project will be transferred to many generations, it will take some time to be completed in all respects. This industrial park was eagerly awaited by the industrialists as it will provide employment to thousands of jobless people and further develop the area, he added.

Ghazanfar Ali said that billions of rupees are expected to be invested in this project. He said that the provincial government wants serious people to come forward in this area so that economic prosperity come back over here. SIDB Deputy Managing Director Nauman Fayaz also explained salient features of Industrial Park Peshawar saying that it will be a unique industrial estate under private public partnership. He said Sialkot, Faisalabad, Gujranwala and Karachi industrial models have been taken into consideration while designing it. Therefore, along with the general quota, 17 priority classes and sectors have been selected in the allotment criteria, he said adding that applicants with products and services in these sectors will be given priority in plot allotment, but they will be bound to ensure their same production after plot allotment as indicated by them in the documents and if any industrialist later changed type of production, the Board will be entitled to take action against it. The purpose of implementing this law is to promote those products which are in demand throughout the country, however, he said industrialists can apply for setting up any environment-friendly industrial units in the general quota as well. Apart from this, overseas Pakistanis will be given preference in plot allotment, he further said adding that investors from foreign countries can also apply in the general quota in addition to the priority sector, but they will pay the price of the plot in dollars which is fixed.

On another question, he said that application forms of 3 types of categories have been uploaded on the SIDB website. Apart from this complete details are provided for obtaining application form, online submission of the form and other information along with its timely submission. He said that on-line system to make the procedure of plot allotment easy has been introduced while the plot price will be charged in 4 installments as per schedule.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker KP Minister for Sports, Science and Information Technology Dr. Najeeb Ullah talking to media persons.

Food insecurity as a global health crisis

Noor Zia

insecurity:

NOWADAYS, food insecurity is a serious and challenging problem around the globe. Food insecurity refers to a lack of nutritious food for growth and development. It can be due to the unavailability of food or limited access to food.

It is often rooted in poverty and hampers the country's ability to develop its economy. In 2023, due to rapid population growth, severe climate fluctuations, and economic challenges, the problem of food insecurity has taken center stage around the globe. It can be long-term or short-term and is triggered by factors such as low income, unemployment, and sometimes by disability. The risk increases when there is no money to buy food and related stuff.

According to the World Food Programme (which works in 79 countries), over 345 million people will face high food insecurity in 2023. The number is not half, but double the number in 2020. It shows a shocking rise of 200 million people after the COVID-19 pandemic. Reasons for global food

Impacts on health and education:

Food insecurity highly affects people's health and education. If people do not have proper food, how can they get an education? "Health is wealth." If you have poor health, you will be unable to do something. In countries where the cycle of poverty is expanding, people have poor health, and the ratio of education is too low, such as Afghanistan, Nigeria, etc. Also, malnutrition and poor academic performance are directly proportional to each other. A high illiteracy rate affects the overall economy of the country.

Global food insecurity is a severe challenge that needs a coordinated effort from governments, international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector. Solving this issue is not insurmountable. By adopting sustainable practices, investing in infrastructure, and prioritizing climate adaptation, we can work towards a world where food security is not a dream but a reality for all.

The writer is student of 8th Semester at Department of English, Islamia College university Peshawar.

Women Literature Festival: Our words, our world kicks off

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar Women's Literature Festival "Our Words, Our World: Celebrating Literacy Contributions" with its inaugural ceremony took place at the Jirga Hall, within the Governor House in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Safia Ahmed expresses her heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Guest; Prof. Dr. Muhammad Qasim Jan, Minister of Higher Education and all attendees for their presence at the festival.

Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University is making significant contributions to the education and development of women. The university has organized a First Women Literature Festival in collaboration with the DOSTI Welfare Organization. The Peshawar Women Literary Festival is not just about literature; it celebrates the power of words, ideas, and voices. It serves as a platform for women writers, thinkers, and creators to share their stories, experiences, and perspectives with the world. In a world where women's voices have often been marginalized or silenced, this festival provides a vital space for women to be heard, celebrated, and appreciated.

The festival started with the Welcome Remarks by the Vice Chancellor, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto women University, Peshawar, Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed (T.I). She then emphasized on the profound significance of higher education in shaping the future of society. The festival plays a role in addressing gender imbalances in literature. It promotes diverse female narratives and stories, helping to create a more equitable representation of women in literary works.

It helps to bring attention to themes that are often overlooked, such as a deeper understanding of women's roles, challenges, and achievements. Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed (T.I) in her speech also highlighted that women have excelled in various literary fields such as poets, story-

tellers, critics, researchers, essayists, columnists, and travel writers. In Western countries, women have better access to opportunities and resources for pursuing literary careers. In the region being discussed, women face limited platforms and resources, hindering their literary aspirations.

The festival provides a unique platform for women from different regions, colleges, and universities to share their literary work. It includes book fairs and talk shows, allowing women to display their literary talents and engage with the audience. This festival is a rare opportunity for women who have not had the chance to appear on a higher platform in their lifetime. She welcomed all the females to participate in their very own women Literature Festival at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University from 6-10 November, 2023.

The Website & the Logo of the Dosti Literature Festival 1st Edition was launched on an SMD by the Chief Guest, Dr. Muhammad Qasim Jan, Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed (T.I). Panel Discussions and Author book talk on the book "Sajda Pa Maikada" by Samina Qadir" was also carried out. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) also took place between the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University and Dosti Welfare Organization.

Renowned Writers and Poets Bushra Farrukh, Samina Qadar, Dr Musarat Jamal, Dr Robina Shaheen, Gul e Arab Dr. Naseem Akhtar, Dr. Basmina Siraj, Dr. Antal Zia, Dr. Rahila, Khurshed and many others graced the occasion.

The Minister Higher Education, Dr. Muhammad Qasim Jan, congratulated Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed to be the first Vice Chancellor to inaugurate Women Literature Festival. He emphasized that The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is committed to providing equal opportunities for women in various areas of life,

that the purpose of the ceremony is to express solidarity and brotherhood with the Christian community over the tragic incident of Jaranwala, because, he said, as humanity, the hearts of people of both religions beat the same. He said that the officers, doctors, junior staff and volunteers of the Paraplegic Center collected donations beyond their means to heal the wounds of their Christian sisters and brothers in today's era of extreme inflation, which is a bright example of sacrifice. He said that the homes and properties of many Christian people were damaged in this incident, and the entire Muslim Ummah in general and the Muslims of Pakistan in particular are

deeply grieved on it.

He said the purpose of this event is not only to encourage the Christian brothers and sisters present here but also to convey the message to the minority communities of the entire country to the world that Pakistan belongs to all of us and the people living here are its equal citizens. On this occasion, the chief guest, Priest George Ghulam of Diocese of Peshawar, while appreciating the selfless services of Syed Muhammad Ilyas, head of the institution and the other staff, said that the excellent services of the institution for the disabled and the missionary spirit of the staff are commendable.

Relief cheque handed over to priest

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Executive of Paraplegic Center Peshawar, Dr. Syed Muhammad Ilyas, during a simple but impressive ceremony at Hayatabad Peshawar, handed over a donation cheque to George Ghulam, priest of the Diocese of Peshawar, for the victims of the Jaranwala tragedy. These donations were collected by the employees and volunteers of the center during a campaign for helping the affected Christian brethren. A large number of Christian community leaders and center employees participated in the event.

On this occasion, Dr. Ilyas clarified



In brief

IG inaugurates police station F.P. Report

BANNU: Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan inaugurates Model Police Station Jani Khiei Bannu, on Friday. As per details, IGP KP Police Hayat Khan inaugurates a model police station at Jani Khiei Bannu during a one day official trip. During his visit, IGP ordered to build a control room in Police Line, and also distributed certificates among the police officers on their achievements. Regional Police Officer Qasim Ali Khan brief IGP about the current situation of the Bannu. IGP praises the efforts of the RPO Qasim Ali Khan in controlling the crime rate of area. While talking to the media, IGP ensured that no compromised will be tolerated on the life and property of the civilians and praised the efforts of the Police fighting in the front line in their limited capacity.

60 kg hashish recovered F.P. Report

MARDAN: The officials of Excise and Narcotics department Mardan on Friday claimed to recover 60-kg hashish from Shazoor vehicle going to Punjab and arrested its driver. The SHO Akif Nawaz Khan Afridi told that a heavy amount of hashish was being smuggled in a Shazoor vehicle going to the province of Punjab. On a tip-off, he said that he along with police personnel erected blockages on different spots on Mardan-Nowshera road. He claimed that they succeeded to trace out the suspected vehicle and recovered the said drugs from its secret parts. He said that the arrested driver was identified as Nadeem hailing from Badkhal. On the occasion, he reminded that last month 526 kilogram of hashish, 7 kilograms of heroin and 15 kilograms of opium were recovered from other different vehicles.

Dangerous robbers arrested

HASAN ABDAL (INP): Police in Hasan Abdal on Friday have arrested a dangerous robbery gang of three people. The gang is accused of stealing cash, gold jewelry, and mobile phones at gunpoint. According to police, the gang was led by Bhola, who was arrested along with his two accomplices, Tayyab Shehzad and Ol Noor. The police recovered stolen goods worth millions of rupees from the gang, including cash, jewelry, and mobile phones. The police said that they used all possible resources and modern technology to track down the gang. They also received help from the public in apprehending the suspects. The police have registered separate cases against the gang and are investigating their involvement in other robberies. The arrest of the robbery gang is a major victory for the police and has brought relief to the people of Hasan Abdal. The police are determined to crack down on crime and ensure the safety of the citizens.

Youth commits suicide

BHAKKAR (INP): A youth committed suicide over taunt of father for excessive use of mobile phone in Darya Khan, district Bhakkar on Friday. The incident took place in Chak No. 21 where a youth disgruntled over taunting of father for extreme use of cell phone consumed toxic pills. The rescue personnel getting information reached the scene and shifted the youth to hospital but could not survive.



LANDI KOTAL: Political workers and members of civil society holding a peace rally at Bacha Khan Chowk. - F.P. photo

JI organizes grand jirga for restoration of peace

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: The atmosphere of Chitral was very sad after the unfortunate incident that took place in Chitral in recent days in which four security forces personnel were martyred and seven were injured. People are living a life of great sorrow and fear they are under great tension. Chitral was an ideal peaceful district where thousands of domestic and foreign tourists visit every year and most of the tourists visit the Kalash valley.

But Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan attacked a post of Chitral Scouts near Bomburat valley Kailash and another post of Chitral Scouts in Janjerit Koh, killing four personnel. After this, the atmosphere of the entire Chitral is very mournful and people are worried.

A Grand peace Jirga was organized on the call of Jamat Islami to restore the ideal peace of. Leaders of all political and religious parties and people of both Sunni and Ismaili communities participated in the Grand peace Jirga in large numbers. Addressing the Grand Jirga, the elders of the area said that the people of Chitral have always been loyal to Pakistan and the army. But every Chitrali is very worried about the unpleasant incident that happened in recent days. They said that there are so many agencies working in Chitral and they had been informed earlier, but despite that, No measures were taken in the true sense to prevent it, which is sorrowful.

The speakers said that the work of border police i.e. Chitral Levies is to protect these borders but the entire procession of these Levies is present in the office of Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner and most of the Levies are in the bungalows of DC, AC and other officers. It is completely unfair and illegal to be engaged them in personal work. They are not paid from the public exchequer to personally serve the DC's children or his household but their job is to protect the borders. They said that the VIP protocol of the officers in Chitral should also be stopped. Presidents and Prime Ministers of some European countries go to their offices on bicycles or without any protocol, but here a whole procession of protocols goes before the vehicle of even an ordinary civil servant, which creates frustration and hatred in the people.

The speakers said that Kailash people having the world's only and unique culture are living in Chitral. Tourists from all over the world come here to see their unique culture. It has also created an atmosphere of fear. If the situation remains like this, no local or foreign tourists will be come there and these people depend on the income from tourism. If that happens, the people of Kailash will be forced to starve.

On this occasion, a unanimous resolution was also passed, according to which the government was requested that the Chief of Army Staff, General Munir, who has lost four of our soldiers in the recent

terrorist attack, should immediately visit Chitral to meet with elders here. Through the resolution they demanded that the people of the border area of Chitral should be given their basic rights and facilities to end their sense of deprivation. So that they remain loyal to their homeland as always.

The resolution expressed great concern that such incidents occurred in Chitral in the presence of so many law enforcement agencies, security forces and intelligence agencies working in Chitral. They also demanded that Officials of these agencies should avoid interfering in other matters other than their duties. The resolution demanded that the Chitral Border Police should be sent to the borders instead of bureaucratic protocol to protect them. It was also demanded that unnecessary protocol should be avoided during the movement of officers within Chitral as it spreads hatred and frustration among the people.

The administration's lack of communication with the people and keeping them in the dark during the unfortunate incidents is condemnable. This creates a gap between the people and the government. Grand Jirga will also be organized in Drosh, Garm Chashma, Upper Chitral and other areas for restoration of peace. A large number of people belonging to all walks of life participated in this Gand peace Jirga, which was concluded with the prayer words of former Amir Jamaat-e-Islami, Maulan Sher Aziz.

MULTAN: Police has arrested two alleged drug dealers and recovered more than 02 kg hashish from their possession in the premises of Makhdoom Rasheed police station, on Friday.

The alleged culprits identified as Ashraf alias Malangi and Jahangir ali as Jaga Baloch in 02 different operations and recovered more than 02 kg of hashish. Cases are being registered against the arrested accused in Makhdoom Rasheed police station. SHO Police Station Makhdoom Rashid Rashid Nadeem along with Assistant Sub-Inspector Aamir Syam and his other team arrested the accused drug dealers and recovered hashish. On this occasion, CPO Multan Mansoor Ul ul Haq Rana said that Multan police are conducting day and night operations against drug dealers and other criminal elements.

While holding banners, inscribed with writings pertaining control of the disease, the participants marched from the administration block till main gate of the health center to alert the dwellers of the illness. Speaking on the occasion administration and health officials said that Dengue fever was a deadly disease and the only preventive measure was to keep clean water covered.

“Dengue mosquito is a social one and only breeds in clean water, therefore efforts should be made to avoid exposed water storing systems in houses and

streets,” they said. They urged the residents not to let their children leave early in morning and to go to their homes before evening because these are bite times of the mosquitoes. As per the health official so far, not a single effectee of Dengue disease has been reported in Landi Kotal, sub-division of Khyber.

Separately, the Pak-Afghan sharing border, Torkham, remained closed consecutively for the third day due to the dispute which erupted last day between the two countries over the building of a new post at the crossing.

officers said that Ehsan Ali, the victim of malpractice, was arrested. After the video went viral, the investigation scope of the arrested accused has been expanded, while the accused have also given confessions of abusing minor children and the arrested accused have further stated that other members of their gang are also school children. In this regard, the police further informed that a case has been registered against the arrested accused, they will try to bring justice to the affected child. The rape incident should be resolved at the public level.

Kuli Katcheri held: Regional Ombudsman Sukhar Syed Mahmood Shah took notice of public complaints and organized a Kuli Kachhari in Larkana. Decisions were

Dead body of minor recovered

F.P. Report

BUNER: The dead body of minor named Sana Ullah 5 years of age resident of Malang Dara area of union council Malakpur recovered from nearby water canal after 5 days while police has arrested his uncle for the commencement of offense.

The SDPO circle Pir Baba Roshan Zada Khan flanked SHO police station Pir Baba Afsan Khan told media persons. SDPO continued that the alleged killer identified the crime scene and recovered the dead body in the presence of police and others. He elaborated the mother sole kid Sanullah was missing from home.

The family reported to police. Police party visited the house vigilantly observed the location also talked to family members and pen pointed Ehsanullah as main suspect. SDPO added when police party interrogated Ehsanullah admitted he was the killer of Sanullah and pointed crime scene and also recovered the dead body.

The SDPO claimed the alleged killer had tried to escape from the crime scene after recovering the dead body but the police already alert party arrested him and shifted to police station. The SDPO continued it was a blind murder case and the killer from home was a challenge for police.

Alleged drug dealers arrested

F.P. Report

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given on the complaints while the next date was given for 4 filed complaints.

In addition, decisions were made on 10 of the 11 complaints filed against Sui Southern Gas Company, while 4 more complaints were filed against SEPCO. Syed Mahmood Ali Shah directed the officers of the attached departments to resolve the requests of the victims immediately within 30 days. should be dealt with while the abuse of customers will not be tolerated under any circumstances, the higher authorities will be informed against the non-compliant officers and legal action will be taken against them. Deputy Manager of Gas Company Saeed Ahmad Correo and officers of other departments participated.

ANP demands holding of general polls within 90 days

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Awami National Party central spokesman and former senator Zahid Khan has asked the election commission of Pakistan to ensure holding of general elections within 90 days. Talking to local journalists at the Timergara press club here the other day, the ANP leader condemned the PTI and PDM governments for the whole mess and said that both Imran Khan and Shahbaz Sharif had taken the country to the verge of collapse.

He said that record inflation, devaluation of Pakistani currency, increasing prices of electricity, petrol and gas had forced the citizens to come onto the roads against the incumbent government. He said the nation had no option other than to launch a massive movement against the rulers. The ANP spokesman said that holding of general election on time was the only solution to the crisis. He also condemned the militants' attack on security forces in Chitral and expressed solidarity with the Pak army.

“The sole responsibility of the caretaker prime minister is to conduct free, fair and transparent elections within 90 days”, Zahid Khan said, adding the delay in general elections would further aggravate the situation in the country. He said the caretaker PM should not cross his limits to inaugurate development projects. He alleged the Punjab chief

minister too had been inaugurating development projects which were against the norms and constitution.

The ANP leader alleged the PTI chief Imran Khan had ruined the country under a planned conspiracy while the PDM government too failed to deliver. Without naming the Jamaat-i-Islami, the ANP leader said that some of the parties had been protesting against the inflation and wanted to move the court on someone's dictation in order to pave the way for them.

Water supply machine: Taking notice of the consumers' grievances the executive engineer (XEN) public health and engineering department Lower Dir asked the department's provincial authority to arrange a special fund amounting to Rs 500,000 for replacement of solar inverter power machine of the water supply scheme Qaziabad Soghalay on need basis. In a letter written to the high ups, the official said the inverter of solar based pumping machinery of the Qaziabad Soghalay water supply scheme had been damaged and was irreparable that needed Rs 0.5 million to be replaced. The XEN has requested the provincial authority that the required funds be arranged for smooth running of the scheme that benefitted hundreds of poor consumers in Talash.

Police books 28 political activists in May 9 vandalism: Police booked 28

workers of the Pakistan Tahreek Insaf in the May 9 and 10 riots, sources in police department said. They said the accused involved in burning of a toll plaza on Swat motorway and vandalism in the Chakdara Fort, were identified by the intelligence institutions and police special branch through videos on social media.

