

REPATRIATION OF
ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

DAYS
REMAINING

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The Frontier Post

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

3 security men injured
F.P. Report

BARA: Three soldiers' sustained injuries when a suicide bomber rammed his explosive laden vehicle on security forces check point here at Dars Jumaat, Aka Khel area of Tirah Valley on Wednesday. The security officials said that unknown suicide struck his car with the forces checkpoint injuring three soldiers including Naib Subedar Muhammad Israr, Sepoy Shafiq and Sepoy Iftkhar.

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PM for accelerated efforts to curb power theft in AJK, Sindh, Quetta

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to accelerate their efforts to curb electricity theft in Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Sindh and Quetta. The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on the anti-power theft campaign, also instructed to speed up the solarisation of agriculture tube-wells.

He also sought a comprehensive report on the resistance faced during the anti-power theft drive in Balochistan and other allied issues.

The prime minister told the participants of the meeting that it was the caretaker government's responsibility to leave behind an established system for the next democratic government concerning the steps like anti-power theft campaign.

The prime minister was briefed on the outcomes of the campaign since its launch. He was told that the process was going on successfully in collaboration with the provincial governments. It was informed that under the campaign, a total of 19,415 power thieves were arrested and 39,836 First Information Reports were registered against power theft since September. Around 189 government officials had also been suspended over their involvement in the electricity theft.

The meeting was told that the cam-

paign against the electricity theft remained the most successful in Mardan where the power theft ratio declined from 43 percent to 13 percent. The participants were told that Rs 14 billion had been recovered under the campaign till September 30. Prime Minister Kakar lauded the performance of the Energy Ministry, power distribution companies, and relevant federal and provincial authorities for the successes achieved in the campaign.

The meeting was also apprised of the outcomes of the countrywide analysis to find out the causes behind the power theft.

Caretaker federal ministers for interior, energy and information & broadcasting, provincial chief secretaries and relevant federal secretaries attended the meeting.

Recent accords with China to add new chapter to CPEC: PM: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said Pakistan was committed to the implementation of projects recently concluded with China in diverse sectors.

He said the recent agreements between the two countries would add a new chapter to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, he said China's Belt and Road Initiative was

the guarantor of the development and prosperity of the entire region.

The prime minister expressed gratitude to Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Chinese leadership for the warm welcome and arrangements during his recent visit to China.

"Pakistan will take strong steps to implement the Memorandum of Understanding and agreements signed during my recent visit to China," he said.

He said the friendship between China and Pakistan was "higher than the towering mountains and deeper than the deep seas".

He mentioned that the people of both countries were benefiting from the fruits of CPEC.

The Chinese ambassador assured the prime minister of China's full cooperation in the development and economic stability of Pakistan.

Pakistan's envoy-designate to UN in Geneva calls on PM:

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva Bilal Ahmed on Wednesday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here. In the meeting, the prime minister expressed good wishes for the envoy-designate. He also instructed Pakistan's Permanent Representative to effectively highlight Pakistan's viewpoint on the United Nations platform.



ISLAMAAD: Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong called on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Erdogan says Hamas is not terrorist organisation, cancels trip to Israel

ANKARA (Reuters): Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, in his strongest comments yet on the Gaza conflict, said on Wednesday the Palestinian militant group Hamas was not a terrorist organisation but a liberation group fighting to protect Palestinian lands.

NATO member Turkey condemned the civilian deaths caused by Hamas's Oct. 7 rampage in southern Israel, but also urged Israeli forces to act with restraint in their response. Ankara has strongly criticised Israel's bombardment of Gaza.

"Hamas is not a terrorist organisation, it is a liberation group, 'mujahideen' waging a battle to protect its lands and people," he told lawmakers from his ruling AK Party, using an Arabic word denoting those who fight for their faith.

Unlike many of its NATO allies and the European Union, Turkey does not consider Hamas a terrorist organisation and hosts members of the group on its territory. Ankara backs a two-state solution to the decades-old Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Erdogan also slammed Western powers for supporting Israel's bomb-

ing of Gaza and called for an immediate ceasefire, the unhindered entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza and for Muslim countries to work together to stop the violence.

"The perpetrators of the massacre and the destruction taking place in Gaza are those providing unlimited support for Israel," Erdogan said. "Israel's attacks on Gaza, for both itself and those supporting them, amount to murder and mental illness." Israel rejected Erdogan's description of Hamas, with Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lior Haiat calling the group "a despicable terrorist organisation".

"Even the Turkish president's attempt to defend the terrorist organisation and his inciting words will not change the horrors that the whole world has seen," Haiat wrote on social media platform X.

Erdogan's comments also drew a swift rebuke from Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini, who said they were "grave and disgusting and did not help with de-escalation". He urged Italy's foreign minister to lodge a formal protest with Ankara. Shares in Istanbul dropped 7% on

Wednesday in a slide that traders attributed to Erdogan's comments on Hamas. The fighting in Gaza comes at a time when Turkey is working to mend its ties with Israel after years of acrimony, focusing on energy as an area of cooperation.

Indicating that those normalisation efforts were now suspended, Erdogan accused Israel of taking advantage of Turkey's "good intentions," and said he had cancelled a previously planned visit to Israel.

"I shook the hand of this man named Netanyahu one time in my life," Erdogan said, referring to his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly last month. "If he (Netanyahu) had continued with good intentions, our relations might have been different, but now, unfortunately, that will not happen either because they took advantage of our good intentions," he added. Erdogan accused the West of hypocrisy for failing to respond to what he called Israel's "intentional massacre" in Gaza with the same decisiveness as it did to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

IHC issues written order regarding hearing on Nawaz Sharif's petitions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday issued written order regarding hearing on petition of PML-N's leader Nawaz Sharif for revival of his appeals in graft references.

The order was issued by the division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb.

It said that the court had sought arguments from respondents on maintainability of the petition seeking restoration of appeals.

It said that the former prime minister had surrendered before the court in line of the order dated October 19, adding that the court was serving notices to NAB on his two petitions. It said that the NAB had sought time to take instructions in this case from the authority.

Armed Forces pay glowing tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Armed Forces of Pakistan, CJC&SC & Services Chiefs pay glowing tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider, on his 75th Shahadat Anniversary today. Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed valiantly defended vital Pir Kaleva Ridge against repeated Indian attacks in 1948. His immortal action is glowing precedent for those struggling to restore the sanctity of land that he laid his life for.

Naik Saif Ali Janjua's martyrdom anniversary serves as a powerful reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices made by the Armed Forces of Pakistan to defend the motherland. Let us remember these heroes who have laid down their lives in defence of our motherland. The nation is proud of its gallant sons.

Former PTI Sindh MPA joins PPP

KARACHI (INP): PPP appears to have given another unpleasant surprise to the newly-formed alliance as former PTI MPA Muhammad Aslam Abro on Wednesday officially announced joining the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). PTI had expelled Aslam Abro over violation of party discipline in 2021. The Sindh MPA had cast his vote against the party's candidates for Senate seats from Sindh in the recent election. Aslam Abro inclusion into PPP comes days after former GDA leader Ali Gohar Khan Mehr joined the PPP.

Gaza families wear ID bracelets to avoid burial in mass graves

GAZA (Reuters): With so many bodies, Palestinians in Gaza are burying the unidentified dead in mass graves, with a number instead of a name, residents say. Now some families are using bracelets in the hope of finding their loved ones should they be killed.

The El-Daba family has tried to reduce the risk of being struck down during the heaviest-ever Israeli bombardment of Gaza. Israel launched the air strikes after Hamas militants attacked Israeli towns on Oct. 7 in a rampage that killed 1,400 people and hostages were taken.

Ali El-Daba, 40, said he had seen bodies ripped apart by the bombing and were unrecognisable.

He said he decided to divide his family to prevent them from all dying in a

single strike. He said his wife Lina, 42, kept two of their sons and two daughters in Gaza City in the north and he moved to Khan Younis in the south with three other children.

El-Daba said he was preparing for the worst. He bought blue string bracelets for his family members and tied them around both wrists. "If something happens," he said, "this way I will recognise them."

Other Palestinian families were also buying or making bracelets for their children or writing their names on their arms.

Mass burials have been authorized by local Muslim clerics. Before burial, medics keep pictures and blood samples of the dead and give them numbers.

The Israeli military has told people to leave the

north of the Gaza Strip, one of the most densely-populated places in the world, and head south because it is safer. But air strikes have hit across the Hamas-ruled enclave.

An Israeli military spokesperson said: "The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) has been encouraging residents of the northern Gaza Strip to move southward and not to stay in the vicinity of Hamas terror targets within Gaza City."

"But, ultimately, Hamas has entrenched itself among the civilian population throughout the Gaza Strip. So wherever a Hamas target arises, the IDF will strike at it in order to thwart the terrorist capabilities of the group, while taking feasible precautions to mitigate the harm to uninvolved civilians."

Imran challenges indictment proceedings in cipher case

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday challenged the special court's October 23 indictment order in cipher case in IHC.

The former prime minister through his counsel, Salman Safdar, has requested the court to declare the special court's indictment proceedings in the cipher case null and void.

In his plea, the former prime minister stated that as per the law, charges can only be framed seven days

after the distribution of the case copy. "The trial court overlooked constitutional requirement and indicted in haste," it alleged.

The petitioner further maintained that a hasty trial may adversely affect fundamental constitutional rights and the due process of law.

"Apex court did not provide directives to expedite the proceedings or to conduct the trial on a day-to-day basis," the petitioner claimed. The plaintiff urged the IHC to declare the Official Secrets Act Court's

order of October 23 as null and void. A special court indicted former Prime Minister Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi, the then foreign minister, in an official secrets acts case on Monday.

