

LONDON (Agencies): Pakistan Army has secured silver medal in one of the toughest military competitions of the world known as ‘Cambrian Patrol’ in Wales, UK. As per Army and Air Attache Pakistan High Commission UK Colonel Taimur Rahat, the competition is being held since 1959 and is considered NATO’s toughest patrolling test with world class testing parameters.

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# Palestinians worry they may die of hunger

## Lives lost, fear spreads as Israel pummels Gaza; Gaza under ‘total siege’ with ban on food and fuel supply; UN experts say Israel’s strikes on Gaza amount to ‘collective punishment’

### Monitoring Desk

GAZA: Amid Israel’s complete blockade of the besieged territory, a group of independent United Nations (UN) experts on Thursday deplored that relentless strikes against Gaza amounted to “collective punishment,” as the death toll in the region surged past 1,300 with the war entering its sixth day on Thursday.

Israel said on Thursday there would be no humanitarian break to its siege of the Gaza Strip until all its hostages were freed after the Red Cross pleaded for fuel to be allowed in to prevent overwhelmed hospitals from “turning into morgues”.

Israel has vowed to annihilate the Hamas movement that rules the Gaza Strip in retribution for the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust, when hundreds of gunmen poured across the barrier fence and rampaged through Israeli towns on Saturday. Public broadcaster Kan said the Israeli death toll had risen to more than 1,300 people killed since Saturday. Most were civilians gunned down in their homes, on the streets or at a dance party. Scores of Israeli and foreign hostages were taken back to Gaza.

Israel has responded so far by putting the enclave, home to 2.3 million people, under total siege and launching by far the most powerful bombing campaign, destroying whole neighbourhoods. Gaza authorities report 1,354 people have been martyred and 6,049 people have been wounded in the bombing. The sole electric power station has been switched off and hospitals are running out of fuel for emergency generators.

Israeli Energy Minister Israel Katz vowed his country would not allow basic resources or humanitarian aid into Gaza until Hamas released the hostages it took during its surprise weekend attack on Israel after the United Nations (UN) called for allowing humanitarian aid into the besieged territory. “Humanitarian aid to Gaza? No electric switch will be

turned on, no water tap will be opened and no fuel truck will enter until the Israeli abductees are returned home,” he said in a statement.

While condemning the “horrific crimes committed by Hamas”, the group of independent UN experts said that Israel had resorted to “indiscriminate military attacks against the already exhausted Palestinian people of Gaza,” Reuters reported. “They have lived under unlawful blockade for 16 years, and already gone through five major brutal wars, which remain unaccounted for,” the group, which includes several UN special rapporteurs, said in a statement.

“This amounts to collective punishment. There is no justification for violence that indiscriminately targets innocent civilians, whether by Hamas or Israeli forces. This is absolutely prohibited under international law and amounts to a war crime.”

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for allowing humanitarian aid into war-struck Gaza, with the death toll in the region surging past 1,300 as the war enters its sixth day on Thursday. Days after Israel announced a total blockade of Gaza, The UN chief took to X, formerly known as Twitter, saying the supply of humanitarian aid, including food and water, “must be allowed” into Gaza. “Crucial life-saving supplies — including fuel, food and water — must be allowed into Gaza. We need rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access now,” the UN chief wrote on X. While addressing the Jewish community in the US Wednesday, President Joe Biden vividly described the horrors of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Soon after he made the claims that he believed based on confirmed pictures, the White House was forced to retract his statements.

In broad statements regarding his administration’s support for Israel amid its conflict with Hamas and efforts to release US hostages, Biden said, “I never really thought that I would see and have confirmed pic-



tures of terrorists beheading children.” According to officials from the White House, Biden was alluding to allegations from Israel of children being killed, referencing several media reports of beheadings.

Israel’s leaders on Wednesday formed a unity government, promising to put bitter political divisions aside to focus on the fight against Hamas, Reuters reported. Former defense minister Benny Gantz, a centrist opposition leader, spoke live on Israeli television alongside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Gallant after forming a war cabinet focused entirely on the conflict.

“Our partnership is not political, it is a shared fate,” said Gantz. “At this time we are all the soldiers of Israel.” Netanyahu said the people of Israel and its leadership were united. “We have put aside all differences because the fate of our state is on the line,” he said. Gantz’s National Unity Party, which has fiercely opposed judicial reforms proposed by Netanyahu’s right-wing coalition, said it will not promote any unrelated policy or laws while the fighting goes on.

Israel has put Gaza under “total

siege” to stop food and fuel from reaching the enclave of 2.3 million people, many poor and dependent on aid. Hamas media said on Wednesday that electricity went out after the only power station stopped working. With Palestinian rescue workers overwhelmed, others in the crowded coastal strip searched for bodies in the rubble. “I was sleeping here when the house collapsed on top of me,” one man cried as he and others used flashlights on the stairs of a building hit by missiles to find anyone trapped. More than 338,000 people have been forced to flee their homes in the Gaza Strip, the United Nations said, as heavy Israeli bombardments continue to hit the Palestinian enclave.

“Mass displacement across the Gaza Strip continues,” the UN humanitarian agency OCHA said in a statement sent on Thursday. By late Wednesday, the number of displaced people in Gaza had risen by an additional 75,000 people from the figure given 24 hours earlier, reaching 338,934, it said. OCHA said nearly 220,000 people, or two-thirds of the displaced people, have sought shelter in schools run by the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees,



UNRWA. Another nearly 15,000 people fled to schools run by the Palestinian Authority, while more than 100,000 were being sheltered by relatives, neighbours and a church and other facilities in Gaza City. OCHA said that around 3,000 people had already been displaced within the enclave prior to Saturday’s attack.

The bombing campaign has destroyed or rendered uninhabitable at least 2,540 housing units in Gaza, OCHA said, citing numbers from the Gaza Ministry of Public Works and Housing. Another 22,850 housing units sustained moderate to minor damage, it said. The UN agency also voiced alarm at the significant destruction of civilian infrastructure damaged in the shelling.

Among other things, it said sewage facilities serving more than a million people had been hit by air strikes, leaving solid waste accumulating in the streets, posing a health threat. Heavy bombardments have been relentlessly rained down on Gaza, where at least 2,540 housing units have been levelled or rendered uninhabitable, according to the Gaza Ministry of Public Works and Housing. Rubble, burnt-out cars and

broken glass cover the roads in Gaza City, where bombs struck the Hamas-linked Islamic University. There is rising concern over the worsening humanitarian crisis in the long-blockaded Palestinian enclave, where the sole power plant shut down Wednesday after running out of fuel, Gaza’s electricity provider said.

Additionally, medical supplies, including oxygen, were running low at Gaza’s overwhelmed Al-Shifa hospital, said emergency room physician Mohammed Ghoniem. The European Union called for a “humanitarian corridor” to allow civilians to flee the enclave’s fifth war in 15 years, while Arab League foreign ministers meeting in Cairo called for aid to be allowed into Gaza “immediately”.

Gaza resident Mazen Mohammad, 38, said his terrified family spent the night huddled together as explosions shook the area, before emerging in the morning. “We felt like we were in a ghost town as if we were the only survivors,” Mohammad told AFP. Unrest has also flared in the occupied West Bank, where protests have been held in solidarity with Gaza and 27 Palestinians have been martyred in clashes since Saturday.



ISLAMABAD: Special envoy of Secretary General of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on Jammu and Kashmir M. Al Dobeay called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## PM rules out deal in Nawaz’s decision to return

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday dismissed the impression that the decision of Pakistan Muslim League leader Nawaz Sharif to return to Pakistan was part of any deal with the interim government.

“The caretaker government has ‘no soft corner’ for PML-N or any other political party...How can a caretaker government strike such a deal,” he said in an interview with digital media platform, WE (World Echo) News. The prime minister was responding to a question relating to the PML-N chief’s homecoming who flew from London to Saudi Arabia yesterday with his announcement to land in Pakistan on October 21.

Kakar pointed out that Nawaz Sharif left the country as per the court decision “under the nose of Imran Khan’s government, and not the caretaker setup”. However, he said that if Nawaz Sharif returns and takes part in politics, he will have to face some legal obstacles. “The answers to these legal questions lie in legal remedies,” he said.

Kakar said any leader be it Imran Khan, Asif Ali Zardari, or Nawaz Sharif, everyone would have to seek their legal remedy as per their case scenario. He said Pakistan was facing the formation of “regimental camps” and the country had been turned into a fighting ground for political positions.

He rejected the notion that the caretaker setup could be likened to the 90s ‘Kakar formula’ where both Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and President GhulamIshaq Khan were forced to quit on the proposal of then

### Peace in region to remain elusive till Kashmir dispute resolution: Kakar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday calling the Kashmir dispute the root cause of tension in South Asia, said peace in the region would remain elusive till the resolution of the issue. The prime minister in a meeting with OIC Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir Yousef M. Al Dobeay, said Pakistan was committed to a just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. He welcomed the visit of the OIC delegation to Pakistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

He lauded the sustained efforts of the OIC in support of the Kashmir cause, particularly in the wake of India’s unilateral and illegal actions of August 5, 2019 and stated that the people of Pakistan and Kashmir had high expectations of the OIC. Highlighting the tremendous sacrifices of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination, the prime minister said that the Kashmiris had always looked towards OIC and Ummah for support.

army chief General WaheedKakar to make way for fresh election. “This comparison is apples and oranges. It is out of context because in our case, the stint of the normal parliament led to its retirement and we are part of the constitutional continuation where leaders of the House and the Opposition agreed upon my name,” he said.

There has been no interference from any institution in our case, he said. On general polls, he said necessary security and administrative arrangements were in place. He said the caretaker government in collaboration with the Election Commission was in the process of the finalization of the required measures.

On the expulsion of Afghan refugees, the prime minister said the action was being taken only against unregistered foreign nationals and over one million illegal aliens. The

government’s objective, he said, was to regulate the movement of unregistered foreign nationals through proper process. On relations with India, he said the radicalized RSS (RashtriyaSwayamsevakSangh) mindset of the ruling Indian party and the Kashmir dispute were the main hurdles in the maintenance of good ties.

“The situation between Pakistan and India needs to be improved, however, realistically at present, there is no such possibility,” he said. PM Kakar said the hegemonic designs of India needed to be curtailed as the country was turning into hell for its minorities, including Muslims, Sikhs, and others. Asked about any possibility of recognition of Israel, he said, “There are no such deliberations going on.”

(Continued on Back Page)

### Pakistan calls for truce in Gaza

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday strongly condemned the “indiscriminate and disproportionate” use of force by Israeli authorities against the civilian population in Gaza and called for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahrah Baloch said in her weekly press briefing that Pakistan was deeply concerned by the fast deteriorating and dire humanitarian situation in Gaza due to the “inhumane blockade and collective punishment by Israeli forces”.

The statement comes after Israel imposed a “total siege” to stop food and fuel from reaching the enclave of 2.3 million people, many poor and dependent on aid in response to a surprise Hamas offensive on Saturday that left 1,200 Israelis dead, according to officials. The spokesperson said that the decision to cut off electricity, fuel and water supplies was “unjust and should be reversed as it would severely impact the lives of millions of people in the enclave”.

“The current cycle of aggression and violence is a sad reminder and a direct consequence of over seven decades of illegal foreign occupation, aggression and disrespect for international law, including UNSC resolutions that recognise the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people,” she added. The FO spokesperson said Pakistan had been constantly warning against serious consequences of Israel’s “escalatory and provocative actions in recent months”. She said the “unprecedented gravity of the situation demands urgent intervention by the international community”.

Pakistan urged the United Nations to play a proactive role in facilitating a ceasefire to alleviate the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. “The international community must work in concert for a just comprehensive and lasting two-state solution with a viable, sovereign and contiguous state of Palestine on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Sharif (Jerusalem) as its capital.

## Political stability paramount to development: Shehbaz

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif has said that Pakistan’s sustainable economic development is incumbent upon its political stability as both are mutually inclusive.

Cash-strapped Pakistan’s \$350 billion economy is in meltdown with low growth, a weak currency, and skyrocketing prices, with those with less incomes feeling the most pain. Currently, a caretaker setup is at the helm of affairs with limited powers. It will stay in place till the country sees general elections, which is the interim government’s primary responsibility. The polls are likely to be held by the end of January next year, according to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

In his address to traders in Lahore on Wednesday, Shehbaz — whose government’s term ended in August — said: “When the traders’ shop runs, it helps move Pakistan.” “If the economy is stable then development and prosperi-

### Nawaz arrives in Jeddah

JEDDAH (Agencies): The PML-N supremo and former prime minister Mian Nawaz Sharif arrived in Jeddah from London on early Thursday. He will stay in Saudi Arabia for week and perform Umrah. The former premier was accompanied by family members and close aides.

The PML-N supremo then will fly to Dubai on Oct 17 or 18. After a three-day stay, he will travel for Pakistan as part of the party plan. Sharif will reach Pakistan by a special plane. Sources said that the flight carrying Nawaz Sharif would be branded “Umeed-e-Pakistan” which can carry approximately 150 passengers. The former premier, along with party members and journalists, is scheduled to leave Dubai for Pakistan on Oct 21. The special flight will land in Islamabad from Dubai before proceeding to Lahore where Sharif will address a gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan.

ty will come with it. The country needs economic and political stability,” the former prime minister added.

Reiterating his stance, the ex-premier claimed that his government’s members decided to “compromise their political stake” to “save the state”. “We did not care about politics when we were in power for 16 months. Had we not saved the state, then our politics would have been buried,” Shehbaz, the younger brother of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif,

Slamming the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) without naming the party, Shehbaz said his government faced sit-ins and threats every day. “Abusive language was used [against us]. The society was polarised. But in order to move forward, we need to end this divide,” he said. Talking about Nawaz’s return, Shehbaz said the country would begin the road to progress under the PML-N supremo — the three-time former prime minister.

## IHC clubs Imran’s pleas against cipher case

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday combined former prime minister Imran Khan’s separate petitions seeking to stay the trial court proceedings in the cipher case and dismiss the case altogether.

IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq took up a separate plea seeking the stay of Imran’s trial in the cipher case and clubbed it with the main plea, wherein he has sought the dismissal of the case and be fixed for hearing. During the hearing, senior lawyer Sardar Latif Khosa appeared as Imran’s counsel and informed the court that the pleas were seeking the stay of the trial court proceedings and challenging the special court’s order of indictment.

He further said that the matter was pending before

the IHC and a verdict had been reserved, adding that the Lahore High Court has also issued a stay order in a case by the FIA. Khosa reiterated that he had urged the special court to “not hurry” as the matter was pending before the high court.

The lawyer went on to emphasise that he had “plenty of concerns” regarding the application of the Official Secrets Act in the case. “What security was compromised or which secrecy [sic] was leaked? Bhutto sahib had also made similar remarks in his speech in Raja Bazaar, so what? “My client is a national hero and the world knows and believes that. Now, he is in jail [while] innocent,” Khosa asserted.

Justice Farooq then asked him if the separate plea should be combined with that seeking dismissal of the

case, to which Khosa agreed on the condition that it would be fixed before October 17. When Justice Farooq inquired what would happen on October 17, the counsel replied, “There would be great unpleasantness on October 17. A trial is under way. Indictment is to take place.” The chief justice then observed that he would review the matter and issue an order on it, assuring that the pleas would be fixed for hearing before October 17.

Meanwhile, Imran’s lawyer, Naeem Haider Panjutha lamented the delay in today’s hearing of his client’s bail plea in the cipher case. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), he said the hearing was supposed to start at 2pm but it had not started till 2:34pm at least. He added that even the previous hearing began late, due to which it had to be adjourned.





## FIA arrests human smuggler

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested a man here on Thursday over his alleged involvement in heinous crimes related to human smuggling.

According to an FIA spokesperson, the team arrested Muhammad Fiaz for receiving 4,000 Dirhams from a man on the pretext of providing him job in Dubai. However, later on he did not send him to Dubai.

The accused was collecting money from citizens on the pretext of sending them abroad. Under the supervision of Deputy Director Anti-Human Trafficking Circle Lahore, special raid teams were formed for arrest of the accused.

## SNGPL takes action against 160 gas pilferers

LAHORE (APP): The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), in its ongoing crackdown on gas theft, disconnected another 160 connections in Punjab, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, and imposed Rs. 33.8 million fine, and processed 235 under-billing cases.

According to a spokesman for the SNGPL, the teams continued raids in Lahore and disconnected 17 connections over illegal use of gas, and processed 14 under-billing cases.

In Bahawalpur, six meters were disconnected, in Islamabad 14, Multan 16, Sheikhupura 17 connections were disconnected.

In Peshawar and Karak, the company disconnected 60 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal connections while another 11 under-billing cases were processed. The regional team also registered three FIRs [First information reports] against gas thieves and Rs 2 million fine was imposed.

In Rawalpindi, the regional team disconnected four gas connections over direct and illegal use of gas. The SNGPL team in Mardan disconnected 11 connections.

## Taxila police arrest three robbers

RAWALPINDI (APP): In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted a gang and arrested three robbers and street criminals besides recovering over Rs 60,000 cash, five mobile phones, weapons and other items from their possession.

According to a police spokesman, Taxila Police arrested three accused namely Bilal, ringleader, Farhad and Fahad, who were allegedly involved in various robberies, and street crime cases.

He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Taxila Police Station on the directives of SP Potohar, Muhammad Waqas Khan conducted a raid and managed to net the criminals who were record holders.

The SP said that the Police were taking strict action in accordance with the law against lawbreakers and criminal gangs.

# Senate Committee for more efforts for conservation of Indus Delta Mangroves

KARACHI (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change has called for more coordinated and comprehensive measures for protection of Mangrove forests along the coastline of Pakistan and exploring its economic potential for the benefit of the country.

The meeting of the senate committee to review measures for conservation of Indus Delta Mangroves, and discuss future outlook and way forward was held here during visit of WWF Wetland Center the other day. Chairperson Senator Seemee Ezdi chaired the meeting that was attended by Senator Khalida Ateeab, Senator Abida Muhammad Azeem, Senator Keshoo Bai and Senator Mohammad Humayun Mohmand. The committee chairperson Senator Seemee Ezdi expressed concerns about the challenges encountered to Mangroves forests on coastal line of Pakistan particularly deterioration of the Indus Delta region due to sea intrusion, coastline erosion and deforestation of mangrove forest.

Speaking to media persons at the occasion she said that the mangrove forests are not only natural habitat and hatchery and breeding ground of several species of marine life but it serves as a defense line against cyclones and Tsunamis.

She noted that Mangroves absorb three to four fold more Carbon as compared to other species of the trees and it may contribute significantly in earning valuable foreign exchange in shape of Carbon credits. She also appreciated joint measures of WWF Pakistan, Sindh Forest Department

and other partners during last 10 years for Mangroves conservation and protection of marine ecosystem in Indus Delta region. The upper house committee underscored the need of further measures by all the relevant departments and ministries for dealing with issue of encroachments over the wetland areas and disposal of untreated water that was causing destruction of mangrove forest cover.

Senator Humayun Mohmand highlighted the financial aspects of Mangrove conservation and proposed to promote it as an industry. Mangrove forest grown over a single hectare has potential to earn thousands of dollars while conservation of Indus Delta Mangroves area could earn Pakistan billions of dollars annually through marine fisheries, sea food exports, creation of livelihood opportunities and resources for local communities as well as Carbon credits, he observed.

Director General WWF-Pakistan Hammad Naqi Khan, Senior Manager Conservation WWF-P Altaf Sheikh and Chief Conservator Sindh Forest Department Riaz Ahmed Waggon briefed the committee about measures taken for rehabilitation and conservation of mangrove forests along the coastline of Pakistan, achievements made so far in the regard and challenges encountered. Hammad Khan briefed the committee on the climate vulnerability of Pakistan and shared that ecologically, mangrove forests are the top habitat for biodiversity as it creates a defense system against natural disasters such as Tsunami, cyclones and sea storms.

## Call for infrastructure up-gradation to boost tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Infrastructure including roadways, airports and public transit systems should be upgraded to facilitate easier access to different tourist sites which promote tourism in the country at large. Talking to APP, a tourist Aleena Khan said that enhancing the country's infrastructure by upgrading transportation networks will facilitate national and international visitors.

She said that she visited different places in Azad Jammu and Kashmir along with her family and found roads in dilapidated condition and faced miseries and hardships by commuting from one site to another. Khan said Pakistan has rich tourism potential which attracts most domestic and foreign dignitaries to come to visit the country.

She stressed the need to improve road infrastructure as a large number of international tourists are thronging to the

country to enjoy their trip or make the journey memorable. Another tourist Ahsan Ali said that developing a strong infrastructure would pave the way to encourage tourists to visit various recreational and religious sites, adding that tourism is contributing a lot to economic growth as well.

He said that infrastructure including air, ground, port and tourism services like hotel rooms and car rental services plays an important role in travel and tourism competitiveness, serving as the arteries of the industry. It may be mentioned here that the tourism ministry has started work on the launch of a "Tourism App" to provide one-click information about tourist destinations, this app includes all the information regarding restaurants, hotels, transport, travel facilities, culture, entertainment and historical places.

## LESCO detects 16,520 power pilferers in 35 days anti-theft campaign

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has detected a total of 16,520 connections from where the consumers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts - Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara - during last 35 days of anti-power theft campaign.

A LESCO spokesman told the media on Thursday that the company had so far submitted FIR [First information report] applications against 16,380 electricity thieves, out of which 15,228 cases had been registered in respective police stations, while 5,153 accused were arrested. The spokesman said that all electricity thieves had been charged Rs 1.532 billion [Rs1,532,319,134 exactly] so far with 34,111,026 detection units.

On the 35th consecutive day, October 12, of anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, LESCO found 490 connections involved in electricity theft in all its circles and also submitted FIR application against 490 electricity

thieves in the respective police stations, out of which 267 cases were registered while 65 accused arrested.

During the operation, he said, various agricultural and commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft; their connections were disconnected and they were charged with detection units.

Among the seized connections, 14 were commercial, four agricultural and 472 domestic, and all of those were disconnected and charged a collective amount of Rs36,921,245 against 702,431 detection units.

On the 35th day of anti-power theft operation, the LESCO charged 2,012 detection units worth Rs 994,852 to a connection in Hanjarwal area of Lahore; 15,060 detection units of Rs 545,300 to another connection in the area of Hujra Shah Moqem; 6,000 detection units worth Rs 421,000 to a power pilferer in Ichhra area on Ferozpur Road; and 7,800 detection units of Rs 400,000 to power thief in Factory Area.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice Maqbool Baqar meets with a delegation of Jamat Ahl-e-Hadees led by its Ameer Mufti Mohammad Yousif Kasori at CM House.

## CM gives keys of 312 new vehicles, uniforms to PHP Police

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi gave keys of 313 new vehicles and uniforms to Punjab Highway Patrol (PHP) Police at a ceremony held at his office here on Thursday.

Addressing the ceremony, the CM said that the incumbent government had given new vehicles to the Punjab Highways Patrol Police after a hiatus of 19 years. Only 47 vehicles were provided to the patrolling police after 2003-04, he said and maintained that the government was bound to give two uniforms to the policemen every year.

From now on, every jawan and senior police officer would be given two uniforms besides the provision of additional funds, he said. Punjab Highway Patrol police had been given the responsibility of checking the axle load. If the police performed this responsibility in a befitting manner, it would take a lead to Punjab police and traffic police, he remarked.

Naqvi noted, "Police Khidmat centers are also serving the masses but along with this, we have to change the archaic police culture to provide justice to the common man." Meanwhile, the plan for the

up-gradation of 750 police stations with Rs.1.90 billion had been chalked out as some police stations lacked their own buildings even in a city like Lahore.

"I have visited the Samanabad police station; it is impossible for a human being to live there," the CM maintained and noted that the policemen were also working in such police stations.

The government would do whatever possible for the Punjab Highways Patrol police, he added and reiterated that the government would extend full support to the patrolling police. Similarly, the police must treat the public with good manners and do justice to them, he concluded.

Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman said that the Punjab Highways Patrol police had been given the responsibility to deal with the important problem of axle load. A summary was being forwarded to the chief minister regarding giving incentives to the PHP.