A case against the accused was registered under sections 302, 324, 427, 436, 440, 452, 120 B, 124 A, 7ATA etc at the Chakdara police station, sources said. The newly inducted party workers included Amjad of Kharkai, Osama of Badwan, Gauhar Zaman of Chekho, Fayaz of Chekho, Naik Zada of Meena Bhattan, Abdullah of Ouch Gharbi, Shahab Khan of Tendo Dak, Mehran of Kotigram, Amjad Ali of Chat Pat, Irfanullah of Darbar Chakdara, Suliman of Chakdara, Mir Afzal of Chakdara, Jamil of Darbar Chakdara, Ismail of Ramora, saced Khan of Amandara, Hawa Khan of Chekho, Zuhab and Ibrahim of Chat Pat, Shafiqullah Gujjar of Ali Gaddar, Farman Ali of Gaddar, Sher Zaman of Badwan, Talha of Shamlai, Numan of Bathkela, Asad Khan and Ayaz of Thana Malakand, Aneesur Rehman of Khar, Bacha Zada of Malakand and Tauseef Zaman of Momand Malakand. Sources said that raids were being conducted to arrest the accused.

Attack on press club: Termination of cop sought

F.P. Report

MIRAN SHAH: North Waziristan Miranshah press club was attacked by people carrying sticks, assaulted club member Noor Bahram, abused them and ransacked the club. The attack was planned by Station House Officer (SHO) Miranshah Muhammad Ibrahim father and his associates, on Friday.

SHO Ibrahim Khan's father along with other colleagues entered the Miran Shah Press Club and attacked the members of the club with sticks. Noor Bahram has been shifted to Miran Shah Hospital in an injured condition. All the journalists of Miranshah Press Club announced an immediate boycott from police coverage, demanding immediate filing of a case against the people involved in the incident, ensuring the security of the press club and its members. President of Miranshah

Press Club, Safdar Dawar, said that the entry of people carrying batons into the premises of the press club and the attack on the club members is alarming. They have demanded a case and action against the attackers and others, in addition, the journalistic circles across the country, including North Waziristan, have demanded the IG, CM and Governor to identify all those responsible for the attack on the Miran Shah Press Club. Cases should be registered against them immediately, otherwise a series of protests will be started in the entire country.

Meanwhile, a swift and decisive response, the District Press Club of South Waziristan Upper has vehemently condemned the recent attack on Miran Shah Press Club by the police. In an emergency meeting, President Malik Hayatullah Mehsud declared this assault on journalists and the Press Club as an act of terrorism,

emphasizing the vital role of journalism as a pillar of the state.

Hayat Ullah Mehsud went on to criticize the Miranshah police for their alleged hooliganism in attacking journalists, emphasizing that journalists will not be silenced by intimidation, threats, or violence. He affirmed their commitment to reporting based on facts. In a unanimous decision, the District Press Club of South Waziristan has demanded a transparent inquiry into the incident from the Inspector General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Additionally, they have called for the immediate dismissal of officials found to be involved in the attack. This condemnation underscores the importance of press freedom and the protection of journalists who play a crucial role in upholding democracy and informing the public. The situation is developing, and further updates will follow.

SNGPL crackdowns against gas thieves

F.P. Report

KARAK: Like the rest of the country, the SNGPL department has launched a grand operation against gas thieves in Karak as well. They have cut the big connections from the main transmission, while the gas-powered generators have also been seized by cutting the stolen connections from the mobile towers.

According to the details, the SNGPL department has started a grand operation to prevent gas theft. Karak district is the most gas-producing district, there is also a lot of gas theft and wastage, against which the department. A grand operation has been started,

ed, 8 major ones from the main transmission line, while 300 local connections have been cut and a case has been registered against 30 people.

It is a crime and no exemption will be given to the people involved in it. On this occasion, along with him, in-charge engineer Kashif Naveed Hangu, in-charge engineer Nasir Bangash, engineer Mazmar, engineer Haseeb were also present. Crores are being lost and the big connections that have been cut were stealing and wasting gas equal to two districts, while 300 other connections have also been cut and FIRs are being filed against them, now no one will be left to steal gas.



QUETTA: Balochistan Caretaker Minister Jan Achakzai addressing a press conference.



Indonesia’s leader warns of protracted conflicts

JAKARTA (AP): Indonesia’s president issued a stark warning after wrapping up a summit of Southeast Asian countries that was joined by China, the United States and Russia, saying “we will be destroyed” unless conflicts are resolved. The three-day summit by leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations along with Asian and Western counterparts in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta spotlighted major conflicts in Asia with calls for peaceful resolutions and restraint.

Myanmar’s bloody civil strife and the South China Sea territorial disputes, which have dragged on without any solution in sight, figured high on the agenda. Concerns were also raised over the US-China rivalry in the region, although no ne was specifically called out as Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang and US Vice President Kamala Harris were in attendance. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov also took part. “I can guarantee you, if we are not able to manage differences, we will be destroyed,” Indonesian President Joko Widodo, who led the 10-nation ASEAN this year, told a news conference after the summit talks. “If we join the currents of rivalry, we will be destroyed,” he added.

Widodo, who turned over the leadership of the regional group to Laos during the Jakarta meetings, characterized ASEAN as a regional peace-maker - or a safe house - that the world sorely needs. Founded in 1967 in the Cold War era, the ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Though long derided as a toothless talkshop, AESAN has been credited for its ability to convene rival world powers in closed-door meetings that provide a chance for dialogue and manage to extract public commitments for peaceful resolution of disputes. In an ASEAN leaders’ meeting with China, Japan and South Korea in Jakarta, Li underscored the need to oppose “a new Cold War,” although Beijing has long been condemned for its increasingly



aggressive actions in the disputed South China Sea and against Taiwan. “To keep differences under control, what is essential now is to oppose picking sides, bloc confrontation and a new Cold War, and ensure that disagreements and disputes among countries are properly handled,” Li said. The ASEAN leaders renewed their call for the peaceful resolution of long-seething territorial conflicts in the South China Sea in their post-conference communique, which also welcomed progress in long-delayed negotiations by their regional bloc and China to come up with a nonaggression “code of conduct” to avoid occasional spat in the disputed waters.

The contested waters have become a delicate fault line in the US-China rivalry. Washington does not lay any claim to the strategic waterway, a key trade global route, but has deployed its Navy ships and fighter jets to challenge China’s expansive claims and uphold what it calls freedom of navigation and overflight in the offshore region. UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who also met the ASEAN leaders separately, renewed an urgent call to the international community to seek a unified strategy to end the worsening crisis in Myanmar.

Declining financial aid should be

boosted to previous levels to enable the world body to respond to an “enormous tragedy,” he said and added that the situation in Myanmar has further deteriorated since he met with ASEAN leaders in a 2022 summit. Guterres again called on the crisis-wracked country’s military-installed government to immediately free all political prisoners and “open the door to a return to democratic rule.” Myanmar army seized power on Feb. 1, 2021, from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, arresting her and top members of her governing National League for Democracy party, which had won a landslide victory for a new term in a November 2020 general election. Security forces suppressed widespread opposition to the military takeover with lethal force, killing thousands of civilians and arresting thousands of others who engaged in nonviolent protests. The savage crackdown triggered armed resistance in much of the impoverished country. Guterres also renewed his alarm over other issues being aggravated by rivalries between and among major powers. “Our world is stretched to the breaking point by a cascade of crises: from the worsening climate emergency and escalating wars and conflicts, to growing poverty, widening inequalities and rising geopolitical tensions,” Guterres said.

Philippines says it signs free trade pact with South Korea

MANILA (Reuters): The Philippines has signed a free trade deal with South Korea, its president said, completing four years of negotiations between the countries on trade and investment ties. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, who was in Jakarta for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit, announced the signing of the deal in a video message on his YouTube page.

He said the signing was “a testament to the realization of the many opportunities for complementation and collaboration between the Philippines and the South Korea and an even greater milestone for our economic friendship”. Marcos did not provide details about the agreement, but the Philippines’ Department of Trade and Industry has said previously that it should give Manila improved market access for a wide range of goods, including agricultural products such as bananas. In 2022, the Philippines exported \$3.12 billion worth of goods to South Korea, making it the country’s seventh-largest export market.

Japan launches ‘moon sniper’ lunar lander SLIM into space

TOKYO (Reuters): Japan launched a lunar exploration spacecraft aboard a home-grown H-IIA rocket, hoping to become the world’s fifth country to land on the moon early next year. Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said the rocket took off from Tanegashima Space Center in southern Japan as planned and successfully released the Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM). Unfavourable weather led to three postponements in a week last month.

Dubbed the “moon sniper”, Japan aims to land SLIM within 100 metres of its target site on the lunar surface. The \$100-million mission is expected to start the landing by February after a long, fuel-efficient approach trajectory. “The big objective of SLIM is to prove the high-accuracy landing ... to achieve ‘landing where we want’ on the lunar surface, rather than ‘landing where we can,’” JAXA President Hiroshi Yamakawa told a news conference. Hours after launch, JAXA said it picked up signals from SLIM showing it was operating normally. The launch comes two weeks after India became the fourth nation to successfully land a spacecraft on the moon with its Chandrayaan-3 mission to the unexplored lunar south pole. Around the same time, Russia’s Luna-25 lander crashed while approaching the moon.

Two earlier lunar landing attempts by Japan failed in the last year. JAXA lost contact with the OMOTE-NASHI lander and scrubbed an attempted landing in November. The Hakuto-R Mission 1 lander, made by Japanese startup ispace, crashed in April as it attempted to descend to the lunar surface. SLIM is set to touch down on the near side of the moon close to Mare Nectaris, a lunar sea that, viewed from Earth, appears as a dark spot. Its primary goal is to test advanced optical and image processing technology. After landing, the craft aims to analyse the composition of olivine rocks near the sites in search of clues about the origin of the moon. No lunar rover is loaded on SLIM. H-IIA rocket also carried the X-Ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission (XRISM) satellite, a joint project of JAXA, NASA and the European Space Agency. The satellite aims to observe plasma winds flowing through the universe that scientists see as key to helping understand the evolution of stars and galaxies. Ground stations in Hawaii and Japan received signals from XRISM soon after the launch confirming that the satellite’s solar panels successfully deployed, JAXA said. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries manufactured the H-IIA rocket and operated the launch, which marked the 47th H-IIA Japan has launched since 2001, bringing the vehicle’s success rate close to 98%.

Fukushima water release Kishida says China seafood ban contrasts with wide support

TOKYO (AP): Japan’s prime minister said that China’s blanket ban on Japanese seafood in reaction to the release of treated radioactive water from a tsunami-ravaged nuclear power plant contrasts starkly with broad understanding shown by many other members of the international community. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on Japan’s northeastern coast started releasing treated and diluted radioactive wastewater in late August into the Pacific Ocean. The release has been opposed by the Japanese fishing community, which is worried about the reputation of the fish it catches. China immediately banned all Japanese seafood.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters in Jakarta, Indonesia, after a session attended by leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as South Korea and China, that the treated water release is conducted under international safety standards and with the help of the International Atomic Energy Agency. He said Japan has broadly gained understanding from the international community, and that in sharp contrast, China’s blanket ban on Japanese seafood “stuck out.” The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant suffered major damage from a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan on March 11, 2011.

Kishida said he approached Chinese Premier Li Qiang during a break and

hit hard by the ban. Hours later in Japan, US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy was at the US Embassy in Tokyo, where Ambassador Rahm Emanuel was serving vegetables and fruits from Fukushima and fish caught off the coast of neighboring Miyagi prefecture, to support Japan. “I just view it as another way of the communist party of China putting the falsity out there, trying to divide, and it’s just an unfair position that they have and a false position that they have from the rest of the world’s stance,” said McCarthy, criticizing China’s ban on Japanese seafood. McCarthy said he set up a bipartisan committee to study how China influences industries around the world when he became House Speaker, and has seen China try to dominate and control a number of industries, while “dumping falsities on others and watching the same situation happen here.”

“So what you have to do is wake up to that day, stand together, stand with your friend, do it based upon science as well, something that China does not do,” McCarthy said, noting China’s lack of transparency during the COVID pandemic. The US Embassy is also working with Japan’s government to find new export destinations in the United States, as well as other countries for scallop processing that Japanese exporters used to conduct in China. Japanese officials have said they plan to cultivate new export destinations in Taiwan, the United States, Europe, the Middle East and some southeast Asian countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore. Kishida’s Cabinet approved a 20.7 billion yen (\$141 million) emergency fund to help exporters hit by China’s ban on Japanese seafood. The money will be used to find new markets for Japanese seafood to replace China and fund government purchases of seafood for temporary freezing and storage. The government will also seek to expand domestic seafood consumption. The new fund is in addition to the 80 billion yen (\$547 million) that the government previously allocated to support fisheries and seafood processing and combat reputational damage on Japanese products.

Gabon junta appoints former Opp leader as interim PM

LIBREVILLE (Reuters): Gabon’s ruling junta which seized power in a coup last week appointed a former opposition leader, Raymond Ndong Sima, as prime minister of its transitional government. Sima, a 68-year-old economist, was an outspoken critic of President Ali Bongo, who was ousted by military officers on Aug. 30. He served as Bongo’s prime minister from 2012 to 2014, then resigned and ran against him for president in 2016 and again as part of an opposition coalition this year.

Bongo, in power since 2009, had succeeded his father Omar Bongo, who ruled the Central African oil producer for 42 years. The family’s dynastic rule had created widespread discontent, with critics saying the Bongos did little to share Gabon’s wealth with its 2.3 million people. Bongo had been under house arrest after the coup, but the junta said that he was now free and could travel abroad for medical checks if he wished. The coup was greeted with scenes of jubilation in the capital Libreville and the junta moved quickly to consolidate power, swearing in General Brice Oligui Nguema as interim president. Army officers read a decree on state television announcing that Sima had been named PM.

The coup in Gabon was the eighth in three years in West and Central Africa, though it has been playing out very differently from the most recent other army takeover, in Niger. Unlike Niger, Gabon has not seen an outpouring of anti-French, pro-Russian sentiment, and the generals in charge in Libreville have appeared open to dialogue with international organisations which their counterparts in Niamey have shunned. Nguema has promised economic reforms and said he will organise free and fair elections, though he has not said when. Abdou Abarry, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Central Africa, met Nguema in Libreville and told him that the United Nations would assist the country as it made a fresh start. “Once we know the roadmap, the timetable, once a government will have been appointed, our different agencies will make the necessary contacts and continue to support Gabon,” he said after the meeting, in remarks broadcast on Gabon 24 TV.

Xi visits flood-stricken area in northeast China

BEIJING (Reuters): Eschewing face-time with foreign leaders at global summits this week, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the homes of villagers in a rural part of northeast China battered by floods. In the village of Longwangmiao in Heilongjiang province, Xi called on local residents to triumph over their difficulties and work towards returning life to a more normal footing, according to state media reports. He also enquired about their losses and supply of daily necessities.

In late July through early August, record rainfall laid waste to vast swathes of northern China, flooding cities and farmlands unused to powerful storms more common in the south, but Xi did not visit any of the disaster-hit areas until this week. Inspecting rice crops and damaged homes in Longwangmiao battered by remnants of the super typhoon Doksuri, Xi skipped an Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit in Indonesia this week. He will also miss the chance to meet with US President Joe Biden at a G20 conclave in India.

But Xi did attend a meet-

ing in late August with leaders of the BRICS group of major emerging economies - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - in South Africa. Alfred Wu, associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, said that Xi’s speed in visiting disaster-stricken areas in China has usually been much slower than his immediate predecessors Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, a possible consequence of Xi’s centralisation of power. “These delays are common in Xi’s regime, it is not a good look for him,” Wu said.

“We know that the floods started in July, but he probably got the information late, and then in August he was busy with BRICS, so only now has his agenda cleared.” China has not explained why Xi, who had attended every G20 summit since coming to office over a decade ago, was not leading Beijing’s delegation to New Delhi. It has said only that Premier Li Qiang will represent China. By comparison, Xi left China for five overseas visits in 2022 - when the country’s borders were

effectively closed due to pandemic controls - and a dozen in pre-COVID 2019. Reuters, citing foreign diplomats in China, previously reported that Xi’s absence at the upcoming G20 could be a sign of Beijing’s increasing coolness to the West and its allies. Instead, some Western leaders such as French President Emmanuel Macron and senior officials including US State Secretary Antony Blinken this year had to come to China to see Xi. Alfredo Montufar-Helu, head of think tank The Conference Board’s China Center, said that from a geopolitical perspective, attending the BRICS summit in South Africa was a higher priority for Xi than the G20. “There is not only no strategic goal to be achieved at the G20, but there is also a risk that the US and its allies use the meeting to criticize his government,” Montufar-Helu said.

“It is more of a priority for him to pay attention to the domestic situation given the impact of the economic slowdown and natural disasters on people’s livelihoods.”

King Charles III’s visit to France

LONDON (AP): King Charles III will travel to France later this month for a state visit that was postponed in March due to fears that protesters demonstrating against President Emmanuel Macron’s economic policies would disrupt the pageantry. Charles and Queen Camilla will visit Paris and Bordeaux from Sept. 20-22, Buckingham Palace announced. The visit underscores Britain’s aim to bolster ties with its closest European neighbor after years of sometimes prickly relations strained by Brexit and disagreements over the growing number of migrants crossing the English Channel on small boats.

“The state visit will celebrate Britain’s relationship with France, marking our shared histories, culture and values,” said Chris Fitzgerald, deputy private secretary to the king. While Britain’s royal family long ago ceded political power to the country’s elected leaders, they remain the U.K.’s pre-eminent ambassadors as presidents and

prime ministers jockey to bask in the glamor and pageantry that follows them wherever they go. This role was epitomized by Queen Elizabeth II, who made 121 state visits during her 70-year reign, leading royal historian Robert Hardman to dub her “Queen of the World.” Charles ascended the throne after his mother died last September. The new king had intended to make France the scene of his first overseas visit in tribute to his close relationship with Macron, forged through their shared focus on protecting the environment and fighting climate change. That honor went to Germany when the Charles canceled the first leg of a planned two-nation European tour when protests over Macron’s plans to raise the retirement age devolved into riots. But officials on both sides of the Channel hope that the delay will make it possible to stage the pomp and ceremony of a state visit in the spirit of celebration rather than siege.

The trip will begin with

a service of remembrance and wreath laying at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris to mark “the shared sacrifices of the past and an enduring legacy of cooperation.” Later, Charles will meet with members of the National Assembly and Senate, providing a new venue for the king to show off his language skills after he wowed his audience by switching seamlessly between German and English during a speech to the Bundestag, Germany’s parliament, in March. The trip will also include a black tie state dinner at the Palace of Versailles and a stop in Bordeaux, home to a large British community. The king will meet emergency workers and communities affected by the 2022 wildfires in the area and visit the Forêt Experimentale, or experimental forest, a project designed to monitor the impact of climate on urban woodlands. They will also meet with community sports groups as France hosts the Rugby World Cup, which runs from Sept. 8-Oct. 28.

Germany forges pact for Leopard 2 successor

BERLIN (Reuters): Germany has signed agreements with Italy, Spain and Sweden on the development of a successor to the Leopard 2 tank, German business daily Handelsblatt reported. If confirmed, the deal would be certain to upset France, which, in 2017, agreed with Berlin to develop a joint Franco-German tank to succeed the German Leopard 2 and the French Leclerc in a project beset by delays and disagreements.