The charge is related to a classified cable sent to Islamabad by Pakistan's ambassador in Washington early last year, which Khan is accused of making public. Both the politicians pleaded not guilty and refused to accept the charge sheet.

Parvez Elahi again handed in Lahore ACE custody

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Wednesday handed over former Punjab Chief Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Parvez Elahi to Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) on transit remand.

Judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain heard a plea submitted by Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE), seeking transit remand of former Punjab chief minister. During the hearing, the ATC judge accepted the plea and handed over the PTI president to Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE). The anti-corruption officials shifted Elahi from Adiala Jail to Lahore.

Pervaiz Elahi was not produced in the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) for

the hearing.

In a statement, Elahi's Lawyer - Advocate Sardar Abdur Razzaq - said that Anti-corruption Lahore was granted transit remand without presenting Pervaiz Elahi in court.

Citing the Criminal Code, the lawyer said, an accused cannot be remanded without being produced in court. "Elahi is being illegally transferred to Lahore in another case," he claimed. It is pertinent to mention here that Elahi has been arrested and detained repeatedly since the May 9 riots. Earlier in October, it was reported that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) 'finalised' corruption reference against six including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Pervaiz Elahi and his son Moonis

Elahi. Perviaz Elahi, Moonis Elahi, Muhammad Khan Bhatti and others have been accused of taking kickbacks in the development packages announced for Gujrat worth Rs72 billion.

According to reference, Elahi as Punjab chief minister approved development projects worth Rs72 billion by violating the rules of procedures.

Moonis Elahi held meetings with the officials to fix 'kickbacks' in the development projects, the NAB sources said and added assets of Moonis Elahi recorded surge during the tenure of his father as chief minister of Punjab. Former federal minister Moonis Elahi bought 384 Kanal land with Rs72 million he received from 'corruption' in the development funds.

Ultimatum to return home country for all foreigners, not for Afghans only: Sarfraz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday clarified that the ultimatum for returning home before November 1 is for all foreigners and not just for Afghan refugees.

Briefing the Senate's Standing Committee on Interior, he said the impression was wrong that only Afghan citizens were being evacuated and after the deadline only passports and visa would be allowed to enter Pakistan.

The minister further apprised the committee that the government had talked about illegal residents, but the wrong message was sent however, its message was not only for Afghan citizens, but for all illegal residents.

He said that no country in the world allowed any nonimmigrant to settle as permanent citizen and start businesses without documentation.

The minister said, the government owned only as a guest if someone had a refugee card or a valid visa but the impression was given that this was an ethnic issue whereas the government

clearly talked about eviction of all illegal residents.

Bugti said that he was not aware of the issue of Biharis living illegally in the country, but the matter would be investigated. The minister said that the other counties in the world forcefully deport illegal immigrants in accordance with the international and national laws of immigration and citizenship. Speaking to the media person after the meeting, Bugti said that no extension had been proposed for the date of November 1 given to the people residing illegally in the country.

From November 1, it had to be ensured that anyone coming into the country would bring a passport and those living without visa would be deported with force to their country of origin, he added.

He said attempts were being made to make the issue ethnic but the government would not allow anyone living illegally in Pakistan.

He said that no diplomatic intervention was being done and there was no need for it, adding the western

countries strictly followed the laws of immigration and did not allow any one without documents to stay in their country. "If the western countries are so sensitive about their citizens, then for us Pakistanis are above all," the minister added.

Repatriation of Afghan refugees via Chaman border continues: Repatriation of Afghan refugees via Chaman-Spin Boltak border to their country continued on Wednesday.

As many as 3185 Afghan refugees, including 670 male, 593 female and 1923 children, entered into Afghanistan via Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing point. Till now 67,980 Afghan refugees have been repatriated to their country.

Voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees to their country commenced after Government of Pakistan ordered all illegal immigrants, including Afghan refugees, to leave Pakistan. Afghan refugees are citizens of Afghanistan who were forced to flee their country as a result of wars, persecution, torture and genocide.

PTI chairman NAB cases

IHC bench dissolved as Justice Babar Sattar recuses himself

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) bench was dissolved after a member of bench, Justice Babar Sattar, excused himself to hear the Al-Qadir Trust and Toosha Khana NAB cases involving the Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Justice Babar Sattar, a member of the bench set to conduct the bail plea of PTI Chairman, has recused himself from the case, however, the reason is yet to be discovered.

Earlier in the day, IHC's Chief Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Babar Sattar presided over the hearing pertaining PTI chairman's bail plea in two NAB cases, as the accountability court had dismissed the bail petitions for non-compliance in Al-Qadir Trust, and Tosha Khana cases. However, Sardar Latif Khosa, the legal representative of the PTI Chairman argued that the NAB against the imposition of restrictions on his client.

The court questioned Chairman PTI's arrest, the NAB issued a statement clarifying that he had not been arrested. Sardar Latif Khosa explained that the NAB follows a specific protocol in issuing warrants for the arrest of individuals.

Sardar Latif Khosa further clarified that arrest cannot be executed without the issuance of warrants by the NAB. The court also inquired about the delay in conducting investigations into Nawaz Sharif's case while he is under custody. The NAB prosecutor was asked to explain the legal procedures that have been followed. As for the Al-Qadir Trust and Toosha Khana cases, warrants for arrest have been issued in both cases. The NAB prosecutor confirmed that they cannot conduct an investigation in a manner that contravenes legal provisions. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had launched an investigation against Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi and others for the alleged gain of hundreds of canals of land in the name of Al Qadir University Trust, which reportedly caused a loss of 190 million pounds to the national exchequer.

As per the charges, the Khan and others accused allegedly adjusted Rs50 billion — 190 million pounds at the time — sent by Britain's National Crime Agency (NCA) to the government. Former PM Imran Khan had registered Trust for Al-Qadir University Project on Dec 26, 2019. Toshakhana reference

The Toshakhana issue became a major sticking point in national politics after the Election Commission of Pakistan disqualified the PTI chief for making "false statements and incorrect declaration".

The reference, which alleges that Imran failed to share details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana (during his time as the prime minister) was filed by lawmakers from the ruling coalition last year.

The judgement added that the former premier was found to be indulged in corrupt practices under sections 167 and 173 of the constitution. "A criminal proceeding will be initiated against him over filing a false statement."

"His disqualification under Article 63, 1(P) has been for his current parliamentary membership", the ECP said in its 36-page detailed judgment of the reference.

"The amount in his bank account was around half of the value of the state gifts. Imran Khan was bound to declare the cash and bank details in his returns but he didn't declare it," the ECP decision read.

"Imran Khan being declared disqualified and unseated from his National Assembly seat," the ECP



Two meter readers suspended

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electricity Supply Company (LESCO) has suspended two meter readers on the charges of neglecting their duties in Kot Abdul Malik Sub-Division. The LESCO spokesman told media here Wednesday that both the officials were conniving in the electricity theft while neglecting their duties. As part of its ongoing grand anti-power theft campaign under the supervision of LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider, an inspection team of the company detected two fake power meters in Tayyaba Colony, he said and added that both the meters were purchased from the market. After detecting facilitation to electricity thieves, the company suspended the relevant meter reader and initiated departmental inquiry against him. In the same colony, the inspection also found another power meter that was reversed to cheat the LESCO. The company also suspended the meter reader concerned and is taking departmental action against him.

Meanwhile, another inspection team conducted a search operation in Burj Attari area and checked 105 connections out of which four connections were found to be stealing power from the direct supply of LESCO. All four connections have been disconnected and cases have been registered against the accused while four accused have also been arrested by the area police.

More than 7 kg drugs recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): The police here on Wednesday arrested 7 drug dealers and recovered more than 7 kg drugs from their possession during a crackdown.

The police spokesman said Rata Amaral police held Zubair and recovered 1.7 kg drugs from his possession.

Similarly, Pirwadhi police nabbed Shah Fahad and recovered 1.4 kg drugs from his custody. While, Gujjar Khan police arrested Raheel and recovered 1.3 kg drugs from his possession.

Following operation, Naseerabad police recovered 1.1 kg drugs from Abid. The Civil Line Police arrested Sher Ali and recovered 505 gram of charas from his possession.

Sadiqabad police recovered 500 gram of charas from Nadeem. Race Course police recovered 500 grams of charas from Hassan.

Court Notice

In the court of Hafeez Ullah, Civil Judge-I, Topi, Samia Bibi VS. Ubaid Ullah, Court periodical number: 59/FC, Institution date: 15-06-2023, Hearing date: 04-11-2023.

Notice to: Ubaid Ullah S/o Afriday R/o Totalaiy, Teh, Dagar, Distt, Bunair. Defendant. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court on 04-11-2023 personally, through counsel or attorney to avoid ex-parte proceeding.

Governor, Pir Pagaro discuss political situation of Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori and Pir Pagara Sibghatullah Shah Rashidi on Wednesday discussed the prevailing situation of the Sindh province.

The Sindh Governor visited the residence of Pir Sahib Pagaro here, according to a statement issued by the Governor's House. Talking to Pir Pagaro, Kamran Khan Tessori said that all the stakeholders should unite on one platform for the prosperity and development of the country.

Sindh governor lauds contributions of Jamia-Tur-Rasheed: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday visited Jamia-tur-Rasheed, a renowned educational institution headed by Mufti Abdul Raheem. The governor while addressing on the occasion said that he was indebted for the love, affection and prayers of Mufti Abdul Raheem who has always been very kind.

"All my welfare projects during the last year as Governor, are due to the guidance of Mufti Abdul Raheem, who motivated me to serve the masses without any discrimination", he added.

He said that Mufti Abdul Raheem has established this unique institution, where religious and contemporary education is being imparted under one roof.