The IG police said that CM Naqvi had done an exemplary job for the welfare of the police in a short period. Rs.120 crores were released for the families of the policemen who died

during service and an ex-gratia amount of 80 crore rupees was also released for the families of police martyrs, he added.

Addl IG (PHP), Addl IG (Ops), Addl IG (Logistics), CCPO, DIG (PHP), DIG (Tele), DIG (Ops) and others were also present.

**CM inspects expansion project of Bibi Pak Daman shrine:** The renovation and expansion project of the Bibi Pak Daman shrine will be completed by the middle of next month as around 80% of the work has been completed. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the ongoing activities at Bibi Pak Daman shrine early in the morning. Both secretary C&W and architect Nayyar Ali Dada apprised him about the pace of work and the steps taken to improve the interior of the shrine.

The CM ordered to accelerate the speed to complete it in time and instructed secretary C&W and architect Nayyar Dada in this regard. He also prayed for the progress and prosperity of the country at the shrine.

Provincial Ministers Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, SMBR, secretary auqaf, and commissioner & DC Lahore were also present.

## CCPO issues show-cause notices to various SHOs

LAHORE (APP): Under the chairmanship of CCPO Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamayana, a performance review meeting of Civil Lines and City Divisions was held at CCPO office on Thursday.

In the meeting, performance was reviewed regarding the pending road certificates, cases under investigation, habitual criminals, absconding accused etc.

Addressing the meeting, the CCPO Lahore ordered for dealing with all pending cases and road certificates as soon as possible and ordered a strict

crackdown on motorcycle thieves and mobile snatchers.

He expressed indignation at the performance of several station house officers (SHOs) and issued show-cause notices to SHO Race Course Police Station, In-charge Investigation Police Station Mozang, SHO Police Station Badami Bagh, In-charge Investigation Police Station Badami Bagh, In-charge Investigation Police Station Gawalmandi, In-charge Investigation Police Station Tibby City and In-charge Investigation

Police Station New Anarkali. The CCPO Lahore directed all SHOs to improve their performance and said to ensure prevention of robbery, snatching and motorcycle theft and remember that Departmental action will be taken against the officer who will not perform well. DIG (Operations) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, SSP Admin Atif Nazir, SSP(Operations) Ali Raza, SSP (Investigation) Anush Masood Chaudhry, SPs of Civil Lines and City Division, DSPs, SHOs, Incharges (Investigation) attended the meeting.

## CS reviews progress on 33 priority projects

LAHORE (APP): Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman reviewed the pace of work on 33 priority development projects on Thursday.

At the Civil Secretariat meeting, the Planning and Development chairman discussed in detail progress on upgradation of Services, Mayo, Ganga Ram, and Nishtar departments - 10 II Multan hospitals, and schemes of specialised Safe Cities project in healthcare department, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad six each of housing and urban development, and He directed the

communication and works, four of Auqaf, three of the Punjab Information-Technology Board (PITB), and two schemes each of Forest and Education departments.

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# Governor orders law and order improvement

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of the elected local body Chairmen called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali and discussed in detail regarding the problems being faced by the local government representatives.

The participants of the delegation informed the governor about other problems including the closure of electricity feeders and gas load shedding. Governor KP also contacted CPO Peshawar, directed to arrest the suspects involved in the murder of the student of Edwards College as soon as possible.

The delegation included Inamullah Khan, Aziz Ghaffar, Nimatullah Khan and others. On the spot, the Governor spoke to Chief PESCO and other top officials of WAPDA to resolve the electricity load shedding and said that the problem should be resolved in the said area.

The Governor also urged the elected local Council Chairmen to try to discourage Kunda mafia in their respective areas, which will permanently solve the problem of load shedding.

The Governor said that it is the responsibility of the local body representatives

to attract the people for the installation of new meters. On this occasion, the Governor also directed the Sui Gas authorities to take steps to end load shedding.

Apart from this, the Governor has also contacted CCPO Peshawar and has instructed to bring the accused involved in the murder of the student of Edwards College on Mufti Mahmood Flyover to justice as soon as possible, on which CCPO Peshawar told the Governor that efforts have been started to arrest the accused on emergency basis and the

accused will be arrested very soon.

The Governor directed to take steps to improve the law and order situation in the entire province including Peshawar and said that the SHOs of all the concerned Police Stations to take measures in accordance with the law to prevent vagrancy, street crimes and other crimes in their respective areas so as to ensure the prevention of such unpleasant incidents. Expressing grief over the killing of the young student, the Governor also expressed his sympathy with the bereaved family.



PESHAWAR: Supporters of a religious group chanting slogans against Israeli airstrikes on Gaza during a demonstration to show solidarity with Palestinian people.

## Secretary assess standard of service delivery in bus terminal

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Secretary of Transport for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zia-ul Haq conducted a visit to the Peshawar Bus Terminal, the Driving License Branch Peshawar, and the Vehicle Emission and Fitness Checking Facility.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the condition

of these facilities and their adherence to regulations.

Accompanying Zia-ul Haq were Noor ul Amin, Additional Secretary of Transport and Zeeshan Abdullah, Director of Transport.

During the visit, a thorough evaluation of the bus terminal was carried out, and recommendations were made to enhance the quality of services and meet the

required standards.

The Transport Complex and the Driving License Branch were also inspected, with immediate directives issued for necessary improvements.

In an effort to boost vehicle safety and compliance, inspections were conducted at the Peshawar Vehicle Emission Testing Stations (VETs) and Motor Vehicle Examination

Stations (MVEs) offices. A demonstration of vehicle inspections was presented by VETs and the Mobile Weighing Station's operations were examined.

Zia-ul Haq recognized the significance of these facilities in ensuring passenger safety and issuing instructions to enhance public service quality and ensure the efficient delivery of services.



PESHAWAR: Provincial president of Contractor Association Malik Riaz Mian Nisar Gul addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## RTS orders DPO to register FIR, submit report

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Right to Public Services Commission (RTPSC/RTS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ordered District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber to register First Information Report (FIR) and submit report within 30 days, on Thursday.

The complainant Banaras Khan informed that local Station House Officer (SHO) didn't register FIR on his plea against an attempt to kidnap his children and receiving threat-

ening calls despite District Prosecutor direction.

RTS's commissioners ordered DPO Khyber to register FIR on Banaras Khan's complaint and inform the commission within 30 days regarding the redressal of grievances.

A female applicant Parveen Akhtar thanked RTS for redressal of her complaint as Fard (land documents) were provided after the intervention of the commission.

However, the commission observed that RTS

will reopen complaint of Mastan Shah resident of Battagram after one month as it is stipulated timeframe granted to Conservator for provision of public service under the Act.

RTS argued that delay in delivery of notified services wouldn't be tolerated to ensure accountability of public servants as well as directed citizens to approach the commission for inconvenience for good governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Delegation of IMLA Lahore calls on minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A delegation from Cantonment Institute of Management Land Administration (IMLA) Lahore here Thursday called on Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce, Technical Education, and Integrated Districts Affairs Dr. Aamir Abdullah at Civil Secretariat.

The delegation that was led by Director of Institute, Rana Rafiq included Additional Director,

Zufishan Manzoor, Deputy Director Arshad Khan and under training officers of Central Superior Service.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Aamir Abdullah shared historical context of merged districts and government's efforts in post-merger period to enhance construction and development in these areas.

He highlighted the transformation of these districts into integral parts of the country emphasizing importance of equal rights,

citizenship, and development opportunities for people living in these regions.

Caretaker minister also underlined the government's dedication to addressing challenges after merger and to establish a ministry for merged districts.

The delegation was provided with a comprehensive overview of various sub-institutions under Department of Industry, Science, and Technical Education.

## Khyber Eye Foundation observes World Sight Day



PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Eye Foundation, on Thursday observed World Sight Day 2023 here and arranged a symbolic walk here in Ejazabad, Gulbahar No. 4.

The primary goal of this initiative was to serve as a powerful reminder to people worldwide about the importance of prioritizing eye health in the workplace. This event stressed the significance of taking care of eyes by both the employees and employers.

The Khyber Eye

Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to providing essential eye care services to underserved communities in the Khyber Agency and surrounding regions.

Through a dedicated team of healthcare professionals and support from generous donors, the foundation strives to restore sight and transform lives.

The spokesman of the foundation Yusuf Mansoor said that World Sight Day 2023, under the auspices of the International

Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), is a global initiative with a profound mission.

Its primary objective is to emphasize the critical importance of addressing issues related to blindness and vision impairment, recognizing these challenges as central concerns in the fields of public health and development.

He said that the walk was part of an effort to raise awareness among people to essential eye care services.

## Minister for C&W visits NESPAK office

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Communications & Works and Irrigation Engineer Ahmed Jan Khan on Thursday visited the office of private construction consultancy firm NESPAK (Pvt) here at Peshawar.

During the visit, the Provincial Caretaker Minister was briefed regarding the professional activities of the firm and its services being provided in various construction projects.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister was told that the consultancy firm is providing its consultancy services in the construction sector in the country and abroad and in this context the firm has provided its services in roads, highways, buildings, bridges and other development projects.

During the meeting, MD Zargham Ishaq Khan, Engineers Daud Akhtar and Noorz Gul and other officials were also present.

Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker minister appreciated the consultancy services of NESPAK in the construction and development sector.

He hoped that the institution would follow their quality in construction projects and will maintain its standard in this regard.

## Police arrests two alleged drug-peddlers

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Police arrested two alleged drug-peddlers while recovered two kilograms Ice-drug and 10 kilograms hashish in the premises of Badabhier police station, on Thursday.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Saddar Division Abdus Salam Khalid deployed police teams under Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Badabhier Zia Ullah Khan to foil drug-smuggling on intelligence report.

The alleged culprits were identified as Rabbani and Jawad while collectively two-kilos Ice-drug and 10 kilograms hashish recovered from their possession. Police had registered separate First Information Reports on the culprits.

## Counterfeit medicines recovered

PESHAWAR (APP): The Anti-Corruption Circle Peshawar on Thursday raided a store and recovered a large consignment of counterfeit and unregistered medicines and arrested the accused here.

Spokesman FIA told media persons that the raid was conducted under the supervision of Deputy Director Anti-Corruption Peshawar Saad Ullah.

During the raid big consignment of counterfeit and unregistered medicines were recovered and an accused namely, Nasir Khan was taken into custody.

He said the recovered medicines were handed over to drug inspectors for evaluation and a case was registered against the accused adding further investigation was started.

PESHAWAR: The "Seerah Week 2023," organized by the PRIME Society for Arts & Literature (PAL), is underway at Peshawar Medical College (PMC).

Students from various academic institutions, including PMC, Peshawar Dental College, Ruffaidah Nursing College, University of Peshawar, Frontier College for women, IM Sciences and other esteemed institutions are actively participating in these engaging competitions.

This lively week offers a diverse array of competitions and activities, including Quiz Competitions on the life of The Rasool (Sal-Allah-u-alahi-Wasalam) and His Companions, Naat Competitions, Calligraphy Exhibition, and a panel discussion on the life and teachings of the Rasool (Sal-Allah-u-alahi-Wasalam).

A series of events as part of "Seerah Week 2023,"

including Qirat and Naat competitions, aimed to shed light on the life of the Rasool (Sal-Allah-u-alahi-Wasalam) life.

The event was graced by the presence of Prof. Dr. Mohammad Aman Khan, the Principal of PMC. Distinguished panelists, including Prof. Dr. Saeed Anwar, Prof. Dr. Shamsul Haq, Prof. Dr. Sahib Islam, Prof. Dr. Nomanullah Wazir, and Dr. Prof. Muhammad Ashfaq, engaged in thought-

provoking discussions about various aspects of the Nabi (Sal-Allah-u-alahi-Wasalam) life.

The Qirat and Naat presentations left the audience in awe as students showcased their remarkable talents and skills in highlighting the Rasool's (Sal-Allah-u-alahi-Wasalam) life and teachings. The closing ceremony and prize distribution of Seerah Week 2023 will take place on October 16th at the PMC Auditorium.

## 'Students' Vote Education and Awareness Workshop' held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Students' Vote Education and Awareness Workshop was organized at the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar organized by PILDAT to engage the youth in the electoral process.

The Regional Election Commissioner Peshawar addressed the students and answered their questions. He urged the students to verify their votes early as October 25, 2023 is the last date for registration, correction, transfer and deletion of votes. Faculty members and REC Peshawar the speakers urged the students to do their national duty by voting in the upcoming general elections.

The workshop was conducted by Faheem, from PILDAT. Election Officer Peshawar and his staff



organized a mock poll exercise at the polling station to familiarize the students with the voting process.

Students took keen interest in the session and mock poll exercise.

Besides, faculty member Prof Dr. Amir Taj & Prof Arif, large number of male and female students participated in the session.

Spokesperson to the Provincial Election Commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also attended the session.

## Civil society and academia vow to fight polio

PESHAWAR (APP): Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women's University, Peshawar organized Polio eradication awareness day in collaboration with Pakistan Development Foundation and Rotary International Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

This event was joined by Prof. Dr. Riaz Anwar, Caretaker Minister for Health, Vice Chancellor SBBWU Prof. Dr. Safia Ahme, Muhammad Bilal Sethi, Chairman Pakistan Development Foundation (PDF), Muhammad Zeeshan Khan, Deputy Secretary Health/Deputy Coordinator EOC, Khurshid Khan, Goodwill Polio Ambassador Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

At the beginning of the event, the Chairman PDF, Muhammad Bilal Sethi recorded his protest against brutal killing of a student of Edwards College Peshawar in mobile snatching case and tied a black ribbon on his arm.

He urged the Minister to

convey his message to the Chief Minister and provincial government that such incidents were an injustice to youth and need to be addressed.

Minister Riaz Anwar and Vice Chancellor Safia Ahmed also condemned the sad happening and urged the government to provide justice to the student and family.

The Minister for health and all senior officers along students of SBBWU and volunteers of PDF and Rotarians joined an awareness drive against polio.

Addressing at the seminar, Minister of Health, Prof. Dr. Riaz Anwar, appreciated the efforts of the Pakistan Development Foundation and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar.

He said the government is continuously working to eradicate polio. He mentioned that Pakistan and Afghanistan are the only two countries where polio cases were still existed and

collective efforts were required to win fight against it.

Bilal Sethi, the chief of Pakistan Development Foundation said that NGOs and NPOs are playing a vital role in raising awareness against polio. He said that religious leaders, teachers, motivators and people from all walks of life have a key role in eradication against polio.

## 9723 illegal electricity connections removed

PESHAWAR (INP): In on-going operations and crackdowns against power pilferage, Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) had so far removed 9723 illegal connections and lodged 3547 FIRs against the accused.

According to the PESCO spokesman, 1518 people had been arrested and more than 343.5 million fines were imposed on the illegal consumers, adding that 43 industrial, 15 agricultural and 441 commercial illegal connections had been removed while the last day, 183 electricity thieves were caught.

He warned that as per the directives of PESCO chief no leniency would be shown to power pilferers and indiscriminate action were being taken.





## In brief

### Police fails to protect citizen F.P. Report

PABBI: Awami National Party (ANP) central general secretary Mian Iftikhar Hussain condemned the murder of a student by mobile snatcher in the red zone at provincial metropolis Peshawar as well as police and provincial government for their failure to protect citizen, on Thursday. This he condemned while addressing students at Ghazi Model School Pabbi during annual prize distribution ceremony as chief guest. He added that students are protesting for arrest of culprits but police had failed to provide security to citizen. ANP central general secretary added that the police know every outlaw person operating in the premises but can't acting to protect citizen from criminals. He claimed that ANP standing with bereaved family of deceased student. During the prize distribution ceremony Abbas Khan Ghazi, Muhammad Ilyas Khan, ADEO Akhtar Muhammad, chairman Sohail Khan, Essa Khan, Umar Farooq, Nizam Khan, Khair-ul-Abbar, Karim Khan, Haji Iftikhar, Syed Ayub Shah, Dilawar Khan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Asad Ali were present. The participants also condemned murder of student on resisting mobile snatching while argued arrest of culprits involved in the offense as soon as possible.

### 29 injured Swat mishap Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: At least 29 passengers, including women and children, suffered multiple injuries after a bus carrying wedding guests skidded off the road in Swat's Kabal Kotlai on Thursday. The bus was heading towards Ali Garam from Kabal when it met with an accident. After being informed, rescue teams rushed to the spot and shifted the injured to Kabal Civil Hospital. The victims with critical injuries were later shifted to Saidi Sharif Central Hospital. Police are investigating the incident.

### 2 petrol pumps, brick-kiln fined

SARGODHA (INP): Two petrol pumps, a brick-kiln and a godown were fined over violation of laws in Shahpur tehsil, here on Thursday. According to official sources, during the ongoing crackdown on profiteers and hoarders, Assistant Commissioner Shahpur Anum Babar checked various petrol pumps, brick-kilns and grocery shops and found Ali Petroleum and Sial Petroleum using faulty gauge. She imposed Rs 20,000 fine on Ali Petroleum and Rs 25,000 fine on Sial Petroleum. The AC also imposed Rs 10,000 fine on Malik brick-kiln for not adopting the zig-zag technology and Rs 10,000 fine on a godown of a grocery shop over hoarding.

### TLP to hold rallies

NANKANA SAHIB (INP): Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) will hold peaceful rallies across the country tomorrow Friday to expresses solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people. The announcement was made by Muhsan Raza, Advocate, High Court Legal Advisor, TLP, Lahore. He said that TLP is a group that cares for the Muslim Ummah, and that the Muslim Ummah needs to unite in support of Palestine. Raza urged the international community to raise their voices against Israel and to present a resolution against Israel in the United Nations.



**SARGODHA:** A view of trolley with electric transformer place on road in front of Company Bagh creating hurdle in smooth flow of traffic and needs the attention of authorities concerned.

## LPP holds exposure visit for civil society to TEVTA

Saqib Mushtaq

LODHAN: Lodhran Pilot Project (LPP) has organized an exposure visit in collaboration with WHH for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to TEVTA head office in Lahore. The representatives of 10 CSOs from Bahawalpur division visited TEVTA secretariat, Lahore.

Basic purpose of the exposure visit was to provide information to CSOs about the importance of technical and vocational training and role of TEVTA for the provision of such training courses to the youth. During the visit, Mr. Irfan Sagheer, Director (Operations) TEVTA briefed the participants about functionality of TEVTA and discussed that almost 90,000 youth is being trained through different technical and vocational training courses at TEVTA Institutes in the Punjab.

Project Manager Tanzeela Altaf, LPP thanked the officials at



TEVTA head office and all the participants of the exposure visit and shared that LPP is providing assistance to marginalized youth for their economic development at grassroots level so that they could play their positive role in the society. She shared that technical and vocational trainings have been provided to 500 youth through different courses under "Strengthening the socio-economic resilience of the youth by promoting their economic self-reliance in three provinces of Pakistan" project and other

834 youth members will be trained in future.

While speaking with the participants Muhammad Akmal, Program Coordinator said, "It is the responsibility of the CSOs to aware youth about the importance of technical and vocational education so that they could be able to support their families for better wellbeing. The representatives of CSOs also visited Government Technical Training Institute and appreciated the efforts of TEVTA for the provision of quality trainings to enhance their skills.

## Facilitation of students in edu institutions demanded

F.P. Report

BUNER: Islami Jamiat Tulba (IJT) Buner Nazim Farhat Ullah along with Aziz and Ikramullah argued government for facilitation of students at education institutions otherwise threatened they will be compel to arrange protest on larger scale, on Thursday.

This was demanded during press conference held at Buner press club while IJT Nazim pointed out that there is no transport and hostel facility in the university of Buner for male students and many faculties sans multimedia and the results delayed while admission fee high. He claimed smoking inside

university a routine and harassment also reported.

The Nazim claimed the historical degree college daggar is also facing transport and the closer of the main gate a constant nuisance. He elaborated this college excluded the subjects of Pushto and Economics for the session 2023/2024. He made it clear the IJT would mobilize rest of students organizations to jointly stage protest demo at college Chowk in Swari soon.

The IJT leader shared the degree colleges of Champa and Jowar yet to start B. S classes due to which students suffered. He continued these colleges are facing short of facilities like adequate staff transport

and hostels. The IJT nazim shared the GGSC Hashimsar is in grip of multiple problems like short of staff short of accommodation and facilities due to which enrolled students are worried and aspirants to get admission are at waiting list for years but to no attention.

The IJT nazim claimed problems and difficulties being faced by student's community of both sex are many time high than told and held the administrations responsible for taking mums and demanded its early solution otherwise repeated the threat of protest demos for wide attraction statesmen and world media as well.

## Accountability vital for effective governance: Commissioner

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Mardan Division, Shaukat Ali Yousafzai, highlighted the significance of a system of rewards and consequences in ensuring efficient management and administration.

He commended the district administration of Swabi for setting a commendable precedent by acknowledging the exceptional contributions of employees across various domains. Particularly, he lauded the women officials who have played a pivotal role in areas such as population welfare, livestock, and women development, emphasizing the importance of recognizing their efforts.

Commissioner Mardan spoke as the chief guest at a special event hosted by the District Administration Swabi at Fazal Ali Haqqani Library Hall Swabi. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Commissioner Swabi, Gohar Ali, DPO Haroon Rasheed, ADC Finance and Planning Sara Tuhab, alongside administrative and police officers, as well as personnel from various departments.

During the event, Commissioner Mardan distributed awards and prizes to outstanding male and female officers and personnel in departments like Population Welfare, Livestock, and Social Welfare and Development of Women. Additionally, he distributed a new special

uniform introduced by the Swabi administration to drivers and Class IV employees in government departments.

Commissioner Shaukat Ali Yousafzai underlined the significance of Swabi as a pivotal district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, known for producing highly capable individuals across diverse fields. He expressed his appreciation for the district administration, particularly Deputy Commissioner Swabi, Gohar Ali, and his team, for initiating several projects that serve the public interest. In a symbolic gesture, Commissioner Mardan also inaugurated the Jawan Marka in Shah Mansoor and planted a sapling in the Shah Mansoor Complex.

## Iranian diesel, NCP items seized

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Dera Police have conducted successful operations resulting in the seizure of 5000 liters of Iranian diesel and other non custom paid items worth Rs.2 million in the limits of Daraban police station here on Thursday.

According to the police spokesman, Dera police intensified crackdown

against the smuggling of illegal diesel and non custom paid items on the direction of Regional Police Officer Nasir Mehmood Satti and District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani.

Following the directions, SHO Daraban police station Atta Ullah Khan in an action against smuggling of illegal diesel during the checking of the truck

TKA-995 police found 5000 liters of diesel worth Rs. 1.4 million. Police seized the truck and smuggled diesel and later the police handed over to the Customs authorities. Meanwhile During another operation during checking the vehicle LES-1086, the police found NPC items including 10 sacks of dry milk and 16 sacks of Iranian Shoppers worth Rs.0.4 million.

## 2 including 12 years student killed F.P. Report

SWABI: Two persons including a student of class fifth were killed in separate incidents occurred within limits of district Swabi here on Thursday.

According to police, Muhammad Javid lodged report in Swabi police station that he was taking his son, Abdus Samad to school when assailants opened fire on him. The firing killed his 12 years old son who was a student of fifth class. Reason behind the incident was reported to be an old enmity.

In another incident bullet riddled body of a man, Zafeer Gul, was recovered from nearby field situated within limits of Tordher Police Station. Zafeer Gul was released from court after facing a murder trial. Police has registered cases and investigation is underway. Meanwhile rescue teams recovered body of a boy, Saifullah that was drowned while bathing in Pihur canal.

## FIA nabs 3 suspects from airport

SIALKOT (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) immigration on Thursday apprehended three individuals in different operations at Sialkot International Airport.

The suspects allegedly involved in human smuggling identified as Muhammad Altif, Shahid Javed, and Asif were arrested at Sialkot Airport. According to media reports, Muhammad Altaf and Shahid Javed were arrested upon their arrival from abroad, while Asif Javed was taken into custody as he was wanted by the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle, Lahore.