The initiative is to take place under the leadership of Krauss-Maffei Wegmann (KMW) and Rheinmetall, the German arms makers building the Leopard 2. Handelsblatt reported, citing unnamed industry and political sources. The German defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A spokesperson for Rheinmetall declined to comment on the report. A spokesperson for KMW

could not immediately comment. The newspaper said the partners in the deal were planning to apply to the European Defence Fund for funding amounting to a three-digit million euro sum, adding the project would also involve Sweden’s Saab and Italy’s Leonardo. It did not identify which Spanish company would be involved. The delays to the proposed Franco-German project have strained ties already tested by differences over energy topics and the question to what extent Europe should become independent from the US in its security policy. Still, the defence ministers of France and Germany said in July they sought to give fresh impetus to the venture and had tasked their army chiefs to hammer out the rough outlines of the new tank’s capabilities, to have a basic document ready by the end of the year. Handelsblatt, however, reported the countries had

not been able to agree on the specifications of the tank, with France aiming for a rather light vehicle whereas Germany opted for a more heavily armoured tank.

The French military has been traditionally strongly involved in Africa where having a lighter vehicle that can be more easily transported by air makes sense. Germany, in contrast, sees the major threat as coming from Russia. The defence ministry in Paris and the office of President Emmanuel Macron did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Handelsblatt said the new tank deal was a setback for the Franco-German cooperation in defence procurement, even though it was possible that both projects might be continued. It cited French government sources as saying the topic would be raised at Franco-German government consultations scheduled for the start of October.

Sudan’s army chief travels to Qatar

CAIRO (AP): Sudan’s army chief traveled to Qatar for talks with the country’s emir, making his third international trip since fighting broke out between the military and a rival paramilitary force in mid-April, media reports said. Sudan plunged into chaos almost five months ago, when long-simmering tensions between the military, led by Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, escalated into open warfare on April 15.

During the visit, Burhan and the Qatari emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, discussed the challenges facing conflict-stricken Sudan. The talks took place in the Qatari capital, Doha, according to a statement by the Emiri Diwan media outlet. Al Thani reiterated his call for broad peace negotiations between all of Sudan’s political forces and a lasting stop to the fighting, the statement said. Sudan’s acting Foreign Minister Ali al-Sadiq and Gen. Ahmed Ibrahim Mufadel, head of the General Intelligence Authority, accompanied Burhan on the trip, Sudan’s state run SUNA news agency said. The visit comes amid a flurry of similar diplomatic meetings convened in Egypt and South Sudan, where Burhan held talks with South Sudan’s president, Salva Kiir.

Last week, the general met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi in the Egyptian coastal city of el-Alamein, in Burhan’s first trip abroad since Sudan’s conflict erupted. Few details were made public about either trip. The fighting in Sudan is estimated to have killed at least 4,000 people, according to the UN human rights office. Activists and doctors on the ground say the toll is likely far higher. Burhan’s trip to Qatar occurred a day after the United States imposed sanctions on RSF’s deputy leader, Abdel-Rahim Hamdan Dagalo, for alleged acts of violence and human rights abuses committed by the paramilitary troops. Abdel-Rahim is the brother of Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, the RSF’s leader. In a statement, the RSF condemned the sanctions, which block all US property and entities owned by Abdel-Rahim Dagalo. It denounced the measure as “a purely political decision that was taken without an accurate and transparent investigation.”

Also, in a rare televised interview on Sky News Arabic, Abdel-Rahim Dagalo also criticized the sanctions as unfair and tried to deflect the blame for rights abuses onto the army. In the western region of Darfur - the scene of a genocidal campaign in the early

2000s - the nearly five-month conflict has morphed into ethnic violence, with rights groups and the United Nations accusing the RSF and allied Arab militias of attacking ethnic African groups. “For four years we have been working hard to solve the Darfur problem, to solve the tribal problems,” Abdel-Rahim Dagalo told Sky News Arabic.

He said that Burhan and figures from the former administration of Islamist leader Omar al-Bashir were the real drivers of ethnic violence in Darfur and have been arming certain ethnic groups. Al-Bashir, who ruled Sudan for 30 years, was deposed in popular uprising in 2019. Since April, the fighting has displaced more than 5 million people, according to the most recent figures by the UN’s International Organization for Migration. Despite international efforts, the conflict has shown few signs of easing. Formal peace negotiations mediated by the US and Saudi Arabia in the kingdom’s coastal town of Jeddah were adjourned in late June with both mediators publicly calling out the Rapid Support Forces and the army for continually violating agreed-to truces. There have been at least nine cease-fires between the army and the RSF since the fighting broke out. All were violated.

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One military countless fronts

PAKISTAN'S military is currently engaged in four front wars besides dealing with a wide range of domestic challenges which seriously confronted the security, survival and territorial integrity of the Pakistani nation over the past few years. The 259th huddle of the Pakistan Army Corps Commanders held in-depth discussions on internal and external security challenges alongside taking a full account of the regional and global geostrategic environment that might have a direct or indirect impact on Pakistan. The forum commemorated the sacrifices of Shudahas and Ghazis who rendered unmatched sacrifices in defence of the nation.

Pakistan Army is the nation's most disciplined, highly organized, well-trained, and responsive institution. Its prime role is the defence and security of the country; however, it has been called upon for jobs which were well beyond the scope of their duties. Being an ideological and national Army, it remained committed to defending the country's geographical territories while upholding the Country's Islamic ideology. During the past seven and a half decades of Pakistan's history, the Pakistan Army fought three major battles with the country's eternal enemy along with ever-boiling low-level conflict at Siachen Glacier, the highest warzone in the world. The Pakistan Army successfully defeated the terror groups in the most difficult terrain of the country and is currently embattled with remnants of terrorism and ethnic insurgency in Erstwhile FATA and Balochistan respectively.

The Pakistan Army always played a pivotal role during natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, locust attacks and deadly pandemics through its kinetic search and rescue operations and well-organized relief activities. Pakistan Military also remained available to the civilian governments during hours of need for the maintenance of law and order, national census, election duty, polio vaccination campaigns, desalination of water canals, management and monitoring of COVID-19- pandemic and locust attacks in the country, that has no example in any other nation in the world. The Pakistan Army remained at the forefront of nation-building activities through the construction of roads, and bridges, and the provision of educational, medical and communication facilities to the residents of border regions including Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Balistan, Erstwhile FATA and Balochistan. Interestingly, the Pakistan military along with the civil government played a crucial role in the accomplishment of FATF's 34 points agenda while successfully securing Pakistan from grave risks of blacklisting by the anti-money laundering watchdog permanently. Presently, the Pakistan Army is an integral part of ongoing efforts to uplift socio-economic growth under the umbrella of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and wholeheartedly assists the government in curbing all illegal activities which hamper economic stability, growth and investors' confidence. Meanwhile, it is equally involved in the ongoing crusade against the manipulation and smuggling of currency, sugar, wheat and other commodities from the country that had created miserable conditions for the South Asian nation at this time.

Besides these domestic campaigns, the Pakistan Army is continuously facing aggression and trespassing from the west and the eastern neighbour. The cross-border attacks at the Durand line became customary, as the banned Pakistani terror outfit enjoys salient support from its ideological mentor, who currently rules in the neighbourhood. Likewise, New Delhi has intensified its anti-Pakistan propaganda and ramped up its military operation and human rights abuses in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Army is like an ironclad against Pakistan's enemies and their proxies inside the country. The Pakistan military is a symbol of national pride and a sole guarantee for the security and sovereignty of the country. So, until brave Pakistani soldiers guard the Country's territorial frontiers no enemy could ever dare to harm Pakistan.

Humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan

ACCORDING to reports, nearly 20 million Afghans are currently facing serious risk of hunger in neighbouring Afghanistan, while the months-long impasse between the world and Kabul further causes gravity in the prevailing situations and endangers the survival of millions of lives in Afghanistan. Currently, About three-quarters of Afghanistan's people need humanitarian aid as their country emerges from decades of conflict under an internationally isolated Taliban administration that took over as US-backed foreign forces withdrew in 2021. Development assistance that for years formed the backbone of government finances has been cut, the administration is subject to sanctions and central bank assets abroad have been frozen.

Historically, Afghanistan's economy witnessed a sudden collapse after the US Forces withdrew from the country which led to the collapse of the entire government and banking system, halted foreign aid and prompted food shortages in violence-hit Afghanistan. The crisis partly stems from the blockage of Western funding and crucial economic support, while severe drought, commodity price hikes, freezing of Afghan assets abroad and the Ukraine war multiplied problems and added to the economic woes of millions of Afghans. Interestingly, the Afghan people were caught between two parts of the mill as the withdrawal of European allies and imposition of economic sanctions broke their back on one hand while the damaging policies of the ruling Taliban equally hurt its population which was already embattled with the worst economic conditions in their homeland.

According to the United Nations Humanitarian Aid Coordination Office, \$125 million had been earmarked for countries facing humanitarian crises worldwide, of which \$20 million has been allocated to Afghanistan. Meanwhile, nearly fifty-six humanitarian aid programs have been stopped in Afghanistan due to the ban on women's employment and other interventions of the ruling Taliban. The reports suggest that insufficient funding and pause in aid programs are likely to cut off the provision of essential humanitarian support to nearly 10 million Afghans. The UN Food Program has appealed for urgent provision of funds required to feed millions of Afghans during the winter season. It is of utmost importance that the global community and Western nations must put aside their political differences, come forward and display their traditional generosity in helping poor Afghans, otherwise, no one could avert a grave human tragedy in Afghanistan.

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Putin's reaching out to Kim Jong-un is a desperate move

Sergey Radchenko

REPORTS that North Korea's dictator, Kim Jong-un, may visit Russia soon to meet Vladimir Putin - probably to discuss the supply of North Korean weapons for Putin's war in Ukraine - point to a rather remarkable transformation of Russian-North Korean relations. During the cold war, North Korea was Moscow's key ally in north-east Asia. But at that time, the North Koreans were, at best, poor supplicants to a mighty superpower. Today, Kim's hermit kingdom stands tall and proud as Russia's partner in crime.

Putin's engagement with North Korea is as old as his presidency. But the relationship was generally more exotic than practical. Russia's real partner was South Korea, which consistently ranked among its top 10 trade partners, with nearly \$30bn in trade volume in 2021. North Korea was never an attractive partner, and it was subject to very restrictive sanctions that Russia, as a permanent member of the UN security council, had helped craft. Until it invaded Ukraine, Russia tried to abide by them in letter and spirit.

Everything changed with the invasion. In May 2022 - in a development that may foreshadow the beginning of the end for the North Korean sanctions regime - Russia (and China) vetoed a UN security council resolution that would penalise Pyongyang for another round of missile tests. In July 2022, Pyongyang recognised the Russian-occupied puppet republics of Donetsk and Luhansk (just over two months before their annexation by Russia made this recognition moot). Then, in July this year, the Russian defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, turned up in Pyongyang to an unprecedented welcome. Kim was seen proudly showing him around the latest models of North Korean weaponry. Amid the smiles and camaraderie, a new relationship was being born.

Russia's quest for North Korean weapons and ammunition (much like the Kremlin's purchase of Iranian drones) suggests a high degree of desperation in the Kremlin. With Russia's vaunted military

machine having been proved something of a paper tiger by the Ukrainians, there is an implied humiliation in shopping around for weapons in places like North Korea, a disdained client state at the best of times. There are also important practical consid-

important. By overdoing North Korea, the Kremlin risks undermining its relationship with South Korea. Granted, the war in Ukraine has taken a toll on this relationship already, as Seoul joined western sanctions against Russia. South Korea's exports to Russia plummeted by 37% in 2022

You may argue, of course, that the (partial) dismantling of the sanctions regime will bury all hopes for Pyongyang's denuclearisation, a goal to which the Kremlin is, in theory, still committed. But Putin may well decide that this is the least of his problems at this time. The second consideration is potentially more important. By overdoing North Korea, the Kremlin risks undermining its relationship with South Korea. Granted, the war in Ukraine has taken a toll on this relationship already, as Seoul joined western sanctions against Russia. South Korea's exports to Russia plummeted by 37% in 2022 (imports decreased by 15%). But Seoul joined these sanctions only reluctantly, and many South Korean companies continue operating in Russia. South Korea is something of a weak link in the western sanctions front, a situation the Kremlin could exploit to its advantage if it had the tactical acumen to do so.

erations that Putin must weigh before embracing Kim. The first - violating the sanctions regime that Russia has helped built up over the years - is probably the least of Putin's hurdles. Now that Russia itself has become a pariah state, on the receiving end of extensive western sanctions, it is only reasonable that the Kremlin might reach out to fellow rogues. You may argue, of course, that the (partial) dismantling of the sanctions regime will bury all hopes for Pyongyang's denuclearisation, a goal to which the Kremlin is, in theory, still committed. But Putin may well decide that this is the least of his problems at this time.

The second consideration is potentially more

(imports decreased by 15%). But Seoul joined these sanctions only reluctantly, and many South Korean companies continue operating in Russia. South Korea is something of a weak link in the western sanctions front, a situation the Kremlin could exploit to its advantage if it had the tactical acumen to do so.

Putin may conclude, however, that by forging a new relationship with Pyongyang he could increase his leverage with South Korea. He may believe that the closer the relationship becomes between himself and Kim, the more eager South Korean policymakers will be to maintain dialogue with Russia. It was this

logic that in the late 1980s led the South Korean president, Roh Tae-woo, to launch the policy of nordpolitik - reaching out to Moscow to put pressure on Pyongyang. In fact, Putin's courting of North Korea early in his own presidency followed exactly this logic.

The third consideration that may weigh on Putin's mind is whether North Korea is a trustworthy partner. In fact, it most certainly is not. Pyongyang spent the cold war exploiting disagreements among its allies and playing them off against one another. It proved notoriously wilful and unpredictable and, on more than one occasion (for instance, during its 1968 capture of the USS Pueblo and its 1969 downing of a US EC-121 surveillance plane), pulled tricks that could have dragged Moscow into an unwanted confrontation with the US. North Korea is also well known for becoming an economic burden on its reluctant friends and partners. What bargain Kim will attempt to drive with Russia is still unknown, but he is unlikely to sell himself cheaply.

Despite these considerations, Putin may well have already made the strategic choice to draw closer to North Korea. This is in part the consequence of the new situation Russia finds itself in. The demise of the post-cold war world and the return of bloc mentality tend to encourage these kinds of realignments. The elephant in the room is Pyongyang's longtime sponsor China, which has also been drawing closer to Russia by the logic of its own deepening conflict with the US. The last time these three countries were on the same wavelength was in the late 1940s to early 1950s, which cannot be described as a happy time for north-east Asia. It is as yet unclear whether Kim will meet Putin, but the relationship between their countries is clearly shifting. And not because North Korea is changing, but because Russia is. It is beginning to look more and more like North Korea. Whether or not North Korean armaments find their way to the frontlines in Ukraine, Russia's descent into the depths of tyranny will put a smile of satisfaction on Kim's face.

The Guardian

Ozone layer protocol a model for successful multilateralism

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

THE International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, which is designated by the United Nations General Assembly, will be marked next Saturday. It is important to consider the following issues: What is the current status of the ozone layer, what can we do to further restore, heal and protect the ozone layer, and what lessons can be learned from the unified international efforts that have been carried out in order to address this critical environmental issue?

Every year, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated on Sept. 16 in order to commemorate the date in 1987 that the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was signed. The Montreal Protocol should be hailed as one of the most successful international treaties or agreements in human history. This is partially due to the fact that the treaty was ratified by 198 countries, all members of the UN. In addition, the Montreal Protocol should be used as an example for other treaties and global initiatives when it comes to taking action to combat or prevent environmental catastrophes.

After scientists began issuing warnings about the state of the ozone layer and its depletion in the 1970s and 1980s, world leaders in both the environmental and political arenas came together and in 1985 they signed the multilateral international and environmental agreement known as the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. This treaty played a key role in reducing the production of chlorofluorocarbons, which were instrumental in the depletion of the ozone layer. The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer ultimately laid the framework for the Montreal Protocol, which aimed to phase out a number of chemicals, including chlorofluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons, which were contributing to a hole in the ozone layer above Antarctica. According to the treaty, the parties to the protocol recognized the fact that "worldwide emissions of certain substances can significantly deplete and otherwise modify the ozone layer in a manner that is likely to result in adverse effects on human health and the environment. Determined to protect the ozone layer by taking precautionary measures to control equitably total global emissions of substances that deplete it with the ultimate objective of their elimination on the basis of developments in scientific knowledge."

It is worth noting that the ozone layer protects life on our planet because it absorbs harmful ultraviolet radiation that comes from the sun. As with many other environmental issues, the problem with the ozone layer was caused by human actions. The main cause of the depletion of the ozone layer was human-made chemicals including propellants, halocarbon refrigerants, solvents and foam-blowing agents, such as chlorofluorocarbons, hydrochlorofluorocarbons and halons. The depletion of the ozone layer caused humans to be exposed to damaging ultraviolet rays. As well as leading to skin diseases, cataracts, cancer and impaired immune systems, these harmful rays also cause harm to plants and marine ecosystems. The landmark Montreal Protocol and the global efforts to address this environmental issue paid off, as the ozone layer began to recover. Some scientists believe that, by 2040, the ozone layer covering most of the world will be fully healed to the level it was before human-made chemicals caused its depletion nearly 50 years ago. But our job is not totally done. We should continue conducting scientific research on the ozone layer and eliminate any new substances or chemicals that could damage it. We should also continue to work on phasing out hydrofluorocarbons, which are coolants often used in refrigerators and air conditioners.

Nevertheless, the Montreal Protocol is a success story in addressing one of the world's most important environmental issues. Several lessons can be learned from this landmark agreement and ought to be applied to combating the other environmental catastrophes that the world faces. The most important lesson is that all countries, governments and industries came together, alongside the scientific community, in order to address this critical issue.

Secondly, multilateral agreements are more likely to be effective in terms of their enforcement and implementation and they are more likely to be firm and durable if they are endorsed by all UN member states, rather than being imposed by a few powerful countries. The third great thing about the Montreal Protocol is that it is constantly being updated with new amendments based on scientific studies and findings in order to improve the situation. For example, the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol came into effect in 2019 and it aims to phase out other ozone-depleting substances, particularly in cooling systems. These lessons can be applied to the current climate change crisis, which poses several critical threats and has already inflicted crippling losses across the world. One of the most important issues in the climate crisis is that it is impacting almost every sector and every person and animal on Earth. Tackling the climate crisis is not only about protecting and preserving biodiversity and the planet, but it is also related to protecting our future and that of the coming generations.

In conclusion, the Montreal Protocol is one of the great success stories of multilateralism, showing how governments, scientists and industries can come together to address and resolve a critical environmental issue. This ought to be an example for fighting other environmental crises, such as climate change and global warming.

Arab News

European Commission President to lay out second-term vision

Andrew Hammond

EUROPEAN Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will give the most important speech of her career next week, in what could be her last annual "state of the union" address to the EU.

Almost four years into her presidency, the EU faces a crossroads moment in the aftermath of the pandemic and amid the Ukraine war. The array of challenges and opportunities facing the bloc means it is at a potentially historic tipping point between the past and a hopefully brighter new dawn in the second half of the 2020s.

Von der Leyen hopes to lead that future by serving a second term from late 2024, but that will depend upon the political horse-trading that follows the result of next June's European Parliament elections. Even if she does not serve as European Commission president again, it is possible she may land another big job, with US President Joe Biden reported-

ly wanting her to serve as the next NATO secretary-general.