The governor said that he was very proud that the charter of Al-Ghazali University was granted by his signatures. "I am positive that Al-Ghazali University would turn out to be a remarkable place of learning like Jamia-tur-Rasheed."

He said that Pakistan currently facing economic hardship and "we must all unite on a one-point agenda of reviving our economy". The governor assured that he would extend all possible help and assistance to Jamia-tur-Rasheed and Al-Ghazali University.

Dr Saif highlights govt's revolutionary initiatives for boosting IT exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Dr Umar Saif on Wednesday highlighted the revolutionary initiatives undertaken by the ministry in the last two months to bolster exports of the IT and telecom sectors.

Addressing a press conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, he said the government would provide interest-free loans to free-lancers for establishing e-working centers.

He said each freelancer would receive financial assistance of Rs 100,000 to set up their own e-working center. The initiative was aimed at addressing the challenge of lack of suitable workplaces for freelancers so that they could work in a conducive and peaceful environment, he added.

Dr Saif asserted that each freelancer could earn upto \$30,000 annually which would significantly contribute to the national economy.

He projected that the measures could increase IT sector's exports by \$3 billion.

The minister said the government was also working for easy access to loans and investments for IT startups, with the expectation of attracting external investments of upto \$1 billion within the next six months. Referring to the skill gap within the IT workforce, Dr Saif said the

Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, but only 2,000 of them managed to secure employment.

The IT Ministry would introduce a standardized quality test in all the universities across Pakistan to ensure job opportunities for fresh graduates, he added.

"We have made significant decisions to revamp IT education in universities in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, the National Computing Accreditation Council, the Examination Testing Council, the Pakistan Software Export Board, and the Pakistan Software Houses Association." Dr. Umar Saif said while emphasizing that students who passed the test would be offered job opportunities through the Industry Placement Programme.

"We will allocate funds to support special industry courses in universities, designed to prepare students in accordance with current industry trends and needs."

The minister further explained that the National Computing Accreditation Council would consider the passing rate of students to determine a university's rating.

He stressed the importance of aligning educational institutions with industry requirements and facilitating industry-specific training.

Pakistan has great potentials in solar, wind energy: Muhammad Ali

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali on Wednesday said that Pakistan had a great potential in solar and wind energy that could reap further benefits.

Addressing an event of "40 Years of Friendship-Past, Present and Future between Republic of Korea and Pakistan" as chief guest here, he said Pakistan was going towards digital metering and transmission sector was going through major revamp to attract tremendous investments in the future. "Pakistan is offering a great opportunity in exploration front and will be looking at gas pipelines and storage facilities," he said.

He mentioned that exploration in Pakistan could be a keen interest of Korea.

He expressed his gratitude to the Embassy of Republic of Korea and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI). The minister said that the remarkable journey of diplomatic collaboration between the two countries that was formally established on November 7, 1983 had touched every facet of the society.

He highlighted the key projects in the energy sector done with the collaboration of South Korea.

Muhammad Ali said that 215 MW Asrit-Kedam Hydropower Project on the Swat River in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) expected to be commissioned in

2028, was being developed by the Korea South-East Power.

Further appreciating the collaboration in energy sector, he highlighted the establishment of Mira Power Limited, a subsidiary of Korea Energy (KOEN), to oversee the design, construction, operation and maintenance of 102MW Gulpur Hydropower plant. He said the partnership between the two countries was beyond diplomacy as in 2019 South Korea signed a framework agreement with Pakistan to provide \$500 million in Economic Development Cooperation Fund loans for infrastructure development. The minister said that around 30 Korean companies were currently operating in Pakistan and participating in human, financial and infrastructure development.

In education sector, he appreciated the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2022 between Daksung Women University in Seoul, South Korea and the University of Agriculture Faisalabad.

He said that he looked forward to the future collaboration in sustainable energy solutions, research, innovation, and human resource development.

The minister said that the 40 years of relations were only the beginning of what future hold and he looked forward to new initiatives on the horizon and a commitment to more sustainable solutions.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori presiding over the meeting of the vice chancellors of the government universities of the province at Governor House.

Dr Jamal unveils visionary initiatives for newborn eye health

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare, Dr Jamal Nasir, announced significant steps to protect the eye health of premature babies.

He was addressing a seminar on World Vision Day organized at the King Edward Medical University here on Wednesday.

He emphasized the need for creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to administer oxygen to premature infants, as excessive oxygen exposure can lead to eye diseases in the newborns.

Dr Jamal Nasir revealed that mandatory eye examinations would be conducted for newborns before they were discharged from hospitals, with orders to make this practice compulsory in the near future. To

support this initiative, Australia's Fred Hallo Foundation had offered Rs 600 million in aid to Punjab, and an MoU for collaboration would soon be signed. The partnership would ensure the provision of necessary equipment for eye examinations and surgeries at district and tehsil headquarters hospitals across the province.

Addressing additional healthcare concerns, Dr Jamal Nasir shared that Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi had directed the removal of staff shortages in primary health centers, tehsil, and district hospitals, and had called for the preparation of estimates for equipment and machinery requirements. Furthermore, the shortage of ophthalmologists in remote and under-served areas of the province

would be addressed by posting eye specialists there.

Dr Nasir also highlighted the remarkable progress in reducing the rate of blindness in Pakistan, which had decreased from 2 percent to 0.5 percent of the total population.

He acknowledged the dedication of Pakistani doctors who had played a pivotal role in serving society and improving eye care.

The seminar also featured contributions from esteemed experts, including Prof Dr Asad Aslam, Prof Dr Muhammad Moyn, and Prof Dr Haroon Hamid. Participants of the seminar joined a walk to raise awareness about the importance of eye protection, emphasizing the significance of preserving and improving vision health in Punjab.

36 power pilferers arrested, 163 FIRs registered in LESCO region

LAHORE (APP): On the 47th day of the grand anti-power theft operation, Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) arrested 36 electricity thieves by the police and detected pilferage on 250 connections in all five districts (Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara), here on Wednesday.

According to a spokesperson, He added that First Information Report (FIR) applications against 247 electricity thieves have been submitted in the respective police stations, out of which 163 FIRs have been registered while 36 accused have been arrested.

Among detected connections were one industrial, two agricultural, 12 commercial and 235 domestic categories and supply to all of them have been disconnected, he said, asserting that all the electricity pilferers have also been charged a total of 305,051 detection units worth Rs 14,408 million.

Sharing further details, the spokesman said that 10,090 units worth Rs 504,500 were charged as a detection bill to a connection in an area along Eastern Bypass Gujjarpora; detection bill amounting to Rs 1.509 million against 22,241 units to owner of Family Inn hotel pilfering electricity; Rs 300,300 detection bill against 1,740 units to another power pilferer in Ram Kot area of Raiwind city and Rs 300,000 detection bill against 5,825 units to a customer in GawalMandi area

of Anarkali Sub-Division.

The spokesman mentioned that during 47 days of anti-power theft opera-

tions, the LESCO detected pilferage on 20,911 connections and submitted 20,699 FIRs applications out of

which 19,948 FIRs have been registered against power pilferers, while 6,942 accused have been arrested.

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution

SELECTION AND RATE CONTRACTING (CONTRACT FRAME AND WORK AGREEMENT) OF DRUGS / MEDICINES, MEDICAL, DEVICES, SURGICAL, DISPOSABLES & NON-DRUG ITEMS FOR THE FY 2023-24