The preliminary investigation revealed that the suspects Muhammad Altaf and Shahid Javed had allegedly entered multiple foreign countries through illegal means and had been residing there without legal documentation for several years. The immigration authorities were also unable to find any travel records for these individuals in the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS).

All three accused have been transferred to the FIA Anti-Human Trafficking Circle in Gujranwala for further legal proceedings. Earlier to this incident, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) anti-human smuggling cell apprehended two individuals involved in human smuggling from Lahore.

The suspect, Abdul Shakoor, was found guilty of taking a hefty sum of Rs 3 million from a citizen with the promise to assist them with the counterfeit documents for traveling to the United States. Meanwhile, another accused, Rashid, took a significant amount of Rs 350,000 for facilitating a person in attempting to reach the UAE.

# Traders condemn Israel brutality on Palestinians

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The Provincial General Secretary of the central organization of traders and the President Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zahir Shah, while strongly condemning the atrocities and attacks on the Palestinians by Israel, expressed solidarity with the oppressed and helpless Palestinian Muslims.

They said that Palestine is the land of the prophets; Zionist arrogant powers have occupied the land of Palestinians through oppression, brutality and massacre and will not hesitate to make any sacrifice. The fascism and brutality of the Muslims of Palestine is the worst example of terrorism. The judges of the world must be massacred. He said that Israel is a Zionist state which is an illegal occupier of the land of Palestine. We will never

recognize and accept Israel.

The children of Pakistan fully support their Palestinian Muslim brothers Bait-ul-Maqdis belongs to Muslims. We thank Allah who freed the first Qibla from the occupation of the Jews, we salute Hamas and the Mujahideen Palestine. The rulers of all Islamic countries should raise their voice in support of Palestine by showing their honor and faith, which will shake the halls of disbelief. He said that unfortunately, today the rulers of Muslim countries have become victims of interests and expediencies instead of fulfilling their religious duty.

**Dengue spreading quickly:** Dengue virus has spread its claws in Mardan, hundreds of citizens are affected, the district administration, Mardan health department and other responsible institutions are silent spectators, especially

men are the most affected and citizens are requested to spray and other protective measures from the higher authorities.

According to the details, urban areas of Mardan, especially, Mirafazal Khan Bazar, Bari Cham, Bicket Gunj, Mardan khas ,Khawja Gunj, Hoti, Gulibagh, Muslimabad, Kas Kuroona, Par Hoti and others dengue virus has spread in.

Poor sanitation and drainage in urban areas have now become breeding grounds for mosquitoes while the acute lack of anti-dengue spray and other protective measures by the district administration including TMA Mardan and WSSCM is causing the rapid spread of dengue. The citizens requested the higher authorities to take preventive measures against dengue in Mardan, vaccine and anti-dengue head.

## Officials seek support of public against narcotics

F.P. Report

KHYBER: Police and administrative officials urged the locals to join hands with them to wipe out-sale and use of narcotics especially "Ice-drug" and other social diseases among the youth of the area.

Under the auspice of local police station, an open court was organized in jirga hall on Thursday that was attended by Assistant Commissioner, Irshad Mohmand, Station House Officer (SHO) Akbar Afridi, Tehsil Chairman Haji Shah Khalid, Tehsildar Taimour Afridi, councilors, tribal elders, political workers and members of civil society were among the participants.

Addressing on the occasion AC Irshad Mohmand, Haji Shah Khalid, President local press club Khalil Afridi and others categorically condemned excessive sale and use of Ice and vowed that all initiatives would be adopted to curtain business and use of narcotics. They maintained that a comprehensive awareness would be necessary to inform laymen of the drawbacks of use of Ice and other narcotics and to guide them to socially boycott those involved in trade of narcotics.

For restricting the demand of narcotics it was obligatory to reduce supply that added and stressed upon parents to closely observe their children so that they would not indulge

in anti-social activities. SHO Akbar Afridi assured the audience that the police would never be compromised to curb narcotics trade and use in Landi Kotal and adjacent areas and called upon the masses to provide genuine information pertaining to local smugglers of narcotics.

He went on that they would shun political and officials pressures in the best interest of the people and would eliminate the curse from the tribal society. Residents of Landi Kotal appreciated the positive step taken by the police officials and asked for formulation of effective schemes against the excessive dealing of narcotics especially, the Ice-drug.

## BISE Larkana announces 12th class result

F.P. Report

LARKANA: Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Larkana announced the results of the twelfth class annual exams in which female students have won over boys by getting good marks.

The results have been announced, the male and female students have secured 9 positions out of a total of 12 points in the above mentioned four groups, only three female students have secured positions in the exams. According to the results, in the computer science group, Abdul Khaliq Kahuso, a student of Government Degree College, Larkana, got the first position by scoring 970 marks, while Mushtaq Ali Sheikh, a student of C&C Degree College, Shikarpur, scored 969 marks, and Raheel Bahto, a student of Degree College, Larkana, secured the second position.

967 marks have secured the third position, in the commerce group Mir Zahir Ali Maino, a student of Zebst School and College, secured the first position by securing 964 marks, while Hussain Junejo, another student of the same school, secured the second position by securing 963 marks, while Arts and Commerce Habibur Rahman Memon, a student of Larkana College,

has secured the third position by securing 962 marks, Dua Batul Syed, a student of Government Girls College Shikarpur, has secured the first position by securing 792 marks, while Aziz Ali Mastoi, a student of Arts and Commerce College.

Larkana, has secured the third position in Humanities Regular Group. 2nd position and girls by securing 791 marks. Tayyaba Leghari, a student of Degree College, Larkana, secured the third position by securing 789 marks, while in Humanities Regular Group, Shakila Rind, a student of Government Girls College Qamber, secured the first position by securing 924 marks, while Vishal Markhiani, a student of Government Degree College, Larkana, secured 923 marks.

The second position, while another student of Degree College Larkana, Shahzain Hafeez Buzdar, secured the third position by securing 921 marks. A total of 1772 candidates belonging to two tehsils Makhar and Khairpurnathan Shah of Dadu district including Larkana, Qamber Shahdadt, Shikarpur, Jacobabad and Kashmore Kandakot districts have appeared in the computer science, humanities regular and private examinations of the twelfth class.

Participated in the exams out of which 1519 candidates passed while 143 students failed while the exam results of 59 candidates have been withheld due to various reasons. 369 candidates in commerce group appeared in the exams while according to the results 358 passed while 10 candidates failed while the result of one student was withheld due to paper reasons 501 candidates appeared in the humanities regular group. According to the results of the board, 438 candidates have passed and 48 have failed, while the examination results of 14 candidates have been withheld due to various reasons.

**DIG take notice of rape incident:** A mother of three children resident of Kunab Colony, suburb of Larkana, protested in front of the press club against the gang rape by relative and his friends, which DIG Police Larkana Javed Sonharo took notice of. Jaskani ordered the SSP District Qamber Shahdadt to arrest the accused.

Totani, along with his friend Bilawal Biliidi, allegedly kidnapped me from my house and gang-raped me in a deserted house in Ghatthar area of Shahdadt, Qamber district. She is avoiding doing it, that's why I am forced to appeal to the higher authorities for justice. If justice is delayed, then I will be forced to commit suicide.

## Koto Hydropower to add its share in national grid by April 2024: Minister

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker Minister for Mines, Minerals and Energy, Sarfaraz Ali Shah has said that Koto Hydropower Project would start power supply to the national grid from April 2024.

He said this mini power project would prove an accomplished mega power project for the provincial government due to its efficient power addition in the national grid. The minister

added that problems of people related to mines and minerals would be addressed on priority.

The minister said this during his daylong visit to Dir Lower district on Thursday. The minister visited Chakdara Minerals and Mines and Asif Minerals and Mines Talaash. He inspected various sections of the sites and expressed satisfaction over its performance.

On the occasion he listened to the problems of the people associated with minerals and mines and issued

directives to the deputy commissioner and DPO for addressing the same. Later, the minister visited the under-construction Koto Power Project and inspected various sections of the project.

The project director told the minister that work on the power project was in its last phases and hoped that the project would start power supply to the national grid by April 2024. The minister said this was a project of high importance for the province that would enhance revenue generation.





Friday, October 13, 2023



**SEOUL:** US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan is escorted as it arrives in Busan, South Korea.

## NASA unveils sample scooped from surface of near-Earth asteroid

NEW YORK (Agencies): A sample of material collected from the surface of the near-Earth asteroid Bennu has been found to contain abundant water and carbon, the US space agency NASA said, offering more evidence for a theory that life on Earth was seeded from outer space. The findings were announced as NASA gave the public a first glimpse of what scientists found inside a sealed capsule that was returned to Earth last month after carrying material scooped from the 4.5-billion-year-old asteroid's surface by the OSIRIS-REX spacecraft.

"This is the biggest carbon-rich asteroid sample ever returned to Earth," NASA administrator Bill Nelson said at a press event at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, where the first images of black dust and pebbles were revealed. Carbon accounted for almost 5 percent of the sample's total weight, and was present in both organic and mineral form, while the water was locked inside the crystal structure of clay minerals, Nelson said. The findings were made through a preliminary analysis involving scanning the sample with electron microscopy, X-ray computed tomography and more. The preliminary results point to a likelihood of further discoveries that could buttress the hypothesis that early Earth was seeded with the primordial ingredients for life by celestial objects such as comets, asteroids and meteorites that bombarded the young planet.

"The secrets held within the rocks and dust from the asteroid will be studied for decades to come, offering insights into how our solar system was formed, how the precursor materials to life may have been seeded on Earth, and what precautions need to be taken to avoid asteroid collisions with our home planet," NASA said in a statement. "This stuff is an astrobiologist's dream," said senior NASA scientist Daniel Glavin. Early analysis found the material seems to be "loaded with organics", he said. The early findings are the outcome of the seven-year roundtrip that the Osiris-REX spacecraft made to the surface of Bennu before dropping off its collected sample in a sealed capsule that was parachuted back to Earth last month.

OSIRIS-REX launched in 2016 and reached Bennu in 2018, then spent nearly two years orbiting the asteroid before venturing close enough to snatch a sample of the loose surface material with its robotic arm in October 2020. No one at event got to see any of the samples firsthand - just photos and video. The asteroid pieces remain behind locked doors in a new lab at the space centre, accessible only to scientists in protective gear. The images of the sample displayed showed a loose cluster of small charcoal-coloured rocks, pebbles and dust found to have been left in the outer portion of the spacecraft's sample storage canister. Technicians

are still methodically disassembling the canister containing the bulk of the specimen, a process expected to take two more weeks. But the "bonus" sample of overflow material was immediately examined, said Dante Lauretta, principal mission investigator at the University of Arizona. What scientists found was material high in carbon, nearly 5 percent by weight of an element essential to all life on Earth, as well as water molecules locked in the crystallised structure of clay fibres, Lauretta said.

Scientists also discovered iron minerals in the form of iron sulfides and iron oxides, "which themselves are indicative of formation in a water-rich environment", Lauretta said at a later news briefing. The asteroid, Bennu, discovered in 1999, is described by scientists as a relatively loose clump of rocky material, like a rubble pile, held together by gravity. It measures about 500 metres across (0.3 miles). Like other asteroids, Bennu is a relic of the early solar system. Because its present-day chemistry and mineralogy are virtually unchanged since its formation, it holds clues to the origins and development of rocky planets such as Earth and could prove central to studies of astrobiology. In the months ahead, the overall asteroid sample is to be parcelled out into smaller specimens promised to some 200 scientists in 60 laboratories around the world.

## Russia tries to spoil Ukraine's counteroffensive before winter

MOSCOW (Agencies): Russia launched a series of small-scale offensives in the 85th week of its war with Ukraine, appearing to try and freeze Kyiv's four-month-old counteroffensive by fixing its forces in place. Ukraine's counteroffensive has succeeded in wresting back half the territory Russia captured earlier this year, breaching Russia's vaunted "Surovikin line" of defence, weakening Russian logistics by striking deep into Crimea, and depriving Russia of control of the western Black Sea.

Russia resumed an offensive effort towards the city of Kupiansk at the north-eastern end of the front, on October 6, Ukraine's eastern forces spokesman said. Russian sources confirmed the ground assault in the direction of Synkivka following an artillery barrage. Ukrainian officials said in July that Russia had launched a push to capture Kupiansk, and military analysts have assessed that this is a Russian effort to distract Ukrainian forces from parts of the front where they are achieving success. "If I was Russia today ... I would do an immediate spoiling attack. I would go on the offensive somewhere," Colonel Seth Krummrich, a

vice president at Global Guardian, a security consultancy, told Al Jazeera in late June. "I would punch, because right now you're running out of options ... [the Ukrainians] are going to find a breach and they're going to punch through it," he said.

That is what Russia did in Kupiansk the following month, but it didn't stop Ukrainian forces from puncturing their first line of defence on the southern front, near Robotyne, in September. Russian forces near Robotyne appeared to have rotated troops of the 291st and 71st Motorized Rifle Regiments after grueling September battles in which they retreated before a growing Ukrainian salient through their minefields and trenches. Russian forces near Robotyne and Verbove were busy re-mining front lines previously cleared by Ukrainian forces and slowing them down, said one Russian military blog calling itself Paratrooper's Diary.

"Although enemy armoured vehicles are increasingly appearing in the Robotyne-Verbove section, the enemy has reduced the movement time due to mined areas," the blogger said. "Our sappers manage

to re-mine areas already cleared by the enemy." But the blog also corroborated Ukrainian reports that the counteroffensive was continuing. "The artillery does not stop for a minute," the blogger said. Russian forces were going on the offensive elsewhere, too. As many as three Russian battalions attacked Ukrainian defences in October near Zherebyanky, west of Robotyne, claiming to have advanced 2km (1.2 miles).

They launched a battalion-level offensive near Huliaipole on the southern front, advancing "several hundred metres", according to one Russian reporter. And they stepped up efforts to capture Avdiivka, an eastern city they have surrounded to the north and south with a pincer movement. These tactical operations were aimed at freezing what has been a slow but steady Ukrainian advance ahead of Russian presidential elections, said Igor Girkin, a Russian military officer who organised the Russian militia that has fought the Ukrainian army since Donetsk and Luhansk declared they were seceding in 2014. "With a 99 percent probability, the Kremlin decided to freeze the war until the elections, that is,

until March 2024," wrote Girkin, who goes by the nom de guerre Strelkov, in a letter posted by his wife on social media. In his analysis, Russian President Vladimir Putin will do nothing to "seriously aggravate the social, economic and internal political situation in the country", until spring, the sole priority being "to prevent deep breakthroughs or sensitive operational successes of the enemy", until then. The Kremlin may expect a lull in winter fighting due to seasonal rainfall that will muddy the ground and make manoeuvres by tanks and armoured fighting vehicles difficult.

But Ukraine has said it could maintain the momentum of its summer counteroffensive through the winter. "If the cold weather hits immediately ... the ground will remain frozen and heavy machinery will be able to move on it," said Ilya Yevlash, Ukraine's eastern forces spokesman. Despite Russian spoiling attacks, Ukrainian forces pressed on with their counteroffensive. In their southern salient, they marginally advanced south of Robotyne on October 6 and broadened their salient westwards towards the village of Kopani on October 7.

### Slovakia polls: Populist winner signs deal to form govt

SLOVAKAIA (BBC): The winner of last month's parliamentary elections in Slovakia has agreed to form a coalition government. Robert Fico's populist left-wing Smer-SSD party won the vote with pledges to halt military aid to Ukraine, but denied being pro-Russian. Mr Fico - who has previously served as Slovakia's prime minister - signed a deal with the centre-left Hlas and nationalist SNS parties.

Together they will control 79 seats in a 150-seat parliament. It is not yet known how the parties will fill ministerial posts to form a new government, chaired by Mr Fico, but it seems clear that a key aim will be to end Slovakia's support for Kyiv. "If Smer enters government, we will not send a single round of ammunition to Ukraine," Mr Fico told supporters during his campaign. This, as well as his pledge to resist Western sanctions on Russia, caused some onlookers to compare Mr Fico to Hungary's populist right-wing Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Meanwhile, the SNS party - full name: Slovak National Party - is led by the former parliamentary speaker Andrej Danko, who is known to share similar views about the war in Ukraine. Back in July, he said that some Russian-occupied territories were not "historically Ukrainian". He has also previously described Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as a "dear friend". Migration is another issue that Mr Fico has said he wants to tackle while in office - specifically the number of migrants going to western Europe through Slovakia.

The liberal Progressive Slovakia party, which came second in the election, says it offers a vision of an "open, tolerant, cosmopolitan society" and has advocated following a liberal line within the EU on issues such as green policies and LGBTQ+ rights. Smer, Mr Fico's party, dismisses that vision as "liberal fascism", campaigning on stability, order and social security instead.

### Three killed in Russia

MOSCOW (Agencies): Three people were killed, including a young child, and two injured when debris from a destroyed Ukrainian drone fell on homes in Russia's Belgorod region, a local official says. Belgorod regional Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said early on Thursday that Russian air defences shot down an "aircraft-type" unmanned aerial vehicle as it approached Belgorod city, and the falling debris had destroyed several homes.

"To great sorrow, there are dead. Operational services recovered the bodies of two people from the rubble - a man and a woman," Gladkov wrote on the Telegram messaging app. The governor later updated the death toll to three following the discovery of a child's body beneath the rubble of a house.

"Three people were killed, one of them a small child," he wrote, accompanied by pictures of a house reduced to a pile of masonry behind red and white police tape. "A difficult morning for all of us," he said, offering his condolences to the loved ones of those killed. "We are all grieving." Two other people, a man and a woman, were also injured in the incident and had been brought to hospital. The man was in a coma and had suffered burns to his respiratory tract and upper and lower body, according to Russia's state news agency TASS. The injured woman had a concussion and a fractured leg, TASS reported, adding that doctors had assessed the woman's condition as "serious".

Russia's Ministry of Defence said earlier on Thursday that an attempted Ukrainian drone attack in the Belgorod region had been "thwarted". The ministry made no mention of casualties. Russia has come under regular attack by Ukrainian drones in recent months, mainly in border regions but also in the capital, Moscow. According to the regional governor, Ukrainian shelling killed two civilians in the Belgorod region.

## US aircraft carrier arrives in S Korea

SEOUL (AP): A US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier arrived in South Korea on Thursday in a demonstration of strength against North Korea, as the North's leader reaffirmed his push to bolster ties with Russia. The USS Ronald Reagan and its battle group came to the southeastern South Korean port of Busan after participating in a trilateral South Korean-US-Japanese maritime exercise in international waters off a southern South Korean island earlier this week, the South Korean Defense Ministry said.

The aircraft carrier is to stay in Busan until next Monday as part of a bilateral agreement to enhance "regular visibility" of US strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula in response to North Korea's advancing nuclear program, according to an earlier Defense Ministry statement. It's the first arrival of a US aircraft carrier in South Korea in six months since the USS Nimitz docked at Busan in late March, the statement said. The arrival of the USS

Ronald Reagan is expected to enrage North Korea, which views the deployment of such a powerful US military asset as a major security threat. When the USS Ronald Reagan staged joint military drills with South Korean forces off the Korean Peninsula's east coast in October 2022, North Korea said the carrier's deployment was causing "considerably huge negative splash" in regional security and performed ballistic missile tests.

The US carrier's latest arrival comes as concerns grow that North Korea is pushing to get sophisticated weapons technologies from Russia in exchange for supplying ammunitions to refill Russia's conventional arms stores exhausted by its protracted war with Ukraine. Such concerns flared after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited Russia's Far East last month to meet President Vladimir Putin and inspect key weapons-making facilities. Many experts say Kim would want Russian help to build more reliable weapons systems targeting

the US and South Korea. Washington and Seoul have warned that Moscow and Pyongyang would pay a price if they move ahead with the speculated weapons transfer deal in breach of UN Security Council resolutions that ban any weapons trading with North Korea. On Thursday, Kim and Putin exchanged messages marking 75 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries. In his message to Putin, Kim said he was "very satisfied" over "an exchange of candid and comprehensive opinions" with Putin during his Russia trip, while expressing a firm belief that bilateral ties will develop onto a new level. Kim also hoped that the Russian people would defeat "the imperialists' persistent hegemonic policy and moves to isolate and stifle Russia," according to the official Korean Central News Agency. Putin, for his part, told Kim in his message that he was satisfied with the fact that bilateral ties continue to positively develop in all aspects, KCNA said.

## Why is Gaza out of fuel - and what now?

GAZA (Agencies): Israel has bombed the densely populated Gaza Strip, home to about 2.3 million people, with missiles since the Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack last weekend. Now, the enclave is without power, pushed into a complete energy blackout after Gaza's sole power plant will run out of fuel, affecting essential services including hospitals.

Israel cut off the electricity supply and blocked the entry of food and fuel to the Gaza Strip as part of a "total siege" strategy adopted, in retaliation against the Hamas attack. Egypt also closed its crossing into Gaza after Israeli air raids hit the border area. With the enclave's sole power plant running out of electricity, its people will now rely solely on backup fuel-run generators.

However, the Palestinian Health Minister Mai al-Kaila announced that "the fuel stock to operate the generators in the Gaza Strip hospitals will end tomorrow, Thursday, which will exacerbate the disastrous conditions in the hospitals." The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli land, air and sea blockade for the best part of two decades. That has meant that the people of Gaza are cut off

from the rest of the world, and live in what many human rights and law experts have described as an open-air prison. The blockade has also meant that the Gaza Strip depends on fuel, food and medical supplies that come from or pass through Israel.

With the "total siege" in place, even that's not possible any more. This, in turn, means bringing in any fuel for the power plant or the fuel-run generators is effectively impossible. Srinivas Burra, an international humanitarian law expert and professor at New Delhi's South Asian University described Israel's actions as a "clear violation" of international law. "Israel's prime minister has said that his country is at war. Once you make that declaration, you are required under international law to follow the rules of war," Burra told Al Jazeera. Israel isn't doing that, he said. "It's the first rule of war: It must stay between combatants," Burra added. "When you punish civilians in the way Israel is doing, that's clearly illegal."

Hospitals in the besieged enclave, already overwhelmed by victims of Israeli bombing, are relying on generators that are not equipped to power many critical medical devices, said Hassan Khalaf, the

medical director of Al-Wafa Hospital in Gaza City. Khalaf predicted the generators have a life of only "maximum: a few days", and may be as short as a day or two, amid dwindling fuel supplies resulting from the complete blockade. He said there are currently 100 newborn babies relying on electricity-powered medical equipment in the Gaza Strip. "These newborns, they could not survive ... because they depend in every aspect of life on electricity and equipment," he told Al Jazeera. "They are very tiny. They are very weak." The doctor also said there were about 1,100 patients who rely on dialysis machines for survival in Gaza, saying the Israeli siege amounts to "mass killing". The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volcker Turk said Israel's refusal to supply food, fuel and other essential commodities to the Gaza Strip was prohibited under international law. Even the European Union, which has strongly backed Israel's assertion that its response to the Hamas attack was driven by a desire for self-defence, has criticised the total siege on Gaza. Josep Borrell, the EU's foreign policy chief, said Israel was violating international law.

## \$9.5b of key metals in overlooked electronic waste

NEW YORK (AFP): Consumers discard or possess disused electronic goods containing raw materials critical for the green energy transition and worth almost \$10 billion every year, the United Nations said on Thursday. Toys, cables, electronic cigarettes, tables, electric toothbrushes, shavers, headphones and other domestic gadgets contain metals like lithium, gold, silver and copper.

Demand is expected to soar for these materials due to their crucial role in rapidly growing green industries such as electric vehicle battery production. In Europe alone, copper demand is predicted to multiply by six by 2030 to meet rising needs in key sectors like renewable energy, communications, aerospace and defence. But the materials are squandered because this "invisible" waste is thrown away rather than recycled or gathers dust in homes, the United Nations Institute

for Training and Research (UNITAR) said in a report released on Thursday.

The "invisible" e-waste amounts to nine billion kilograms every year worldwide, with the related raw materials worth \$9.5 billion, around one-sixth of the estimated 2019 total of \$57 billion for all e-waste, UNITAR said. "Invisible e-waste often falls under the recycling radar of those disposing of them because they are not seen as e-waste," said Magdalena Charytanowicz of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Forum, an international association of non-profit organisations that commissioned the report.