When Von der Leyen took office in December 2019, she could not have foreseen that the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine would be the decisive challenges of her presidency. Yet they have dominated and it is sometimes now forgotten that COVID-19 nearly forced her resignation as a result of the EU's bungled initial rollout of vaccines in 2021. For all of the challenges that the pandemic and the Ukraine war have brought, this crisis-type environment is one that the EU has sometimes previously found congenial to clearing the pathway to ever closer union. Coming to office during a troubled period for the bloc, he is seen by many as giving the present-day EU a clear sense of direction, including as the founding father of the euro. In his first term from 1985, he rallied the bloc to the call of the single market and, when appointed to a second term, he urged

Europeans to embrace the ambitious goals of economic, monetary and political union. While history may not see Von der Leyen's presidency as being quite so historically important as that of Delors, she has delivered a number of big achievements. For one, von der Leyen played a key role in 2021, alongside then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron, in persuading EU leaders to agree to give the bloc - for the first time in its history - debt-raising powers to finance a 750 billion (\$804 billion) post-coronavirus recovery plan to counteract its worst economic shock for decades.

This could be looked back on as a key moment for the EU. At the time, there was even discussion in Brussels of a "Hamiltonian moment," in reference to Alexander Hamilton, the US treasury secretary who, in 1790, convinced the nascent Congress of the benefits of common

debt. Earlier in her presidency, in 2020, Von der Leyen was key to the EU-27 and the UK agreeing a Brexit trade and cooperation deal. While tensions still exist with London, this has provided a potentially workable framework between the parties to try to build a new phase of UK-EU partnership in the years to come, especially now that a revised Northern Ireland protocol has been agreed.

Yet another big achievement was the huge scope of her Green Deal megaproject. This has seen more than 50 major sustainability initiatives rolled out since 2019, as Europe seeks to become the first continent in the world to be climate neutral, with a target date of 2050. Ahead of her big speech next week, Von der Leyen has hinted that she will again focus not only on Ukraine, but also on this green vision for the post-pandemic EU. This will include a big section on climate action, with COP28 on the horizon.

Von der Leyen will therefore reemphasize her belief that it is critical for the bloc, which has a population of more than 400 million, to be ambitious and seize the initiative in the coming years. The alternative, in her view, is further drift of the type that has characterized EU affairs for so long. As well as opportunities on the horizon, there are also risks. Indeed, recent years have seen a huge growth in domestic and external challenges that may be without precedent in the post-Second World War era.

On the domestic front, there has been a significant rise in anti-EU, nationalist sentiment across the continent, which has seen populist arguments coming to the fore, as well as a perceived erosion of the fundamental values of liberal democracy. This is personified by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who enjoys the closest relationship with Russia's Vladimir Putin of any EU leader and who has, in the last year and a half,

stymied a number of key sanctions-related activities against Moscow following its invasion of Ukraine. On the international front, meanwhile, is a new geopolitical reality - and not just from an increasingly assertive Russia. There is also massive uncertainty from the US, with the key 2024 presidential election potentially offering a stark international relations choice between the strong Atlanticist Joe Biden and the pro-Brexit, anti-EU Donald Trump. Von der Leyen's speech will seek to make clear that the decisions made in late 2023 and 2024 will have a huge role in defining the EU's longer-term political and economic character in the face of multiple opportunities and challenges, including Ukraine. With storm clouds perhaps gathering again, she is right that there may now be a historic window of opportunity for the continent to forge a stronger, more sustainable path into the future.

Tories can't afford to capitulate to the trans cult

READING Brave New World recently, I came across "mother" rendered as "m-----". In Aldous Huxley's dystopia, the word for female parent has become an obscenity. The idea of giving birth and living in families is disgusting and those people who reproduce normally are despised outcasts. Any preference for one person over another has been eliminated.

Huxley's science fiction classic was published in 1932. Ninety-one years later, staff at Great Ormond Street children's hospital (GOSH) are being advised not to use the inflammatory words "girls" and "boys". Guidance produced by the hospital's Diversity and Inclusion team and Pride Network, entitled "Using Pronouns at GOSH", suggests that they stop using "gendered language" in conversation. Apparently, the wrong pronouns can make people feel "disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, triggered, alienated, or often, all of these things". A friend's child died at Great Ormond Street. My friend was Sophia's mother, a woman. Sophia was my friend's darling daughter, born of a woman. Neither of those statements would be remotely controversial to the parents who hover tenderly, fearfully, at their child's bedside in that remarkable institution. In fact, telling them their sick infants are non-binary creatures whose sex is an affront to the purple-haired, rainbow-lanyarded activists in the Diversity Office would cause distress and bewilderment.

But who cares what normal people think, eh? What matters is the noble goal of "inclusion" and if the vast majority demurs then they'd better buck up their ideas and become an "ally" of the minuscule minority whose feelings we are now busy rewriting the English language to spare. You would hope that a Conservative Government would know what its role was here. It's pretty clear, isn't it? Stand firm against an

Allison Pearson

aggressive, vocal minority that is imposing its fashionable ideology on the rest of us while providing support to confused children going through that Krakatoa of the hormones known as puberty.

An opportunity to do just that presented itself when ministers were called upon to resolve the issue of "social transitioning" at school: that's where kids who say they are trans ask to be referred to by a different pronoun and wear the uniform of the opposite sex. Jill decides to be Jack. It's a fast-spreading contagion. Gender dysphoria used to be a rare condition presenting almost exclusively in young boys. Now, there are thousands of teenage girls, for whom anorexia often used to be the malady, asking to be treated as male, with or without parental consent. One poor teacher told me she had referred to a student as "she" only to be hotly rebuked. It turned out the pupil was suddenly identifying as a boy although, unhelpfully, she looked exactly as she had done the day before. A complaint was lodged and, astonishingly, the head told the teacher she was guilty of "misgendering" and must apologise to the child.

As places dealing in factual knowledge, schools surely can not be seen to be accommodating fictional claims that lack any basis in biological science. Worried parents have eagerly awaited action from the Government which would make that crystal clear. Then, back in January, Education Secretary Gillian Keegan dropped worrying hints that a cowardly compromise was on the cards. "We have to be very sensitive to children," she said. "We are actually going to publish some guidance and consult because it is a very tricky area to get right." Asked whether she thought 16 was too young for gender self-identification (without medical verification), Keegan replied, "No, I don't actually. I was working at 16, I was paying tax at

16, I was making decisions for myself at 16." What an unforgivably fatuous statement from a minister presiding over so many young lives. Keegan's "decisions" at 16 didn't involve binding her breasts as preparation for "top surgery" (the jarringly jaunty term for a mastectomy) or taking puberty hormones that might wreck her fertility. And at an age when our society considers a kid too young to drink, drive or get married. Forget all that lifelong harm stuff. This week, we learnt that Rishi Sunak is "considering abandoning plans to ban children from changing gender at schools". The Prime Minister was told by Attorney General Victoria Prentis that a law was needed to bar social transitioning, because otherwise it could contravene the Equality Act. Sunak may be backing away from including such a law in this autumn's King's Speech. Apparently, he's worried about party differences being exposed in the Commons in the run-up to an election.

With a Labour victory on the horizon this is the last chance to enshrine protection for millions of impressionable youngsters and to give parents peace of mind that their kids aren't being inducted into some sinister cult at school. The Conservative government may now fail to do so. How dismayingly gutless, how morally inert. Frozen, scared stiff of saying the wrong thing and upsetting people who would never vote for them in a million years, the Tories are fretting instead about being "on the wrong side of history". Have we totally lost the plot? The Government can summon the resolve to rush an Energy Bill through the Commons this week which could get you arrested for not limiting your energy consumption (dishwashers at 3am, chaps) in the debatable cause of net zero. Yet when it comes to safeguarding children, their health both physical and mental, suddenly it may be all too difficult. Be kind to vulnerable trans kids, they

cry. Yet, as the excoriating Cass Report into the Tavistock Gender Identity Clinic said, "social transition" is not a "neutral act" but a major psychosocial intervention that may affect whether a child's gender distress disappears or becomes long-lasting. In other words, refuse to treat Katie as Karl, insist on a degree of good old-fashioned conformity in school hours and the phase may well pass.

As the organisation Sex Matters notes, Hilary Cass rejected the ideological label of "trans children", which suggests a well-defined category and wrote instead of young people who may be going through a difficult developmental stage and are likely to be harmed if a potentially transient personal identification is treated as stable and permanent. Your average tricky teenager in other words. And what about the negative effect of one student transitioning on hundreds of other pupils and staff? Many schools which are facilitating social transition, often without informing parents, are going beyond supporting changes of name and preferred pronoun, allowing a trans pupil to use facilities intended for the opposite sex and to play single-sex sports. Why shouldn't that make the majority of children feel "invalidated, dismissed, triggered and alienated"?

"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored," wrote Huxley. Prophetic in so many ways, he was wrong about that, or very nearly. The basic facts of humanity - girls and boys, mothers and fathers - are stealthily being erased by people who wish to remodel society in their own image. To ban social transitioning in schools would be a big step towards rescuing fact from fiction, and rescuing some children, too. That's not finding yourself on the wrong side of history. It's being on the right side of decency and common sense. Rishi Sunak should give it a go.

Energizing Sino-US ties: A path of promise

Edward Lehman

IN the dynamic world of international relations, fostering collaboration and nurturing partnerships is vital for a prosperous global future. This is especially true for the United States and China, the two largest economies in the world. As a US citizen who has lived and worked in Beijing for almost four decades, and is general counsel to AmChamUS, I have been fortunate to witness the evolution of this profoundly important relationship.

The recent high-level discussions between US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Chinese officials show the commitment of both nations to enhance cooperation and address global challenges with a positive outlook. Raimondo is the fourth high-level US official to visit China in recent months, as also the first US commerce secretary to do so in five years. The visit comes at a time when many commentators suggest that the China-US relationship is at a low point. However, such challenges are not at all surprising when one considers the rapidly changing economic, social and political nature of the world, and the magnitude of the relationship. As noted by the secretary: "It's a complicated relationship. There's no doubt about it. We are in a fierce competition with China at every level, and anyone who tells you differently is naive." She added, "We have to manage this competition. Conflict is in no one's interest."

Raimondo's visit to China, and direct talking points, underscore the United States' dedication to strengthening its relationship with China. These discussions at the highest level of government play a pivotal role in building trust and addressing pressing global challenges.

During her conversations with Premier Li Qiang and Vice Premier He Lifeng, Raimondo emphasized the significance of open communication and tackled a range of concerns affecting American businesses in China. The commerce secretary stated that: "This isn't about decoupling. This is about maintaining our very consequential trade relationship, which is good for America, good for China, and good for the world." The message is

clear: the United States does not seek to sever economic ties with China but rather aims to ensure that the relationship is mutually beneficial and stable. Raimondo stated that: "No commerce secretary has been tougher than I on China." While we applaud the efforts of the administration to take a firm position, what is needed now more than ever is a common sense approach, and a way forward, which we believe can be accomplished by taking a practical approach to address issues one by one. We see the recent granting of air route rights by the US to China Airlines as exactly the type of common sense policy implementation which has win-win consequences for both sides.

With regard to trade, among the most contentious trade policies between the two countries has been the imposition of tariffs on China-made products, a policy that is mostly a continuation of one pursued by the previous administration. In return, China has imposed its own tariffs on US imports. Evidence shows that tariffs have resulted in job losses, hurt the US agricultural market and lead to higher prices. According to David Weinstein, an economist at Columbia University, "The tariffs protect the least efficient firms and reduced their incentives to innovate while hurting the most successful US firms, reducing their ability to innovate." It seems the two countries can immediately achieve a breakthrough if they mutually agree to eliminate the tariffs.

Beyond addressing economic concerns, Raimondo also highlighted the importance of cooperation on broader global issues like climate change, the opioid crisis, and artificial intelligence. The Chinese side, in turn, expressed its desire for reduced export controls on advanced technology and the retraction of certain executive orders. While national security remains a top priority for the United States, it is evident that both nations recognize the potential for collaboration on critical global challenges.

Citing national security concerns, the Biden administration has imposed addi-

tional restrictions on export of high technology and investments in US tech companies. According to Raimondo: "We are not going to sell the most sophisticated American chips to China that they want for their military capacity. But I do want to be clear, we will also still continue to sell billions of dollars of chips a year to China, because the vast majority of chips that are made are not the leading edge, cutting edge that I'm talking about."

In fact the Biden administration's policies with regard to high tech only affect a very small percentage of the entire US-China economic relationship. By far the majority of US-China trade does not impact national security. China strongly opposes US' restrictions on investments in China stating that it "violates the principles of market economy and fair competition". In the short term these restrictions may reduce issues related to national security. In the long run, these restrictions will likely encourage China to improve its domestic industries, while depriving US companies of export opportunities. This effect can be seen in the new Huawei phone, which has an octa-core HiSilicon 5nm chipset CPU known as Kirin 9000s. Raimondo said that selling certain chips to China will ultimately generate revenue for American businesses to invest in further research and development. It remains to be seen if this is the case.

Chinese officials have welcomed Raimondo's visit as an opportunity to reduce tensions and address concerns. It is heartening to see both sides engaging in constructive dialogue and emphasizing the importance of rational and practical policies. While obstacles may exist, it is crucial to remain positive about the potential for collaboration and mutual benefit. As we move forward, the two countries should continue to make progress in areas that are easily achievable, like eliminating tariffs. Raimondo insisted that "no one is more realistic than I am about the challenges" with China. We hope that both sides can be realistic about the upside that can come from cooperation and achieving cooperation as much as possible.

Sorry Trumpers, there won't be a US civil war for 2024

Andrew Mitrovica

EVERY once in a while, Sarah Palin tries to escape the purgatory of irrelevancy by doing or saying something that the failed Congressional candidate is likely convinced will inject her back, however briefly, into the cultural zeitgeist. It must be galling for the former Republican "it girl!"- who was plucked from obscurity and thrust into the ego-swelling limelight as John McCain's running mate in 2008 - to watch from afar as the diabolical duo of Marjorie Taylor Greene and Lauren Boebert slowly and inevitably overtook her in the calcified hearts and conspiracy-consumed minds of the party's looney tunes faithful.

And so, it was hardly surprising when, in late August, Palin attracted a fleeting burst of life-affirming attention while appearing on exiled Fox News personality Eric Bolling's derivative chat show on the cable news network equivalent of purgatory, Newsmax. Bolling began a follow-up "interview" with Palin with this remarkably astute introduction. "Joining me now to assess all of the Left's craziness in America is former Alaska governor, Sarah Palin."

Who better to "assess" and discuss what constitutes "craziness" than the still reigning avatar of "craziness" herself? Despite her diminished profile, Palin has been busy reconfirming those credentials. She told Bolling a few days earlier in the same contrived setting that Donald Trump's arraignment in Georgia - on a slew of felony charges in connection with a mob-type scheme to overturn his 2020 election loss in the state - was going to provoke a "civil war".

"Those who are conducting this

travesty and creating this two-tier system of justice, I want to ask them: What the heck. Do you want us to be in a civil war? Because that's what's going to happen. We're not going to keep putting up with this," Palin said. "We need to get angry. We do need to rise up and take our country back." Palin's rather lame rallying cry was chock-a-block with the predictable bromides meant to "fire up" - she forgot that one - Bolling's tiny pool of perpetually seething, star burst-gravitating viewers. It was Palin's explicit suggestion - framed, conveniently, as a consequence-free "question" - that a "civil war" was in the offing that caused, in her self-absorbed gambit, an agreeable stir.

Bolling had Palin return to "clarify" her typically incendiary remarks. Palin was, I suspect, more than happy to oblige since it meant doing what she loves most to do, stare - with a frozen look of golly-gee amazement - into a camera. Palin claimed, unconvincedly, that her "words" had been "twisted" and that she was forced to "hunker down" in light of the "threats, lies, and false accusations". Happily, Palin was able to emerge from her warm, alternative-universe cocoon for five minutes or so to insist that she was just asking - golly gee whiz - a question of the "Left". No foul. No harm. "I asked a question," Palin said. "And I will repeat exactly that question ... what is it that you want, Left? Do you want a civil war because we don't. I don't." Now, I'm not sure which "left" Palin was addressing in her exculpatory screed since the "left" as an organised, political principle of any coherent persuasion is an inconsequential outlier in

America. But Palin and company need not fret. America is not going to devolve into a "civil war" - beyond the entrenched ideological and rhetorical divisions that have been a defining characteristic of the disfigured US body politic for generations. Palin is not the first, nor will she be the last, cable news swamp-addicted grifter to urge millions of malleable, cable news swamp addicts to "rise up" and "take America back" in what would amount to the charge of the MAGA not-so-bright brigade from the familiar comfort of a New York television studio or, in the former vice-presidential nominee's case, her Stars and Stripes-draped basement. A trial run occurred on January 6, 2021, when the Capitol was attacked in order to prevent - through intimidation and violence - the certification of Joe Biden's election as president.

After ginning up Oath Keeper and Proud Boys-led insurrectionists into a wild froth, Trump took quick refuge in the White House to watch and applaud his sinister designs unfold from what he apparently considered a safe and protective distance. Rest assured, Palin will follow Trump's cowardly lead and avoid being anywhere near "on point" in any real or imagined reprise of the mad, cacophonous events of January 6. She, like Trump, would stay well in the rear. The gullible minions are expendable, not Sarah Palin.

But Palin ought to be careful what she wishes for - or not. A gang of once cocky, strutting Oath Keeper and Proud Boy leaders has been convicted of sedition and sentenced to stiff prison sentences, including the

polo shirt-wearing proudest Proud Boy of them all: Enrique Tarrio, who will be spending the next 22 years in federal prison - which may or may not damage his pride. He joins scores of other cockeyed cosplay enthusiasts turned would-be "revolutionaries" jailed across the US for having stormed Congress. Trump, the insurrectionist-in-chief, has been indicted for his precipitating role in encouraging, fomenting and planning a failed coup d'état.

A wise jury willing, Trump could soon be sharing a cell block with Tarrio to reminisce about those exciting, not-so-distant better days when they attempted to thwart the peaceful transfer of presidential power. Sure, Trump's maniacal followers are content to fly MAGA flags on their porches and from the back of their blaring pick-up trucks, but I doubt they're prepared, these days, to heed another self-aggrandising charlatan's call to "civil war" and to risk an extended stay at the crowbar hotel.

They and Palin will take considerable solace, I'm sure, in knowing that, if he is re-elected, Trump - ever the rule of law-allergic authoritarian - would exact a swift and satisfying measure of revenge by promptly keeping his jarring vow to imprison his political opponents. "I will be president in one and a half years, and we will pick the strongest, toughest, and most respected attorney general, and if guilty, we will put them all in jail where they belong," the four-time indicted and probable Republican presidential nominee promised on Wednesday on Truth Social. If that junta-inspired horror happens, Palin might get her civil war - or not.

Aljazeera

Towards the end of the liberal order: BRICS Summit

Ibrahim Orçun Gökürk

FOUNDED in 2009, BRICS, which was initially about cooperation in finance, development and trade, is evolving into a structure that will have major geopolitical and geostrategic significance for the peoples of the world with the accession of new members at the latest summit in South Africa, in the third week of the last month.

What was more remarkable than the accession of six new countries from three continents was the fact that more than 40 countries applied for membership. This shows us once again that the "international order" inherited from the 20th century and demarcated by imperialist hegemonies is not working and that the developing countries of the world, need a new order.