- In compliance with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (KPPRA) Act, 2012 and KPPRA Rules, 2014, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution Peshawar invites sealed bids from:
 - Manufacturer/s and / or Importer/s of drugs / medicines authorized by the goods' Principal Manufacturer or producer for import / supply of the said quoted goods in Pakistan, registered as such with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) for the quoted item's falling under The Drug Act 1976 & Rules framed there under; and
 - Manufacturer/s of Medical Devices in Pakistan, registered as such with the DRAP for the quoted items and regulated under the DRAP Act 2012 and the Rules Framed thereunder; and
 - Importer/s of Medical Devices, duly authorized by the goods' Principal Manufacturer or producer to import / supply the said goods in Pakistan, as registered and regulated as such for the quoted item's under the DRAP Act 2012 and Rules framed thereunder; and
 - Manufacturer/s of Non-Drug Items (NDIs) in Pakistan; and
 - Importer/s of NDIs, duly authorized by the goods' Principal Manufacturer or producer for import / supply of the said quoted goods in Pakistan.
- Manufacturer/s and / or Importer/s of various items interested to enter in this bidding competition must obtain separate application form from the office of the Director Medical, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution Peshawar on any working day on or before **04:00 PM Wednesday, 15th November 2023**. At the time of submission of the bid, the original receipt of non-refundable cash payment of Pak Rupees Five Thousand (Rs. 5000/-) per application form shall be submitted with technical bid. No Application Form shall be issued after before **04:00 PM Wednesday, 15th November 2023**.
- Bidding competition under this advertisement shall be conducted through **Single Stage—Two Envelopes Bidding Procedure** as per KPPRA Act 2012 and Rules framed there under. Under this procedure, the bidders should submit the bids in two sealed envelopes of technical and financial bids, each of which must bear on them the clearly written words **'KP ESSi Technical Bid 2023-24'** and **'KP ESSi Financial Bid 2023-24'** as well as the full and complete identification of the bidder along with its postal and email addresses and phone number/s on each of the respective envelope. Both these sealed and labeled envelopes should be placed inside another outer envelope of appropriate size which should also be sealed and should bear clearly written words **"Bid for KP ESSi 2023-24"** along with the identification and contact details of the bidder.
- The Standard Bidding Documents, other than the application form mentioned above, for this bidding/ competition may be downloaded from the www.kppra.gov.pk
- A Pre bid meeting is scheduled to be held on **Monday & Tuesday, 30th & 31st October, 2023 at 10:00 AM**, at the Committee room of **KP ESSi** Peshawar in the following groups: **Manufacturer on 30th & Importers on 31st of October, 2023**. The bidders shall thoroughly study the standard bidding documents (SBDs) before the Pre-Bid meeting and bring their query(ies) / suggestion(s) to the forum for clarification / understanding and the same shall be submitted in written on or before the Pre-Bid. In case of non-submission of hard copy on or before the meeting day, the query(ies) suggestion(s) shall not be considered / entertained on the day of meeting or afterwards.
- Bidders must submit sealed bids to the office of Director Medical KP ESSi Peshawar on or before **10:30 AM (sharp) Thursday, 16th Nov 2023**. Any bids presented / submitted / received later than this deadline or delivered to some office other than the above office, shall not be considered and shall be rejected without any further processing.
- Mandatory Bid Security / Earnest Money amounting to a flat rate of Rupees Five Hundred Thousand only (Rs.500,000/-) from each bidder in the shape of **Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) / Bank Guarantee** in the name of the Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution Peshawar is required to be submitted in original along with the Financial Bid within its sealed envelope and shall be from the account of the firm/manufacturer/importer. A separate photocopy of the Bid Security being financial instrument should also be placed inside the sealed envelope of Technical Proposal. Ordinary crossed or open Cheques shall not be acceptable as Bid's security.
- Quotation must be computer typed & printed; the Offered rate, Trade Price (TP) and Maximum Retail Price (MRP) must be written both in words & figures. All pages of the submitted bid shall be signed, numbered, and duly stamped by the authorized person of the bidding entity as mentioned in the SBDs
- The bidders are required to submit the unit prices (Offered, IT and MRP) of quoted items on the format as prescribed for financial bid in the Standard Bidding Documents.
- Quotations with cutting, erasing, and over-writing shall not be accepted to the extent of that particular quoted item.
- To facilitate the data entry during bids processing, all bidders are required to submit the quoted product list as per the prescribed proformas in the approved Standard Bidding Documents for this bidding competition, in soft form in MS Excel format (and not on a CD, other software formats such as images (JPEG and PDF) on a USB, duly labelled by a permanent marker with the name of bidder firm along with the words 'KP ESSi 2023-24'. The bidders must ensure that said USB is openable and readable. Moreover, in the same context, the bidders are also required to submit a hard copy of Tape bind booklet bid, having table of contents (Indexing with proper page number and contents mentioned in the start of bid and each page of the submitted bid shall be properly numbered, signed and stamped by the authorized person of the bidding entity).
- Bidders are required and encouraged to offer the most competitive lowest price/s of their quoted item/s.
- Bids will be opened by the Purchase Committee of ESSi at **11:00 AM (sharp) Thursday, 16th November 2023** in the Committee Room of the ESSi in the presence of bidders or their representatives (who choose to attend the bids opening process).
- Bidders offering Medical devices, Surgical Disposables, Cotton and Related Goods, & Non -Drug Items are required to submit the sample(s) of their quoted products, along with the quoted product list, both in hard and soft form, to the office of Director Medical KP ESSi in sufficient quantities (in 2 Separate Packages: one for DTL analysis and the other for end user evaluation) on or before **(Tuesday) 11:00 PM, 21st November, 2023**. Sample/s submitted after the due date shall not be accepted and the same items will be considered nonresponsive.
- The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution Peshawar reserves the right to reject any or all the bids under Rule 47 (1) of KPRA Rules, 2014.

Important Note: The technical bid must be a Tape bind booklet, having table of contents (indexing with proper page number and contents mentioned in the start of bid and each page of the submitted bid shall be properly numbered, signed and stamped by the authorized person of the bidding entity). Any bid which is submitted in box file, ring binding, wire binding, comb binding, coil binding, slide binding, velo binding, paper/card file, or unbind bid shall be rejected.

Vice Commissioner

INF(P) 2638/23

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Employees Social Security Institution Peshawar. Tel No: 091-9212913



KARACHI: Cantonment Board workers removing illegal structures in anti-encroachment drive at Kalapul area.



Governor condoles over deaths in earthquake

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Wednesday visited the Afghan Consulate here and met with Consul General, Hafiz Muhib Ullah Shakir.

A statement from the Governor's House, said the Governor expressed heartfelt sympathies over the deaths and destruction of over 50000 homes and buildings due to an earthquake in the Herat province of Afghanistan.

The Governor on his behalf and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's extended condolences to the Afghan Consul General and said we equally share the grief of Afghan people and government at this critical hour.

The Governor said Afghanistan was our brotherly neighboring country and both the people share the common moments of grief and happiness.

The Afghan Consul General thanked the Governor for visiting the consulate and said we were thankful to the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for sharing our grief and providing services and respect to the people of Afghanistan.

The Afghan Consul General also shared his suggestions about repatriation of the Afghan people from Pakistan, upon which, the Governor assured to convey the same to the

Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Later, while talking to the media, Afghan Consul General said the reason for the Governor KP visit to the Afghan Consulate was to express condolence with Afghan people over losses of lives from the earthquake.

He said repatriation of the Afghan people from Pakistan was the decision of the Pakistani government adding that dignity and self-respect of the Afghans would be ensured during the repatriation process.

He said the people of Pakistan especially from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa extended commendable hospitality to their Afghan brothers for decades as both the people have a relation

of brotherhood and shared common traditions and culture.

The Afghan Consul General said we would ensure that on repatriation, the Afghan people did not face hardships on arrival in Afghanistan.

During the visit of the Governor to the Afghan Consulate, General Secretary of JUI, Maulana Atta ul Haq Darwaish and former provincial minister, Maulana Aman ullah Haqqani were also present.

From the Afghan side Secretary Afghan Consul General, Maulvi Muhammad Raza Rehmani, Muhammad Tahir and Muhammad Saeed Hashmi were present.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali offering fateha for martyred in Herat earthquake during his meeting with Afghan Council General Hafiz Muhib Ullah Shakir.

Sufyan took charge as Director F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Director Narcotics Control Sufyan Haqqani committed for elimination of menace of drugs from society through joint effort in a team work, on Wednesday.

This he said during meetings with several officials of Excise and Taxation Department after taking charge as Director Narcotics Control at his office. He claimed that narcotics would be vanished from society as soon as possible and special teams should be deployed across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in this regard.

Director and Taxation Officer (ETO) Counter Narcotics Control, ETO Rehabilitation and Circle Officer Peshawar along with other officials congratulated Sufyan Haqqani as Director Narcotics Control.

Director ordered Excise and Taxation personnel that prioritize delivery of services and good governance otherwise stern actions would be initiated against unprofessionalism.

PHC orders provision of Shuhada package to proxy Khasadar

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Waqar Ahmad ordered provision of "Shuhada Package" along with benefits to the family of proxy Khasadar killed in bomb blast, on Wednesday.

PHC ordered concerned authorities to conclude the procedure immediately for ensuring provision of "Shuhada package" to the family of proxy Khasadar.

The counsel Amin-ur-Rehman Yousafzai advocate argued that proxy Khasadar Shahzad embraced martyrdom on 27th March 2009 in suicide blast. He added that at the time of martyrdom Shahzad was 21 years aged while on Rs3 lac was provided to his mother as compensation.

On 13th February 2023 PHC ordered the provision of "Shuhada package" along with benefits and pension to the martyr's family but to no veil, the counsel stated. He argued that a Contempt of Court plea had been submitted before honourable court for compliance of judicial orders.

PHC ordered provision of "Shuhada package" to martyr's family while all respondents appeared before court and dispose of Contempt of Court plea in this regard.

PHC acquits alleged murderer: PHC's divisional bench comprising of Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah suspended lifetime imprisonment along with fine of killer allegedly murdered his wife over domestic dispute.

According to prosecution, Barakat Ullah killed his wife in the premises of Chamkani police station on 15th October 2014. The father and brother of deceased had nominated Barakat Ullah and his brother in their complainant.

The trial court had acquitted co-accused in the case while Barakat Ullah was convicted for lifetime imprisonment and also imposed fine in this regard.

The counsel Shabbir Khan and Sheraz Ali advocates argued that prosecution had failed to produce evidences for establishment of link between Barakat Ullah and commencement of the offense as well as the complainant was not present at the crime scene.

The petitioner is vegetable vendor and was present at his shop as confirmed by witnesses at the time of commencement of the crime.

PHC's divisional bench comprising of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah acquitted alleged murderer from charges after conclusion of the arguments.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam talking to a delegation of foreign investors.

Canadian firm expresses interest to invest in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A high level delegation of Canadian Mineral Sector Investment Company "TYTAN COPPER", called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamir Abdullah, here in his office, at Civil Secretariat Peshawar and expressed with him their interest to invest in the mineral sector of the province.

The delegation was headed by chairman of the company, David Michael Thompson, while Secretary of Mines and Mineral Development KP, Hamidullah Shah, Director Exploration Muhammad Amir, and other relevant officers were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Canadian company work-

ing in the mineral sector informed the caretaker minister about its activities in various sectors of minerals and expressed its desire to invest in the mineral sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially related to copper deposits.

The delegation told the caretaker minister that the same company wants to invest in the province in mineral exploration and safe mining of Cooper precious natural resources in accordance with international standards in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and desirous to work with province in exploration and mining of this mineral.

During the meeting, the delegation indicated that the company can also invest in marble and granite in the province.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister welcomed the Canadian

investor delegation to invest in the province and said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government values foreign investment in the province and assured them that investing here would be beneficial for the economic prosperity of the province. He expressed that all possible facilities will be provided to Canada for investing in the province and the said investment company will be encouraged here.

The caretaker minister told the delegation that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade will extend them all needed assistance at the apply procedural stages as a one window facility established for the promotion of investment.