"We need to change that and raising awareness is a large part of the answer." More than one-third of the "invisible" waste came from toys such as race cars, talking dolls, robots and drones, with 7.3 billion items thrown away annually. The weight of the estimated 844

million vaping devices discarded each year is equivalent to six Eiffel Towers, the report said.

The study also found that 950 million kilograms of cables with recyclable copper were thrown away last year, enough to circle Earth 107 times. In Europe, 55 percent of electric and electronic waste is recycled, but the global average drops to a little over 17 percent. The recycling rate tumbles to almost zero in parts of South America, Asia and Africa, usually due to a lack of collection points, Charytanowicz said. Manufacturers have been responsible for collecting and recycling the waste in Europe since 2005, most often in partnership with environmental authorities. But recycling rates remain patchy, said Guillaume Duparay of French non-profit organisation Ecosystem, pointing to a lack of awareness and information among consumers.

### Four killed as express train derails in India's Bihar state

NEW DELHI (Agencies): At least four people were killed and several others injured when an express train derailed in the Indian state of Bihar, local media and officials reported. The train from Anand Vihar Terminal railway station in Delhi came off the rails as it raced to the Kamakhya Junction in Assam, the Times of India newspaper reported.

"Four casualties have been confirmed and rescue operation is under way. Twenty-one coaches have derailed," Tarun Prakash, general manager of the East Central Railway, was quoted by the Times as saying. The ANI news agency also put the death toll at four. The cause of the derailment was not immediately known. India's Minister of Railways

Ashwini Vaishnav said on social media that rescue operations at the site of the derailment were now complete. "Deepest condolences for the irreparable loss," he wrote, adding that the "root cause" of the derailment will be investigated. In June, India experienced its worst train crash in two decades in Odisha, which resulted in the death of at least 288 people.

## US announces \$200m military assistance package for Ukraine

WASHINGTON (Agencies): The United States will provide Ukraine with a new \$200m military assistance package, including air defence and rocket ammunition. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced the package at the opening of a two-day meeting of Kyiv's international supporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

The package is the first since Congress dropped new funding for Kyiv from a bill to avoid a government shutdown earlier this month. The decision to drop the funding amid resistance from Republicans raised questions

about Washington's continued commitment to helping Ukraine fight against Russian forces. Austin repeated assurances that the US will stand with Ukraine "for as long as it takes".

Absent further action by Congress, US President Joe Biden's administration still has authority to withdraw more than \$5bn worth of equipment from military stocks. However, the Department of Defense has only \$1.6bn in remaining funding to replace donated weapons and equipment. Austin and Air Force General Charles Q Brown are also expected to use the

meeting to reassure allies, including Kyiv, that it can maintain support for Ukraine while backing Israel in its conflict with Hamas. So far, the US has provided Ukraine with \$44bn in military assistance since Russia's invasion, including tanks, rockets and millions of rounds of ammunition.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also attended the meeting in Brussels to press allies for more weapons before winter. "We are preparing, we are ready," Zelenskyy said in advance of a meeting of defence ministers. "Now, we need some support from the leaders."

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Russian President Vladimir Putin was "preparing once again to use winter as a weapon of war" by targeting energy infrastructure in Ukraine.

"We need to prevent that. With more advanced and increased capabilities for air defence, we can make a big difference," Stoltenberg said. Ukraine has waged a counteroffensive to recapture territory in the south and east of the country since July, but has failed to make a breakthrough due to Russian fortifications and landmines.



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## Responsible justice and judicial reforms

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday sustained the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023 which deals with the Chief Justice's powers as constitutional with a 10-5 majority verdict. According to the details, the full court, comprising all 15 judges of the apex court, announced the already reserved verdict on the pleas challenging the law after conducting five marathon hearings. The recent verdict of the apex court acknowledges the parliament's right to legislation under Article 191, which states that the Supreme Court rules are subject to the Constitution. The law will be effective from April 21, 2023, the day it was enacted, which means the SC verdicts under 184(3) which came after this date can be appealed for review, including the NAB Amendments Act 2023 that was previously annulled by the apex court bench headed by the former Chief Justice Umar Atta Bandial just days before he retired from the position of the top judge.

In an unexpected and surprising development, the full bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan finally issued a historic judgment in contract to the institutional interest and personal ego by upholding the real soil of the constitution that vested the legislative powers in the Public representatives and parliament whatsoever and whoever they deem appropriate to the public interest and country's constitutional and administrative needs. The apex court, particularly the incumbent Chief Justice relinquished his sole power of *sou motu* notice which the recent amendment handed over to a three-member committee comprising senior judges including the Chief Justice. It further aimed to have transparent proceedings in the apex court and includes the right to appeal together with the constitution of benches, every cause, matter, or appeal before the apex court would be heard and disposed of by a bench constituted by a committee comprising the CJP and the two senior-most judges. All those powers were previously the sole prerogatives of the Chief Judge until now. Realistically, after the Pakistan military's quest for the apolitical role, the top judiciary relinquishing its unlimited powers and self-assumed political role is another landmark event in the country's history that would have a great impact on national politics, rule of the law and justice delivery to the public in the coming days. Historically, this is the second magnificent act of self-sacrifice or self-accountability of an institution in the history of Pakistan, after President Asif Zardari voluntarily relinquished his power under article 58 (2)B through the 18th amendments during the PPP's government more than a decade ago. In fact, those rational decisions not only strengthened the Constitution and democracy but have set landmark examples of selfishness, patriotism and the rule of the law.

The recent 10-5 verdict clearly highlights the difference of opinion and distinctive interpretation of the same law by the top judges, along with exposing polarization and grouping within the top judicial body. That problem not only exists in the top court but the entire judicial system including higher courts and district courts are deeply polarized and frustrated due to Institutional politics, nepotism and corruption, while pressure and blackmail from the lawyers further undermine the autonomy and conduct of the lower courts at the all levels.

The judiciary is an important pillar of the state that plays an important role through impartial and timely delivery of justice to the public, however, egoistic and biased approaches of the bar and the bench have caused serious judicial and political issues in the country. Currently, our judicial system needs strict reforms and self-accountability that not only curb corruption and nepotism in the institution but instil new vigour and enthusiasm in the adjudicators and the lower staff. The Chief Justice and the top judges have initiated an appreciable reform or accountability from the top, that must be applied on all tiers without exception so the judges' decisions speak for themselves practically instead of the media releases or telephones.

## Debt ridden state entities

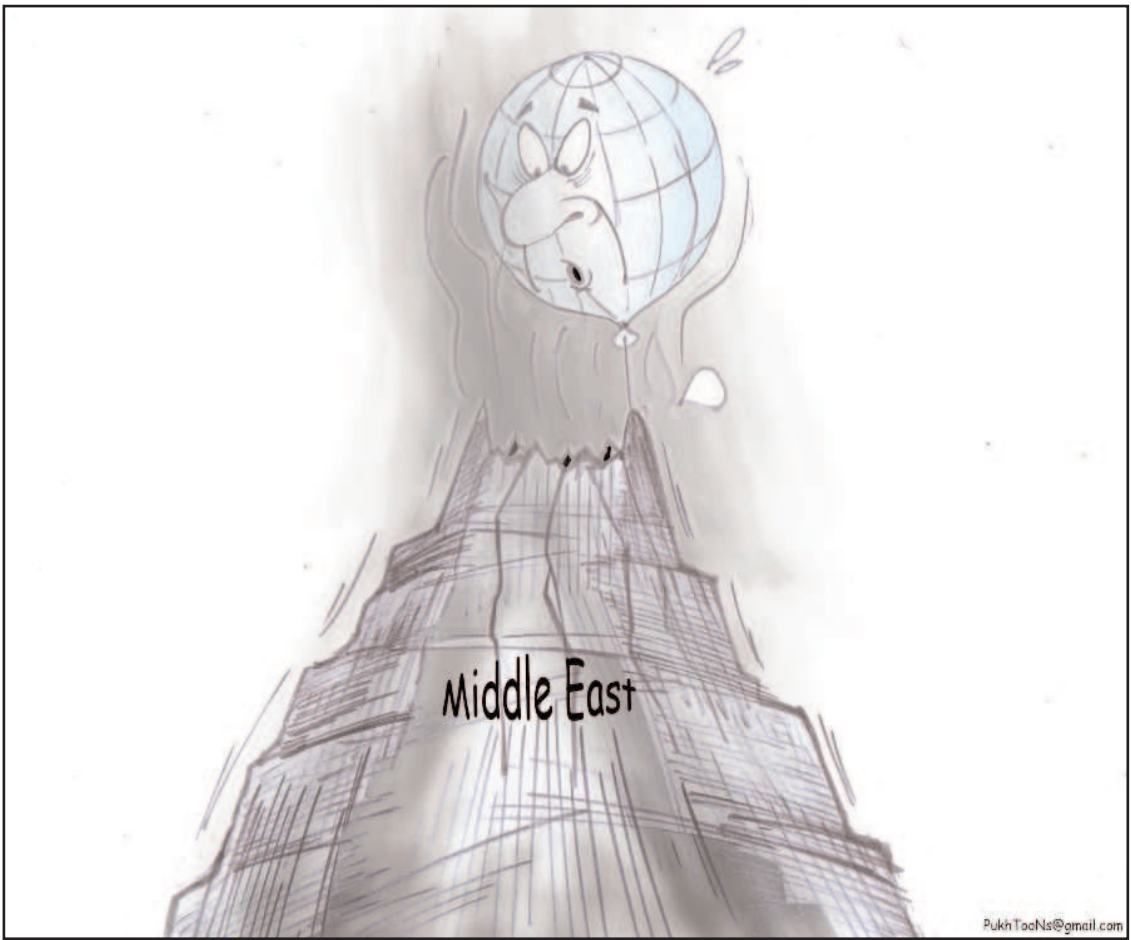
THE caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has recently informed the nation that the country was facing financial problems and those state owned enterprises (SOEs) which had been incurring losses, were further adding to these economic woes. The Premier made this note after chairing a high level meeting regarding the worst management and business affairs of the Pakistan International Airline (PIA), which currently needs billions of rupees funds to keep its aeroplanes flying. The Prime Minister stressed upon expediting the privatization process of PIA and other SOEs running into losses, adding that their losses could not be met with the public tax money.

Historically, Pakistan is a developing economy with scanty domestic revenue, a weak industrial base, and growing energy crises coupled with aggravating impacts of the rising inflation which presents a meek picture of the country's economic outlook. According to the World Bank report, the poverty rate has surged to 39.4 % with almost a 5% increase in the previous year, posing serious challenges to over 240 million masses, pushing 12.5 million below the poverty line. Amid such domestic and global challenges, several state owned entities including the PIA, Pakistan Railway, Pakistan Steel Mills, WAPDA, the Sui Northern and Sui Southern Gas Pipelines companies and dozens of others state owned enterprises have failed to run their routine operations and need billions of rupees on regular intervals to keep their wheel running and pay salaries of their employees in addition to bulk of circular debt which they cause on regular basis.

Realistically, those business giants should have been money generating machines for the country but unfortunately played adversely and turned into white elephants for the nation as well as the government. The nation had poured hundreds of billions of rupees into those institutions in the past years but all those endeavors neither improved their performance nor resolved their persistent economic and operational issues on a sustainable and permanent basis. In fact, no nation could ever afford such cruel waste of hard earned tax money in futile ventures and failed missions. Therefore, privatization of debt ridden entities is the only solution to this recurrent problem. As soon as it could be accomplished, it would be better.

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## Palestinians are showing that they will not be erased

M Muhanad Ayyash

FOR decades, Israel, aided and abetted by the American empire, has sought to politically erase Palestine from the map. Over the past few days, Palestinians have proved, once again, that they won't easily give up their indigenous claim to and sovereignty over the land stolen from them.

I do not use "sovereignty" here to mean "the authority to govern a land" in the narrow Euro-American sense. Rather, I'm speaking of an authority to govern that stems from the deep, non-utilitarian connection between a people and their ancestral land - a connection that renders meaningless all other political impositions. That deep connection between Palestinians and Palestine is exactly what the Israeli state has long been seeking to erase.

Recently, efforts to normalise relations between Israel and Arab states, and especially between Israel and Saudi Arabia, have intensified this erasure. With every step towards normalisation, more and more people around the world, including top diplomats and politicians, bought into the idea that the Middle East has become a region where Palestinians do not matter, where Palestinian aspirations for freedom, liberation, and sovereignty do not figure into the future of the region. Palestinians have, for decades, tried to put under a global spotlight the violence Israel has been inflicting on them on a daily basis. They recorded all the killings, the torture and the abuse. They catalogued the stolen homes, lands and other vital resources. They documented in painstaking detail how Israeli state violence deprives them of their freedom and dignity, and harasses and abuses them on a regular basis, in blatant violation of international law. How did the leading members of the international community respond to all this evidence of Israel's relentless brutality? They responded with something much worse than silence. They voiced their support, repeatedly and loudly, for Israel. They aided and abetted Israel's

colonial oppression and basically encouraged it to intensify its efforts to expel Palestinians from their remaining lands and erase Palestine from history and global politics. Palestinians tried diplomacy, political advocacy, and all types of armed and unarmed resistance and protest to get the world's attention. They pleaded their case over and over to anyone who listened, but all that effort has not brought their situation to a stasis - in fact, their situation has gotten worse.

As Israel intensified its efforts to erase Palestine and Palestinian people from Arab and global consciousness, Palestinians found themselves at a crossroads. They could continue to try and plead their case, from within the confines of their prison, obeying the rules of those who imprison them, and hope that someone with some humanity would eventually intervene to stop their constant brutalisation. Or they could start acting in a manner that responds to the brutal, inhumane system in which their tragedy is playing out in accordance with that system's internal logic. Looking at the states holding leadership positions in the global arena - states that have a say over the fate of Palestinians, there is one clear thing: these states, including Israel, and its main protector the US, achieved their positions of influence, power and security through organised state violence. No state or actor in this current system can gain enough authority and power to ensure its safety and dictate its will on the global community by merely speaking of higher ideals. In fact, higher ideals are proclaimed in this wretched world order only to conceal the brutal violence required to gain and maintain any authority whatsoever. As such, mirroring the behaviour of the states oppressing Palestinians through acts of organised violence emerged as a rational way forward for the Palestinian struggle. Many label such actions by the colonised as "terror", as if that violence is somehow worse than the much more systematic and thus far-reaching and long-

term state violence perpetrated by the coloniser. Others say this course of action is "irrational" because the colonised are too weak to wage a battle of organised violence against mighty states whose capacities for violence cannot be matched by stateless, weakened, suffocated peoples like the Palestinians.

This latter point is, of course, true, but this is an observation that is not lost on the colonised. The recent attacks on Israel from Gaza are not aimed at immediately liberating Palestine, even if that discourse is sometimes used by the resistance. Rather, these operations are meant to change the outlook and dynamic of the struggle. They are meant to shake up the current international consensus, which holds that Palestine is a lost cause and should be completely ignored and eventually forgotten. These operations are reminders - and from the viewpoint of those who call for organised armed resistance, the only ones that will work in this system - that Palestinians exist and will never give up their right to live as a free and sovereign people on their lands. These operations will not change the current conditions on the ground for Palestinians. And it is probable that their conditions will be made worse. But they are not going to be made worse because of these operations: they are going to be made worse by the ongoing actions of the Israeli state, which is determined, regardless of how Palestinians resist, to erase Palestine and officially create what they already achieved in practice: exclusive Israeli-Jewish sovereignty over the entire land of Palestine.

So yes, the colonised are outmatched in the relations of force, but in this colonial world order, the colonised have observed clearly and unambiguously that they only receive attention and recognition of their existence when they engage in organised violence. Otherwise, they are killed and erased anyway, and without states that can make a difference paying any attention. This is the state of affairs

that journalists, academics, and politicians in powerful states want to return to when they ask for de-escalation and calm: a slow, gradual, brutal erasure of Palestine. In this reality, there is no calm, there is no de-escalation; there is no break for Palestinians from the brutal yoke of Israeli settler colonial power. I think that I can safely predict that the Israeli government, as well as politicians and foreign policy experts in the US and elsewhere, are now considering all of these developments purely in security terms. They will focus on the intelligence failure and other technical security failures that allowed the Palestinian fighters to undertake Saturday's operation. They will focus on their continuing brutal bombing of the Gaza Strip. They will focus on their continued expulsion of Palestinians, their official annexation of even more Palestinian land, and the erasure of Palestine. In short, they will try and carry on business as usual.

But here's the most important point: Palestinians will not be erased, and the majority of people in the region and many people in other regions of the world understand and support the just Palestinian struggle. The people of Palestine will continue to refuse this fate of erasure that all these great powers have determined should be theirs. People from across the world will continue to see their struggles reflected in the Palestinian struggle, ensuring that Palestine as a political story, a political vision, and as a revelation of the current political conditions and systems of power, will never be erased from the hearts and minds of people the world over. This, and not the current configuration of the relations of force that favour Israel, will be what stands the test of time. The Palestinian revolutionary spirit that shows the foundational violence and injustice of this colonial world order and insists on liberation and the creation of an alternative system will outlast all of the powerful states who are currently ruling the world and plotting to erase Palestine from the map.

## UK ready for change but will the people back Labour?

Mohamed Chebaro

ALL you hear in the UK these days is talk about how the Labour Party is likely to win the general election next year and replace the Conservative Party at the helm of power for the first time since 2010. This would end the years of Conservative government-induced austerity that led to squeezed public services, followed by the social and economic fallout of Brexit and COVID-19.

During this last month of political parties' annual conferences, everyone in divided post-Brexit Britain seems to agree that the country is "broken" and in need of "fixing." But not everybody agrees that the Labour Party has what it takes to reengage, energize, reform and reboot the UK. And to borrow Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer's own words, "People are looking to us because they want our wounds to heal and we are the healers."

I am among those who believe that the country urgently needs to do away with Tory infighting and entrust the country to any pair of safe hands, even the boring and less-than-bold Starmer, to try to steady the tiller, give the country some hope and certainty and maybe repair the damage of the chaotic Tory years in Downing Street. The recent Conservative governments have tainted the country with their lack of political integrity, incompetence and constant shifts to the right, toward divisive populist politics, which have made the historic party of government in the UK more like a full-blown Trumpian party that thrives on the oxygen of falsehoods.

Though the Labour Party annual conference this week - likely to be the final one before the next elections are held - could have offered more in terms of policies that the Labour Party would adopt if it came to power, above all it was the job of Starmer and his shadow Cabinet to focus on trying to give people hope and inspiring them to vote Labour.

Some people attribute the rise in Labour's chances of leading the country to the story of Tory self-destruction. And the opposition party's leaders do not need to be geniuses to show the electorate that the country would be better off in their hands after events like the so-called Partygate, Liz Truss' short premiership that nearly collapsed the British economy, the cost-of-living crisis, the ballooning hospital waiting lists and the collapsing school infrastructure, to mention just a few. The problem is that many voters are still skeptical and maybe not totally ready to back Labour.

Labour have long enjoyed a double-digit lead in the polls, but Starmer, a former chief state prosecutor, is often criticized for being too cautious and failing to spell out what his party stands for. In June, an Ipsos poll revealed that 50 percent of the electorate do not know what the Labour leader stands for. Yet, to be fair, Starmer has managed to change

Labour's image since the battering it took due to the leadership of his predecessor, the ultra-leftist Jeremy Corbyn. A September YouGov poll revealed that 43 percent of people believe that Labour is today a "moderate" party, while 41 percent believed it was "extreme" before he became leader. But the picture remains precarious for Labour and Starmer and, as a result, for the country. In its most recent poll, 34 percent told Ipsos that Labour was "fit to govern" - less than the 40 percent who said the same before the party lost the 2015 election. The same poll also reported that 38 percent believe that Labour is ready to form the next government, well short of the 55 percent who held that view in 1997, when Tony Blair came to power.

Comparing the polls or drawing on history lessons from bygone eras when Labour won previous elections has been rife among politicians like Starmer, the people and pundits alike. But I believe that could be a waste of time, since we are living in a different age, with all the digital scrutiny and distractions that have changed not only Britain and its political landscape but also the world. Despite that, some have been comparing the return of Labour to power with the Blair moment in 1997 and warning Starmer and his team not to be complacent, while others have been looking at 1974, when Labour won two elections in a year against a backdrop of high inflation, industrial strife and rising unemployment. Others believe the election of 1945 is maybe more relevant, as Britain needed hope and certainty to rebuild in the wake of the Second World War, which Starmer mentioned during his conference speech this week.

During my near-40 years living and working in Britain, I have witnessed several recessions, two of them being really deep ones, a pandemic, huge cuts to public services, Brexit, high inflation, the cost-of-living crisis, problems in housing, hospitals, the police and criminal justice, and shortages in skilled labor, in addition to failures by both Conservative and Labour governments. But never has the country seemed in need of such a major systemic rebuild as it does today, after the recent years of right-wing populist Conservative government. For the British electorate at the next election, the question is whether to support a sober and accountable leadership, albeit possibly boring, that constitutes a break from the recent charismatic leaderships that came with empty populist slogans. This is the real test that awaits Britons at the ballot box, regardless of what the polls predict or what history tells us. Will we see a landslide victory that gives Labour the strong mandate it needs to carry out the required changes for the future of Britain, or a modest result that could spell more trouble for Britain, its people and its politicians going forward?

Aljazeera

## Can Netanyahu survive Hamas's attack on Israel?

Neve Gordon

Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas and the transfer of money to Hamas," he stated at a Likud party meeting in March 2019. "This is part of our strategy, to differentiate between the Palestinians in Gaza and the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria."

Following Hamas's attack, this strategic framework has come increasingly under intense fire. There is also a lot of talk of an "intelligence failure", where Hamas outsmarted Israel's famed Unit 8200, the general secret services - also known as the Shabak - and several other agencies responsible for surveillance. These intelligence units appear to have been operating under a mistaken colonial paradigm, one that casts Hamas as weak and lacking strategic acumen, leading them to ignore fairly obvious warning signs, such as the military manoeuvres Hamas had been carrying out on Gaza's beach over the past few months. Perhaps

the best phrase for this failure is colonial hubris.

Then there is the "preparedness failure". This, too, is the result of colonial hubris. More concretely, it has now come out that the military has been moving battalions away from the border with Gaza to secure Jewish settlers in the West Bank. As of September, some 22 battalions were spread throughout the region while only two remained near Gaza. In Hebron, for example, 600 to 800 soldiers regularly protect about 800 settlers, while three battalions accompany Jewish "prayer" at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. This past weekend an entire battalion that was supposed to secure the Gaza border was sent to protect Jewish settlers who went to pray in Huwara, the Palestinian town where settlers carried out a pogrom. As one commentator put it,

the same battalion cannot simultaneously secure the southern region and a pogrom in the West Bank. The lack of preparedness also bled into the hours and days that followed Hamas's attack, with military units taking hours before they could reach besieged civilians. The families of those kidnapped feel completely abandoned by the government, while one person living not far from Gaza's border expressed a sentiment increasingly shared by Israelis: "In this war, something cracked. The contract between us and the state had been clear: we guard the border, and the state guards us. We did our part bravely[...] the State of Israel did not fulfil its part."

The right-wing government and its supporters have already established a defence. "Now," they say, "is not the time to point fingers; now we must unite to defeat the common ene-

mies." Most liberal Zionists have readily adopted this position as well, vehemently criticising anyone who dares to break rank.

A broad unity government appears on the horizon, with former chief of staff and the leader of the opposition political alliance Blue and White, Benny Ganz, publicly indicating that he is willing to enter Netanyahu's government until the fighting abates. Yair Lapid, the leader of another opposition party, Yesh Atid (There Is Future), has set out strict conditions under which he would be willing to enter such a government. Some say Lapid is now wavering. Netanyahu knows full well that broadening the government will help stabilise his reign.