The imperialist plunderers ensured their own development at the expense of the rest of the world. But by the last quarter of the 20th century, the rise of Asian countries, China in particular, continued steadily into the 21st century. This has been accompanied by continued independence movements in Africa and Latin America, even with some setbacks. From the second half of the last century to today, there were those who called for a "flat world" and those who proclaimed the "end of history", those who tried to explain the new situation as a "convergence" of development between the Global South and the North... Now that almost all of them have

shelved their liberal credo, it did not take them long to realize that the irreconcilable contradictions between the exploiters and the exploited persist and that the majority of the world is against them. The BRICS summit, which was held in Johannesburg on August 22-24, came together for all oppressed nations with the aim of determining the course of the world after the US-centered liberal order. It was decided that Argentina, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Ethiopia will officially become BRICS members from the beginning of next year, sending a strong message to Washington. Thus, a period has entered in which the interests of the developing countries of the world will be better brought to the world agenda and the struggle against imperialism will be strengthened.

It seems that BRICS will provide new solutions to the problem of "accumulation of private and public debts", which Russian President Putin emphasized at the beginning of his video message to the Summit. Putin also emphasized "unilateral sanctions that violate international law" and reassured confidence by talking about the economic superiority of the 5 BRICS founding countries over the US-based G7 with empirical data. By the way, Russia will assume the BRICS presidency next year. Russia's slogan for the first

summit of the expanded BRICS+, expected to be held in Kazan in October 2024, is expected to be "Strengthening Multilateralism for Global Development and Security Justice". One of the unofficial agenda items of the summit was "de-dollarization". Although some Western experts said after the summit that this was "unsustainable", the process of de-dollarization has already begun. Although the BRICS Summit in South Africa did not officially include a "reserve currency" agenda, there was a will to increase trade in local currencies.

In 2015, BRICS established the "New Development Bank" to counter US-dominated financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF. The bank already loans in the Chinese renminbi, and after the summit it was announced that the national currencies of South Africa and Brazil would be added to this. The bank also aims to announce the first Indian rupee bond by October (note that India recently signed a trade agreement with the United Arab Emirates to trade in national currencies instead of US dollars). At a time when international developments have become almost entropic, BRICS is now on the verge of a new era in the 21st century with 6 new developing countries.

Moreover, most of the new countries are from West Asia and are

energy giants. In this way, we can say that BRICS has taken an advantageous position in the geopolitical rupture in terms of pricing energy products and managing the responsibilities and vulnerabilities of countries in terms of the cost of oil. The fact that more than 40 countries have joined the membership queue shows that the developing world, uncomfortable with the liberal world order, is more firmly committed to real alternatives.

In the last 5 years, Türkiye and the developing world countries have been increasingly facing foreign exchange shortages amid major geopolitical transformations such as the pandemic and the Ukraine issue. The main problem, of course, is that these countries have been detached from their national production and their national currencies have been constantly devalued in the last 50 years within the international imperialist division of labor based on neoliberalism. The oppressed countries of the world, looking for an alternative to the Paris Club, needing more loans from the New Development Bank. But even more important is the need for a new order that does not achieve its development by plundering other countries, but by making common, equal, just, people-centered and non-interference in each other's internal affairs as the basic principle of its foreign policy. This is what BRICS offers to the world.

The China Daily

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Weekly inflation up by 0.96 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.96 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on September 7, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 279.87 points as compared to 277.21 points during the past week, according to the PBS data.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 26.32 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.77 percent and went up to 285.27 points from last week's 283.10 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.81 percent, 0.80 percent, 0.87 and 1.06 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 32 (62.75%) items increased, 05 (9.80%) items decreased and 14 (27.45%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included chicken (3.20%), cooking oil 5 liters (1.03%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.47%), tea packet (0.43%) and vegetable ghee 1 kg (0.14%). The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis, included tomatoes (17.00%), pulse masoor (10.87%), sugar (6.73%), garlic (4.66%), gur (3.62%), pulse moong (3.55%), onions (3.43%) and pulse gram (3.25%), non-food items, diesel (6.28%), LPG (5.19%) and petrol (5.12%).

The commodities that

witnessed a decrease in price on a year-on-year (yoy) basis, included tomatoes (34.77%), onions (23.44%), and electricity for q1 (21.96%).

On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices included wheat flour (117.71%), gas charges for q1 (108.38%), sugar (107.36%), cigarettes (100.16%), rice basmati broken (90.66%), tea packet (88.41%), chilies powder (86.05%), rice irri-6/9 (84.18%), gur (72.83%), gents sponge chappal (58.05%), gents sandal (53.37%), salt powdered (52.07%), powdered milk (42.45%) and bread (42.33%).

Speakers for expanding trade ties between Pakistan, Egypt

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers at a conference held in Cairo, Egypt have stressed for expanding trade ties and boosting cooperating in various sectors between Pakistan and Egypt. The Embassy of Pakistan in Egypt, in collaboration with Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), organized the Pakistan-Egypt Business Opportunities Conference in Cairo, said a press release received here on Friday.

The purpose of the conference was to enhance bilateral trade and investment ties between the two countries. The conference coincided with the ongoing celebrations of 75th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Egypt. Minister for Public Business Sector of Egypt Engineer Mahmoud Esmat, graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Head of Egyptian Commercial Services, Yahya El-Wathik Bellah Ahmed, high-ranking government officials,

members of diplomatic community, representatives of Chambers of Commerce of Egypt and a large number of Egyptian businessmen attended the event.

The Chief Guest, in his remarks, appreciated the efforts of business communities of both countries in strengthening economic ties. In his statement, Yahya El-Wathik Bellah highlighted the mutual desire of the two sides to boost cooperation in various sectors including agriculture, energy, housing, tourism, textile and food etc. He also stressed the need to create new avenues for investments.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Egypt Sajid Bilal thanked the Egyptian government and Chambers of Commerce for extending all possible support for making the event a success. He highlighted the efforts of the Government of Pakistan to attract foreign investment especially from the brotherly countries through the formation of Special Investment Facilitation Council.

The Ambassador praised

the role of Pakistani and Egyptian companies in promoting bilateral commercial relations. He highlighted the ongoing mechanisms and mutual efforts of the two governments in realizing full potential of trade and investment between Pakistan and Egypt.

President of RCCI Saqib Rafiq Shahraiz Malik and Group Leader of RCCI Sohail Altaf briefed the audience on the role of RCCI and private sector in enhancing Pakistan's trade with countries across the globe. They noted that the presence of more than 150 delegates from various business sectors of Pakistan in the conference is an evidence of the importance people of Pakistan attach to Egypt. It also reflects the priority given to Africa by the government of Pakistan and the outstanding prospects for forging commercial linkages with Egypt.

The companies from the two sides signed seven MoUs for mutual cooperation in education, tourism, and food sectors.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, Big Breeze, MSC Shay, Express Athens, Navois Lapis, Banglar Agrogoti and PVT Elena carrying Container, Palm oil and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile three more ships, PVT Flora, Acadia Park and Limra with Palm oil, Chemicals and LPG are also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during the same period. A total of 09 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Express Athens, Navois Lapis and Ullswater sailed out to sea on Friday, while five more ships, PVT Elena, TTC Vidyut, Star Crimson, MSC Shay and Big Breeze are expected to sail on same day. A cargo volume of 98,795 tonnes, comprising 73,941 tonnes imports Cargo and 24,854 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,123 Containers (661 TEUs Imports and 1,462 TEUs export) was handled during last 24 hours.



BAHAWALPUR: A vendor is selling carpets at a roadside stall.

PSX turns around, gains 256 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Friday and gained 256.25 points, showing growth of 0.56 percent, closing at 46,013.49 points against 45,757.24 points the previous trading day.

A total of 149,572,246 shares were traded during the day as compared to

177,062,657 shares, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs 5,551 billion against Rs 7,581 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 312 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 166 of them recorded gains and 115 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 31 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were TPL Properties with 11,949,265 shares at Rs 12.72 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 11,039,918 shares at Rs 1.17 per share and Bank Al-Falah with 9,272,484 shares at Rs 40.82 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 100.00 per

share price, closing at Rs 7,100.00, whereas the runner-up was Mehmood Textile with Rs 43.13 rise in its per share price to Rs 618.13.

Rafhan Maize XD witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 150.00 per share closing at Rs 7,850.00; followed by Indus Motor Company with Rs 12.30 decline to close at Rs 944.97.

Business leaders demand charter of economy to ensure long-term business policies

ISLAMABAD (APP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Friday stressed that all political parties should agree to sign a Charter of Economy in order to ensure long-term business and economic policies that would help attract local and foreign investment. Besides, it facilitated the growth of trade and industrial activities, boost exports and revive the economy, he added.

He said this while addressing a reception hosted in his honor by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, former President ICCI and CEO Centaurus Mall, Islamabad.

The prominent business leaders of the twin cities including representatives of various trade unions/ trade associations like All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajir, Anjuman-e-Tajir, Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajir, and members of business community were present on the occasion.

Ahsan Bakhtawari urged the government to formulate a 10-year economic policy that would help the business community and the investors to make long-term business and investment plans in Pakistan.

He further urged that all political parties should present their economic

manifestoes to give a clear direction to the business community about the future economic outlook of the country. Former President ICCI, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan stressed to include prominent business figures from the twin cities in the Special Investment Facilitation Council to represent the voice of the business community in its decision-making process.

Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI urged that all economic policies should be formed in consultation with the private sector that would improve the confidence of the business community and investors ultimately leading to the better

revival of the economy. President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Saqib Rafique, President Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Rizwana Asif Group Leader RCCI, Sohail Altaf President Federation of Realtors Pakistan, Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Dr. Rashid Ilyas Khan, Ch. Nadeem ud Din and others also spoke on the occasion.

They urged the government to take measures to stabilize the local currency, bring down the dollar rate, increase exports, reduce tariffs, and improve the ease of doing business in the country that would help revive the economy.

Asian markets extend losses as US rate hike fears build

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Stocks sank again Friday after another report pointing to a resilient US jobs market added to the misery for investors who fear the Federal Reserve is not finished with its campaign of monetary tightening.

The losses extended a sell-off endured for most of the week as various indicators suggested the world's top economy was in rude health and the battle against inflation was still far from won, while Chinese data showed continued weakness. It followed a tough day on Wall Street, which was also hit by a sharp drop in Apple fuelled by concerns about China's decision to ban government departments from using iPhones.

Traders are now gearing up for policy decisions by major central banks towards the end of the month, with the Federal Reserve concluding a much-anticipated meeting on September 20.

Markets largely expect data-driven US officials to

keep rates on hold at a two-decade high, having seen inflation come down in response to more than a year of hikes and signs of a softening labour market.

However, the latest set of strong readings -- including on the services sector and jobs -- and a surge in oil prices have sparked fears the Fed will announce one more hike before the end of the year or keep borrowing costs elevated for an extended period, risking a recession. Those worries were compounded Thursday by news that jobs claims came in below forecasts last week. "The higher-for-longer interest rate narrative and the inevitable lag effect of monetary policy create uncertainty around the Federal Reserve's ability to steer its monetary policies precisely," said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management.

"As a result, the Fed's choices in risk management will play a significant role in determining the economy's ultimate trajectory.

"Inflation has spiked significantly above its target and could remain very sticky as Saudi Arabia pursues a balanced budget through higher oil prices. Therefore, it would be wise for the Fed to tighten its monetary policy more instead of less, or at least keep the screws tighter for longer." Meanwhile, Fed officials did little to soothe nerves. New York Fed boss John Williams noted inflation was "moving in the right direction" but more hikes were not out of the question, while Atlanta head Raphael Bostic warned there was "still work to do".

Still, Chicago Fed chief Austan Goolsbee told the Marketplace radio programme: "We are very rapidly approaching the time when our argument is not going to be about how high should the rates go."

Markets across Asia were in the red, while Hong Kong was closed in the morning owing to a strong storm. The yen strength-

ened further against the dollar, having hit a 10-month low earlier in the week on Fed rate bets.

It also got support from Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki, who said authorities were watching forex markets with a high sense of urgency and would keep options open, with a first intervention since November still a possibility. Oil dipped again after a rally on the back of news that Saudi Arabia and Russia had extended an output cut to the end of the year, with economic uncertainty offsetting supply worries.

Tokyo - Nikkei 225: DOWN 0.9 percent at 32,681.31 (break)

Shanghai - Composite: DOWN 0.4 percent at 3,109.74

Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index: Closed for a storm Dollar/yen: DOWN at 147.05 yen from 147.25 yen on Thursday

Euro/dollar: UP at \$1.0722 from \$1.0701 Pound/dollar: UP at \$1.2500 from \$1.2474

APO's role in driving inclusive, innovation-led productivity growth eulogized

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Vice President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Faad Waheed here on Friday praised the Asian Productivity Organization's (APO) role in Asia-Pacific's development while emphasising the need to renew our commitment to inclusive, innovation-led productivity growth.

He said while addressing the closing ceremony of a five-day training program on "Assessor of the Productivity Specialist Certification Program", and welcomed international delegates and expressed gratitude to APO and the National Productivity Organization (NPO) for addressing this crucial topic. The National Productivity Organization (NPO), in collaboration with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), in Tokyo, Japan has organized the training program.

Faad Waheed highlighted the potential of working together with APO to find solutions to long-standing productivity challenges in Pakistan. The program would help in promoting the cause of producing Certified Productivity Professionals in Pakistan to support and propagate the agenda of creating a productivity improvement culture in Pakistan.

He further said that to meet the current productivity challenges of Pakistan and to achieve sustainable productivity and economic growth, NPO Pakistan is closely working with APO Tokyo. Program Officer, APO Japan Zafarullah Khan expressed his gratitude to the government of Pakistan for their sincere efforts to continue the Productivity Movement. He appreciated the efforts of the APO Country Director for his strong leadership and support, and the

NPO head for his keen interest. He also mentioned the APO and NPO team for their efforts for Productivity enhancement in the region. Zafarullah apprised the participants about the APO's Journey of success stories and major achievements in the region.

Chief Executive Officer NPO Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry thanked Senior Vice President ICCI and APO Program officer for attending the program.

He said that three other APO member countries, namely Malaysia, Vietnam, and Mongolia, recently attained accreditation for their Certification bodies from APO, in alignment with the vision of their respective country leaders, with the assistance of APO, Japan. The certification body is a strategic initiative which will contribute to productivity initiatives in Pakistan. NPO is facilitating to complement

and strengthen the Ministry's mandate through its vision "Economically Productive and Globally Competitive Pakistan".

NPO is solely responsible for Productivity and Quality enhancement in Pakistan. Recently, NPO Pakistan has attained the status of Certification Body (CB) of the Asian Productivity Organization Accreditation Body (APO-AB) under the scheme of "Certified Productivity Specialists (CPS)".

As an outcome of this training, competent assessors for APO-PS 101 are equipped with skills, knowledge, and ability while maintaining the highest standards in conducting assessments; CBs' capability is developed; and networks among assessors in member economies are strengthened. The training program was attended by 17 overseas participants representing 10 APO member countries, alongside 5 local participants.



MULTAN: A lady vendor displaying handmade household items while waiting for customers near Ghanta Ghar Chowk.

Cotton arrival grew by 49.37 %

ISLAMABAD (APP): Cotton crop arrival in the local markets has witnessed about 49.37 percent growth during the first week of current month (September) as compared the arrival of the same month of last year.

By September 01, 2023 about 3.041 million cotton bales were arrived in local markets as compared the arrival of 1.539 million bales of same month of last year, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

Talking to APP here on Friday, he said that encouraging trend in local cotton output was mainly attributed to the provision of certified quality seeds as well as incentives introduced by the government to ensure proper and fair rate of returns to growers across the county.

The of crop arrival from

Sindh Province, he said also grew by 57.84 percent as the province harvested over 1.901 million of cotton bales as against the arrival of 801,772 bales of same period of last year.

Meanwhile, cotton crop arrival from the Punjab Province were recorded at 1.068 million bales as compared the arrival of 703,993 bales of last year, which posted an increase of 51.82 percent, he added.

The crop arrival from Balochistan grew by 51.92 percent as province harvested 70,600 bales as compared to 33,945 bales of same period last year, he said adding that during the period under review, 168,726 cotton bales were also exported, where as 2,615,271 purchased by the textile sector, which was 49.35 percent higher than the last year's purchase.

He said that the ministry in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders were also organizing awareness on field-secessions for crop management and pest control to achieve higher output. The Ministry of National Food Security and Research in collaboration with Central Cotton Research Institute Multan organized pesticide management workshops for cotton growers in order to avoid their harmful impact on human health and the environment, he added.

Meanwhile, about 25 master trainers were also trained for further disseminating training to growers on innovative crop sowing techniques, fertilizers and pesticide management to enhance the per-acre output of cotton during the current season, he added.

Over 100 farmers from

different crop-producing areas were also trained on the latest production technology, which was aiming to attain higher per-acre cotton output to enhance local production of this major cash crop of the country. Besides, the government was also working to ensure the availability of certified seeds for different crops including cotton, wheat, rice, maize and other major and minor crops to enhance crop output to achieve sustainable agriculture growth and social development in the country.

In this regard, the track and traceability of certified seed was launched and the traceability data revealed that total cotton seed requirements were estimated at 41,048 metric tons, whereas seed availability was registered at 25,986 metric tons.



Pakistan-India Asia Cup match in Colombo gets ‘reserve day’ amid washout scare

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): The much anticipated PAK vs IND clash of the ongoing Asia Cup 2023 Super 4s will have a reserve day, sources told.

According to the details, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has given a green signal for a reserve day for the high-octane clash PAK vs IND clash, scheduled on September 10.

Notably, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) echoed reservations about the scheduling of the Asia Cup 2023 Super 4s stage in Colombo where heavy rainfall is forecast until the end of the tournament.

Consequently, if PAK vs IND clash gets washed out on September 10 then the action will resume on September 11 from the stage it was halted.

Furthermore, if the antic-

ipated clash gets postponed to the reserve day then India will have to play back-to-back matches as they are scheduled to take on Sri Lanka on September 12.

The PAK vs IND clash is the only Asia Cup 2023 Super 4s fixture to have a reserve day.

Rain Threat Persists Despite adding a reserve day for the Super 4s clash between Pakistan and India, dark clouds still loom over the rest of the tournament as the Asia Cup 2023 final and all five remaining Super 4s games are in the capital, where rain is forecast all week.

If all remaining Super 4s fixtures get washed out, Pakistan will qualify for the final with four points as they have already secured two points by thumping Bangladesh by seven wick-

ets on Wednesday.

However, Sri Lanka and India will be tied on three points each, along with the same Net Run Rate and then a coin toss will determine which team will advance into the final to join Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the washouts will result in Bangladesh crashing out of the tournament as they will end up with two points, having already lost a game.

The two fierce rivals came face to face in the group stage of the ongoing Asia Cup 2023 on September 2 but the rain played spoilsport after Pakistan's pace trio of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah booked India on 266.

The second innings of the blockbuster clash could not be possible and the two sides settled for a point each.



KARACHI: Sune Luus and Marizanne Kapp added 183 runs for the fourth wicket, Pakistan vs South Africa, 1st Women's ODI.

Neymar claims Saudi league could top Ligue 1 already

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's football league could already be stronger than France's Ligue 1, says Brazil captain Neymar.