He said that the Department of Industry is also establishing industrial zones in mineral potential areas which are related to these mineral resources to provide facilities to investors at the local level in the various mineral deposit areas of the province.

On this occasion, the delegation was also briefed regarding the available various mineral investment potential locations and they were informed about the metal and other precious minerals available there.

Karkhano Market raided for illegal drugs

PESHAWAR (APP): A team from Peshawar's Drug Control unit conducted a raid at Karkhano Market on Wednesday as part of a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department initiative targeting illicit and dangerous drugs. Dr. Abbas, the Director General of Drugs and Pharmacy Services, reported that the operation resulted in the permanent closure of 23 illegal drug display counters and the confiscation of a substantial quantity of counterfeit medications.

Additionally, three individuals were apprehended during the raid and handed over to local law enforcement for further legal proceedings.

Dr. Abbas further said that 24 First Information Reports (FIRs) have been filed against individuals involved in the illicit trade of unregistered, counterfeit, and harmful drugs within Karkhano Market, Peshawar.

A dedicated ongoing campaign against illegal drugs and counterfeit medicines will be carried out daily with the aim of enhancing the quality and accessibility of medications for those in need.

Meeting discussed digitalization of public sector livestock management

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Secretary Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperative Department, Dr. Muhammad Israr, chaired a meeting in Peshawar to discuss the digitalization of Livestock in Public Sector regarding animal records, production, feeding, protection against diseases, other health and management aspects and farm assets on the analogy of Telefarming being practiced at Agriculture Extension Department.

The Director General livestock research Dr. Muhammad Ijaz Ali, Additional

Secretary Livestock Asghar Khan, Registrar Co-operative Mr. Farhan Khan and officers from livestock, fisheries and agriculture department were present in the meeting. The Secretary emphasized the need for digitalization and the conversion of current paper based documentation to real time database with quick access to all sorts of information of the Livestock farms and animals. To assist in this new initiative, the Secretary LFC specially invited resource persons of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) and the Agriculture Department having expert-

ise in the subject matter.

Dr. Asim Ijaz, Director General of BISP, presented the digital services platform system features with various suggestions for existing module improvements and further review. He assured the forum of their cooperation in digitizing the Livestock Farms in accordance with the BISP database model as and when needed.

The Additional Secretary Mr. Asghar, who is looking after the proposed digitization project, informed about the Annual Development Program (ADP) scheme different parameters and plan of work. The Technical

expert from Agriculture Extension Department briefly explained the features of the Telefarming System and assured of the support required for the project.

It was unanimously agreed to get benefit of the technical services of Tele Farming relevant experts for the digitalization of livestock in the initial phase till hiring of consultant. To ensure professional and efficient digitalization as per PC-1 guidelines, the services of a consultant will be hired. Additionally, efforts will be made to secure donor support to overcome financial obstacles.

Awareness seminar held

PESHAWAR (APP): Emergency Operations Center Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with RMI and partners on Wednesday organized a seminar on polio awareness to mark World Polio Day. The seminar was attended by Special Secretary Health for Polio Eradication Abdul Basit, VC KMU Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq, Dean RMI Dr. Bakhtiar, President PHA Dr Saima Abid senior pediatricians, Deputy Coordinator Emergency Operations Center KP, Zeeshan Khan, representatives of UNICEF, WHO, Rotary International faculty members and medical students of RMI.

Missing facilities at Gur Mandi to be provided soon, says Mayor

PESHAWAR (APP): Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali has said that all issues of the new grain market in Gur Mandi will be addressed on a priority basis.

He said missing facilities including streetlights, conversion of mosque on solar energy, electric water cooler, tuff tiles and new electricity transformer would be provided to the market. The mayor said for cleanliness of the market two employees would be hired who remain in the market on a regular basis

for ensuring complete cleanliness.

He was talking to a delegation of the traders from grain market including chairman Gurr Mandi Jalal Mohmand, president Haji Gul Khan, vice president Haji Shumaz Gul, Haji Shafiq and others. The mayor said a green belt would also be constructed in the center area of the market.

Earlier, the traders informed the mayor about problems of the grain market and demanded streetlights, electricity trans-

former, drinking water facility, tuff tiles' floors, solar panels for the mosque and employees for the cleanliness of the market.

The mayor, while accepting all the demands of the traders of the grain market, said in the next few days all the missing facilities would be provided to the market.

He asked the traders to select two people for cleanliness and the metropolitan government would hire them on a permanent basis for the cleanliness of the market.

The traders thanked the mayor and said under his guidance most of the problems of the city traders were being addressed on priority basis.



PESHAWAR: Ameer Jamat-e-Islami Peshawar Baharullah Khan Advocate addressing a press conference against increased in gas prices. — F.P. photo

SCCI vice president got married

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The marriages of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) vice president Ijaz Khan Afridi and Asad Khan Afridi celebrated on 21st

October at local hotel. Haji Nisar Khan Afridi paid thanks to guests participated in Waleema program of the marriage. Businessmen Forum Leader Ilyas Bilour, FPCCI former president Ghazanfar

Bilour, SCCI president Fawad Ishaq, senior vice president Sana Ullah Khan, Shaukat Ali Khan and Senator Nauman Wazir along with large number of guests participated in the marriage ceremony.

Former Senator Ilyas Bilour and Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) president Fawad Ishaq congratulated newly married couples and wished for good future ahead of them.

Govt urged to withdraw increase in gas prices

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) president Fuad Ishaq urged the government to withdraw the recent unprecedented increase in prices of natural gas to flourish the national economy, businesses and industries and put the country toward sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

The chamber president also called for reviewing agreements with the Independent Powers Producers (IPPs) and providing electricity to domestic, commercial and industrial consumers on subsidized rates.

He sought special incentives and schemes should be announced for the business community and investors to create further investment and employment opportunities in the

province.

Fuad Ishaq demanded the allowing trade with Afghanistan, Iran and China in Pakistani rupee and granting status of Most-Favoured Nations (MFNs) to these countries.

He made these demands while addressing a delegation of small factory owners and representatives, which was headed by Small Industrialists Association Kohat Road Peshawar Wahid Arif Awan here at the chamber's house on Wednesday.

The association senior member and former SCCI president Engr Maqsood Anwar Pervaiz, office bearers and owners and representatives of small manufacturing units were amongst the delegation.

Fuad Ishaq said the increase in electricity and gas prices are unfavorable for the country's economy,

business and industrial growth and urged the government to take back its decision and provide special relief to the business community by reducing electricity and gas rates.

The SCCI chief linked the country's progress with economic prosperity which can only be made possible by providing facilities and special incentives to the business community.

Mr Ishaq urged the government to initiate steps for provision of electricity to industries on wheeling charges while demanding the elimination of fixed power charges and electricity rates should be charged as per load consumption.

He continued to say that high electricity prices have made it hard for industrialists to run their manufacturing units and closure of industries is generating unemployment in the

province.

Commenting on the provincial constitutional rights on natural resources, the SCCI chief stressed that the constitutional right to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that had been given under article 158-A of the constitution of the country should be ensured with true letter and spirit.

Fuad Ishaq informed that SCCI would devise a concrete strategy to take up electricity and gas related issues with relevant government department/authorities at central and provincial level.

He vowed the chamber will play its effective role in protecting rights of the business community and provision of all facilities and incentives to them.

The chamber president assured that the chamber will make vigorous efforts for attaining funds through

Export Development Funds for promotion of small businesses and industries and completion of Expo Centre Peshawar Project.

He said the electricity rates should be charged to all businesses and sectors on equitable grounds.

Fuad Ishaq assured the small industrialists delegation of taking up their issues with relevant authorities in an effective manner.

Earlier, the association president Wahid Arif Awan and Engr Maqsood Anwar Pervaiz raised up issues of small manufacturers during the meeting and also congratulated the newly elected president Fuad Ishaq and senior vice president Sanaullah Khan and expressed hope that they along with rest of the cabinet members will play important role toward resolution of the business community.



In brief

Rescuer shot killed in Karak F.P. Report

KARAK: Unknown persons shot killed rescuer on his way to office in Karak district, on Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Tasin Zafar son of Karimullah was killed on the spot by unknown persons while going to duty from home. Tasin Zafar was performing medical technician duty in Rescue 1122. He was buried in front of thousands of locals. The funeral prayer was attended by people of different schools of thought. Moreover, Sakhi Jinan Advocate passed away and was laid to rest in front of thousands of tearful eyes in Yaqoobi Kala. Lawyers, journalists, dignitaries of the area, municipal representatives and PPP workers participated in large numbers.

Families deprived of cash

SHARQPUR (INP): Robbers deprived two families of hundreds of thousands rupees cash and gold jewelry worth millions of rupees in Tayyeba Colony of Sharqpur, police said on Wednesday. According to CCTV footage, 10 armed robbers break opened the doors and window panes of two houses. The robbers took the residents hostage at gunpoint and also tortured them for offering resistance. The robbers took away Rs900,000 cash, 16 tola of gold jewelry from the two houses. The police teams visited the scene of crime, collected the evidences and after registering a case into the incident have started investigations.

Two teenagers killed

SIALKOT (INP): Two teenage boys were killed when roof of an under construction building located at Aimanabad road of Sialkot suddenly came down on Wednesday. Rescue sources said that the incident took place in village Dharmkot where roof of an under construction building collapsed. Two youngsters including Abdullah 18, and Husnain 16, were killed in the incident. Six vehicles of rescue took part in the operation, pulled out the bodies and handed them over to heirs. A state of grief and sorrow prevailed upon in the area over accidental death of two teenagers.