At the same time, there is little doubt that a defence playbook for the "day after" is being crafted. Netanyahu and his ministers will blame the different intelligence agencies, the pilots and elite military units who have

been associated with those protesting against his government's judicial overhaul. They will blame Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran and the Palestinians. They will blame the Supreme Court judges, the media, the army chief of staff and their own defence minister. They will blame the Palestinian citizens of Israel, the anti-Zionist leftists, and the academic staff in Israeli universities. They will also blame the liberal Zionists leading the protest movement.

Many also agree with Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant who recently revealed that he has ordered "a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals and we will act accordingly." A desire for violent retribution is the glue that holds Israeli society together at the moment, however tentatively. But this might also be the one key ingredient that Netanyahu needs to stay in power for years to come.



# Divisions in Congress threaten America’s credibility

Dr. Amal Mudallali

**AS the Middle East stands on the edge of the abyss, with the specter of a long and bloody war underway, the US Congress is frozen without a speaker and the political dysfunction in Washington is worrying lawmakers and officials alike. This feeling was captured in an article in Foreign Affairs by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates titled "The Dysfunctional Superpower." Gates wrote: "Dysfunction has made American power erratic and unreliable, practically inviting risk-prone autocrats to place dangerous bets."**

Congressional leaders expressed worry over the weekend that they cannot move fast enough to respond to the deteriorating situation in the Middle East because of the vacant seat at the helm of Congress. But this is not all. A number of American ambassadors to Middle Eastern countries have been waiting for months to be confirmed by Congress, including the ambassadors to Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Oman and Kuwait. This leaves American diplomacy in the region weakened at a very fraught time, according to diplomats.

The situation with military appointments is no better. Sen. Tommy Tuberville's hold on about 300 military nominations is also continuing, depriving high-level and sensitive posts of their leaders, while the government is living on borrowed time before the next threat of a government shutdown on Nov. 17.

The Democrats hope that the situation in Israel will convince their Republican colleagues to "put their act together" and vote in a new speaker this week. With the exception of a handful of hard-liners in the Republican Party, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle expressed a sense of urgency regarding the situation in the Middle East and the importance of

presenting a show of unity.

The attack on Israel united Congress and its members, unlike the issue of aid to Ukraine, which is facing an uphill battle because a group of Republican lawmakers believe that this money would be better spent at home. It was this Ukraine aid that was at the heart of last month's fight in Congress that threatened to shut down the government. Republicans who oppose the aid vowed to vote against the proposed funding bill, causing the government to be shut down, if the money was not dropped.

This same small group of Republicans led an upheaval at the US Capitol when they orchestrated the historic ouster of Speaker Kevin McCarthy over the budget, even though the temporary funding deal that he struck with the Democrats dropped the Ukraine aid and avoided a government shutdown. It was the first time in history the House of Representatives had voted to remove its leader. The removal of the speaker and the looming battle among Republicans over who will take the top job in Congress created a sense of dread as the Middle East entered the fray.

Republican Rep. Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, is worried about the message this sends to the world about America's ability to govern. He said: "I look at the world and all the threats that are out there, and what kind of message are we sending to our adversaries when we can't govern ... How does [Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei] look at this, knowing that we cannot function properly? And I think it sends a terrible message. We have to get a speaker elected this week so we can get things to the floor like replenishing the Iron Dome."

Congress is also readying a resolution to condemn Hamas and McCaul said it cannot wait. "We have to get that message out as soon as possible," he said. Some members of Congress are calling for action to support Israel even without a new speaker. Dropping the Ukraine aid from the government funding bill was a setback for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who visited Washington a few weeks ago and requested the aid. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said after meeting Zelensky: "There was a single sentence that summed it all up, and I'm quoting him verbatim. Mr. Zelensky said, 'If we don't get the aid, we will lose the war.'"

The alarm about Congress dropping the Ukraine aid came from both sides of the Atlantic, and it freaked out the Europeans. Europe has always been concerned about the impact of American domestic divisions on the country's support for Ukraine. Some voices even questioned whether Europe could count on America as a reliable ally if there was a change in Congress or of administration. The BBC called the move by Congress a "budget fiasco." But there is another danger that also has strategic implications for America's standing and credibility in the world. The Biden administration's request for funds to scale up the capacity of the World Bank and other international financial organizations "faces an even steeper uphill battle," according to Politico. Republicans in Congress, including Rep. Matt Gaetz, who orchestrated the ouster of McCarthy, are opposing more aid for Ukraine, but at the same time are blocking US aid to the World Bank and other international financial institutions because the two are "lumped together."

Those World Bank and International Monetary Fund officials who are meeting in Marrakech this week will be disappointed, but their dismay will be negligible compared to that of the White House. President Joe Biden made reforming, "reshaping and scaling up" the World Bank and the IMF his focus at the recent G20 summit in India and promised millions of American dollars to bolster the World Bank's capacity to help developing countries. The US is facing a major challenge from the BRICS nations and the Global South to encourage a fairer international order and to reform the World Bank and the IMF to make them more responsive to the needs of developing countries. The US administration vowed to increase its support for these institutions and make them more representative. The White House sees these efforts as part of its strategy to counter China's growing influence in these institutions and its challenge to the international world order that the US built following the Second World War.

If Congress does not approve the White House request for these funds, America's standing and credibility will be damaged. The divisions in Congress between Republicans and Democrats, and within the Republican Party in particular, are proving to be the biggest challenge to the White House and US foreign policy. This week could prove crucial: Will congress come together and choose a speaker quickly, end the gridlock and unlock the hold being placed on political and military appointees, as well as approve the needed funds to support the administration's foreign policy agenda, or will it continue with business as usual? America's credibility and its strategic competition with China depends on a positive outcome.

# Conflict inevitable in absence of a Palestinian state

Ghassan Charbel

**IT is too soon to wonder what the Israeli political, military and security institutions will conclude from the current developments. It is also too soon to wonder what Hamas will conclude. Will the Israeli institutions view the developments as a terrible setback that must be overcome by making Hamas and Gaza pay a price equal to the damage they have dealt the image of the Israeli army and its deterrence power? Will it preoccupy itself with punishing those whom it deems responsible while still preparing for the next war?**

One must await the end of the war, which may spiral out of control if it stretches on and witnesses even greater violence than we have seen so far. What about Hamas? What will it conclude? Will it consolidate its conviction that there can be no other solution than war and prepare for more wars to come? In this case, what about the West Bank and the simmering tensions there in the wake of the current fighting?

What about the Lebanese-Israeli border, where the embers lie in wait for the possible expansion of the war? What about the Lebanese-Syrian border? Will the war spread across it in spite of Russia's presence in Syria? What about the entire region? What of the allies of the warring parties, namely the US and Iran? What is taking place is greater than just a war between Israel and the Gaza Strip. It is a new crossroads in a long and bitter conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. It is no exaggeration to say that the new images are unprecedented. It is no simple feat for the Qassam Brigades to attack Israel by land, sea and air. It is no simple feat to confuse the Israeli army like this. It is no simple feat to reach such heavy death tolls, cause this many injuries and take so many people captive. It is no simple feat to prepare for such a war and to take Israeli intelligence by surprise. We are speaking here about Gaza, which the Israeli army believed it was besieging and keeping a close eye on.

The scenes are indeed unprecedented. It is no simple feat for Hamas fighters to enter the settlements around Gaza and take several residents hostage. It is also no simple feat for the Qassam Brigades to shower

Israel with thousands of rockets. The battle on the first day was that of optics above anything else. The regular Israeli army was incapable of immediately retaliating and addressing the loopholes that were exploited. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself was forced to acknowledge that Israel was at war and that he had to call up the reservists. The memories of the people of the Middle East are full of long and bitter conflicts. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is at the forefront. One of the many chapters of this long lesson is that the conflict cannot be resolved through war, and it also cannot be resolved through a settlement.

The Israeli army achieved a resounding victory in 1967. It broke the Arab armies and occupied more territories. But the war did not force the losers to surrender. Instead, they retaliated hard in 1973. Israel was taken by surprise, but American support prevented an Arab victory. The shock of the war did not persuade Israel to opt for peace as a way to end the conflict. It only agreed to enough points that would see Egypt quit Gaza. Israel was deluded into thinking that Egypt's departure would bring an end to the wars and that the Palestinian cause would eventually be forgotten. In the 1970s, Beirut became the capital of the Palestinian cause. The clashes on the Lebanese-Israeli border were heated messages. The Palestinians were underscoring their demand for their rights. Israel was trying to deprive them of these rights. In 1982, Israel concluded that it should uproot the Palestine Liberation Organization from its last remaining foothold on the Arab-Israeli front line. The Israeli army invaded Lebanon and besieged Beirut, forcing the PLO to withdraw from the country. Israel believed at the time that the Palestinian cause would be defeated in exile. Neutral observers believe that Israel lost major opportunities to guide the conflict toward a settlement that would stop the cycle of wars. It lost the opportunity presented by Yasser Arafat's handshake with Yitzhak Rabin at the White House. It was a handshake between two warriors who each enjoyed full legitima-

cy in their own environment. Israel underestimated the importance of Arafat's political and military legitimacy and his Palestinian, Arab and Islamic legitimacy. Ariel Sharon was deluded in believing that a "boy-cott" of Arafat would destroy the Palestinians' dream of the establishment of their own state. Israel also wasted the opportunity presented by the Arab Peace Initiative, which was declared at the Arab League Summit in Beirut in 2002. The initiative was the product of arduous efforts to resolve the conflict in a way that would guarantee the establishment of a Palestinian state side by side with Israel. The latter was promised that it would be included in the region should it be receptive to the proposal. Israel's sense of superiority and power led it to waste more opportunities. It believed that the post-9/11 world and the US invasion of Iraq offered a golden opportunity to impose a status quo that disregards the essence of the Palestinian conflict. It took away all hope from the Palestinians and its behavior weakened the position of moderates, who were banking on reaching a negotiated settlement. Israeli society slipped further toward the right. The current Israeli government includes figures who make provocations on a daily basis. The result is the situation we have now.

The embers of war could be blown in more than one direction. But the expansion of destruction and the war will not eliminate the extraordinary scenes that unfolded on that first day, when Israel witnessed the unexpected. This conflict can only be resolved through deriving some lessons. The first is acknowledging the Palestinians' right to have their own independent state. Any other option means merely biding time until another, even fiercer, war claims more lives, especially among civilians, and causes massive economic losses. The question remains: What will the fighters conclude when the fighting stops? They cannot emerge from this chronic conflict without carrying out a deep review and taking painful decisions. The formation of a Palestinian state is the first step toward establishing stability in the region. Without it, we will witness more conflicts like the one unfolding right now.

# How long can America continue to be arsenal to the world?

David A. Andelman

**TO put it simply, the United States cannot readily support two major wars while preparing for the possibility of a third. That's a hard, indeed ineluctable reality - one that is becoming increasingly and painfully evident by the hour. America's military industrial base is already stretched by the ongoing war in Ukraine that Russia appears prepared to carry on to an indefinite future. Even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which is now 20 months old and counting, questions were being raised about whether America was overextended as a superpower.**

Now Israel is at war, a close ally that the Biden administration has pledged to support. And the scope of that conflict could grow: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has imposed a blockade in Gaza and has threatened an invasion, which could in turn draw a reaction from Iran or lead to any one of a host of other nations to get involved. Also looming ominously is a potential challenge by China for control of Taiwan- which all too often appears to teeter on the brink of conflict.

In my view, the US is on the side of the angels in all three situations, two of which are full-blown shooting wars. But rivals are counting on America's fallibility: The nation's resources are far from limitless, and the wildly conflicting political currents roiling its democracy have revealed that it hardly speaks with one voice in terms of its willingness to engage militarily in all three - even though Washington continues to say it is prepared to defend right over might. During Ukraine's counteroffensive, now drawing to a close as winter approaches, its guns have been firing some 6,000 rounds per day, though it has wanted to burn through 10,000 daily - a fraction of the 60,000 a day Russia has been hammering into Ukrainian positions, cities and towns. Last July, even before this year's counter-offensive got underway, the US disclosed it had supplied some 2 million artillery rounds since the start of the Russian invasion. The Biden administration has increased America's production of artillery rounds - especially the benchmark 155mm round - from an anemic

pre-war level of 14,000 a month to 24,000 per month today, with plans to increase that number soon to 28,000 per month. But it is unclear how many of those rounds would be earmarked for Ukraine - and officials in Washington aren't saying.

The US is also faced with the increasingly challenging task of procuring high-tech components for cruise missiles, sophisticated artillery weapons and drones, even as prices for radiation-resistant capacitors and semiconductor chips have risen by 300% and the cost of lithium components is up 400%, according to a Defense News survey. Meanwhile, there has been no public discussion of expanding arms shipments to Israel so far, although the Biden administration has signaled to Congress that such a request may be not too far off. The latest 10-year Memorandum of Understanding from 2018 through 2028 pledged \$38 billion in military aid. Israel has already purchased 50 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, the most advanced stealth jet fighter ever made, and was the world's first foreign operator. For 2023, Congress authorized some \$520 million in joint US-Israel defense programs, most of it for missile defense. But most independent observers believe the pace of Hamas missile attacks means that Israel will need urgent and immediate replenishment of munitions. The Iron Dome defense systems. The real imponderable, of course, is whether Israel's blockade of Gaza - or an outright land and sea invasion of the territory - might lead to Iran's entry into the war. Tehran's involvement might be indirect, through supply of weapons or other military assistance. The question then, would be what form Israeli retaliation against Iran might take.

And then there is Taiwan, where there is no active military conflict currently underway, but where the threat of hostilities seems to loom ever closer, an issue of abiding concern for US military leaders. "China's leaders have yet to renounce the use of military force, while they increasingly turn to the [Peoples Liberation Army] as an instrument of coercion in support of

their revisionist aims, conducting more dangerous activities in and around the Taiwan Strait," Ely Ratner, assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs, told the House Armed Services Committee last month. "China remains the department's top pacing challenge...meeting our commitments consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act - providing Taiwan with self-defense capabilities, as well as maintaining our own capacity to resist any use of force that jeopardizes the security of the people on Taiwan," Ratner added. The administration, Ratner observed, would expect a "bipartisan, whole-of-government commitment to strengthening Taiwan's self-defense." At least in his public testimony Ratner did not put a price tag on any of this. That commitment appeared open-ended. But a third potential conflict straining the nation's military stockpile seems more than even the capacious American stockpiles or even its military-industrial complex can sustain for long.

Finally, there is the critical - though rarely mentioned- issue of how the drain on American munitions would impact the nation's ability to defend itself. At a background briefing on Monday, a senior defense department official told reporters, "We are able to continue our support both to Ukraine, Israel, and maintain our own global readiness." At some point, however, dollars in the pipeline to supply weaponry will need to be reauthorized for all three regions, with hardly a totally clear path to success for either Ukraine or Israel, let alone the Pacific theater. The Biden administration has already warned leaders of the House and Senate and leading committee members that it will be coming to Congress soon seeking new aid authorizations for Israel. The White House is reported to be considering piggy-backing a reauthorization of aid to Ukraine in an aid package for Israel, which may have broader bipartisan support. One administration official told the Washington Post that such an approach is especially appealing since it also "jams the far right," including many members of Congress who have

been staunchly opposed to continued aid to Ukraine while strongly backing additional military support for Israel. Aid for Taiwan would not be included in such a bill, but generally speaking there is broad, bipartisan support on Capitol Hill for anything that might help the United States prevail in a faceoff with Beijing. Indeed, in August, the White House asked Congress to approve an arms program for Taiwan as part of a supplemental budget request for Ukraine - since the potential threat to Taiwan's security is seen as being a matter of equal urgency.

On Tuesday, Julianne Smith, the US ambassador to NATO, insisted that America's support for Israel would not impact its "promise to continue supporting Ukraine." But without a doubt, Russia and China are watching from the sidelines to see how all of these resource issues play out. Nothing should stand between Washington providing vitally needed support for Ukraine and Israel, nor should there be any ambiguity about Washington's backing for Taiwan. The US and its closest allies must make clear that they will provide whatever resources are necessary to bolster democracy in all three theaters of actual or potential conflict. That would be the ideal the US must strive for. But at some point, there may need to be a moment of reckoning. Over time, this may well mean that the nations the US has been aiding may themselves have to make unenviable choices - decisions that seem unthinkable now to them certainly and to us, but which may in the end prove inevitable.

Will Ukraine ultimately have to face the prospect of losing Crimea? Will Israel have to make a modicum of concessions to demonstrate to Palestinians there is an alternative to perpetual conflict? The illusion that the US will always come to the rescue and provide military weaponry to prop up a democracy in need may be comforting - but it may also one day clash with some hard realities. Perhaps rather than continuing to be seen as an arsenal to the democratic world, America eventually may need to be a better, more adroit partner in helping each nation we befriend find its own path to a more lasting and sustainable peace.

CNN

# The heartbreaking impact of Israel-Gaza conflict

Fawaz Turki

**THE blood-soaked Israel-Gaza conflict, which began over the weekend and continues, as we speak, to dominate the headlines, may appear at first blush to be one strictly between Gaza and Israel, but look deeper into its roots and you will find it to be, at its core, a 75-year-old, yet unresolved dispute between the peoples of Palestine and Israel. But first, the carnage.**

As I write this on Tuesday morning, my time here in Washington, more than 900 Israelis were reported dead and 2,600 injured. In Gaza, roughly 800 were killed and 4,000 injured - and still counting. It was dreadful (and in my view sickening) to learn that in their assault across the border into Israel, Hamas militants chose to target young, unarmed Israeli civilians at a music festival, where they reportedly massacred (I find no other word that would do here) well over 200 concertgoers and then from there went on to take and drag into Gaza between 100 and 150 hostages, among them women, children and the elderly. Equally dreadful and sickening was Israel's decision to mount, in like manner, a campaign of indiscriminate air strikes against civilian targets like high rise residential buildings, mosques and marketplaces in Gaza, a 140-square-mile welter of misery, an exclave that packs a population of 2.4 million, where people, with no access to bomb shelters, literally have no place to go when the missiles begin to fall.

Your guess is as good as mine as to how long the mayhem will last ("this is the start of it", said Israel's prime minister), how irremediable the suffering will be that Gazan civilians are expected to endure and where it will all lead at the end of the day. What we are witnessing today is not, in reality, a war but another battle in a war of many battles between an occupied people and their occupiers, like the two

intifadas of 1987 and 2000 and the Great March of the Return, the series of demonstrations held every Friday near the Gaza-Israel border from March 30, 2018 till Dec. 27, 2019, all costly battles indeed, all different in kind and in degree but all the same in aspiration - ending the occupation. This is a war waged by a people who simply refuse to continue living, as they have done for well over half a century, with a boot over their collective neck, continue seeing their humanity progressively reduced to a fragment and continue watching helplessly as their land is stolen from right under their feet, all the while shorn not only of their human right to determine their own political destiny but even of their right to determine how they live their daily lives. In short, a people shorn, in Hannah Arendt's words, of the "right to have rights". Take the sustained campaign to rob Palestinians of their land in violation of every conceivable international law under the sun.

Look, when you rob a predominantly agricultural people of land they had tilled for centuries and on which they had depended for their survival - land with which they had developed an unbreakable archetypal nexus - you rob them of more than material property. You rob them of acre and sanctuary, leaving them with wounds unhealed and a broken spirit unended. It is common in peasant folk rhetoric to speak of "ardi-a'ardi", a complex, elusive phrase that translates roughly as "In my land lies my human nobility". Rob people like that of their land and you rob them of their raison d'etre, a moment when life becomes worthless, when, as Austrian-British philosopher Karl Popper suggested in his iconic book, The Poverty of Historicism (1957), men don't mind going on missions in pursuit of causes that they know they will not be around

to see triumphant. Then take Israel's exceedingly absurd policy of "mowing the grass", a metaphor implying that Palestinians under occupation need to be cut back like grass every now and again, with the expectation that in time they will be drained of their motivation to resist - a policy that ignores the fact that that you can cut back grass but you can't cut down human beings.

The long and short of it is this: You cannot brutalise a people, as Israel has done all these long years, by subjugating them to the rule of the gun, without expecting them to respond brutally. Oh, yes, the carnage. Do let's go beyond it and reflect here on the irony of ironies found in the ongoing strife between Israel and Gaza, a strip of land more than half of whose population is made up of refugees, or the descendants of refugees, who in 1948 had sought refuge there after fleeing towns and villages in what was then southern Palestine but is now southern Israel - the very territory that Hamas militants stormed over the weekend.

In an allusion to that fact in his Washington Post "Worldview" column on Tuesday, political analyst Ishaan Tharoor resurrected an incident from the history books, one where in 1956 an Israeli soldier, one Roi Rotberg, was gunned down by Palestinian militants while he patrolled the Gaza-Israel border. During an oration at Rotberg's funeral, we are told in the column, Moshe Dayan (d. 1981), then Israel's Chief of Staff, was blunt about what motivated those who killed the soldier. "Let us not blame the murderers", he said. "Why should we complain of their hatred for us? Eight years have they sat in the refugee camps of Gaza and seen, with their own eyes, how we have made a homeland of the soil and the villages where they and their forebears once dwelt". Now it's 75 years since they've sat there.

Gulf News

# Has Putin committed an act of war against NATO?

Robert Clark

**THIS week as all eyes are understandably on the appalling situation unfolding in Israel, Nato faces its first real test since newest member Finland joined the alliance in April. Given the understandable outrage at the Hamas terrorist attack against innocent Israeli civilians over the weekend, many would have missed the events on Sunday night, which led to the 48 mile-long Balticconnector gas pipeline link between the Finland and Nato ally Estonia being extensively damaged.**

On Tuesday, Sauli Niinistö, the President of Finland, stated that the extensive damage caused to the undersea pipeline is caused by external activity, and almost certainly deliberate. It's important to consider where this pipeline is; connecting Finland to Estonia not too far from the capitals Helsinki and Tallin, and under the direct

path of the Russian Baltic Fleet whenever it passes through in transit to Saint Petersburg. This of course has echoes of last year's Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipeline attacks. Almost exactly a year ago in late September, the those attacks caused European gas prices to jump 12 percent - despite the fact that Nord Stream 1 had not delivered gas since August and Nord Stream 2 had never gone into service.

This week's attack has far more potential to cause serious concern. Whilst Nord Stream is majority Russian owned, with the pipelines effectively redundant at the time of last year's attacks, Balticconnector is the critical national infrastructure of two Nato allies. And unlike Nord Stream, Balticconnector is not far from redundant; transporting up to 2.6 billion cubic metres a year, it

supplies one third of Finland's domestic gas consumption, and is also plugged into wider Baltic gas supplies and even within the EU's energy infrastructure. Likely this will cause already fragile energy markets to continue to spiral - in the short term, at least, as the wholesale UK gas price jumped by as much as 14 per cent on Tuesday, to more than 125 pence per therm, after having dropped as low 88p on Friday.

Today, as Nato defence ministers meet in Brussels, Finland will be hoping this is treated extremely seriously, as is its prerogative being a fully functioning member. We will have to wait and see what Nato's response - if any - will be. But doing nothing will send a sharp message to Putin that he can act with impunity against Nato member states - and that sets an incred-

ibly dangerous precedent that will be difficult to row back from in the challenging years ahead. People mocked, and sneered, as Putin threatened retaliation for Finland's successful acceptance into Nato earlier this year.

What could a weakened and politically fragile Kremlin possibly do whilst preoccupied in a losing ground war in Ukraine? Those of us who predicted precisely this nature of below-threshold escalation by Russia, just enough to avoid Article 5 from being triggered, have got our answer, just as Europe prepares to head into another long winter. We must not be afraid to call out Russian aggression in all forms, and act accordingly when our national interests, and those of our closet allies, continue to be threatened. It was Finland's undersea cables this week. Tomorrow, it could well be Britain's.





# SCCI apprises CCC about business community issues

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A business-men delegation led by President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Fuad Ishaq held a meeting with Chief Collector Customs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Saeed Akram.

During the meeting, the SCCI chief in detail apprised chief collector custom KP, Saeed Akram about customs clearing agents and gave a number of proposals for their amicable resolution.

The delegation consisted of the Frontier Customs Agents Association (FCAA) president Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, General Secretary Wahid Bacha and other members of the association along with traders, exporters and importers, said in a press release here on Thursday.