The 31-year-old forward moved to the Saudi Pro League from Paris St-Germain in August for about £77.5m and add-ons.

Neymar joined Al-Hilal in a transfer window that saw Saudi clubs spend more than £700m on overseas players.

"For the names that went to Saudi Arabia, I wouldn't be surprised if the Saudi league is better than the French," he said.

Saudi clubs' spending this summer on international transfers was second only to the Premier League, whose teams spent just under £1.6bn on overseas deals, according to figures from football governing body Fifa.

While Al-Itihad were unable to prise Mohamed Salah away from Liverpool, Salah's former team-mates Jordan Henderson, Roberto Firmino and Fabinho were among the Premier League players to move to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi clubs also lured Neymar's PSG club-mate Georginio Wijnaldum, Real Madrid's Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema and Bayern Munich's Sadio Mane.

Others to make the switch to the Saudi Pro League have included Inter Milan's Champions League final captain Marcelo Brozovic, Barcelona's Franck Kessie, Celtic's Jota and Lazio midfielder Sergej Milinkovic-Savic.

There could have been a new world-record transfer too. PSG gave Al-Hilal permission to talk to Kylian Mbappe after making a £259m bid, but the forward opted to stay with the French champions and Neymar was sold instead.

Neymar helped PSG win five Ligue 1 titles although his time in Paris was hampered by ankle injuries after moving from Barcelona for a record fee of £200m in 2017.

Speaking at a news conference while on Brazilian international duty, Neymar said: "I can assure you the football in Saudi Arabia is the same. The ball is round, we have goalposts."

"There's no secret. We have intense practice there, the thirst to win is still big."

"I want to win trophies with Al-Hilal. It doesn't change much."

Several Premier League managers have criticised the Saudi deadline closing almost a week after Europe's major leagues.

Last week, Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp said the Saudi Pro League feels more like a threat than not. Klopp feels there is a need to "protect the game and make sure European leagues stay as strong as they are."

Meanwhile Henderson, who has been a vocal ally of the LGBTQ+ community, said he was "really hurt" by criticism of his transfer.

His move has been questioned by some LGBTQ+ campaigners, as same-sex sexual activity is illegal in Saudi Arabia.

ICC announce match officials for ICC Men's CWC 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced 20 match officials for the League Round of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup (CWC) 2023 in India.

Sixteen umpires would officiate the 13th edition of the tournament, including all 12 of the Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Umpires and four members of the ICC Emerging Umpire Panel, they are: Chris Brown, Kumar Dharmasena, Marais Erasmus, Chris Gaffaney, Michael Gough, Adrian Holdstock, Richard Illingworth, Richard Kettleborough, Nitin Menon, Ahsan Raza, Paul Reiffel, Sharfuddoula Ibne Shaid, Rod Tucker, Alex Wharf, Joel Wilson and Paul Wilson, said a press release.

The experienced list includes three of the four umpires who were appointed for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019 final at Lord's - Dharmasena, Erasmus and Tucker - with only Aleem Dar missing, who stepped down from the Elite Panel in March of this year.

The Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees is represented at the event by a quartet of former international cricketers, namely, Jeff Crowe, Andy Pycroft, Richie Richardson and Javagal Srinath.

Srinath will take charge of the tournament opener between the last event's finalists, England and New Zealand on 5 October in Ahmedabad. Menon and Dharmasena will be the standing umpires, with Paul Wilson as TV umpire and Saikat taking on fourth umpire duties.

The officials have been named for the entirety of the League segment, with the selections for the semi-finals and final of the tournament to be named in due course.

Wasim Khan, ICC General Manager - Cricket, said, "The ICC Elite panel of umpires, referees, and emerging group of umpires involved will bring

immense skills, experience and world-class standards to this World Cup. We are delighted with the group that we have assembled for this tournament".

"Our competitive pathway system continues to see the development and emergence of high-quality match officials across the game. We are pleased that four members of the ICC Emerging Umpire Panel have earned the opportunity to be part of this showcase event and we wish them, and all the other match officials involved all the very best for the tournament."

Sean Easey, ICC Manager - Umpires and Referees said, "This group is the best from around the world and will be ready to perform a challenging job, with the eyes of the global cricketing community focused on the event. We are confident that they will do an excellent job and wish them all the best of luck for what promises to be a World Cup to remember."

Coco Gauff beats Karolina Muchova, Aryna Sabalenka edges past Madison Keys



NEW YORK (Agencies): American teenager Coco Gauff reached her first US Open singles final by beating Karolina Muchova in a semi-final disrupted by climate protesters.

Gauff, 19, wrapped up a 6-4 7-5 win over Muchova and will face second seed Aryna Sabalenka in Saturday's final. Four protesters chanting for the end of fossil fuels had interrupted the Gauff-Muchova match for 49 minutes.

One man glued his feet to the floor on Arthur Ashe Stadium with some chants of "kick them out" towards the protesters. Security escorted three out but it took longer to the remove the fourth. The United States Tennis Association said all four were in New York Police Department custody.

The drama was confined to the tennis court in the second semi-final where Australian Open champion Sabalenka dug deep to beat Madison Keys 0-6 7-6 (7-1) 7-6 (10-5) and prevent an all-American showpiece in New York.

It will be sixth seed Gauff's second attempt to win a Grand Slam singles final after finishing runner-up to Poland's Iga Swiatek at the 2022 French Open.

Gauff could not convert a match point when serving at 5-4, but broke Czech 10th seed Muchova to seal victory after winning a 40-shot rally to create the sixth

opportunity. Gauff raised her fist after clinching the win, signalling her defiance and fight, as the home crowd erupted. After letting out another roar of celebration, she made a heart sign to the fans as a thank you for helping her get over the line.

Ultimately, the way Gauff finally secured victory was testament to her own resolve and a mental fortitude which she says has developed over a successful North American hard-court season. "Some of those points it was so loud, I don't know if my ears will be OK. Please be louder - this is crazy," Gauff told ESPN.

Gauff within touching distance of destiny. Ever since Gauff burst on to the scene as a 15-year-old phenomenon in 2019, she has been heralded as a future major champion. Now she has earned another opportunity to reach the pinnacle of her sport while still a teenager after a gutsy win over Muchova at Flushing Meadows. Gauff, who turned 19 in March, is the youngest American woman to reach her home Grand Slam final since Serena Williams in 1999.

It comes after she has enjoyed the best period of her career on the North American hard-court swing. Winning her biggest singles

titles in Washington and Cincinnati was the perfect preparation for the US Open and she has continued to thrive in front of expectant home crowds in New York.

Gauff made a fast start against a tight-looking Muchova, who was aiming to reach her second major singles final after also being beaten by Swiatek at the French Open this year. A slew of mistakes from Muchova contributed heavily to a 5-1 deficit and once she settled - which enabled her to pose questions of Gauff's forehand - fought back to 5-4.

However, a poor service game from the Czech gifted the opening set to Gauff - and the drama of the protest came shortly afterwards. The players were taken off court after the first game of the second set because one of the protesters, who were wearing Extinction Rebellion T-shirts, glued themselves to the floor.

"I just treated it like a rain delay," Gauff told ESPN. "The only thing which was harder was that we had to leave the court and didn't know if it would be five minutes or an hour." After the protesters were finally removed by police, the players resumed the match nearly 50 minutes after the previous point.

The pair continued to hold serve in the second set until what had slowly developed into a gripping contest suddenly burst further into life. Gauff broke for 5-4 but, like in the first set, could not serve out and needed to show all of her will to get over the line. Sabalenka unsure how she 'came through' stressful semi-final.

With most of the focus on Gauff, Sabalenka had been quietly and efficiently getting on with business. The 25-year-old, who will become the new world number one after the tournament, had not dropped a set on her way to the last four but had to find a different way to win against Keys.

County cricket is still 'important': Brathwaite

JAMAICA (Agencies): Warwickshire's latest recruit Kraigg Brathwaite says county cricket is still "important" and would encourage any player to come and play in England.

The West Indies Test captain made his Bears debut against Surrey last Sunday, little over 12 hours after flying in from the Caribbean.

It is his fifth short stint in county cricket and he says all the spells have been a key part of his "learning".

"I have no Test cricket until January so it came at a good time," he said.

"But I would always encourage our players to go and play cricket anywhere," Brathwaite told BBC Radio WM. "It is all part of the learning."

"Guys can play in the Championship and go through all the different processes - failure, success. That's how you learn."

"Playing against Surrey and other good county teams is important to get in that frame. County cricket, any four-day cricket, it gives you the balance."

"Franchises are good because it enables the guys to make a living."

"But, for the guys who aren't in the franchises, it's important you get any cricket you can. And any cricket in England is always challenging."

"You always learn playing any game and [it's] always good playing first-class cricket."

Although they have five T20s and three one-day internationals against England in December, West Indies do not play another Test again until January, when they face Australia at Adelaide and Brisbane before switching back to white-ball action for three more T20s and three ODIs.

"We've not got a great lot of Test cricket," said Brathwaite. "We don't have another Test until we play Australia."

"They're the number one in the world so we've got to be ready."

Fifth time in county cricket

Warwickshire are the fifth side Brathwaite has played for in the County Championship.

He had two games with Yorkshire in September 2017, four for Nottinghamshire in August and September 2018, three for Glamorgan in September 2019 and six games for Gloucestershire in April and May 2021.

Such was his enthusiasm to return to England, he even gave up the chance of playing cricket back home in the Caribbean.

"I had a tour to be on for Barbados - a select team to Bermuda," he said.

"I had to cancel that which was a shame as I had a young team I was looking forward to leading."

It meant a hurried arrival - and a less than happy outcome.

After Warwickshire won the toss and put Surrey into bat, Brathwaite spent the first day fielding as the reigning champions piled up nearly 400 runs.

He then had little over an hour's batting out in the middle over the next two days, as he made scores of 16 and 9 in the Bears' second successive defeat - and their biggest of the season, by an innings and 97 runs.

Now he will have had to knuckle down for a bit of net practice to prepare for the Bears' final three games against two of the bottom three clubs - Northamptonshire at home, starting on Sunday, Middlesex at Lord's and the final home game against Somerset.

Warwickshire should be safe from relegation, 49 points clear of danger, but they are hopelessly out of form after three successive batting collapses, are injury-hit and will be missing Sam Hain for the last two matches following his call-up by England for ODI duty.

But Brathwaite will be ready. And prepared. He is also not using last week's rushed start to his Bears career as an excuse.

"I arrived only on Saturday evening," he said. "But I was in a good space, I'd had some rest. It's not like it's something I'm not used to, given all the travelling we do in cricket."

"For me, I keep it simple. I'm all about routines and sticking to that. That does not change for me here in county cricket."

Messi scores from a free kick to give Argentina 1-0 win in South American World Cup qualifying

BUENOS AIRES (AP): Once again, and now as a World Cup champion, Lionel Messi came to Argentina's rescue when the team most needed him.

The 36-year-old captain scored from a free kick in the 78th minute to give Argentina a 1-0 win against Ecuador in the first round of South American World Cup qualifying on Thursday.

It was Messi's 104th goal in 176 international appearances, including his 29th in World Cup qualifying. Those 29 goals equal the record of Luis Suárez of Uruguay.

More than 83,000 fans at the nearly full Monumental de Nuñez Stadium were getting jittery until Messi scored, with their team having hit the post and the bar during the match, and offering Ecuador several chances to counter.

Ecuador kept Argentina at bay during most of the match with a defensive line of five players, led by Moisés Caicedo, which put Messi under wraps during most of the clash in Buenos

Aires. But the decisive moment of the star was enough to beat the hard-working Ecuadorians.

Goalkeeper Hernán Galíndez did not move as Messi's shot from the edge of the box went to the back of the net, near the left post. Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni, who completed five years in the job on Thursday, surprised fans with a different formation from the one that played and won the World Cup final over France in Qatar. He benched Ángel Di María and started Nicolás González.

Scaloni also used Lautaro Martínez as his center forward instead of Julián Álvarez. Argentina's coach, who is yet to lose a match in South American qualifying, brought Di María in during the second half, but Argentina continued struggling to get clear chances. "Every match needs 100% from us in this qualifying," Messi said after the match. "This was a tough match to play, a very physical one."

Earlier, Colombia beat Venezuela 1-0 with a header by Rafael Santos Borré in the 46th minute. Paraguay and Peru drew 0-0.

Argentina and Colombia lead the standings with three points. Paraguay and Peru are next with one. Ecuador has minus three points because of a FIFA punishment that caused a deduction in South American qualifying for the falsification of birth information of defender Byron Castillo, who is of Colombian origin.

The first round of South American qualifying will be completed on Friday when Brazil hosts Bolivia and Uruguay plays against Chile. All 10 teams in the region will play their second round on Tuesday.

The 2026 edition of the World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada is expanding to a 48-team format. The leading six positions in South America will secure a direct spot. The seventh-place team will contest an intercontinental playoff for a berth.

Pakistan's pace attack reminds Akhtar of 'old days'

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar on Thursday said the team's current pace attack reminds him of the era of the great pair of Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis.

Pakistan boast one of the world's best fast-bowling attacks in Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf.

The trio has taken 23 wickets between them in the first three matches of the ongoing Asia Cup co-hosted by Pakistan and Sri Lanka, a precursor to next month's one-day international World Cup in India.

Left-arm pacer Shaheen rattled the Indian top order last week in a group match that was abandoned due to rain after just one innings and remains a threat ahead of a key Super Four clash between the arch-rivals on Sunday.

"These youngsters are very, very talented and I am happy that Pakistan is able to produce such fast bowlers over and over again," Akhtar said in an online chat organised by Star Sports.

"This pace battery reminds me of the old days... reminds me of that era of two Ws (Waqar and Wasim). They are very confident and have the mindset of taking wickets."

Wasim and Waqar took over 900 ODI wickets between them, striking fear into the hearts of opposing batsmen with their lightning-fast reverse swing deliveries. Shaheen leads the charge with new-ball partner Naseem, but it is first-change Rauf who tops the Asia Cup bowling chart with nine wickets.

Pakistan thrashed Bangladesh in the opening match of the Super Fours in

Lahore on Wednesday with Rauf returning 4-19 from his six overs.

"I would say Shaheen Shah Afridi is on top of his career right now. Haris Rauf has a wicket-taking mindset like Shaheen," said Akhtar, who later joined Pakistan's pace attack alongside Wasim and Waqar.

"I would just advise Naseem to bowl more wicket-taking deliveries than be a stock bowler. He seems the ball more than Shaheen and can penetrate more." Pakistan has had a history of producing great fast bowlers including Fazal Mahmood, Sarfraz Nawaz and World Cup-winning captain Imran Khan.

Akhtar said Pakistan remain favourites to win the Asia Cup and the World Cup starting October 5 and predicted Babar Azam's team will topple India in both tournaments.

Serbia beat Canada to reach Basketball WC final

MANILA (APP): Serbia beat Canada 95-86 on Friday to reach the final of the Basketball World Cup for the second time.

Bogdan Bogdanovic had another standout performance for the Serbians in Manila, scoring 23 points and racking up three assists and four rebounds.

Serbia will play either the United States or Germany in Sunday's final in the capital of The Philippines. They lost to the Americans in their only previous final appearance as an independ-

ent country in 2014.

Canada were appearing in their first World Cup semi-final. They struggled to replicate the kind of performances that had taken them there, getting only 15 points from key player Shai Gilgeous-Alexander.

Serbia led by eight points at the end of the first quarter and 13 at half-time.

Canada showed more spark after the interval and clamped down on Bogdanovic, who scored only eight points in the second half. It was not enough

to overhaul Serbia, who got 16 points apiece from Ognjen Dobric and Nikola Milutinovic.

RJ Barrett was Canada's top scorer with 23 points, followed by Dillon Brooks on 16. Serbia were playing without power forward Borisa Simanic, who underwent surgery to remove a kidney after being hit by an opposition player's elbow earlier in the tournament.

Serbia's only loss in the tournament so far was a 78-76 defeat to Italy in the second round.



In brief

Three bike lifters arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested three bike lifters members of 'Usama' gang besides recovering seven stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, a team under the supervision of SHO, Taxila Police Station managed to net three bike lifters namely Usama, ringleader, Haris and Imran and recovered seven stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under way. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Muhammad Waqas Khan said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars. He said that the operations against the law-breakers would be accelerated further.

7 held, 123 kg drugs recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country, managed to arrest seven accused and recovered 123 kg of drugs from their possession. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday, in two operations near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, ANF special force have recovered 70.8 kg charras and 14.4 kg opium from secret cavities of two vehicles. Four accused residents of Attock were netted during the operations. In the third operation near Car Chowk Rawalpindi, 1 kg charras was recovered from the possession of an accused, a resident of Khyber. In the fourth operation on the National Highway near Hyderabad, 30 kg charras were recovered and ANF arrested a drug smuggler, a resident of Quetta. The spokesman informed that in the fifth operation, 7.2 kg charras were recovered from the possession of an accused, a resident of Khyber, arrested from the Hayatabad area in Peshawar. "Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process," he added.

Sadiqabad police arrest two robbers

RAWALPINDI (INP): In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted a gang and arrested two robbers and street criminals besides recovering Rs 520,000 cash, a motorcycle, and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Sadiqabad Police arrested two accused namely Hamdan and Aqib Rasheed, who were allegedly involved in various robberies, and street crime cases. He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Sadiqabad Police Station on the directives of SP Rawal, Faissal Saleem conducted a raid and managed to net the criminals who were record holders. Earlier, two other members of the group were also sent behind bars and police recovered Rs 400,000 and two pistols from their possession.

13 drug peddlers, bootleggers arrested

RAWALPINDI (INP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers and other law-breakers here on Friday arrested 13 accused besides recovering 1620 grams heroin, over eight kg charras, 30 bottles of liquor, a pistol and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesperson, during the crackdown launched against drug peddlers and bootleggers, Rawalpindi district police arrested 246 accused and recovered over 200 kg charras, 788 liters liquor, 470 grams heroin and 50 grams Ice drug during the last two weeks.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah chairing a meeting regarding revival plan of cultural and literary heritage.

National Heritage & Culture Division plans to revive cultural, literary heritage

ISLAMABAD (APP): A comprehensive plan has been developed by the National Heritage & Culture Division (NH&CD) to revive the cultural and literary heritage of the nation. The revitalization plan was presented during a meeting at the Division, with Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presiding. The revitalization plan was introduced during a meeting at the Division, with Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presiding. The revitalization plan was introduced during a meeting at the Division, with Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presiding.

During the meeting, a thorough discussion took place regarding several initiatives in line with the vision of the Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture. Additionally, the meeting delved into the details of an upcoming three-day national-level conference focused on cultural education and literature, with an emphasis on Pakistani children and youth. This conference is scheduled to be organized in the near future.

The minister instructed all departments to work together in developing an annual calendar encompassing youth-oriented leadership programs and cultural events. These events would include artist camps, youth festivals, talent hunts, film festivals, music concerts, exhibitions, youth leadership conferences, and theatrical

performances, among various other art forms. The goal is to coordinate efforts across departments to maximize their impact on the youth. Federal Minister Jamal Shah explained that as part of the revival plan, mentorship programs will be set up to connect young individuals with experienced artists and mentors, with the aim of preserving and promoting our cultural heritage.