Robbers kill man, injure brother

PAKPATTAN (INP): Armed robbers killed one person and injured his brother upon resistance during a robbery in a home in Saddar police station jurisdiction, Pakpattan. According to details, four armed robbers barged into a house, took the residents hostage at gunpoint and started looted valuables. Upon resistance from two brothers, the robbers opened straight fire killing one on the spot and leaving other critically injured. The robbers fled the scene with looted cash, jewelry and other valuables. Police getting information reached the scene of crime, collected the evidences, shifted the body and injured to hospital. A case was registered into the incident and investigations were kicked off.

AICS, BISP partnership F.P. Report

QUETTA: A field visit by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) has been completed to Baluchistan to monitor main activities in the framework of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Programme, in particular in Lasbela and Khuzdar districts.

Price control committee reduces edible items' prices

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: In the special meeting on Wednesday of the District Price Review Committee under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Abdur Rehman, in the context of the recent decrease in the prices of petroleum products, while reviewing the supply and demand of food items and prices in the market, the prices of several items have been reduced.

The decision was made. It is worth mentioning here that the Caretaker Prime Minister and Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have directed the administration to take all necessary steps to convey the fruits of improvement in the value of petroleum products and rupee to the public, which is highlighted by the Price Review Committee A special meeting was called. Assistant Commissioner Mardan Ayesha Tahir and AC Takhtbai Mahin Hasan, Assistant Food Controller, Press Club Chairman Bakht Muhammad Yousafzai along with representatives and administrative officers of Khawajaganj Bazar Union and Grocery Association participated in the meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Abdul Rehman emphasized to the participants that in this period of inflation, the fruits of reduction in the prices of petroleum products must reach the people in which everyone has to play their role. On this occasion, while reviewing the prices of food items, the price of Chana Sefid 7/8 has been reduced from Rs.320 to Rs.315 per kg.

It was decided to reduce the price of dal mash num-

ber 2 from Rs 480 per kg to Rs 470 per kg, red bean number 1 from Rs 490 per kg to Rs 420 per kg. Similarly, the price of red bean Kenya/Tajki has been reduced from Rs.475 to Rs.400 per kg and the price of gram plain peas has been reduced from Rs.160 per kg to Rs.150 per kg, while the prices of other items have been decided to remain unchanged.

Deputy Commissioner Mardan urged the traders to ensure the supply of food items to the people at fixed prices and to provide relief to the people by reducing the prices. He said that the administrative officers will continue to check the prices in the market and strictly deal with profiteers and those who create artificial inflation.

Anti-electricity theft drive continues: A joint team of FIA and WAPDA PESCO, while acting against the criminal mafia in Sheikh Maltoon subdivision, cut off the direct connection of petrol pumps and two hotels, while collecting lakhs of rupees as arrears and depositing it in the national treasury.

According to the details, on the instructions of WAPDA PESCO XEN Ikramullah Khan, Sheikh Maltoon Sub Division Chairman Salman Ali under the supervision of FIA Inspector Khaqan Ali along with DCR team members Kamran Khan and Siyar Khan and other staff raided the place Meanwhile, the WAPDA team seized the direct connection of a petrol pump and two hotels on Mardan Nowshera Road and started legal proceedings by cutting the direct connection.

Anti-polio day observed: District Health

Officer (DHO) Mardan Dr Javed Iqbal along with Shahzaib ADC (General), Dr. Imtiaz Coordinator EPI and Dr. Umer N-STOP Officer celebrated World Polio Day with its full zeal and enthusiasm.

On the auspicious occasion of World Polio Day, a grand walk was held at DHQ Hospital Mardan. DHO Mardan addressed the significance of vaccination, enlightening its vital role in public health. DHO Mardan also emphasized the critical importance of vaccination and shared compelling statistics: there has been a remarkable 99% reduction in Polio cases worldwide, with it being endemic in only two countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

DHO Mardan addressed the current challenges particularly the need to reach children who may be missed during vaccination campaigns due to their unavailability at the time of the vaccination team visits or whose parents may refuse vaccination. He delineated the collective responsibility to promote vaccination, its importance & help needed for health teams to reach to every target age child with vaccination so that safeguard the health of our kids against 12 deadly diseases including Polio.

DHO Mardan further added in his interview at the conclusion of the walk that chronic refusals of Polio pose a significant threat towards the eradication of Polio and radical steps need to be taken to overcome those challenges as a child once infected with Polio will have to carry this illness his whole life.

Tongshogor need attention of authority to attract tourists

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: Arkari valley is very famous for its scenic beauty. There is also another small valley known as Bhisti. In this valley there is a beautiful tourism spot at a height of 16000 feet above the sea level which is called Tong Shughur in local language. Even in Tongshughur, springs of pure water coming from the foothills of the mountains. This water flows in a circle like a snake, this meandering canal adds to the beauty of the area.

Tongshughur also has a green field and with green grass growing naturally everywhere, it looks like a green carpet has been laid here. There is greenery everywhere which look very handsome. The mountains are covered with snow which presents a very attractive look. Trich Mir mountain looks like a small mound from here. Here in this field, there is medicinal

plants like onion grows naturally, which also tastes like onion. Local people say that this onion-like herb was used as medicine in past.

According to the local people, Tong Shughur was also the summer pasture of the people of Bhisti valley where the local people used to bring their cattle for grazing and as it was their summer pasture, they collected milk and made cheese, butter, curd, and milk items from it. They used to make other things, which were taken here from summer and used in the houses.

In the past, wild life was also existing here in this tourist spot, which was hunting legally by foreigners in hunting trophy and local people to earn a lot of money by this way. Emeralds and other precious stones and minerals are also found in this area in the surrounding moun-

tains.

Being located at a high altitude of 16000 feet, Tongshughur overlooks the Trich Mir mountain look like mud mound from here. The sound of clear and cool water waterfalls in the nearby areas is like a natural music sound of trumpets. Local people say that this beautiful tourist spot could not become the center of attention of the authorities as well as the media. Our team was the first media team to reach this beautiful area for the first time. The local people demand that the tourism department should pay attention to this area and organize a tournament or a traditional sports event here so that this beautiful area can also attract tourists and this area can also develop by promoting tourism. In this beautiful place, local people celebrated a picnic and also put bhangra and performed fold dance here.

Six outlaws arrested

SARGODHA (INP): Police arrested six accused and recovered motorcycles, liquor and illegal weapons from their possession.

Police said team of different police stations conducted raids and arrested six accused and recovered two motorcycles, 70-liter of liquor, one pistol and a rifle. They were identified as Ijaz,

Saud, Dawood, Khalid, Usman and Akbar. Separate cases were registered against the accused.

Commissioner reviews construction of road: Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti on Wednesday reviewed under construction Sargodha-Ajnala road and inspected work.

Deputy Commissioner

Shoaib Ali was also accompanied him. Superintendent Engineer Highways Mansoor Arshad briefed that an estimated cost of 27-km Sargodha-Ajnala road was Rs 966 million and so far Rs 340 million had been spent. The commissioner said there was no compromise on quality of the road construction.



HYFERABAD: Polio Health workers participating in a polio awareness walk outside Press Club.

Army, FC establishes Women Skill Centre in Swat Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: In a remarkable effort to empower and uplift the women of Pechar Swat, Pak Army and Frontier Corps North established the Women Skill Centre.

This initiative, as part of the Women Outreach Program, has received invaluable assistance from local elders and the District Welfare Organisation. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been actively engaged to promote the center's activities, providing a source of livelihood for the women of the area. Since its inauguration, the Women Skill Centre has already registered 30 enthusiastic participants.

To facilitate their skill development, the center is equipped with sewing machines and essential classroom accessories, such as chairs and tables, all provided free of cost. Additionally, raw materials required for the skill training are also being generously supplied. The premises for the Women Skill Centre have been generously donated by the former Chairman of the Village Council in Pechar.

Renovation and refurbishment of the facility were carried out by the dedicated teams of Pak Army and Frontier Corps North. To ensure the smooth operation of the center, a local teacher and a maid have been hired. The impact of this initiative is already being felt throughout the community, with local women expressing their happiness and gratitude. They view the Women Skill Centre as a valuable gift from Pak Army and Frontier Corps North, providing them with a unique opportunity to enhance their skills and improve their livelihoods.

Two robbers killed in Quetta

QUETTA (INP): Two robbers were killed, another injured and held after exchange of fire with police in the provincial capital on Tuesday-Wednesday midnight.

The police engaged a three-member gang of robbers fleeing after committing robbery and an encounter took place near Eastern Bypass Bakra Mandi, Quetta. In cross firing, two robbers were killed and another injured and arrested.

Every 9th woman suffers from breast cancer

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Every 9th woman is suffering from breast cancer. According to the survey in 2002, 83 thousand women in Pakistan have breast cancer. Breast cancer can be treated if diagnosed by consulting a doctor. District Headquarter Hospital Timergara MS Dr. Ali Asghar Khan, Senior Surgeon Dr. Bakht Sarwar, Deputy MS Dr. Shiraz, and Lady Dr. Maryam Maqsood expressed these views.

In a message on social media to raise awareness about breast cancer among women on the occasion of World Breast Cancer Day, he said that breast cancer is a deadly disease but if it is diagnosed and treated in time. So the patients can recover from this disease.

MS Dr. Ali Asghar of District Headquarters Hospital Timergara said that mammography machine facility is available in Timergara District Headquarters Hospital for breast cancer diagnosis if women have breast cancer. If you feel lumps and pain, consult your doctor immediately. He said that sometimes due to misunderstandings and negligence, breast cancer reaches stage four and spreads throughout the body, and then the disease is incurable. There is treatment, so it is necessary for women to consult specialist doctors immediately whenever they feel a lump or pain in the breast.