Collector Customs Enforcement Peshawar

Khawaja Khurram was also present in the meeting.

Chief Collector Customs Saeed Akram took keen interest in issues of custom clearing agents and traders' community.

Fuad Ishaq thanked the chief collector customs for assurance toward early resolution of issues that were faced by the business community.

In the meeting both sides have agreed to establish a close liaison and devise a joint mechanism for prompt resolution of issues of the traders' community.

Earlier, FCAA delegation headed by its president Ziaul Haq Sarhadi held a meeting with SCCI chief Fuad Ishaq at the chamber house.

Members of the FCAA delegation include general secretary Wahid Bacha, vice president Imtiaz Ali, executive members Muhammad Javed, Noor

Azam, Nizam Khan, Tariq Iqbal, Mansoor Ahmad, Adnan Akhtar, Mujeeb Rehman.

The delegation informed the SCCI chief about issues of customs clearing agents, traders, exporters, and importers owing to new policies enforced by customs enforcement and appraisal departments.

Fuad Ishaq expressed grave concern over increasing issues of customs clearing agents and traders community and stated that anti-trade policies were not in the interest of the country under the prevailing economic turmoil situation.

He urged the customs and other authorities to facilitate traders by adopting business-friendly policies.

During the meeting, the SCCI chief instructed the chamber's relevant department to highlight issues of clearing agents/ traders before the customs high

officials through writing letters and other means of communication in order to resolve them promptly.

Earlier, FCAA president Ziaul Haq Sarhadi congratulated newly elected President Fuad Ishaq and senior vice president Sanaullah Khan and expressed hope that they along with other members of the cabinet will play a vital role in resolution of business community issues.

Sarhadi on the occasion made demands for launching a cargo train from Peshawar to Karachi, resumption of Goods in Transit to Afghanistan (GITA) service and complete operationalization of the Aza Khel Dry.

The chamber president agreed with proposals of the FCAA delegation and assured to take initiatives in light of these recommendations to resolve all issues on priority basis.



PESHAWAR: Women customers selecting and purchasing stone decoration items from a roadside vendor on GT Road.

## PTCL to monetize 12 non-core assets

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) has decided to sell its twelve surplus immovable assets in nine cities to strengthen its financial health and service capacity. This is in consideration of the company's aggressive network and ICT infrastructure expansion plans.

Required approvals have been accorded for the planned sale of company's properties, situated in Attock, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Kasur, Multan, Okara, Sadiqabad and Sialkot.

As a responsible corporate entity, PTCL ensures strict compliance with the relevant company policies and legal frameworks in all business operations.

The planned transactions will be carried out through a transparent auction process in accordance with the rules and regulations to provide an equal opportunity to all individuals/firms interested in buying the properties.

The funds generated from these properties will be allocated to the expansion of PTCL's network and IT infrastructure.

The liquid resources will play a pivotal role in financing upcoming projects aimed at delivering enhanced connectivity and integrated ICT services to an even larger consumer and enterprise user base across the nation.

Pakistan Telecommunication Company remains committed to its mission to provide seamless connectivity solutions to meet the evolving needs of Pakistan's digital landscape.

# PSX continues with bullish trend — gains 297 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday and gained 297.17 points, a positive change of 0.61 per cent, closing at 48,771.71 points against 48,474.54 points the previous day.

A total of 342,287,229 shares valuing Rs 11.735 billion were traded during the day as compared to 396,455,410 shares valuing Rs 10.529 billion the previous day.

As many as 322 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 146 of them recorded gains and 160 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 16 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 112,985,840 shares at Rs 2.85 per share, WorldCall

Telecom with 17,102,517 shares at Rs 1.30 per share and Nishat ChunPow with 12,166,495 shares at Rs 21.97 per share.

Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 350.00 per share price, closing at Rs 8,350.00, whereas the runner-up was Bata (Pak) with a Rs 50.61 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,697.25. Pak Engineering witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 24.93 per share closing at Rs 308.11, followed by Dawood Law with a Rs 17.99 decline to close at Rs 222.01.

## Rupee gains 93 paise against Dollar

Pakistani Rupee on Thursday witnessed the 26th consecutive recovery session as it gained 93 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.58 against the previous day's closing

of Rs279.51.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs276 and Rs278.75 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 38 paise to close at Rs 295.93 against the last day's closing of Rs296.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen lost one paise to close at Rs1.86, whereas a decrease of 53 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs342.62 as compared to the last closing of Rs343.15.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal declined by 25 and 26 paise to close at Rs75.84 and Rs74.26 respectively.

# Both blue, green color banknotes of Rs.75 Legal tender: SBP clarified

## F.P. Report

KARCHI: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) would like to clarify that under Section 25 of the State Bank of Pakistan Act, 1956, all banknotes including commemorative notes issued by SBP are legal tender everywhere in Pakistan for the amount expressed therein and carry the guarantee of the Federal Government.

It is therefore notified for the information of pub-



lic that banknote of Rs.75 (predominantly green) issued on August 14, 2022 to commemorate 75 years of Pakistan's Independence and banknote of Rs.75 (predominantly blue) issued on

July 04,2023 to mark 75 years of SBP's inception are legal tender across Pakistan.

These banknotes are equally eligible to perform the function of medium of

exchange i.e. for settlement of private and public obligations.

Besides, SBP and all commercial banks shall issue to, and accept from, public, these banknotes.

# ICCI calls for focusing on trade fairs and exhibitions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), on Tuesday urged the government to focus on trade fairs and exhibitions to promote trade, exports, and investment that would help revive the economy.

He said that the exhibitions are a permanent feature of business promotion in developed countries. He said that Pakistan is a huge market with 240 million consumers and the fifth largest country in the world in terms of population; therefore, it needs to organize at least 500 exhibitions every year to uplift businesses and the overall economy.

He said that the patronage of the government by the private sector is so

important to promoting such activities in the country. He said this while talking to a delegation of the Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry (PAEI) that visited ICCI, led by its Chairman, Muhammad Khurshid Barlas.

Amin ur Rehman, Fahad Barlas, Shamraiz Iqbal, Sheikh Rehan ur Rehman, and Zeeshan Amjad were in the delegation. Faad Waheed said that about 13000 exhibitions are held every year in the USA, about 12000 in Europe, and around 2500 in China.

However, Pakistan holds around 40-50 exhibitions per year, which are quite insufficient to promote trade and exports. Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Khurshid Barlas, Chairman Federal, Pakistan Association of

Exhibition Industry, said that the private sector is very dynamic in Pakistan, but it needs the support of the government to promote economic activities through exhibitions.

He emphasized that all the relevant ministries and departments of the government dealing with commerce, trade, industries, planning, and financing should extend all possible support and cooperation to the exhibitors and trade fair organizers as well as participants to make Pakistan a hub of business and economic activities.

He urged the government to encourage exhibitions and trade shows in cooperation with the chambers of commerce and industry of the country, as the involvement of the private sector in organizing

such exhibitions is very important to making them successful and result-oriented.

He also highlighted the role of PAEI in promoting the exhibition industry and said that the close cooperation of ICCI with it would add value to its efforts to uplift the local industry.

Engineer Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President of the ICCI, said that the current state of the economy necessitates a fast boost in exports, and regular exhibitions in domestic and major international markets are the best tool to introduce our exportable products and increase their exports. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with PAEI to promote trade fairs and industrial exhibitions in the region to accelerate economic activity.

# Democracy is the best revenge

## Murtaza Rafiq Bhutto

We have always heard a debate that which system is good for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan whether it's a democratic system dictatorship and most of our generation prefers the rule of the dictatorship over democracy & obviously, this perception exists because most of our politicians are referred as

"Corrupt" but just for a while think of a Shaheed Zulfiqar Bhutto or Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto they are not remembered as one, why? Because they have sacrificed their lives for democracy and the people of this country. It is a fact that both of the leaders could not complete a single tenure of the government in their lives but whenever they came in the power they had served a lot to the people. When I think of the key factors that is required to run the democratic system the first thing which comes in my mind is the endless bloodshed, endless

struggle and facing the courts in political motivated cases ending up in prison sometimes as a political prisoner & sometimes as an accused for involved in the corrupt practices, forgery & asset beyond means trials and after decades when the democracy becomes heavier over a ruler & justice is prevailed than we finally hear the judgment that says the accused must be released with respect because the complainant could not provide enough evidence against the accused.

Now, just go back in the times from where it all started, Pakistan People's Party emerged as the political force & voice of the people of this country with a slogan of food, cloth and shelter.

The leader Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto who knew the law and nobody could deny the fact that he successfully provided what he promised to the people. The charm of this leader thought what was actually happened that he was arrested and the military had to take over the country? Well, I can't comment on that because this is a judicial matter and the case is still pending in the court of law. He was hanged till death and set an example as an unbowed politician, he showed us that no matter what happens democracy is above all. I am not going to continue with a brief about what happened after that it's already written in the history one should must read it to revive the memories.

Moving on, the leader's daughter Benazir Bhutto becomes the first woman prime minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, after everything that she had faced or saw with her own eyes must have been turn into rebel but she chose the path to peace and democracy, in resulting to that she had lost her brother Mir Murtaza Bhutto and unfortunately, the rumors had surrounded that she's involved in his own brother's death for whom she walked barefoot from Bilawal house to 70 Clifton. After everything her husband and former president Asif Zardari have been accused of being involved in the corrupt practices and referred as "Mr. 10%" he was arrested and imprisoned in several cases and the victimization

during this whole process is in the book of history.

Mohtarma had to go into an exile with her family and after more than a decade of imprisonment President Zardari was freed to go with respect by the honorable court of justice & law. Moving on to the return of Mohtarma from an exile to her beloved country, I have no further words to describe the feeling of a person who knew that in this political battle she will not be able to comeback alive but still she kept moving forward to her destiny and finally, she was martyred in Rawalpindi. Imagine where the nation's leader is hanged, his young and brave son is martyred, his son in law is imprisoned, his daughter accepts the martyrdom whole heartedly & for what? The democracy, the democracy, the democracy. It's not just ends there the saga continues and after the Mohtarma,

President Zardari took control over the party, I still remember Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was a young shy kid who look a lot like Harry Potter came in front with his father, it was definitely not easy to control the party matters in those circumstances but President Zardari had successfully completed the tenure of his government and in a smooth manner, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Asifa Bhutto had slowly & gradually involved in the party matters and now Bilwal Bhutto is known as The Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and turn out to be a completely mature politician. We all

saw the show after 2013 elections a lot of people came and left the PPP, the circle started to get tightened again to somehow get to president Zardari or to weaken his political party but these "Purani Mitti ke Bannay Log" people who are made up of old sand are not easy to deal with and the circle got tighter but this time not only to arrest Zardari but as the time passed, the limits were required to be exceeded and unfortunately, the families were involved & arrested.

The character assassinations & media trials have been started and it was on the peak. Most of the bureaucrat, democrat or technocrat were facing the charges or involved in references. The national accountability bureau were used as a tool and to measure whether the cases were or not political motivated just go to the Youtube and see the film yourself how they captured, arrested or break in their respective offices and houses, this shall tell you everything you need to know. We have witnessed that in this era there was a civil military partnership in governing the country and PPP leadership had mentioned this several times on the national assembly floors.

Once again, the leadership went through bad phase and somehow turn the bed of roses into beautiful garden and successfully created a government with an alliance. In this whole democratic political system the impact of these political

motivated references and cases or accusation's not only hits the top leadership but comes down to the low level of the political workers, I believe these scenarios were deliberately created to break or divide the party. Most of the politicians from the ruling government party were accused including the Chief Minister of the province, Whenever somebody tries to break the strength their first hit is obviously the middle level people who act as a bridge between the worker and leadership, in this hits a lot of people had suffered and faced the gallows e.g Sharjeel Inam Memon, he has been arrested with several business owners, bureaucrats and after 27 months of incarceration, damaged reputation and almost losing the business, personnel and social life they were released on bail.

Secondly, I quote the President of PPP Sindh Chapter Nisar Khuhro were also accused and disqualified by the election commission of Pakistan, the person who served his entire life to strengthen the party & democratic system had to face the disqualification it is not less than a humiliation for somebody who has served on top notch designations and is disqualified over a minor matter and sees himself secondary and yet they chose to stay loyal to the party. I am not as much as experienced as other senior members of the media fraternity but what I was taught is that the man's

"watch-and-see" approach. While the producer price index came in well above estimates Wednesday, analysts said it was seen more as a blip in a generally disinflationary environment. The main focus is on the release of consumer prices on Thursday. "Any growth in the month-on-month figure would not go down well, particularly as the producer price inflation figures were hotter than expected," noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

After the sudden shifts in the corridors of power, Once again we saw that the parties who used to emerge against the PPP were nowhere but with the ruling party, I am not glorifying the matter of horse-trading but what I am trying to say here is that they take the ownership in first place and then they leave as soon as their party is no longer beneficial for them and in those conditions I would just say that this time understand the value of your vote, please do choose the right politician and political party. As far as the democracy and dictatorship preferences are concerned I would say love your arm forces more than anyone else but when it comes to governing always choose democracy over dictatorship because the democratic system is the only way to rise in these harsh economic conditions and no matter what happens just remember that there are still some politicians who are still willing to sacrifice their lives for democracy and supports the democratic environment.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Arshad Saeed Civil Judge (I) Guardian Judge Kabal District Swat. Case # 31/5. Date of Submission: 04/10/2023. Next Hearing date 24/10/2023. Mst. Gul Shireen Jan (Mother deceased). (2) Sultan Begam. etc R/o Koz Cham Tutano. Bandai Tehsil Kabal District Swat. Vs (1) Public at Large. (2) Chairman Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF) Hayatabad Peshawar (6) Muslim Khan (7) Shaukat Ali (8) Ajmal Sons of Muhammad Karim R/o Koz Cham Tutano Bandai Tehsil Kabal District Swat. (Presently foreign country). Application for Receipt of Succession Certificate. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 24/10/2023 at 8.a.m. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you. Seal of the Court.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 203/1. Institution. 3/7/2023. Date of hearing. 31/10/2023. Charhi Gul alias Charhi VS Ayub Khan etc. Notice. 1. Ayub Khan 2. Shaber Khan. 3. Mst. Rabia. 4. Mst. Sher Banu daughters of Ismail Khan residents of Balokhan at present in India. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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. a.m dated 31/10/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

## Court Notice

In the court of Amjid Ullah Civil Judge II/Judge Family Court Kabal district Swat. Case # 75/2 institution 04/09/2023. Next Hearing date. 21/10/2023. Muhammad Anwar etc VS Ali shah etc. Notice to defendant # 11) Nadar khan 12). Adalat kha son's Taj Malook r/o teeghak Tutano Bandai Tehsil Kabal district Swat. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 21/10/2023. at 8.am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you. Seal of the Court.





In brief

Football referee course concluded

**B A H A W A L P U R** (APP): Under the auspices of Government Technology College Bahawalpur, a three-day Bahawalpur Football Referee Refreshing Course concluded here on Thursday. Government Technology College Bahawalpur organized a three-day Bahawalpur Football Referee Refreshing Course at the college sports ground and a number of participants attended the refreshing course to learn the skills to perform their role as a football referee. The instructors for the football referee course included Qaisar Ali, Majid Khan and Waseem Ali who taught the participants of the course the techniques and skills to perform the role as a football referee. A ceremony was held at the sports ground of the college where the participants were awarded shields. Academician staff, instructors and the participants attended the ceremony.

Pakistan, Cambodia match ends in a draw

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The FIFA World Cup Qualifier away match between Pakistan and Cambodia ended in a goalless draw at Cambodia on Thursday. According to details, neither team could score a goal in the allotted time. The decisive match (home league) between Pakistan and Cambodia would be played on October 17 in Islamabad. The match would be played at 2 pm Pakistan time.

England v Australia

**LONDON** (BBC): A period of silence will be held before England's game with Australia for "the innocent victims of the devastating events in Israel and Palestine". The Football Association also said players would wear black armbands for the match at Wembley on Friday. More than 1,200 people have been killed after Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a series of attacks on Israel. Israel then launched air strikes on Gaza and stopped food, water, fuel and medicine going into the territory. More than 1,300 people have been killed in Gaza since the retaliatory strikes, with 338,000 displaced. "On Friday evening, we will remember the innocent victims of the devastating events in Israel and Palestine," the FA said in a statement. "Our thoughts are with them, and their families and friends in England and Australia and with all the communities who are affected by this ongoing conflict. "We stand for humanity and an end to the death, violence, fear and suffering."

Bernie pleads guilty to fraud

**LONDON** (BBC): Bernie Ecclestone, the former boss of Formula 1, has been given a suspended sentence after pleading guilty to fraud. The 92-year-old did not declare more than £400m held in a trust in Singapore when asked by tax authorities in 2015. Ecclestone has agreed in a civil settlement to repay almost £653m to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), a court heard. He was sentenced to 17 months in prison, suspended for two years. The billionaire had originally been due to stand trial next month after initially pleading not guilty. The settlement covers Ecclestone's tax affairs over the past 18 years, including interest and civil penalties. The court was told that a meeting took place between Ecclestone and HMRC officers in July 2015.

# Quinton de Kock leads South Africa's rout of Australia

**LUCKNOW** (Cricinfo): If South Africa really do want to move through this 2023 World Cup under the radar, they must do better than this. Because in wiping the floor with Australia in Lucknow, winning by a mammoth 134 runs for their second victory in as many games, they have put out one hell of a statement that is impossible to ignore. As ever, Quinton de Kock made the most noise, crashing 109 up top as South Africa put up 311 for 7 having been asked to bat first. Australia's decision at the toss, and the moves to reinforce their batting with Josh Inglis and Marcus Stoinis drafted in for Alex Carey and Cameron Green, came to nothing. A lack of impetus with the ball and errors in the field spilled into their chase - dead and buried as early as the 18th over at 70 for 6. Two straight defeats mean they can afford little room for error in the remaining seven games of the league stage. It's not news that this tournament will be de Kock's last appearances in the ODI format, but it is worth remembering on nights like these. The 30-year-old is departing the scene at the peak of his powers, following a crisp 100 in the opening victory against Sri Lanka with this classy 91-ball jaunt to three figures. The 13 boundaries - five of them sixes - were

crispy as you'd like against some of the most accomplished white ball bowlers on the circuit. Hundred No.19 was as much a reminder of the stock of a modern limited-overs great, as a word to the wise that South Africa are gunning for their first world title. As poor as they were, Australia have cause to lament two decisions against them. Steven Smith was given out LBW as an on-field decision was overturned on DRS despite the naked eye suggesting the ball was on its way past leg stump. Of far greater doubt was the decision to send Marcus Stoinis on his way for a catch down the leg side. Stoinis' bottom hand was off the bat when in contact with the ball, with television umpire Richard Kettleborough suggesting it was in contact with the top hand, which did not seem to be the case from the front-on view. Kagiso Rabada was the bowler to profit from both, finishing with impressive figures of 3 for 33. However, it will be far more productive for Australia to assess their own mistakes, missing an eye-watering seven chances in the first half of this counter. Temba Bavuma was on the right end of three of them. A top edge on 15 caught Adam Zampa lacking at deep third, before an edge off the leg spinner was missed with the Proteas skipper on

19. He was then lucky to continue his innings on 31 when a relay catch on the midwicket boundary could not be completed after substitute fielder Sean Abbott's overarm toss back into play went over the head of Mitchell Starc. Pat Cummins then shelled a caught-and-bowled from Aiden Markram, allowing him to move on from 1 to 56 from 44 deliveries, before two more errors in the penultimate over of the innings; Starc shelled David Miller (on 10) at deep square leg and Stoinis botched a simpler opportunity at cover off Marco Jansen (25). Factor in a spurned run out of de Kock when looking for a single on 22 at the end of the sixth over, and the collective malaise tots up to a galling 170 runs. The crux of de Kock's assault was the clarity of every shot in anger. The early swing and seam available to Starc and Josh Hazlewood, respectively, lent itself to a quiet start. The opening batter soon turned up the volume with a flick for six over square leg off the former, followed by a brace of fours, guided then driven square, off the latter, across the fifth and sixth over. His steady progress allowed Bavuma to go at his own pace, pitching in with 17 from the 53 managed in the powerplay, then 35 in the overall opening stand of 108 before falling to Maxwell to a catch at deep midwicket.

## Zone -1, Zone VI win in A.S.Natural Stone U-16 Inter Zonal Cricket

**KARACHI** (APP): Two more matches were decided in the A.S.Natural Stone Under-16 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds. The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi and Sponsors by A.S.Natural Stone. Summarized Scores :

Zone-I Whites beat Zone-V Blues by 6 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Zone-V Blues 89 all out in 29.1 overs. Fareed Ullah 33. Danish Khan (mf) 4/13. Hussain Haider (lcm) 3/14. Zone-I Whites 90/4 in 15.4 overs. S.M.Ali 24 not out, M.Mair 14 not out. In the Second Match

Zone-VI Blues beat Zone-V Green by 9 Wickets at Student Cricket Ground. Zone-V Green 51 all-out in 13.5 overs. Muhammad 12, Rehan Bashir 11. Fawad Akbar (mf) 4/15. Zone-VI Blues 52/1 in 8.4 overs. Muhammad Anas 24, Areeb Noor 13 both not out.

## The Greater Grand University Games entered the final phase

**PESHAWAR** (APP): The Pakistan Army Greater Grand University Games entered into the final stage. Islamia College secured victory against strong University of Peshawar and recorded first position in the Men Volleyball event final played at GM Khattak Indoor Hall of the Agri University Peshawar on Thursday. Islamia College University Peshawar recorded a 3-2 victory against University of Peshawar. The score was 25-22, 23-23, 21-25, 25-20 and 15-12. University of Agriculture Peshawar won the third position by defeating University of Engineering and

Technology Peshawar by 25-23, 25-20 and 25-21. In the basketball final held at University of Peshawar, University of Peshawar defeated Islamia College University by 45-40 points and won the trophy while the Khyber Medical College won the third position, the teams of Islamia College Peshawar and University of Peshawar qualified for the finals in the football matches. On this occasion, former international volleyball player SHO Punjab Police Arbab Tufail was the special guest. He said that the Greater Campus Sports Gala is very important because sports are very important for mental and

physical development of the players. "I had represented Pakistan for 15 years and won many titles for Pakistan in various international events," Arbab Tufail said. He congratulated the sports coaches. He said unfortunately, the young generation is getting attracted to and using drugs. There are many youngsters using drugs which are harmful not only for their families but for the new generation and Pakistan, Arbab Tufail said. First class cricketer Qazi Shafiq, Agriculture University Dr Sajid and Islamia College Director Sports Ali Hoti were also present on this occasion.

## Saudi Arabia football revolution spreads to women's game

**RIYAD** (BBC): While stars such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar and Karim Benzema have taken men's football in Saudi Arabia to the next level, the country was already an Asian powerhouse and home to some of the biggest and most successful men's clubs on the continent. Yet rapid progress is also now being made in women's football, although in this field the country really is starting almost from scratch. Just five years ago, organised women's football in Saudi Arabia did not exist in a meaningful fashion, but much has changed since a league was created with the aim of boosting female participation in sport in a country where women's rights are restricted. The women's national team - who played their first game just last year - are looking at qualification for the 2027 Women's World Cup, while the coun-

try is bidding to host the 2026 Women's Asian Cup. And on Friday the new season of the Saudi Women's Premier League kicks off. Campaigners say much more remains to be done for women's rights in Saudi Arabia despite reforms, while human rights groups say sport is being used by the Saudi government to distract from long-standing reputation issues and accuse it of 'sportswashing' by investing in high-profile events. At the same time, those involved in the growth of women's football in the country are excited by the opportunities ahead. Layan Jouhari plays for Jeddah club Al-Ittihad as well as the national team, and she says the thought of representing the country at the World Cup is an exciting one. "If we do end up qualifying, then it would be crazy, a dream," Jouhari told BBC Sport. "Whatever challenges there are, then

we will face them. There is still so much that we can do." Women were only allowed in stadiums in 2018 and the following year the Saudi Arabia Football Federation (SAFF) established a women's department. Monika Staab was the first coach of the national team and in March 2022, after the call went out on social media for players was answered by 400, selected an inaugural squad which went to the Seychelles and won their first ever game. The German, who coached for 11 years in her homeland as well as in Qatar and Bahrain, has now moved upstairs to become technical director of the women's game at SAFF. "I have been around the world to 90 countries, but I haven't seen such support from the FA, from the whole country, like I have experienced in the last two years in Saudi Arabia."