He also mentioned the initiation of calligraphy courses in Madaris, designed to instill artistic appreciation in the minds of young Madaris students. Furthermore, the minister highlighted the establishment of youth volunteer groups and forums, which will actively collaborate with relevant departments and nurture their potential future leadership roles in advancing inclusivity.

He mentioned that a talent hunt show will be launched in partnership with PTV and PBC. Additionally, the minister expressed the intention to present excellence awards and prizes to the youth. Furthermore, he put forward the idea of creating a heritage channel to actively promote our cultural and literary heritage. The meeting also addressed the revitalization of cultural infrastructure within the Islamabad Capital Territory. The goal is to transform these facilities into vibrant hubs of

activity, thereby generating employment opportunities for artists across various domains. This initiative serves as a model, with the aim of encouraging provinces to adopt similar approaches.

Additionally, the minister shared plans for his Division to collaborate with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, PNCA, and PBC in establishing a National Music Academy. The meeting also explored the development of listed archaeological sites as a means to attract foreign investment. The objective is to unlock the full potential of these cultural resources, utilizing them as instruments of national integration, peace, and prosperity for the country. The meeting was attended by a comprehensive representation, including Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, and Heads of various affiliated departments such as the Pakistan Academy of Letters, National Language Promotion Department, Quaid-i-Azam Academy, Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Lok Virsa, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, National Library of Pakistan, Quaid Mazar Management Board, Urdu Dictionary Board, National Academy of Performing Arts, and National Library of Pakistan.

Madad Ali lauds AIOU efforts for combating illiteracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi on Friday lauded the efforts and services of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) for combating illiteracy.

Addressing a seminar organized by AIOU on International Literacy Day here, the minister said that he is well-informed about the educational services provided by AIOU and expressed his satisfaction with the university's nationwide services.

He extended his congratulations to the university's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood for organizing a seminar on World Literacy Day.

AIOU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said there are three crore children in Pakistan who are not enrolled in

schools, even after 76 years of independence. This is a matter of great concern and requires a long-term plan to address, he added.

He emphasized the significance of accurately measuring literacy. He further stressed the need to revise its definition to cater to the needs of individuals.

The VC highlighted the importance of transitioning towards digital literacy and its potential to bring about positive change. Dean, Faculty of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irshad Ahmed Arshad and the Director General, National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Mirza Nasiruddin Mashhood Ahmed also addressed the opening session of the seminar. The seminar was organized by AIOU in collaboration with NCHD and JICA.

DC orders crackdown on dengue breeding sites

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday ordered a crackdown on dengue breeding sites to prevent the spread of dengue here.

Additional Deputy Commissioner East Usman Ashraf and Dr. Sania Hamid visited different areas of the city along with anti-dengue teams.

ICT Spokesperson Dr. Abdullah Tabasim said that the teams destroyed dengue

larvae from different places and arrested two persons for negligence and providing a favourable environment for dengue and also warned the management of PHA I-11 flats.

Additional Deputy Commissioner East Usman Ashraf said that the same location will be reviewed again after three days and strict action will be taken against those who do not follow the instructions related to dengue. He urged the citizens to

cooperate with the anti-dengue teams and ensure that their surroundings are clean and free of mosquito breeding sites.

The Deputy Commissioner has urged the citizens to take preventive measures against dengue, such as using mosquito nets, wearing long sleeves, and getting rid of stagnant water.

He has also asked the citizens to report any dengue-related negligence to the authorities.

Motorway Police recovers stolen car from Swabi

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP) on Friday recovered a car stolen from Rawalpindi near Swabi.

According to the details, a white Corolla was stolen from Rawalpindi Area Police Station Saddar and the information was given to the Motorway Police which started the search for it.

Meanwhile, a vehicle was found abandoned near Karnal Sher Khan Interchange on Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway. After investigation, it was found that it was the same vehicle that was stolen from Rawalpindi and a fake number plate was installed on the vehicle.

The vehicle was taken into possession and the search for the accused was started. After completing the initial legal action, the vehicle was handed over to local police for further legal action.

Tarar, US Envoy discuss issues of bilateral interests

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Caretaker Minister for Communications, Railways, and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar was called on by US Ambassador Donald Blome here on Friday and issues of bilateral interests came under discussion.

Speaking to the envoy, Shahid Ashraf Tarar said that US-Pakistan bilateral relations go back a long way and this relationship has evolved from security to other fields such as trade and investment, science and technology, Climate Change and sustainable development, health and education. He expressed his profound desire to deepen the relations based on development cooperation. Moreover, he affirmed that Pakistan has been benefiting from General Electric Locomotives provided by the US to Pakistan Railways, and based on its vitality, another order has been placed recently.

Similarly, he mentioned Tarbela and Mangla Dams as symbols of Pakistan-US cooperation. The Ambassador said that the

focus has shifted from Pakistan's bordering and tribal areas to flood-affected areas of Northern Sindh and South Punjab. Furthermore, possibilities are being explored for provision of clean drinking water and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure in these areas.

Shahid Ashraf Tarar further stated that Karachi-Peshawar Railway line has been affected by floods at certain vulnerable points and US can cooperate with Pakistan Railways to reclaim these vulnerable tracks and secure them from future floods. He further apprised that Pakistan has entered into successful international agreements in Gwadar and is further attracting foreign investments from global partners.

The US Ambassador Donald Blome expressed that Pakistan has an excellent opportunity to attract foreign investments in the wake of diversification of industries and businesses into South-Asian economies.

Overseas Ministry increases minimum pension to Rs 10,000

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development has increased the minimum pension from Rs 8,500 to Rs10,000 per month for the retired senior citizens to facilitate them in the prevailing economic crisis. The ministry had made the directions on Friday in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-Section (a) of Section-2 of the Employees Old Age Benefits Act, 1976, increased the minimum pension from Rs 8,500 per month to Rs10,000 per month along with 17 percent increase in formula pension to the existing pensioners that would be in effect from July 1.

The Ministry had issued instructions to implement the order to process the increase in the rate of the existing pensioners and the pending pension.

All pensioners drawing minimum pension of Rs 8500 would be allowed minimum pension Rs 10,000, with effect from July, 2023. Moreover, the pensioners drawing formula pension as on June 30 would be allowed 17 percent in their

existing rate of pension with effect from July, 2023. It also underlined that the 17 percent increase in rate would be applied only on pensioners awarded pension till June 30, 2023.

The formula pension awarded with effect from July, 2023 would not be allowed increase in rate of pension. However, such pensioners would be allowed formula pension as per schedule. It also underlined that the pension allowed from July, 23 would be treated as normal with regards to minimum pension of Rs. 10,000 and formula pension 17 percent increase in rate would be applied only to pensioners who were awarded pension till 2023. The pensioners drawing reduced pension would be allowed pension reduced by one half per cent for each completed month by which age falls short of 60 years (55 years in case of woman) for minimum pension i.e. Rs.10,000. All reduced formula pensions settled on June 30, 2023 would be allowed 17 percent increase in their existing rate of pension, it added.

US based film maker for highlighting Pakistan's image through rich culture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Izzy Chan – a US-based film maker stressed the need to highlight the positive image of Pakistan through a showcase of its rich cultural heritage and beauty as she recently visited Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Islamabad to train youth in documentary making.

Izzy Chan is a storyteller and award-winning documentary maker who is deeply curious about cultural and social trends poised to change life. Her award-winning documentary feature on the rise of breadwinner moms and at-home dads, "The Big Flip—Stories from the Modern Home Front" (2016), premiered at the Austin Film Festival and Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival and was featured in the 2017-2019 American Film Showcase. As a film envoy, Izzy has traveled to Egypt, China, and Ukraine to conduct workshops on storytelling and strategy. Talking to APP in an interview, she said that during her recent visit to GB, she trained over 50 young aspiring filmmakers through her methods of production, idea conception, and theme development.

"Pakistani youth has amazing talent and they can excel in the field of filmmaking if their ideas are explored and provided proper platforms. They can use the filmmaking field to bring positive change as well as project a soft image of the country through highlighting the positive aspects of their society which are not shown in international media," she maintained.

Praising the beauty of nature and vibrancy of the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan, especially the North side, she said, "There is huge potential for tourism

in Pakistan, and nature lovers and tourists from across the world must come to see these stunning glimpses of nature, local communities and hospitality of Pakistani people and show the world this true face of the country which is not shown unfortunately." "There is so much beauty and diversity in the GB region alongside women empowerment and a stable hospitality industry," she said.

"As a cultural Envoy of American Film Showcase, which is a cultural and art exchange program, I met with young and energetic Pakistani students, the purpose of this art exchange program is to share our knowledge and documentary film-making skills with students and in return, I learned from their inspiring stories," she added. She said, "Local communities in Pakistan are very welcoming, hospitable, and open-minded to visitors of other communities which can bring more tourists from the world to this region to enjoy unique landscapes that are worth visiting to get a lifetime experience. These local communities are keeping alive their local art and crafts and working to make them more sustainable for coming generations."

She also assured her full support to the young filmmakers and her students in Pakistan for making films on their creative ideas and highlighting the positive image of the country. Izzy's creative process integrates her cross-cultural background, experience across diverse industries, and her passion for filmmaking and storytelling as tools for instigating understanding, action, and change.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani chaired high level meeting regarding Global Health Security Summit.

274994 doctors registered with PM&DC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical Council right after assuming the charge & in very short span of time started working dedicatedly for doctors, students and relevant stakeholders and took all necessary steps to resolve their genuine and relevant issues.

Under the umbrella of the President, PM&DC the licensing Department for the last nine months issued more than 41004 renewals, 13208 provisional registrations to new graduates and 13888 full registrations to doctors who completed their house jobs successfully.

Almost 9440 good standing certificates were issued to doctors who intended to proceed to work abroad. PM&DC has issued 2806 registrations to doctors with additional postgraduate qualifications. 197 deleted postgraduate qualifications have also been readmitted in the registration certificate. PM&DC Prof. Dr. Riwan said that the department's priority is to facilitate doctors, students and other stakeholders in the larger interest of Pakistan. He also added negligence of any sort will not be tolerated. He added that all doctors are advised in their own interest to revalidate their registration certificates in time.

Traffic accident kills 2, injures 10

KABUL. (Agencies): According to a provincial official, at least two people have died, and ten others were injured in a traffic accident on Friday afternoon in Laghman province, east Afghanistan. The incident occurred on the Kabul-Nangarhar highway due to the driver's reckless driving as the vehicle veered off the road and overturned. According to the officials, the injured people were taken to the local hospital for medical treatment.

5 medical centers have licenses

KHOST (TOLOnews): Officials of the Ministry of Public Health said that only five of Khost's more than 700 hospitals, treatment centers, laboratories, and pharmacies had licenses, following the release of TOLOnews' story on the operations of unlicensed clinics. According to a team from the health ministry that visited Khost province, if these medical centers do not get licenses within a month, they will be shut down.

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

Human Rights Watch urges ICC to investigate sexual abuse in Afghanistan



Human Rights Watch has urged the International Criminal Court to investigate the sexual abuse and harassment of women and girls in Afghanistan as a "crime against humanity." The organization alleges that the current regime authorities are "committing sexual harassment and persecution against women and girls," constituting "crimes against humanity." Human Rights Watch released a report on Friday highlighting this issue. The organization said that the Taliban authorities have implemented "laws and policies since regain-

ing control of Afghanistan that intend to deprive women and girls of their fundamental rights." Human Rights Watch claims that, based on research, such abuses against women and girls in Afghanistan have been carried out through various written orders or declarations since 2021. According to the organization, these measures severely restrict freedom of movement, expression, and assembly. Human Rights Watch further notes that decrees issued in Afghanistan have essentially prohibited most professions, includ-

ing higher education, and have allowed arbitrary arrests and violations of freedom. In continuation of the report, Human Rights Watch urges the Taliban authorities to remove all forms of suppression and discrimination that deprive women and girls of their fundamental rights. The head of the Global Justice section of the organization Human Rights Watch, Elizabeth Evenson, said that the "systematic and brutal denial of women's and girls' rights" by the Taliban regime has garnered global attention for

their efforts to exclude them from public life. Evenson added: "Coordinated support from relevant governments is necessary to hold Taliban leaders accountable under the law." In continuation of the report, Human Rights Watch, referring to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, defines crimes against humanity as "a series of prohibited acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population with knowledge of the attack." The organization further emphasizes that "abuse and persecution based on sexual characteristics or social structures and norms used to define gender constitute a form of gender-based persecution." In this regard, the head of the Global Justice section of Human Rights Watch says that the International Criminal Court investigations in Afghanistan can address gender-based abuse and persecution. Evenson added that governments should ensure that the International Criminal Court has the resources and cooperation to investigate "crimes and other severe human rights violations" in Afghanistan.

Gen. McKenzie calls delayed Afghanistan exit as 'American Arrogance'

KABUL. (Agencies): Retired U.S. General Frank McKenzie has attributed the delay in withdrawing troops from Afghanistan to what he perceives as "American arrogance." During an interview with Fox News, General Frank McKenzie, the head of United States Central Command during the withdrawal from Afghanistan, expressed regret over the U.S. decision to remain in Afghanistan until the very end. He highlighted that this choice had sometimes led and did lead the country into an "extremist situation." "I think it is a case of American exceptionalism or American arrogance, depending on your perspective, to believe that you can actually withdraw, beaten from the field of battle, and still maintain a large political platform in the country you are retreating from," McKenzie said. "I go back to the basic decision to wait so very



late to begin to bring people out — after we had already given away Bagram Airfield, after we had already drawn down to a shallow footprint in the country," he continued. "I think those decisions led to the scenes at the airport in

Kabul." A tragic blast at the Kabul airport during the evacuation resulted in the deaths of thirteen U.S. soldiers and at least 170 Afghan citizens. This incident marked the third deadliest event during the U.S.'s two-decade pres-

ence in Afghanistan. General McKenzie expressed that he does not regret reaching a deal with the Taliban. "And I feel had we not done so, our casualties would have been significantly higher," he added.

Chairman of Afghan Business Council in UAE calls for investment in Afghanistan



KABUL (Agencies): The head of the Afghan Business Council in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said that the ground is paved for economic activities and investment in Afghanistan and businessmen should return to the country. Obaidullah Sadrakhel added that compared to the past four decades, there are better investment opportunities currently in Afghanistan. He said, Afghans have

invested 12 billion dollars in the UAE. "There is now an opportunity for investment in Afghanistan. I hope that Afghan investors return and invest in Afghanistan, they should take part in the country's rebuilding and make more investments," Sadrakhel said. Meanwhile, officials of the Chamber of Industries and Mines also said that investment opportunities in Afghanistan are better than ever. According to

the chamber's officials, corruption has ended, security prevails and the government supports the private sector. "We are ready to invest in the country and expand it. Now there should be more focus on attracting foreign investment in extracting minerals," Sher Baz Kaminzadeh, head of the Chamber of Industries and Mines, said. Officials of the Ministry of Industry and Trade said that in order to attract

investment in the country, they have provided all the facilities for domestic and foreign investors and are ready for more cooperation in this field. "We have taken all measures to expand investment and economic activities, and this process will expand further. We are committed to supporting the private sector," Abdulsalam Jawad Akhundzada, the spokesman of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said.

On World Literacy Day, girls call for reopening of schools

KABUL. (TOLOnews): International Literacy Day comes as it has been nearly 720 days that girls above the sixth grade in Afghanistan have been denied access to education. Some female students who were deprived of education asked the current government to open schools and universities for girls. "Today is International Literacy Day, and it has been two

years that girls could not continue their education," said Mehria, a student from Mazar-e-Sharif. "We ask the Islamic Emirate to reopen schools for girls and give us our rights," said Zarmina, a student from Jawzjan. "Once again we ask the Islamic Emirate to lift restrictions on education of girls so that we can continue our education," said Maryam Sadat, a student

from Bamiyan. Meanwhile, some religious clerics and citizens said that providing the opportunity of education to girls is for the benefit of the country. "The current rulers should provide the opportunity of going to university to the women of Afghanistan," said Faiazi, a religious cleric. "As a father, I ask the government to provide

the opportunity of education to the girls of this country," said Rahimullah, a resident of Mazar-e-Sharif. The Islamic Emirate hasn't commented on this recently, but it has consistently stated that efforts are being made to reopen the country's schools and universities for girls and that the ban on women and girls' education is not permanent.

Efforts underway to standardize aviation in Afghanistan: Deputy Minister

KABUL (TOLOnews): The deputy Minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MTCA) said efforts are underway to standardize Afghanistan's aviation system to meet international standards. An event marking the 20th anniversary of Kam Air Airlines in Afghanistan was held in Kabul with the participation of UN special envoy for Afghanistan Roza Otunbayeva and representatives of other diplomatic missions, as well as Islamic Emirate officials on Thursday. "The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation continues its efforts to work directly with not only Kam Air but also Ariana Afghan Airlines, so that the standards can grow," said Gulam Jailani Wafa, deputy minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation. The deputy foreign minister, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, said that the ground for development of the private sector has been paved. "I congratulate the 20-year anniversary of Kam Air. May God bless them, and may they take further positive steps in the aviation sector. We are happy that they are performing their duty in a disciplined way," he said.



The CEO of Kam Air Airlines, Jahid Azimi, said that the airline will start flights between Khost province and China whenever the conditions are ready for it. "Whenever the conditions at the Khost airport are prepared, we will send our delegation, if the conditions are ready for it, we will start flights between China and Khost,"

he said. Karm Air Airlines was established in Afghanistan in 2023. The airline was active in many provinces and regional countries. However, after the Islamic Emirate came to power, it had only flights in Herat and Balkh provinces and to a limited number of countries.

Afghan women decry unequal humanitarian aid distribution over year-long gap

The United Nations Coordination Office (OCHA) recently published a report indicating that one million women and girls in Afghanistan have been deprived of humanitarian assistance. Qudsia, a woman renting in Kabul, said, "We received help several times almost two years ago, but since then, we have not received any assistance."

OCHA's report, released on September 4th, highlights that one million women and 700,000 children have been deprived of humanitarian aid in 2023 due to funding shortages. Meanwhile, some women in Afghanistan, left empty-handed, describe the unequal distribution of humanitarian aid and claim they have not received any help for over a year.

Several of these women, speaking with Khaama Press News Agency, reveal they are facing significant economic hardships and have not received any assistance for over a year. Qudsia, a Kabul resident, added, "We received help several times almost two years ago, but since then, we have not received any assistance."

She has five children, and her husband is unemployed. Two of their children are also ill, and she cannot afford their treatment. She emphasizes the unfair distribution of aid in Afghanistan and urges humanitarian organizations to address the needs of the Afghan people. However, a United Nations investigation shows that after the Taliban's ban on women working, 86% of domestic and international NGO activities have been halted or severely reduced.

The United Nations Women's Division had previously announced that out of 151 active NGOs in Afghanistan, 86% of organizations managed by women or focused on providing services to women had suspended or greatly limited their activities in response to the Taliban's decision to prohibit women from working in non-governmental organizations.

Riza Gul is another needy woman who sells items on the streets of Kabul and relies on humanitarian aid. She says that she has not received any assistance in the past year. She also complains about the distribution process and finds it opaque. Riza Gul says, "Sometimes aid comes to our area, but we have no intermediary to help us."