Media role upheld: Deputy Commissioner

Lower Dir Muhammad Fawad Khan has said that it is not possible to deny the importance of media, journalists should play a full role for the reform of the society, the district administration will welcome the positive criticism of journalists.

While talking to the senior journalists of District Press Club Timergara in the office, they say that the positive role of the media is indispensable for the development and prosperity of the country? He said that local journalists will be given a briefing regarding the monthly performance of the district administration, mutual relations will be strengthened and joint efforts will be made for the development of the district.

Media Colony and other issues of the media colony and assured to solve it, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Fawad Khan accepted the invitation from the journalists of Timergara Press Club to visit Timargara Press Club and said that he will visit Timargara very soon.

Admin inspected petrol pumps: On the direction of Deputy Commissioner District Lower Dir and Director General of Industries and Commerce Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Assistant Director Industries/Consumer Protection Council Lower Dir Sohail Khan and Consumer Inspector visited various hotels and petrol pumps etc. and provided non-standard facilities. And by taking legal action

against many people on low gauge, a petrol pump was sold, while notices were issued to many people, confessions were recorded and the cases of serious criminals will be sent to the court of District and Sessions Judge Consumer Court.

Study circle on social media and journalistic ethics held: The Pakhtunkhwa Students' Organization on Wednesday arranged a study circle on the topic of "Social Media and Journalistic Ethics" at one of the hostels of the University of Malakand (UoM). Students from various disciplines participated in the study circle. The guest speaker was Izaz Ahmed while the event was chaired by Abasin Khan.

Izaz Ahmed, highlighting the journalistic history and its values, said that there was a fundamental difference between social media and mass media. He said that the truth was being distorted and that was a risk for the press freedom. He asked youths to use social media with utmost care of some journalistic ethics because fake news was a big threat to journalism at this time.

"We have to deal with it by understanding journalistic ethics", he said, adding that journalists always checked and counter checked their sources for getting information. He also informed the participants about the disadvantages of social media and asked them to be careful in using the social media platforms.

Traders hold protests

F.P. Report

looted lakhs of rupees from Lal.

Similarly, unknown persons armed and harassed other businessman Umair Ahmed Sheikh and escaped after snatching lakhs of rupees in cash due to the growing unrest in the city. Such a situation has arisen and unselfish. In this regard, Shahdadkot SHO Akhtar Abaro while talking to the media said that these incidents of looting are before my posting in Shahdadkot, still it is our first duty to establish law and order situation in the city. After arresting the suspects involved in looting from the traders, efforts will be made to provide justice to the victims.

Protest held against Israeli aggression on Palestinians: A protest was held against the Israeli aggression on the Palestinians in Qamber. A protest was held

against which Irshad Korejo, Ali Bakhsh, Muhammad Hashim Korejo and others protested and said that Israel's shelling on the oppressed Palestinian people is condemnable and the atrocities of the Israeli army.

Thousands of Palestinians have been martyred, while hundreds of Palestinian patients have been martyred, most of them children and women, due to the Israeli attack on the hospital in Gaza, which has been strongly protested by Muslim and non-Muslim countries. And condemned while Israel's phosphorous attacks are more dangerous than nuclear, he added that the land of Palestine belongs to the Palestinians, they have the right to self-determination, but Israel's attacks on Palestinians and the attacks carried out to vacate regional residential houses.

Kashmir Black Day: The ongoing struggle for peace and justice

M. Azlan Khan

ON the 27th of October each year, Pakistan observes "Kashmir Black Day," to commemorate the day when India first illegally occupied the Kashmir, initiating the strife that has been hanging fire for more than seven decades. This annual observance serves as a poignant reminder of the protracted dispute over Kashmir, a region whose complex history has been marred by conflict and the suffering of its people, a region that has been at the heart of a decades-long dispute between India and Pakistan. Beyond the geopolitical complexities, at its core, the Kashmir issue is about the rights and aspirations of the people who have endured immense hardships for decades.

The Kashmir conflict started back in 1947 when the state of Jammu and Kashmir, led by Maharaj Hari Singh, was faced with a difficult choice to accede to either India or Pakistan. Despite a predominantly Muslim population, the Maharaja chose to accede to India, which led to tensions and ultimately the first Indo-Pak war in 1947-48. The United Nations intervened, and a ceasefire was declared, leading to the establishment of Line of Control (LOC).

Kashmir has been in political turmoil for decades, with a huge portion of the people demanding either autonomy or unification with Pakistan. The Kashmiri people have suffered a lot during this conflict. Human Rights violations, communication blackouts, curfews, and mobility restrictions have all been a part of this. One recent example of

such a curfew was the lockdown on Jammu and Kashmir from 2019 to 2021 after India unilaterally revoked Article 370 which gave Kashmir its special status. This curfew was implemented throughout the Indian-occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir with the intention of averting unrest, violence, and protests.

The Kashmir issue has not only the potential to destabilize relations between Pakistan and India, but if it remains unresolved, this conflict threatens South-Asian regional peace in the long term, affecting the larger geopolitical landscape. It is a complicated issue that needs diplomatic attention and international cooperation. The world community has repeatedly urged Pakistan and India to reach a peaceful settlement via conversation and diplomacy. The United Nations, in particular, has approved resolutions calling

for a plebiscite on Kashmir's future status under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 47, adopted on April 21st 1948. This was the first of many similar resolutions which followed over the course of time.

Pakistan has continuously backed the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination. Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar raised the issue on multiple occasions. In his address to the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Prime Minister Kakar reiterated Pakistan's unshakable stance on Kashmir. He emphasized that India is entirely to be blamed for human rights violations in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. In this quest Pakistan is dynamically analyzing all possible channels which leads to the peaceful resolution of this conflict.

Kashmir is more than just a piece of territory; it is home to millions of people who have yearned for peace, security, and the ability to shape their own fate for decades. Their voices, often unheard are an important part of the Kashmir story. People have been forced to bear the consequences of decisions made by forces beyond their control. Kashmir Black Day is not just a symbolic observance; it is a cry for recognition and compassion. It serves to express solidarity with the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir, acknowledging their suffering and their aspirations. At its core, it is a call for justice, peace, and the right to self-determination, principles enshrined in several United Nations resolutions.

In conclusion, a long-term solution to the Kashmir dispute is critical for the region's peace and stability. It is critical not just

for the individuals directly affected, but also for the whole region and the worldwide community.

Diplomacy, dialogue, and commitment must take precedence over conflict in order to chart a course ahead. The interests and ambitions of the Kashmiri people should be central to any resolution. Their voices must be heard, their rights must be upheld, and their safety must be guaranteed. The only way to achieve long-term peace is to pass a resolution that genuinely reflect their will. As the world watches, and the international community plays a vital role in fostering dialogue and understanding, the hope remains that a compassionate, equitable, and lasting resolution can be found, one that respects the rights and aspirations of the people who have endured so much in Kashmir.



Gaza kidney patients face dialysis crisis at packed hospitals

GAZA STRIP (Agencies): Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, the only hospital still functioning in the central Gaza Strip, reached full capacity days ago. Injured people lie on the hospital floors, medical tents and mattresses holding patients occupy the space outside the building, while dead bodies continue to arrive at the facility.

Thousands of displaced Palestinians have taken refuge here, squeezing themselves in corridors and waiting rooms. Meanwhile, many patients with chronic diseases who were being treated at hospitals in the north of the besieged enclave are now at Al Aqsa Martyrs, having fled their homes after evacuation orders from the Israeli military. For kidney patients, dialysis treatment is a matter of life and death.

Before the latest Israeli offensive began on October 7, the hospital had 143 patients requiring dialysis. Now, the number of patients has more than doubled to about 300, including 11 children who all have just 24 dialysis machines between them. Iyad Issa Abu Zaher, the hospital's director general, said the facility is overwhelmed. "We have resorted to rationing of all resources and medical supplies," he told Al Jazeera. "A kidney dialysis patient now undergoes treatment once or twice a week for an hour or two, but before they used to come in three times a week."

Even before the war, Gaza's health ministry had warned that the lives of 1,100 kidney failure patients, including 38 children, were at risk due to a lack of fuel and an acute shortage of the necessary medical supplies needed for dialysis. Last month, Alaa Helles, the director of the Hospital Pharmacy Department at Gaza's Ministry of Health, said the territory's hospitals provided 13,000 dialysis sessions every month. This requires more than 13,000 filters, 13,000

blood collection tubes and 26,000 blood cannulas per month, but since Israel and Egypt control the territory's border crossings, even before the war patients were often left to wonder whether there would be enough supplies to treat them. The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli blockade for 16 years with the movement of goods severely curtailed by Israel and Egypt. The blockade has only tightened since October 7, following an attack by the armed wing of the Palestinian group Hamas in southern Israel. So far, only several dozen aid trucks have been allowed in - a "drop in the ocean" in terms of the aid needed. Before the war, some 450 trucks entered daily with supplies.

Abu Zaher said the Gaza Strip's healthcare system has reached a breaking point, echoing the health ministry's statement regarding the remaining operating hospitals. Already, 12 hospitals and 32 health centres have been forced to stop functioning, the ministry statement said. "And we fear that more will stop due to the Israeli targeting and the lack of fuel," it added. But keeping the doors of the remaining hospitals in the Gaza Strip open does not in itself mean these facilities are able to treat the wounded who flock to them, the statement said, saying that many medicines and medical supplies have already run out in hospitals.

Abu Zaher said that without fuel, patients in operating rooms, intensive care units, babies being kept alive in incubators and others who rely on lifesaving machines are all at risk. "Patients are stacked outside operating rooms as we don't have enough beds," he said. Meanwhile, others recovering after operations have been moved to the outdoor tents - "a field hospital of sorts," he explained. But Abu Zaher also stressed that recovery for patients who have been treated is

not guaranteed given that the overcrowded environment and lack of medical supplies can lead to serious infections.