LUCKNOW: Quinton de Kock kicked off the 2023 World Cup with back-to-back tons.

## Pakistan women's squad for Bangladesh tour announced

**PESHAWAR** (APP): Nida Dar will continue to lead the Pakistan women's team as the national selection committee headed by Saleem Jaffar announced a 15-member squad for the Bangladesh tour scheduled to take place later this month. Pakistan will depart for Bangladesh on Oct 20 to feature in a six-match white-ball series which also includes three ODIs, part of the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25. The series itinerary will be announced in due course by the home board. The experienced Iram Javed stages a comeback to the national side after a gap of one year. The right-handed batter last played for Pakistan in the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022. Iram also featured for Super Women against Amazons in the three women's exhibition T20 matches earlier this year in Rawalpindi. Shawaal Zulfiqar and Syeda Aroob Shah have been excluded from the squad that played against South Africa last month in the white-ball series in Karachi, while Fatima Sana, who got injured in the second ODI against South Africa, is still in the process of recovering.

Both Shawaal and Aroob are part of the 28 probables of the Pakistan women's emerging team taking part in the training camp in Muridke. The emerging team will play a bilateral series and a triangular tournament involving West Indies and Thailand's emerging cricket teams later this month. **Pakistan squad:** Nida Dar (captain), Aliya Riaz, Bismah Maroof, Diana Baig, Ghulam Fatima, Iram Javed, Muneeba Ali (wk), Najiha Alvi (wk), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Sidra Amin, Umm-e-Hani and Waheeda Akhtar. Player support personnel: Nahida Khan (manager), Mauhtashim Rashid (interim head coach), Saleem Jaffar (bowling coach), Taufiq Umar (batting coach), Abdur Rehman (spin bowling coach for camp only) Muhammad Asfand Yar (strength and conditioning coach), Syed Nazir Ahmed (media manager), Rifat Asghar Gill (physiotherapist) and Zubair Ahmed (analyst). Chief Selector Saleem Jaffar: "Our selection committee has carefully deliberated over the squad for the Bangladesh tour, aiming to strike the

right balance between bat and ball, as we believe this squad is well-equipped to face the challenges in Bangladesh. "Young Shawaal Zulfiqar has been omitted from the squad as she requires more grooming before representing again at the international level. The members of the selection committee have recalled experienced Iram Javed in the squad. Iram's presence will undoubtedly strengthen our batting order in Bangladesh conditions. "Fatima Sana is on the road to recovery, and we are committed to giving her the time she needs to be fully prepared for the upcoming away series against New Zealand where the selection committee feels the right-arm fast bowler will be more productive." Meanwhile, Pakistan women's team will undergo a six-day camp at Ghani Institute for Cricket in DHA, Lahore from Saturday, Oct 14 before departing for Bangladesh via Dubai from Lahore in the wee hours of 20 October. The players besides taking part in practice sessions will feature in different match scenarios and will also play a 50-over practice match in the camp.

## West Indies Women-A, Thailand Women's Emerging team to tour Pakistan

**PESHAWAR** (APP): Pakistan will host West Indies Women-A and Thailand Women's Emerging teams from October 18 to November 12 at two venues in Lahore - Gaddafi Stadium and Ghani Institute for Cricket. The tour includes bilateral fixtures and a tri-series involving the Pakistan Women's-A team. West Indies will arrive in Pakistan on October 18 and will take part in practice sessions before taking on the Pakistan emerging side in three one-day matches on October 24, 26 and 29. Ghani Institute for Cricket in DHA will host the one-day fixtures scheduled on Oct 24 and 26, while the third one-day match will be staged at Gaddafi Stadium on October 29. Meanwhile, Thailand's women's emerging side will reach Pakistan on October 28 and will take part in practice sessions until Nov 2. The three sides will feature in a T20 tri-series from 3 to 8 November with all the participating teams playing two matches each. The top two teams will play the final of the tournament on 8 November. All matches of the tri-series will be played at the historic Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. After the departure of the West Indies Women A on Nov 9, Pakistan Women A and Thailand women's emerging team will lock horns in a two-match T20 series taking place on November 10 and 11 at the Gaddafi

Stadium. This will be a first-of-its-kind tour of Pakistan involving women's emerging and A side. On the other hand, Pakistan women's U19 team will tour Bangladesh in January 2024 to feature in a T20 tri-series where Sri Lanka women's U19 will be the third side. In a bumper women's international season 2023-24, Pakistan's senior team is taking part in five ICC Women's Championship series and 17 T20s. They also recently took part in the 19th Asian Games in China. Tania Mallick, Head of Women's Cricket: "Women's cricket is on the rise globally, and Pakistan women's cricket is actively taking it forward. We have recently hosted South Africa in Karachi and now hosting West Indies Women A and Thailand emerging team underscores the fact that a lot of activity is taking place in women's cricket. The emerging series will not only enhance our players' skills but also encourage more investment in women's cricket infrastructure. "We extend our gratitude to West Indies and Thailand for making this tour possible. We hope this series serves as a turning point for women's cricket in Pakistan, where we see more girls pursuing their cricketing dreams." The squad of Pakistan emerging women's team will be announced in due course.

Schedule: 18 October - West Indies Women A arrival 24 October - First One-Day (Pakistan Women A v West Indies Women A); Ghani Institute for Cricket 26 October - Second One-Day (Pakistan Women A v West Indies Women A); Ghani Institute for Cricket 28 October - Thailand emerging team arrival 29 October - Third One-Day (Pakistan Women A v West Indies Women A); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 3 November - Tri-series first T20 match (Pak Women A v WI Women A); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 4 November - Tri-series 2nd T20 match (WI Women A v Thailand emerging); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 5 November - Tri-series 3rd T20 match (Pak Women A v Thailand emerging); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 8 November - Tri-series final; Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 9 November - West Indies Women A departs 10 November - First T20 (Pakistan Women A v Thailand emerging); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 11 November - Second T20 (Pakistan Women A v Thailand emerging); Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore 12 November - Thailand emerging team departs

## International Olympic Committee suspends Russian Olympic Committee

**MOSCOW** (BBC): The International Olympic Committee's executive board has suspended the Russian Olympic Committee "with immediate effect until further notice". The move comes after the ROC recognised regional organisations from four Ukrainian territories illegally annexed by Russia since its full-scale invasion began in 2022. The IOC said last Thursday's recognition was "a breach of the Olympic Charter because it violates the territorial integrity of the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine". The suspension means the ROC "is no longer entitled to operate as a National Olympic Committee" and "cannot receive any funding from the Olympic movement". Olympic Councils from the regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia had been recognised by the ROC. The IOC added it would decide whether Russian athletes could

compete as neutrals at Paris 2024 "at the appropriate time". In response, the ROC called the suspension "another counterproductive decision with obvious political motivations". The IOC did not initially sanction the ROC following the invasion, but Russia has been banned from competing as a nation in athletics since November 2015 after state-sponsored doping was uncovered. Russia's doping suspension was lifted in March but the World Athletics Council ruled the nation would remain banned "for the foreseeable future" because of the war in Ukraine. The IOC has been under consistent pressure to ban Russian and Belarusian athletes from competing even under a neutral flag since the invasion began. But in March it told sporting federations they should allow athletes from those countries to compete as neutrals. Ukraine has threatened to boy-

cott next year's Games in Paris if a full ban on Russian and Belarusian athletes is not upheld. "This is an important decision," said Andriy Yermak, head of Ukraine's presidential office, adding that "sports cannot be out of politics" and accusing Russia of using "athletes as propaganda". Currently, IOC sanctions mean no international sporting events can be organised in the territory of either Russia or its ally Belarus, while the flags, national anthems or any other national symbol of both countries must not be used. Earlier this week European football's governing body Uefa abandoned plans to reinstate Russian Under-17 teams into next year's youth European Championships following backlash from a variety of national football associations. In March the All England Club allowed Russian and Belarusian tennis players to compete at Wimbledon, lifting a ban it imposed a year earlier.





## In brief

### China women's football team

**B E I J I N G** (Xinhua/APP): China's women's football team started a training camp in Xiamen, east China's Fujian Province on Thursday for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympic Games Asian qualifiers. China just finished a disappointing campaign at the Asian Games, losing to Japan in the semifinals on home ground. China will face South Korea, Thailand and DPR Korea in Group B of the qualifiers, which will be held in Xiamen from October 26 to November 1. 12 teams are divided into three groups for the second phase of the qualifiers. The top-ranked team of each group and the best second-placed finisher will qualify for the next stage, where the four progressing teams will vie for the two tickets to the Paris Olympics.

### 22nd EPE for RE

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has announced 22nd Engineering Practice Examination (EPE) for Registered Engineers (RE) to elevate their title to "Professional Engineer (PE)". According to an official of PEC, the extended last date to apply for appearing in the exam is October 20, 2023 and the exam will be conducted on November 19, 2023. About the eligibility criteria, the official said that the applicant must be graduated on or after January 15, 2008 and possess five years of practical experience in the relevant field of engineering since registration with PEC till closing date of submission of applications. The applicant must have 17 CPD points (Maximum 10 CPD points from work/ job experience and 07 CPD points from other categories of CPD). As per decision taken by the PEC Governing Body (GB) all Registered Engineers who are graduated before January 15, 2008 are eligible to apply for the title of Professional Engineer (PE) without appearing in EPE through the web link: portal.pec.org.pk

### Police carry out search operation

**RAWALPINDI (APP):** Police here on Thursday carried out a search operation in 'Raheemabad', and adjoining areas in the jurisdiction of Airport Police Station. According to a police spokesman, the search operation was conducted in order to maintain law and order and to flush out suspects following the directions of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani. He informed, senior police officers and police personnel including women police took part in the search operation. Police checked as many as 33 houses, 17 shops and 150 individuals during the search operation. Superintendent of Police, Potohar said that police are fully prepared to shield the lives and property of the public and combing and search operation was done to flush out the suspects and hardcore criminals.

### IRSA releases 112,100 cusecs water

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 112,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 77,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1529.45 feet and was 131.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 40,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1216.30 feet, which was 166.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.



**ISLAMABAD:** Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Chargé D'AFFAIRS at the embassy of the state of Qatar, Mr. Issa Bin Muhammad Al-Dasam Al-Kubaisi, at Parliament House.

## Ethiopian ambassador calls on Education Minister

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jemal Beker called on the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Minister Mr. Madad Ali Sindhi here on Thursday.

Madad Ali Sindhi welcomed the Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Jemal Beker and said that the two countries have religious, cultural and historical people to people who love each other.

Madad Ali Sindhi discussed the exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding Vocational and Technical Training. He said that the two countries can benefit from the experience of each other.

The Federal Minister also welcomed the

exchange of teachers and students to further mutual cooperation, especially for Skilled Vocational Training. He said that there is significant potential for cooperation between the two countries. The Minister said that a Joint Working Group will be formulated which can pave the way for the signing of an MoU between the two countries.

Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jemal Beker said that the People of Ethiopia have a deep affiliation with Pakistan. He said that university-to-university cooperation and Technical institution-to-technical Technical Institution collaboration is the way forward.

He said that Ethiopian doctors who have studied in

Pakistan volunteered to provide free service to Pakistan during the floods of 2022. He further invited the minister to visit Ethiopia and sign the planned MoU there.

Madad Ali Sindhi said that the future is in Vocational Training of the population of Pakistan. He said that it provides the best opportunity for people to find jobs. The Federal Minister thanked the Ambassador and highlighted the cordial and friendly relations between the two countries. The minister said that the two countries have a shared history. He said that there was a bonhomie between the two people. He stated that the two countries should further enhance their mutual relationship.

## ANF seizes 208 kg drugs in three operations

**RAWALPINDI (APP):** Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations managed to recover 208 kg of drugs and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that ANF foiled a major drug smuggling attempt in Gadap Town Karachi and recovered 168 kg hashish from a truck loaded with apples. Charraas was concealed in secret cavities of the truck. During the operation, an accused, resident of Qila Abdullah, was also arrested.

In another operation in Quetta, 40 kg of hashish was recovered from a car. A resident of Quetta was arrested during the operation. In the third operation, 274 narcotic (ecstasy) tablets were recovered from the possession of a local resident arrested from Jamrud Road Peshawar. The accused was trying to smuggle drugs from Khyber to Punjab. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

## PTA continues crackdown on Illegal SIMs issuance

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal office, Peshawar in collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Circle conducted a raid against a mobile phone company franchisee located on Kohat Road, Peshawar.

The franchisee and his team were involved in the illegal issuance of SIMs against Afghan passports, said a news release issued by the PTA. Reportedly, the franchisee was being run by an Afghan national and the activated SIMs were being sold to Afghan nationals for Rs.3000 each.

Five laptops and eight mobile phones, containing scanned passport data, were seized. Furthermore, five individuals were apprehended at the scene by FIA, who are pursuing further investigations into the matter. PTA had filed a complaint with FIA earlier based on information regarding the illegal issuance of SIMs by the sales channel.

## CII chairman calls for broader perspective on underage marriages

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Chairman, Dr. Qibla Ayaz on Thursday said after extensive discussions on underage marriage, the council had suggested that it should not be solely considered a religious matter.

Addressing the second day of a conference to eliminate the menace of child marriage, organized by National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) in connection with International Day of the Girl Child, he emphasized the need for a broader societal and cultural perspective on underage marriages.

Dr. Qibla also highlighted that the gateway to interpretation (Ijtihad) in social

matters should always remain open.

He stressed the need for significant changes in the prevalent marriage customs in Pakistan, suggesting that revisions to marriage certificates were essential.

Minister for Social Welfare Gilgit-Baltistan, Dilshad Banu, also addressed the conference and said in Pakistan, young girls in rural areas were often subjected to early marriages, emphasizing the necessity of discussing and counseling on underage marriages in rural communities.

She emphasized the importance of involving religious scholars in addressing this issue, highlighting their potential role in shaping people's mindsets.

## MoIT issues notification for CERT Rules 2023

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoIT) here on Thursday issued a notification for the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Rules 2023.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif, said that the initiative aimed to enhance Pakistan's cyber security measures, prevent potential cyber threats to the country's data, and ensure swift responses in case of cyber attacks.

Under these rules, both National and Sectoral-level Computer Emergency Response Teams will be established and the teams are tasked with the responsibility of monitoring and safeguarding Pakistan's cyberspace 24/7, including during holidays, he said. The minister said, the National CERT, funded by the Ministry of IT, will maintain close coordination with various Sectoral CERT teams, providing timely

assistance when needed. This coordinated approach, he said, will ensure a robust defence against cyber threats.

He said, as part of these new rules, the National Security Operations Center will also be established to facilitate the practical implementation of these regulations.

Dr. Umar Saif announced that the notification for the establishment of the IT CERT Council will be issued in the coming days.

The council will consist of members from various government bodies, including the Secretary of IT as the Chairman, along with representatives from the Ministry of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Cabinet Division.

Furthermore, the council will include members from the National Security Division, the Telecom Sector, Industry, Academia, and Civil Society.

These representatives will play a crucial role in overseeing and advancing Pakistan's cybersecurity efforts.

## Winter to set in formally after rain and snow from October 14-17

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-wind/thunderstorm for various parts of the country with occasional gaps from October 14-17, indicating signs of formal arrival of Winter season.

The temperatures will be significantly dropped due to the rain compelling citizens to take out the warm clothes.

A westerly system will enter upper parts of the country on October 13 (evening/night) and likely to spread to upper/central parts on October 14 (night).

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, rain-wind/thunderstorm (moderate to isolated heavy falls) is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Shangla, Buner, Mansehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Swabi, Khyber, Mohmand, Bajaur, Peshawar, Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda, Kurram, Kohat, Hangu, Orakzai, Bannu, Karak, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Waziristan and Dera Ismail Khan from October 13 (evening/night) to October 17 with occasional gaps.

The PMD has forecast snowfall over the high mountains and isolated hailstorm in plains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the forecast period.

In Kashmir/Gilgit-Baltistan, rain-wind/thunderstorm (moderate to isolated heavy falls) is expected in Kashmir, (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur), Gilgit Baltistan (Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar) from October 13 (night) to October 17.

Snowfall over the high mountains is expected in Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the forecast period.

In Punjab and Islamabad, rain-wind/thunderstorm (moderate to isolated heavy falls) with isolated hailstorm is expected in Islamabad, Potohar region, Murree, Galiyat, Sialkot,

Narowal, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Okara, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Hafizabad, Sargodha, Khushab, Noorpurthal, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang and Kasur from October 13 (night) to October 17. Rain-wind/thunderstorm is also expected in Layyah, Bhakkar, Kot Addu, Sahiwal, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan on October 16 (evening/night) to October 18 with occasional gaps.

In Sindh, rain/wind-thunderstorm is also expected in Jacobabad, Kashmore, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, Sanghar and Umerkot on October 17 (evening/night) and October 18.

In Balochistan, rain/wind-thunderstorm is also expected in Sherani, Musa Khel, Zhob, Qilla Saifullah, Loralai, Barkhan, Kohlu, Sibbi, Bolan, Kalat, Harnai, Naseerabad, Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Qila Abdullah, Pishin, Quetta and

Ziarat on October 17 and 18.

About the impacts of rain spell, the PMD has warned that moderate to heavy falls may increase water flows in local Nullahs/streams and may trigger landslides in the vulnerable areas of Murree, Galiyat, Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Mansehra and Abbottabad during the spell.

Heavy rain may generate urban flooding in Rawalpindi and Lahore on October 15 (evening/night) October 16. Temperatures are likely to drop significantly as a result of the rain.

The farmers are advised to manage their crop activities accordingly while the tourists and travelers are advised to remain cautious during the forecast period. All concerned authorities are advised to remain alert and take necessary precaution measures during the forecast period.

## Poultry Industry playing important role in economic development: Ibrahim Hasan

**RAWALPINDI (APP):** Caretaker Provincial Minister of Punjab for Transport, Livestock and Mines & Minerals Ibrahim Hassan Murad has said that the Poultry Industry was playing an important role in the country's economic development. During a visit to the Directorate of Poultry Research Institute Rawalpindi, the Minister informed that Pakistan ranks 11th among all countries in terms of poultry industry.

Director of Poultry Research Institute Rawalpindi, Dr. Syed Kamal Nasir briefed the provincial minister regarding the performance of the institution.

He was informed that the Poultry Research Institute Rwp was established in 1985 and the institute was playing an important role in developing the poultry industry at commercial and rural levels. Along with the economic benefits from the sale of chicken meat and eggs, about 150,000 people are associated with the poultry industry.

It was told in the briefing that there are various labs in the institution for research.

The vaccination of birds is also done at the institute. One-day, one-week, 3 and 6-month poultry courses are organized for the public free of charge. A Poultry Scheme was introduced to make women economically independent.

Punjab has a prominent position in the country in terms of livestock and poultry as it has a 73% share, the Minister said. Solid steps were being taken to further develop the poultry industry at the commercial and rural levels, Ibrahim Hassan Murad informed.

Proper planning could help achieve the best economic goals for the poultry industry, he added. The Poultry Research Institute was playing an important role in the National Agenda for the development of the country, he said. The government was also providing all possible support to the private sector to develop the poultry industry, the Minister said. The Minister during the inspection of various laboratories directed the authorities concerned to take practical steps to improve the poultry industry in the region.



**ISLAMABAD:** Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Jemal Beker called on the Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi.



### Fly Dubai to resume flights

KABUL (Agencies): The press and cultural affairs department of the consulate general of Afghanistan in Dubai said in a statement on Thursday that Fly Dubai will resume flights between Kabul and the UAE after a two-year suspension. According to the statement, flights will resume from next month – possibly November 15. The resumption of Fly Dubai flights “after two years is considered a very important and vital action,” read the statement.

# The Frontier Post

## AFGHANISTAN

Rabi-ul-Awwal 26, 1445 — Friday, October 13, 2023

### WFP calls for aid for victims

KABUL (Khaama Press): WFP has described earthquake in Afghanistan as a “disaster on top of a disaster” and called for humanitarian assistance from the global community for the country. An organization official stated in Herat that the earthquake destroyed homes, damaged healthcare facilities, and disrupted people’s livelihoods. This comes when the limited availability of humanitarian aid has made relief efforts in earthquake-affected areas in Herat challenging.

## Medical teams travel to Herat to aid victims

HERAT (TOLOnews): The acting minister of public health, Qalandar Ibad, said that in order to reach the victims of the earthquake in Herat, the ministry has deployed nearly 60 health teams including women, in the affected areas.

Ibad asked the humanitarian organizations to cooperate in creating shelters for the victims of the Herat earthquake to face the winter season.

“There are ambulances with us, and in every team of doctors, there are nurses and midwives who provide services for women,” Ibad noted.

The acting Minister of

Public Health added that a commission has been created by the Islamic Emirate Prime Minister to assess the damages and needs of those who have been affected by the earthquakes in Herat province.

“These people will live under the tents for a month. After a month, it may be difficult for them to live under the tents. We, all our organs and the commission created, is trying to solve the problem of shelter and the construction of houses,” Qalandar Ibad said.

“We need cooperation for the nutrition sector for the well-being of the people and for the mothers and

children, and we need clean water to prevent infectious illnesses and protect people from these diseases,” the acting minister of public health said.

Although five days have passed since the first earthquake in Herat, another strong earthquake shook part of western Afghanistan today (Wednesday) morning after an earlier quake killed more than 2,000 and flattened whole villages.

In the meantime, the ministry of public health pledged the ministry’s complete readiness for providing medical services for the residents of Herat.

## US Envoy highlights Afghan girl oppression

KABUL (Khaama Press): US Representative for Afghanistan Highlights Taliban’s Severe Oppression of Afghan Girls on International Day of the Girl Child.

Thomas West called on the global community to listen to the voices of Afghan girls, emphasizing that the “secure and bright future” of Afghanistan relies on them.

The US Representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West, said on Thursday’s social media platform X, “On the Day of the Girl, we must remember the millions of Afghan girls who face the most severe form of oppression in Afghanistan, unparalleled anywhere else in the world.”

He said that nowhere else in the world do we see half of girls students deprived of education.

“Nowhere else have half of middle and high school students been deprived of education, which will have grave repercussions on their mental health, families, communities, and the country’s economic future,” he said.

Meanwhile, he added that “The Taliban bear responsibility for this oppression.”

He emphasized that “the global community must continue to support Afghan girls, listen to their voices, and empower them. Ensuring Afghanistan’s bright and secure future hinges on this very action.”

Since returning to power in August 2021, the Taliban has imposed extensive restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan. Higher education institutions are closed to girls beyond the sixth grade, and they have been deprived of access to universities.

October 11th is recognized as the “International Day of the Girl” by the United Nations and is celebrated worldwide. This day is an essential reminder of girls’ challenges and the need to promote gender equality and girls’ rights globally. It is a day to reflect on girls’ unique struggles and opportunities, especially in countries like Afghanistan, where their rights have been severely curtailed.

## Japan, UNDP launch \$10m women’s projects



KABUL (Agencies): A memorandum of cooperation was signed this week between the Embassy of Japan in Kabul and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for the purpose of supporting women.

The ambassador of Japan in Kabul says that in order to empower women, \$10 million worth of projects will be implemented by the UNDP.

UNDP officials in Afghanistan say that women have become more

vulnerable in recent years, and 48 percent of women have lost their jobs.

“Therefore, the United Nations Development Program asks the Islamic Emirate to allow women to return to work and education,” the organization said.

Based on the memo of understanding, the Embassy of Japan will provide \$10 million dollars to the United Nations Development Program to support 1,400 women. These women will be supported in Kunar, Logar,

Zabul, Baghlan, Kunduz and Kapisa provinces.