The increase in people's needs and the unemployment of all women in Afghanistan are direct consequences of the Taliban's rule. Women's rights activists believe that the interim administration's



Sahar is a mother of five and lives in the Kishima district of Badakhshan province. She told Khaama Press News Agency that her husband is addicted, and she is the sole provider for her family. According to Sahar, she used to receive food aid from relief organizations like the World Food Program, but recently, she has not received any assistance. This lack of assistance comes when she knows her family's livelihood depends on it.

After the ban on women working in non-governmental organizations, the United Nations named the Taliban's action unjust. They emphasized that this restriction is hitting the women who rely on assistance the hardest, especially in remote areas. Riza Gul is another needy woman who sells items on the streets of Kabul and relies on humanitarian aid. She says that she has not received any assistance in the past year. She also complains about the distribution process and finds it opaque.

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The increase in people's needs and the unemployment of all women in Afghanistan are direct consequences of the Taliban's rule. Women's rights activists believe that the interim administration's

efforts to exclude women from the workforce and intentionally remove them from social spheres have increased women's dependency on humanitarian aid. Maryam Sediqi, a journalist and women's rights activist said to Khaama Press News Agency, "Women have been removed from all sectors, and a significant portion of them are the breadwinners of their families. They are not allowed to work, which increases their reliance on humanitarian aid."

According to her, the activities of relief organizations, even with male staff only, are another factor that deprives needy women of humanitarian assistance: "After September 2022, these relief organizations continue their activities with male personnel, which means the needs that were previously identified by female staff in these organizations have been paralyzed." The woman renting in Kabul said, "We received help several times almost two years ago, but since then, we have not received any assistance."

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ISLAMABAD: Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting addressing a press conference along with Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance and Muhammad Ali, Caretaker Minister for Energy.

FIA obtains physical remand of Nadra's employees in fake CNICs

Crackdown against money laundering, currency smuggling

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Special Anti-corruption and Immigration Court Central Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judge Rajab Ali Khan hand over to four National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) employees including two officers to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on one day physical remand, on Friday.

Special Court also send one officer to jail on judicial remand while FIA Anti-corruption circle informed that the NADRA employees had created 59 fake Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) while separate cases had been registered against every individual.

FIA investigation officer argued that NADRA Deputy Assistant Director Ikram Ullah, Superintendent Farid Khan along with two agents named as Asadullah, Nasir Mehmood

and Senior Executive Officer Multan Office Abdur Razzaq had granted 59 CNICs by illegal means and requested for five days physical remand for interrogation. However, Special court has hand over four alleged culprits to FIA for one-day physical remand while shifted Abdur Razzaq to jail on judicial remand.

Meanwhile, on the directive of Director KP Zone Nisar Ahmed Tanoli, crackdown is on against elements involved in illegal hundi business and currency smuggling.

Raiding teams were formed under the supervision of Deputy Director Commercial Banking Circle Peshawar Afzal Khan Niazi wherein during operation the team arrested two suspects involved in the illegal exchange of money and currency business. The accused were arrested from Nowshera district and recovered Rs.131 million from the alleged

accused identified as Sher Zaman and Mohammad Saleem. The arrest of the accused was done on a tip-off. A spokesman of the FIA said.

The accused could not satisfy the authorities regarding the recovered currency. A number of receipts related to Hundi money and mobile phones were also recovered from the accused. The office used by the accused has been sealed and cases have been registered against the accused under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act.

Strict actions have been initiated against the elements involved in smuggling of foreign currency with intelligence-based operations are underway against the dealers involved in the hundi business. Intelligence-based operations to continue to receive support from other agencies with further investigation is underway.

Elahi sends to Adiala jail on judicial remand

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC), Islamabad, on Friday sent former Punjab chief minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to Adiala jail on judicial remand.

The PTI president was produced before ATC judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain's court after completion of his two-day physical remand in the judicial complex attack case. During the hearing, the police sought another 10-day physical remand of former Punjab chief minister which was rejected by the ATC judge. The court rejected the police request and sent PTI President Elahi to Adiala jail on 14-day judicial remand. The PTI leader was arrested hours after his release from NAB custody on September 1, after the LHC had restricted the authorities from arresting him earlier that same day.

The case was registered against Pervaiz Elahi at CTD police station on September 3. According to the FIR, the former CM is accused of sending rioters to Islamabad to vandalise the Judicial Complex besides providing vehicles and batons for the same. It is pertinent to mention here that Elahi has been arrested and detained repeatedly since the May 9 riots.

ATC rejects bail plea of alleged kidnappers

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Peshawar has rejected bail plea of four alleged kidnappers including two Afghan citizens and ordered police for submission of complete challan, on Friday.

The counsel Shabbir Hussain Gigyani advocate argued that the abductors named Aashiq Ullah, Sher Baz alias Bazy aka Imran, Habib Ullah and Rahim Ullah had kidnapped Tafseer Khan from OPF colony at gun point from the premises of Shahpur police station.

The counsel further argued that the abductee was kept in the bungalow at Armor while CCTV footage is also available in which two culprits are seen. He added that the kidnappers had demanded Rs60 million as ransom, however, police raided the premises and recovered the abductee while arrested four abductors.

The counsel added that identification parade of alleged culprits held within the jail while two kidnappers are seen in the CCTV footage directly and argued that Aashiq Ullah had wear police uniform to facilitate abduction to Urmor area.

Another kidnapper Habib Ullah chained Tafseer Khan and made several attempts to bury him alive in the grave, Shabbir Hussain Gigyani advocate argued. The alleged kidnappers counsel requested for withdrawal of bail pleas and initiation of trial in the offense, however, ATC rejected bail petitions while ordered police to submit complete challan to pursue the case.

10 die in as floods hit Greece

ATHENS (Agencies): The death toll from severe flooding in central Greece has risen to 10 people, while another four remained missing, the country's civil protection minister said. Rescue crews in helicopters and boats ferried hundreds of people on Friday from inundated villages to safety.

Flooding triggered by rainstorms also hit neighbouring Bulgaria and Turkey, killing a total of 22 people in all three countries since the rains began Tuesday. In Greece, the rainstorms turned streams into raging torrents that burst dams, washed away roads and bridges and hurled cars into the sea. Authorities have said some areas received twice the average annual rainfall for Athens in the space of just 12 hours.

Although the rainstorms had ebbed by Friday, floodwater continued to rise after the Pineios River burst its banks near the city of Larissa, one of Greece's largest cities with a population of approximately 150,000, triggering evacuation orders for several areas.

Pakistan Navy celebrates Navy Day with zeal

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy celebrated 58th anniversary of 'Navy Day' to honour heroic achievements of our Ghazis and Shuhadas who fought gallantly against a much bigger adversary with absolute courage and profound faith in Allah SWT. Navy Day is a glorious reminiscence of daring operation 'SOMNATH', when Pakistan Navy's Warships destroyed important shore installations and inflicted irreparable damage to the Indian pride. Pakistan Navy lone Submarine GHAZI reigned and remained unchallenged at sea throughout the war, because of which the complete Indian Navy did not dare to come out in the open sea and challenge the PN Fleet.

In his message on the occasion, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi said that 8th September marks act of bravery of Pakistan Navy's officers and men who demonstrated invincible courage and absolute audacity during successful bombardment at Dwarka. On this day, we acknowledge the sacrifices of our Shuhadas and Ghazis and honour their valiant spirit



which vanquished the devils enemy during the 1965 War. The Naval Chief highlighted that Pakistan Navy besides ensuring own maritime defence also maintains round the clock presence in international waters and engages with regional navies to foster interoperability and promote maritime security at high seas. For this purpose, Pakistan Navy is acquiring state of the art technologies to meet the emerging security challenges at sea while enhancing indigenous capabilities. Admiral underlined that Pakistan Navy has also embarked on nation building initiatives particularly to uplift coastal communities and is making vigorous efforts to invigorate Blue Economy for economic prosperity of the country.

The day dawned with special prayers offered in

all naval mosques for peace and prosperity of the country and particularly for the success of Kashmir struggle. Quran Khawani was arranged for eternal peace of Shuhada of the 1965 war. Flag hoisting ceremonies were held at all naval units and establishments.

Commander Karachi laid floral wreath at Mazar-e-Quaid. Navy Day events were also organised at Lahore; wherein, Commander Central Punjab interacted with families of PN martyrs and paid rich tribute to their heroics in war. Students from Bahria College across Pakistan participated in various activities tributing our Ghazis & Shuhada. Other activities of the day included boat rally at Karachi harbour and rallies by students of Bahria Model School.

Govt intensifies crackdown on electricity thieves

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The government on Friday intensified a crackdown on electricity thieves across the country and arrested many of them.

In Kabiwala, a Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader, along with his brothers, held the employees of WAPDA hostage and subjected them to torture. Former PML-N ticket-holder Rana Irfan, who tortured the WAPDA employees, is also a defaulter of Rs966,000 of WAPDA, it was learnt.

"The accused held us hostage for four hours and released upon the arrival of Kabiwala deputy superintendent of police (DSP)," a WAPDA employee said. A complaint for action against the PML-N leader on charges of torturing WAPDA employees and interfering in state affairs

was submitted to the police. The complaint sought the registration of a case against the accused under the provisions of terrorism.

"The accused had been stealing electricity through a tube well for a long period," the WAPDA employee alleged. The WAPDA employees, victims of the PML-N leader's brutality, demanded that the senior officers take notice of the incident. In Balochistan, 67 illegal power supply connections were disconnected in the first phase.

In Islamabad, hundreds of illegal electricity connections were disconnected and 20 power thieves were arrested. In Burewala, a fine of Rs650,000 was imposed on 20 power thieves. In Qamber, over 500 illegal electricity connections were disconnected in a grand operation against power thieves.

two power thieves were held in Peshawar. Over 300 illegal electricity connections were disconnected in Sukkur while an operation against power thieves was underway in Shikarpur.

At least 23 power pilferers were arrested in Gujranwala. In Narowal, a lineman involved in power theft was arrested.

In Arifwala, seven power pilferers were booked. In Hafizabad, seven people were held and booked for stealing power. In Khairpur, over 1,000 illegal electricity connections were disconnected and 20 power thieves were arrested. In Burewala, a fine of Rs650,000 was imposed on 20 power thieves. In Qamber, over 500 illegal electricity connections were disconnected in a grand operation against power thieves.

London doctor tells Shehbaz he has no cancer recurrence

LONDON (Agencies): The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif on Friday was informed by his cancer specialist that all his tests had come back negative for the rare disease. The former prime minister was told that there is no recurrence of the cancer that has troubled the PML-N leader for a long time.

Shehbaz, who reached the UK on August 20 last month, underwent several cancer-related tests as he is required medically to get tested every year. His latest tests have been seen by Dr Martyn Caplin — a renowned cancer specialist. It is to be noted that the former prime minister was diagnosed with a very rare and dangerous form of cancer called

"Adenocarcinoid" back in 2000.

The PML-N leader was treated at Sloane Kettering Hospital in New York in 2003 for many months. The New York doctors had advised Shehbaz to get himself regularly checked up in London by Dr Caplin, who is a Professor of Gastroenterology and GI Tumorology and Neuroendocrinology. Since then the former premier has been getting his cancer tests done every year.

"Dr Martyn Caplin has shared the good news that Shehbaz Sharif is cancer-free and there is no recurrence," said a source in Wellington Hospital, St John's Wood, where Shehbaz has been visiting frequently. Furthermore, the former Punjab chief

minister has his back-spine-related checkups scheduled for the next week on Harley Street at the clinic where he has been getting checked up regularly, the source added.

It is pertinent to mention that Shehbaz will be returning to Pakistan once his next round of checkups — which are not related to cancer — is completed in about ten days. Since reaching London, the former premier has met his elder brother and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif and discussed key political developments in the run-up to the general elections. Shedding light on Nawaz's return, The PML-N president said that his brother will be returning to Pakistan in October this year.

Govt adopts holistic approach to revive economy: Shamshad

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs and Privatisation Dr Shamshad Akhtar Friday said the caretaker government had adopted a holistic approach to address the pressing issues being faced by the economy and develop a roadmap with an aim to augment the macroeconomic management.

"We will operate realistically and consistently as a team. This will be an important change that incharges of all segments will work together," she said while addressing a press conference.

A principle had been adopted to look at the government as a whole, she added. The minister was flanked by Caretaker

Minister for Commerce and Industry Dr Gohar Ejaz; Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi; and Caretaker Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali.

Dr Shamshad said subcommittees of the cabinet had already been institutionalized, including Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC), Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCoP), and Cabinet Committee on Energy. She said they were having intergovernmental discussions with one another and making sincere efforts to define a roadmap for augmenting the macroeconomic management in the country.

She said the government was reinforcing fiscal stability and fiscal coordination with monetary policy as well as external policy, as it an anchor of macroeconomic management. She said the caretaker setup wanted to revive economy and for that they were working to "define the steps for economic jump start". Along with that they were making efforts to enhance social safety net during the period when structural adjustment reforms programme was implemented.

"We will try to enhance the social safety net and more importantly financial inclusion will be expedited so that SME (small medium enterprises) and agriculture sectors, and citizens get an opportunity for financial empowerment through digitization."

Rupee rebounds sharply

ISLAMABAD (INP): The resuscitated Pakistani rupee continues to strengthen its position against the US dollar as the local unit appreciated massively by Rs2.94 in the interbank trading on Friday.

According to money dealers, the US dollar slid even below Rs303 and started exchanging hands at Rs302, shedding its value by Rs2.94. Yesterday, the local currency also soared remarkably by Rs2.04 against the greenback and was closed at Rs304.94. The local currency has started appreciating because of the recent reforms introduced by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in the exchange companies' sector.

The reforms encourage leading banks to establish wholly owned exchange companies to cater to the legitimate foreign exchange needs of the general public. Moreover, the ongoing crackdown against speculators, hoarders, and smugglers has also generated positive vibes and boosted market confidence.

The government has started a massive crackdown against the currency smugglers. As a result, the rupee has also improved its position in the open market. On Thursday, the rupee climbed up by Rs5 against the US dollar, bringing the greenback down to Rs307 from Rs312. This narrows the gap between the interbank and open market to a mere 0.31%, significantly below the threshold of 1.25% suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Tribute to Bannu martyred paid

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has paid rich tribute to the martyrs of Bannu terrorist attack who laid down their lives for the sake of the motherland.

The President on Friday telephoned the heirs of Naib Subedar Sanoobar Ali, Havaladar Aftab Ahmed, Havaladar Muhammad Arif, Havaladar Muhammad Imran, Sepoy Ahmed Ali, Sepoy Muhammad Haseeb Akbar, Sepoy Zeeshan Nazakat, Abdul Rasheed and Waris Ali, who were martyred in Jani Khel, Bannu terrorist attack on 31st of August. Dr. Arif Alvi paid homage to Shuhada and prayed that Almighty Allah may grant higher ranks to the martyrs in heaven. He also prayed for the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity.

Rs 2.25b worth of essential commodities seized

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Essential Commodities including sugar and urea are smuggled from Pakistan and goods including POL are smuggled into Pakistan through unfrequented routes spanning the bordering areas of Afghanistan and Iran. These smuggled goods are subsequently transported via trucks and in case of passenger vehicles in smaller quantities to the main urban centers.

Being cognizant of this phenomenon, Pakistan Customs has intensified the counter smuggling operations and started crackdown against the smuggled goods especially Essential Commodities, POL, Currency and other goods. During the last fortnight, Pakistan Customs seized large quantities of essential commodities worth approximately Rs. 2.25 Billion in

various operations across the country including Quetta, D.I. Khan, Multan, Karachi, Sargodha and Lahore regions. The major seized essential commodities included sugar, urea, POL, Pak currency as well as tyres, black tea, betel nuts, vehicles, iron, steel and other goods.

In Balochistan region on 2nd September, Customs Enforcement-Quetta seized 1,637 tons of sugar worth approximately Rs. 1.0 billion from smugglers in a convoy of 15 trucks. This was followed by massive seizure of smuggled goods and vehicles, worth Rs. 519 million on Daraban-Darazinda Road DIK on 3rd Sep 2023 in collaboration with local police and 218,000 liters of smuggled POL / diesel, valuing approximately Rs. 137.6 Million by Customs Enforcement-D.I. Khan. During last week, Customs

Enforcement – Karachi disrupted the flow of smuggled POL by seizing Iranian origin 115,000 litres diesel and 30,000 liters petrol.

Moreover, strict instructions to the anti-smuggling formations including mobile squads of the Collectorates and airports have been issued to keep vigilance on the illicit movement of essential goods / commodities, Iranian POL and currency.

Chairman FBR Malik Amjed Zubair Tiwana and Member Customs (Operations) Ms. Zeba Hai Azhar have appreciated the Pakistan Customs for taking timely action to thwart the smuggling of essential goods. Pakistan Customs is committed to eliminate the menace of smuggling and would continue intensifying its anti-smuggling operations across the country.

KP CM distribute cheques in tribesmen

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan on Friday distributed financial assistance from his special funds amongst the deserving people of the newly merged districts.

It is pertinent to mention here that certain deserving people had requested the caretaker Chief Minister for financial assistance during his weekly meetings with the people of tribal districts, and the chief minister had decided to assist the needy people from special

funds on compassionate grounds. Talking on the occasion, the chief minister said that he was fully aware of the issues and difficulties being faced by the people of newly merged districts, and the caretaker provincial government was taking all possible steps to resolve their problems on priority.

He maintained that progress is being made on resolving the issues pointed out during the weekly meetings adding that all the genuine problems and issues would be resolved one by one. The tribal people have faced a lot of hard-

ships and multiple challenges for a longtime, he remarked and assured that the provincial government is going all out to address the issues of merged areas.

He made it clear that the government is committed to continue to support the tribal people as well as to resolve their problems on a sustainable basis adding that no stone would be left unturned to this effect. The tribal people on this occasion thanked the Chief Minister for taking keen interest in resolving the problems of the tribal districts.

Approval of interest-free loan for 11 judges challenged

LAHORE (PPI): The decision of approving an interest-free loan of Rs360 million to 11 judges of the High Court was challenged in the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday.

The application has been filed on behalf of a citizen, Mashkoor Hussain. The applicant has made chief secretary, finance secretary and others party in the dispute. The applicant submitted that interest-free loans to judges is an illegal act. The judges are already enjoying numerous privileges. The caretaker government is not authorised to dole out public money indiscriminately.

The applicant prayed the court to declare the decision of the caretaker

government to grant loans to the judges null and void. He also requested the court to declare the approval of loan to the judges illegal and grant injunction against dispensation of loan pending the final decision. The Punjab caretaker government has approved funds of over Rs360 million, to be availed as interest-free loan by 11 judges of the Lahore High Court for purchase and construction of houses.

According to sources, the approval for the grant of the loan has been given by the Cabinet Standing Committee for Finance. Reportedly, the high court judges had desired to avail the facility of interest-free loan equivalent to 36 basic

salaries for the purchase and construction of houses. Each judge draws a basic pay of over Rs0.9 million. The interest-free loan will be repaid in installments in a period of 12 years.

The judges availing the facility of interest-free loans include Justice Ahmad Nadeem Arshad, Justice Safdar Saleem Shahid, Justice Rasail Hasan Syed, Justice Shakil Ahmad, Justice Tariq Muhammad Nadeem, Justice Amjad Rafique, Justice Abid Hussain Chattha, Justice Anwar Hussain, Justice Ali Zia Bajwa, Justice Muhammad Raza Qureshi and Justice Raheel Kamran.