“We continue to support the health sector. This two-year project worth \$10 million dollars will be implemented for 1,400 women, and we continue to empower women and support them in this country,” said Takashi Okada, Japan’s ambassador to Afghanistan.

A UNDP representative in Afghanistan said by imposing work restrictions on women has aggravated the humanitarian situation

in Afghanistan, puts pressure on the economy and increases vulnerability.

“If women are not allowed to work and study, Afghanistan will not progress economically. Women cannot support their families. Currently, 48% of women have lost their jobs, and this affects the family’s economy. It has had a negative impact,” said Stephen Rodrigues, representative of the United Nations Development Program in Afghanistan.

## Minister gives update on earthquake casualties



KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’s (IEA) minister of public Health, Dr Qalandar Ebad, said that all the people injured in Saturday and Wednesday’s earthquakes in Herat province have been getting the necessary medical treatment.

Following his visit to the disaster-stricken area, Ebad addressed a press conference in Kabul on

Wednesday morning and said medical emergency response to the worst-hit areas had been quick and medical teams were able to treat the injured and move bodies of the deceased to health care facilities.

“The Islamic Emirate has provided medicine, equipment, food, drinking water, tents and other necessities for the victims of the earthquake, but they

still need more help,” he said.

According to him, 60 ambulances and 60 mobile clinics were deployed to the 12 worst-hit areas. The mobile clinics have been set up in these areas and continue to provide medical assistance to the victims.

Ebad also thanked charitable groups and international organization for their quick response, support and assistance in helping the earthquake victims.

He said while aid has been coming into the area, a lot more assistance is still needed.

He said meanwhile that the death toll was 1,000 with 2,400 injured. Other sources, including Afghanistan’s disaster management authority has put the death toll at over 2,400 with another 2,000 killed.

## Taliban’s policies threaten women and girls’ rights



KABUL (Khaama Press): Representative for Afghan Women made these remarks one day after “International Day of the Girl” while consistently defending the essence of engagement with the Taliban administration.

Rina Amiri addressed Afghan women and girls, writing, “We will continue to support you in defending your rights, including your right to quality education, by any means possible.”

According to her, the “Taliban’s strict policies” do not only affect Afghanistan but may set a precedent for other societies, impacting efforts towards gender equality

universally. Expressing concern over the Taliban’s mindset regarding women’s freedoms, Rina Amiri added, “Taliban’s strict policies are not just Afghanistan’s problem. They create a dangerous pattern that others may emulate.”

She said, “They (Taliban) are creating a dangerous precedent that others may follow. This approach jeopardizes the rights of women and girls everywhere. It is our shared duty to resist these extremist policies meaningfully.”

It has been over two years since the resurgence of the Taliban administration in Afghanistan, during which United Nations organizations have described its restrictions on women’s lives and work as “draconian.”

From September 2021 to 2023, the Taliban administration issued over 50 decrees restricting women’s personal and social lives, targeting various aspects of women’s freedom for education and work and eroding them.

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## Japan pledges \$10m to support Afghan women

KABUL (TOLOnews): Japan’s outgoing ambassador to Kabul, Takashi Okada, said that providing governance according to the wishes of people will be key for a bright future in Afghanistan.

The Japanese ambassador, who participated in the ceremony announcing Japan’s assistance of \$10 million with the UNDP to support Afghan women in private sector, expressed his country’s support for the people of Afghanistan.

“Today the civil war is over which lasted for forty years, there is an opportunity for the people of

Afghanistan to build a sustainable peace and prosperity. If the current leaders of this country provides a better governance in accordance with the wishes of people and if they choose the path of cooperation with the international community the future can be bright,” said Takashi Okada, The Japanese Ambassador in Kabul.

The Japanese ambassador further added that the change in the government, economic collapse and natural disasters are the root causes of current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Takashi Okada insisted

that the exclusion of women from Afghanistan’s economy has adversely affected the sector.

“Exclusion of women from the economy of Afghanistan is estimated to amount to a loss of 4 to 7 percent of its GDP,” said Takashi Okada, the Japanese Ambassador in Kabul.

Japan is providing UNDP with \$10 million to support Afghan women’s activities in Afghanistan’s private sector. Stephen Rodrigues, UNDP’s representative for Afghanistan, said that the program Strengthening Women’s Economic Activity in the



Private Sector- will support 1400 women in seven provinces of Afghanistan.

“The project as you have heard will support 1,400 women as well as 140 women-led small businesses in seven provinces of Afghanistan,” said Stephen Rodrigues, UNDP’s representative for Afghanistan.

The project is planned to start in October this year and continue till September 2025 in Afghanistan’s Kunar, Logar, Kandahar, Zabul, Baghlan, Kunduz and Kapisa provinces, and is aimed at supporting women in the private sector.

## Academy of Science of Afghanistan holds seminar on development



KABUL (TOLOnews): The Academy of Science of Afghanistan (ASA) held a seminar in Kabul titled, Afghanistan’s Development

Path.

Afghan researchers who participated discussed the establishment of a constitution, an inclusive govern-

ment, building hydroelectric dams, concentration on women’s rights to work and education and balanced politics as the key to development in Afghanistan.

ment in Afghanistan.

“Providing basic rights for Afghans in the framework of the constitution will lead to political stability in the country, in the meantime, providing women and girls with the right to education in accordance with Islamic law will strengthen the potential of internal legitimacy,” said Muhammad Khalid Ishaqzai, Investigator.

“Afghanistan with its best land, water sources inexpensive workforce, can provide better opportunities for economic development through the agricultural sector. This can lead to self-sufficiency in the future,” said Hashim Hedayat, a researcher.

“Considering the experiences of other countries, education plays a key role in the development of the country,” said Muhammad

Yasin Farahmand, a researcher.

Meanwhile, the president of ASA says that unity among Afghan people is crucial for the development of Afghanistan and he insisted that Afghans should not allow others to cause disunity among them.

“Now, Muslims are leading the country, Muslims are responsible for everything in this country, be it belief or thoughts. Anything that harms unity among people should be fought against because the secret behind success is unity,” said Fariduddin Mahmood, the president of the Academy of Science of Afghanistan.

The deputy minister of information and culture for publications, Hayatullah Muhajir Farahi, said there is balanced development in

the country and added that the Islamic Emirate should also concentrate on rural development.

“Economic development should begin in deserts and come to cities, we have to provide better living conditions for people in deserts and villages, rural people should be assisted in the sectors of agriculture and livestock,” said Hayatullah Muhajir Farahi, the deputy minister of information and culture for publications.

Participants of the seminar presented eleven different articles on the development of Afghanistan.

Contents of the articles concentrate on ways to create the stability and development of the Islamic system, and assessing the role of agriculture and education in the country’s development.

## Drivers want halt to low quality fuel import

QALA-I-NAW (Pajhwok): Some drivers in northwestern Badghis province have complained against the low quality of fuel and asked the government to stop its import.

Abdul Matin, one of the drivers of Qala-i-Naw-Balamurghab road, told Pajhwok Afghan News the quality of fuel was low in the province.

He said the price of one liter of diesel was 68 afs but still its quality was very low and this harmed their vehicles. He lamented that most of his income go back on the repair work on the vehicle.

“We buy one litre of feul on 67 afs but it is below the standard which damaged our vehicles,” he added.

Habibullah, another driver of Qala-i-Naw-Qadis Raod, said most of petrol and diesel sellers sold low quality of petrol and diesel in the province.

He hoped that relevant authorities would take steps in this regard and stop the import of low quality of fuel.

Jalaluddin Haqqani, deputy head of the provincial Commerce and Industry Department, told Pajhwok Afghan News they often visited petrol and diesel sellers in Badghis.

He said: “We often told fuel importers to avoid the import of fuel, in the future we will also monitor the situation, but we don’t have standard labs to check the quality of fuel.”

It is worth mentioning that in the past also drivers complained against the low quality of fuel.





ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ambassador-designate to Iraq Muhammad Zeeshan Ahmad called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Legal protection to misusers of copter

# PHC orders submission of reply

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprised of Justice Abdul Shakoor and Justice Syed Arshad Ali ordered submission of a reply regarding provision of legal protection to the misusers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's government helicopter through legislation while adjourning further hearing till 2nd November, on Thursday.

PHC further directed to provide of copy of government comments to the petitioner. The amendments for legal protection to misusers of helicopter was challenged by Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) Former Member Provincial Assembly Sardar Yousaf before PHC. The counsel Tariq Afridi and Sardar Nasir Aslam Khan advocates argued that Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had made legislation regarding the use of helicopter which had also protected misusers of the government's helicopter since 2008.

The writ pleaded that legislation passed regarding using of government's helicopter is contradictory with fundamental rights because unauthorized persons can't be enti-

tled to utilize the public's exchequer helicopter. The legislation made regarding usage of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's helicopter to protect Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan because he had misused it from 2013-18 unprecedentedly, the writ stated.

The counsel Tariq Afridi advocate argued PHC to declare legislation null and void as well as to direct recovery from unauthorized persons for using Pakhtunkhwa's helicopter. However, Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amir Javed informed that provincial government had submitted reply before the court while PHC ordered provision of copy to the petitioner and adjourned further hearing till 2nd November.

PHC observed that on next hearing the arguments of all parties would be heard while also adjourned hearing on Arbab Jahan Dad writ petition. Although, PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Asadullah dispose-of writ petition seeking records of cases registered against PTI's leader Senator Azam Swati and Murad Saeed after submission of reply by provincial government.

Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani and counsel Qazi Muhammad Anwar along with Mashal Yousafzai advocates appeared before PHC during hearing. Qazi Muhammad Anwar Advocate argued that police is raiding residences of PTI's leaders as well as harassing their family members after 9th May following arrest of Imran Khan by National Accountability Bureau for political victimization.

Moreover, the government has approached multiple times for provision of record that PTI's leader can contest the allegation at the court of Law but to no veil, the counsel added. However, Additional Advocate General Danyal Chamkani informed that there is no case against Senator Azam Swati in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and added that Murad Saeed is nominated in FIR at Swat for 9th May vandalism.

PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah dispose-of writ petition after submission of record while observed PTI's leaders may approach High Courts of respective province where they are nominated in cases.

## Lt. Gen Salem calls on COAS

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General (Pilot) Salem Hamad Eqail Al-Nabet, Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), COAS at GHQ, on Thursday.

During the meeting matters of mutual & professional interest and regional security situation were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its brotherly relations with Qatar and Pakistan Army also looks forward for enhanced defence and security cooperation with Qatar Armed Forces.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army continuous efforts for peace and stability in the region and pledged to keep working for better relations between the two countries.

## Putin in Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK (Agencies): Vladimir Putin arrived in Kyrgyzstan Thursday, visiting abroad for the first time since the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for him in March. President Putin is wanted by the court over the deportation of Ukrainian children. Its ruling requires members of the ICC, which does not include Kyrgyzstan, to make the arrest if he sets foot on their territory.

Russian news agencies TASS, Interfax and RIA Novosti reported early Thursday morning that Putin had arrived in Kyrgyzstan. He is due to meet his Kyrgyz counterpart Sadyr Japarov and to take part in a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States with his Belarus ally Alexander Lukashenko and other regional leaders. The long-time leader has rarely left Russia since launching the Ukraine offensive in February 2022.

This year, he has travelled only to Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine, with his last foreign trips to Belarus and Kyrgyzstan last December -- a far cry from the busy international schedule he had earlier in his rule. Now, in a sign of Russia's isolation, he is planning a visit to North Korea next, as well as China. Moscow has likened the prospect of Putin being arrested abroad to an act of war, casting the warrant as "illegal".

In practice, however, it has taken precautions: in August, Russia sent Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to a BRICS summit in ICC member South Africa, instead of Putin. While the full-scale Ukraine offensive made Putin a persona-non-grata in the Western world, the ICC ruling virtually closed the door to a large part of the globe for him. The Rome Statute, a treaty requiring members to adhere to ICC rulings, has been ratified by 123 countries.

The ruling caused a legal headache for ICC member South Africa, which hosted the BRICS summit to which Putin was invited. In a last-minute decision, Moscow sent its foreign minister instead of Putin. "Why should I create some problems for our friends during an event?" Putin said this month, commenting on his absence from Johannesburg.

# KP CM takes notice of student's killing

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan on Thursday took notice of the killing of a college student, who was shot dead by the robbers here during an attempt to snatch cell phone the other day. The Chief Minister directed the Inspector General Police to submit a report on the incident, and immediately suspend the SHO of concerned police station further directing that all out efforts be made to ensure immediate arrest of those involved in the brutal killing.

He termed the happening of such incidents in broad daylight as of serious concern, and directed the concerned authorities to take reult oriented measure for effective prevention of such

incidents. He further directed them to ensure protection of the lives and properties of citizens at all costs adding that patrolling system be improved and strengthened to prevent street crimes. The Chief Minister has expressed heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved family, and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul. He assured that the elements involved in the heinous crime would be brought to justice soon.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister also took notice of the alleged incident of misbehaviour with a local journalist by the staff members of Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar the other day, and directed his adviser for Health to get a factual report of the incident after listening to both the parties and take further action

accordingly. On the directives of the Chief Minister, Advisor on Health Dr. Riaz Anwar has ordered enquiry into the matter.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Information Minister, Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel said the killers of student of Edwards College would be arrested soon. He said the chief minister has taken notice of the incident and sought report from IGP KP.

In a statement here, he said Chief Capital City Police Officer has obtained footage of the CCTV cameras and advancement in investigation was made besides geofencing and raids by the police teams. He assured the students to take confidence on government and its institutions, adding the perpetrators would soon be arrested.

# No place for criminals in Peshawar: CCPO

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR:In a stern response to the recent tragic incident in Peshawar , where a student lost his life to mobile snatchers, the Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) of Peshawar, Syed Ashfaq Anwar expressed deep condolences and unwavering determination to maintain the peace and tranquility of the city.

CCPO Peshawar told *The Frontier Post* emphasized that Peshawar, often referred to as the "City of Flowers," will not tolerate any act that tarnishes its beauty or disturbs its peace. He condemned the incident in the strongest terms, stating that not only he, but the entire police department and the

general public, were profoundly saddened by the tragic loss of a young student from Edwardes College. He went on to express his personal anguish, equating the loss to that of his own son.

CCPO Peshawar assured the public that a decisive crackdown against the mobile snatchers has been initiated. He noted the unfortunate recurrence of arrested criminals securing bail from the courts, allowing them to reenter society. However, he affirmed that this time, the police are committed to ensuring that the perpetrators face the full force of the law and are held accountable for their actions.

Joining CCPO Peshawar in this pursuit of justice

SSP Operations Peshawar, Kashif Abbasi engaged with students from Edwardes College who were on strike, promising swift action against the culprits. He assured the students and the community that the Peshawar Police will tirelessly hunt down the offenders and present them before the public and the court of law.

The Peshawar Police, in collaboration with concerned authorities, are intensifying efforts to guarantee the safety and security of the citizens. The entire law enforcement machinery is mobilized to ensure that the sanctity of the city is preserved, and those responsible for disturbing the peace are promptly brought to justice.

## Supdt directed to submit report on Imran's security in jail

ISLAMABAD (INP): An anti-terrorism court in the federal capital sought a detailed report from the Adiala jail superintendent on the security provided to the PTI chairman who is currently imprisoned in Rawalpindi's main prison.

The orders were passed by the ATC judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain as he conducted the hearing of cases concerning the judicial complex attack and the protest outside the ECP office on Thursday. Both the PTI chairman and party leader Asad Umar are nominated in these cases.

Jan Muhammad, the defence counsel, submitted a plea, seeking issuance of production orders for the PTI chairman with an argument that his client was on bail in the aforementioned cases that meant the trial couldn't be held within the jail premises. It's a state responsibility to look into the arrangements for transporting the accused from the prison to the court, he said, adding that police were responsible for the presenting an accused before the court. The imprisoned PTI chairman would have to be presented before the ATC court for trial. The police are bound to follow the orders if court directs them to do so. However, the prosecutor, Raja Naveed, was of the opinion that the court would have to keep in mind the prevailing security matters.

# PTI submits CoD to ECP for holding free, fair polls

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A three-member committee of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) consisting of Senator Ali Zafar, Dr. Babar Awan and Barrister Gohar Khan attended the meeting held at Election Commission of Pakistan, presented a 25-point charter of demand and called upon the commission to fulfil the same in order to ensure free, fair and credible elections in the country within the timeframe of 90 days from the dissolution of the National Assembly fixed by the constitution.

The charter of demand is as under; Former Prime Minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan is currently incarcerated as a Prisoner of Conscience. Our Leaders mentioned in the list of attendees for the ECP meeting have not been allowed to attend, PTI being victimised and perse as a political entity. . ECP is delaying issuing the written order of PTI's Election Symbol case, 'Enforced Staged Encounters' of PTI Leadership staged to force them to renounce PTI, Enforced Disappeared leaders have been forcefully made to give interviews/statements and leave PTI. No level playing field for PTI, Election schedule and holding elections in 90 Days. Schedule had to be announced after meeting the President. January month announced

by ECP without a specific date is wrong. It is outside 90 days limit stipulated by the Constitution.

President has to announce the date, ECP has to give a schedule within 90 days, Matter is pending in the SCP. The SCP gave instructions to the ECP to keep it apprised of the election preparations. Delimitations. Used as a delaying tactics by the ECP.

Smart Phones be allowed in the premises of the Polling Station except where a vote is cast. Returning Officers should be properly instructed. Seals on the bags by PTI. ROs should be properly instructed. Flags in Cants and other Government premises such as WAPDA Colonies and Dam Colonies etc. should be allowed. Rigging & Pre Poll Rigging Issues, ECP should issue instructions that PTI should be allowed to conduct political meetings.

ANP was allowed to conduct a meeting in Hangu and provided 183 people for security. On the same day, PTI was denied permission to hold a political meeting on the pretext on insufficient security personnel but 283 Policemen were used to baton charge PTI activists in Hangu that very day. The Police used the shortage of Police personnel as an excuse to deny PTI holding a political meeting. Letters were written by PTI KP to the KP Govt seeking permission to hold PTI, political

jalsas. Were not given permission. (No denial or permission) – Tacit refusal and then action taken against us. PTI Flags and materials manufacturers are not allowed to produce PTI material. PEMRA should be instructed to give air time to PTI and Imran Khan. PMLN etc are allowed on TV channels and PTV distributes the feed.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to fulfill its legal and constitutional role to conduct free, fair, and transparent elections within the constitutionally stipulated time instead of working on the malicious agenda of targeting Imran Khan.

The PTI spokesperson issued a statement condemning the ECP's extraordinary eagerness and enthusiasm to speedily decide the politically motivated, fabricated, and false cases against the PTI chairman. He said that PTI will never accept any illegal decision or action against Imran Khan by the ECP. The PTI spokesperson also accused the ECP of playing the role of the main puppet in deviating from the constitution and killing democracy in the country. He reminded that the election watcher's bias against PTI and Chairman Imran Khan is evident from its unconstitutional and biased actions during the last 17 months.

# PM rules out deal in Nawaz's decision to return

(Continued from Page 1)

Pakistan considers Israel an "oppressor" and stands with the rights of Palestinians to their existence and return to their land, he said. On Pakistan's economic stability, he said the country for the first time witnessed a reversal of the value of the dollar with a consistent descent of about Rs 42-45. He said the continuation of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SFIC) would lead to sustainability.

He dismissed the impression that the army had taken over the mining sector on the SFIC platform. "The army's role is a stop-gap arrangement to run the matters and at SFIC, it is providing impetus in the facilitation process," he said. He emphasized the need for capacity-building of civil institutions as a pathway for a viable state economically. In Balochistan, he termed security, governance, scarcity of resources, and mismanagement as the main challenges.

He recalled that during the meeting of the apex committee held in Quetta, it was revealed that hundreds of ghost schools and health units existed in the province. "Such mismanagement has led to making a few billionaires but leaving the rest of the population deprived including the common Balochs, Pashtuns, and Hazaras," he said.

**PM to attend Belt & Road Forum in China on 17th:** Caretaker

Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar will visit China to participate in the 'Third Belt and Road Forum (BRF) for International Cooperation', being held in Beijing from October 17-18, the Foreign Office said.

The prime minister is undertaking the visit at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Foreign Office spokesperson said at a weekly press briefing. Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said PM Kakar would attend the opening ceremony of the BRF and address the high-level forum titled 'Connectivity in an Open Global Economy' on October 18. The prime minister during his stay in China will hold bilateral meetings with President Xi Jinping and senior Chinese leaders and other foreign dignitaries attending the Forum, she said.

The prime minister, she said, would also meet the leading Chinese entrepreneurs to expand bilateral trade and investment. He will also visit Urumqi, Xinjiang Autonomous Region of China to meet with local leaders and businesspersons, aiming to enhance trade, investment and people-to-people relations, the spokesperson said.

"The visit of the prime minister comes in the backdrop of the ongoing celebrations marking the ten years of

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative," Baloch said. "The prime minister will highlight the key achievements and the future priorities of CPEC, and reaffirm Pakistan's strong commitment to jointly promote its high-quality development," she said.

**PM for resolving issues of newspapers on priority:** Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar directed the ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the finance ministry to resolve all issues of newspapers on priority.

Talking to a delegation of Council of Pakistan Newspapers' Editors (CPNE) led by its president Irshad Arif here, the prime minister said the newspapers should play their role in promoting such an environment in which everybody should listen to the differences of opinions. He said currently an organized propaganda campaign was being launched against the state. He said during his visit to the US, an organized campaign of false news and undue criticism was launched against him. He said he accompanied a very short delegation during his visit to the US where he effectively presented the Pakistan's case of climate change.

The prime minister pointed out

that he presented the cultural aspect of climate change to the world by referring to the holy Qur'an. With respect to smuggling of foreign currency, he said strict measures were being taken to stop smuggling of dollars in the short term. The rising value of the rupee against the dollar is a testament to the success of this campaign, he said adding that the Managing Director International Monetary Fund (IMF) had also appreciated the government's measures to stop smuggling and illegal transaction of foreign currency.

The prime minister said the smuggling of petroleum products also continued to cause serious damage to the country's economy. Likewise, he said steps were being taken across the country to prevent power theft. He said Pakistan had billions of dollars of trade potential with Central Asian states, adding "I am trying my best to take such measures during the short period by which we can use out trade's capacity."

Speaking about his upcoming visit to China, PM Kakar informed that Pakistan-China strategic relations, bilateral trade, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and tourism promotion would be discussed during the visit. Similarly, he said plans to take full advantage of

the potential of tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan would also be part of the discussions.

He said the government was making the process of privatization of loss-making state-owned enterprises (SOEs) fast and transparent as privatization of loss-making public institutions would reduce the loss to the country's exchequer. With the involvement of the private sector, the prime minister said positive business competition would increase and the best facilities would be available to the public. With respect to the Afghan refugees' issue, he said "Afghans are our brothers, and no one is sending back legally residing Afghan refugees". However, he made it clear that the illegal aliens were being deported and strict action would be taken against them after October 31.

On Israel's recent aggression in Palestine, he said it was a war between oppressor Israel and oppressed Palestinians. "Pakistan stands side by side with the oppressed Palestinians until they achieve their right to self-determination and an independent Palestinian state," he added. Editors of national and regional newspapers from across the country participated in the meeting. Secretary Information, Principal Information Officer and relevant

senior officials also attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar directed the authorities concerned to accelerate the development of more shipyards in the country.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting of the policy board of shipbuilding, also called for keeping in view the environmental impacts of the shipyard building projects. The meeting reviewed the current position of the development of shipyards in the country.

In the briefing, the meeting was told that the shipyards could be developed in Surbandar, Eastbay, Kappar and Pishu Khan areas of Balochistan. The prime minister also instructed the relevant authorities to formulate a comprehensive strategy to curb illegal trawling in coastal areas.

Moreover, the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar directed the Board of Investment (BoI) to chalk out an effective strategy for joint cooperation on investment with the Pakistani community living abroad.

The prime minister issued the directive during a meeting with former ambassador to Bahrain Javed Malik, who called on him here at the PM House. Javed Malik had proposed to the prime minister to set up a platform for cooperation in investment activities with overseas Pakistanis.