"The outbreak of disease is inevitable," he said. "There will be a humanitarian disaster after the war ends." Manar Shreir from the Zeitoun neighbourhood in Gaza City used to go to the Al-Quds Hospital for kidney dialysis. She and her family fled the intense Israeli bombardment of the city and made their way to Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, where her sister lives, after the Israeli military ordered 1.1 million Palestinians from the north to evacuate to the south. The Al-Quds Hospital also received warnings from the Israeli military to evacuate, indicating that it could be targeted, the Palestinian Red Crescent has said. The hospital's director responded to the Israeli military saying a large-scale evacuation would be possible only if Israel provided buses to transport the 12,000 people taking shelter at Al-Quds - including patients - to the southern Gaza Strip and ensured a safe space for them there. The Israeli official reportedly hung up. But even those like Shreir, who have managed to make it to the south, face a struggle to get treatment.

"My sister's house [in Deir el-Balah] is close to Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, but I still have to queue for hours since the early morning, just waiting [for] my turn," said Shreir as she sits up in a hospital bed with a red blanket around her legs. Shreir has been on dialysis since 2015, going to the hospital three times a week for four-hour sessions. Now, she is lucky if she can get dialysis twice a week, for up to two and a half hours per session. "It's a huge difference," she said. "The session is barely enough to get the toxins and accumulated fluids out of my blood. I have to watch what I



eat and drink, and I barely let water pass my lips because I don't want to have shortness of breath or swelling." After her last treatment, Shreir was on her way back to her sister's house when Israeli air attacks hit the street parallel to the one she was on.

"It's terrifying," she said. "Even when you are in the hospital you're scared. Windows have shattered before, the destruction is all around you, not to mention the horrific sound of the bombs. Inside, it's not any better, with bodies of people killed piled up, blood on the floor, people missing limbs. "We are exhausted from this reality. Enough criminality, enough war." Hajj Salah al-Din Ahmed Suleiman Abu Iyadeh, 61, a displaced

patient from Gaza City receiving dialysis at Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, said that without regular treatment, patients will suffer from severe fatigue and swelling.

"Dialysis that is two and a half hours once or twice a week is not enough," he said. "These are toxins in the body which can't be allowed to stay. Right now, we are making do, but if this war continues, there will be serious problems due to the capacity and immense pressure the hospital is under." According to the health ministry, Israeli air attacks have killed 5,791 Palestinians in 18 days, including 2,360 children and 1,292 women. More than 16,000 others have been wounded. About 1,500 people are trapped under

rubble, including 830 children, according to the health ministry.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital alone has received 2,850 injured people and the bodies of almost 1,000 Palestinians, Abu Zaher said. "Most of the casualties are men, women and children who were killed inside their own homes after an Israeli air raid targeted their building," he said. Staff at the hospital work under constant, tremendous pressure due to the overwhelming health situation as well as their personal circumstances. "Some of our staff have received news that their families were targeted or killed in Israeli air attacks," he said. "No hospital in the world operates like this."

Hungary in spotlight after Turkey presses on with Sweden's bid

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP): The Hungarian parliament refused a proposal to hold a vote on Sweden's bid to join NATO, further delaying the Nordic country's inclusion in the military alliance. Hungary is the main hurdle to Sweden's admission into NATO after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan submitted a protocol to Turkey's parliament to approve its admission. All 31 allies must endorse the accession.

The governing Fidesz party - led by populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán who is widely considered one of Russian President Vladimir Putin's only allies in the EU - which holds an absolute majority in the Hungarian parliament, has stalled Sweden's bid since July 2022, alleging that Swedish politicians have told "blatant lies" about the condition of Hungary's democracy. Fidesz lawmakers blocked the proposal to schedule a vote, according to Agnes Vadai, a lawmaker with Hungary's opposition

Democratic Coalition party and a former secretary of state in the Ministry of Defense. The next possible time to vote on the ratification will be during the parliamentary session beginning Nov. 6, she said.

Hungarian officials have said repeatedly that their country will not be the last member to endorse Sweden's bid, but Ankara's move toward ratification suggests that the time for further holdups may be running out. The delays have frustrated other NATO allies, who were swift in accepting Sweden and Finland into the alliance after the neighboring countries dropped their longstanding military neutrality after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Hungary has always seemed to follow Turkey's lead when it came to NATO expansion. After multiple delays in ratifying Finland's NATO bid, Hungary's parliament swiftly passed the measure in March, immediately after Erdogan indicated his government would move forward on the ratifi-

cation. However, speaking from New York before a meeting of the U.N. Security Council, Hungary's Foreign Minister, Peter Szijjarto, said the ratification process by Turkey's parliament "does not change anything," and that Hungarian lawmakers "will make a sovereign decision on this issue."

Last month, Orbán said that Hungary was in "no rush" to ratify Sweden's accession, and a senior Fidesz lawmaker said he saw "little chance" that parliament would vote on the matter this year. The press office of the Fidesz party did not respond to a request for comment by The Associated Press. Erdogan has delayed ratification of Sweden's membership over accusations that Stockholm of being too soft on Kurdish militants and other groups his country considers to be security threats. But Hungary, on the other hand, has expressed no such concrete concerns.

While Erdogan's decision to submit ratification protocols to Turkey's parlia-

ment brought Sweden closer than ever to joining NATO, it was still unknown when an actual vote would go to the floor. Some opposition politicians in Hungary - who have argued for immediate approval of Sweden's bid - believe that Orbán's party is following Ankara's timetable. Vadai, the opposition lawmaker, said that the Hungarian ruling party is likely to act as soon as it seems clear a vote is imminent in the Turkish parliament. In July, Szijjarto, in a news conference, said he had been in "close and constant communication" with his Turkish counterpart on the question of Sweden's membership.

"If there is movement (in Turkey's position), then of course we will keep our promise that Hungary will not delay any country in its accession," Szijjarto said at the time. Vadai said that made it clear both countries are in constant dialogue. "What I'd guess is that the two countries will ratify it, if not at the same time, then very close to each other," she said.

Mexico deploys 300 troopers to area where 13 cops killed

MEXICO CITY (AP): The Mexican government sent 300 National Guard troopers to bolster the southern state of Guerrero, where a local police chief and 12 officers were shot dead in a brutal ambush the day before. It was just one of three attacks in an increasingly violent region of the country.

Announcing the reinforcements in his morning news conference, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador mourned the victims and called the attack "practically an ambush." Guerrero's attorney general launched an investigation after the 13 bodies were found on a highway in El Papayo, which is in the Guerrero township of Coyuca de Benítez on the Pacific coast. Two more people were injured in the attack. Some bodies were found handcuffed, face down on the ground, according to local reports, which could suggest the attackers ambushed and captured the police officers before killing them.

Authorities did not provide any more details about the attack or those responsible. At least six more people were killed in two other attacks in Mexico's southwest, a region where escalating gang conflicts are pushing a surge of violence. Earlier this year, two police officers and three civilians were killed in an attack attributed to the Familia Michoacana cartel. Then in August, a leader of the rival Arreola gang was assassinated. Since then people in the region have complained increasingly about little official security against gangs. According to figures from Common Cause, 341 police officers have been killed in Mexico so far this year. In 2022, at least 403 were slain.

Weah and Joseph face run-off vote

FREE TOWN (BBC): A run-off election will be held next month in Liberia following a photo finish between President George Weah and his main rival Joseph Boakai. Mr Weah got 43.83% of the vote and Mr Boakai, a former vice-president, received 43.44%. The 10 October poll was the tightest presidential contest in Liberia since a civil war ended about two decades ago. A run-off was predicted, but Mr Boakai, 78, has done better than expected by coming close to Mr Weah's tally.

A second round was triggered as neither candidate received more than 50% of the vote in the first round. The run-off is due to take place on 14 November, the head of the electoral commission Davidetta Browne said after announcing the final results.

‘Trump inflated asset values arbitrarily’

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Donald Trump "arbitrarily" inflated the value of his real estate assets in order to secure favourable insurance premiums, Trump's former lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen has testified at the former president's civil fraud trial. Cohen, who cut ties with the former US president five years ago, is now a key witness in a case brought by Democratic New York Attorney General Letitia James alleging Trump inflated the value of his family companies' properties. The lawsuit could break up Trump's business empire.

Cohen testified that Trump tasked him with increasing the value of his company's assets "based upon a number that he arbitrarily elected". The value of the company's holdings was "whatever number Mr Trump told us", Cohen said. He said he and one-time Trump Organization chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg would mark up line items by hand using red ink in Trump's financial statements after he told them the numbers were too low.

"He would say, 'I'm actually not worth \$4.5bn, I'm really worth more like six [billion],'" Cohen said. Cohen said that the resulting financial statements would show the assets "had extremely high values with low liabilities in order to secure better insurance premiums". During a lunch break, Trump told reporters Cohen was a "liar". "We're

not worried at all about his testimony," said Trump, the frontrunner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.

Colleen Faherty, a lawyer for the attorney general's office, began her questioning of Cohen by reviewing his criminal history in an apparent effort to head off expected attacks by Trump's lawyers on Cohen's credibility. Cohen in 2018 pleaded guilty to a campaign finance violation and falsely telling Congress that negotiations over a proposed Trump Tower in Moscow ended by January 2016, when in fact the efforts continued until June 2016 - after Trump had clinched the Republican nomination. "I did that at the direction of, in concert with and for the benefit of Donald Trump," Cohen said on the stand, referring to his false testimony about the Russia real estate project, which never materialised. Prosecutors never accused Trump of criminal wrongdoing stemming from his business dealings with Russia. Trump leaned back in his chair with his arms folded and intently watched Cohen on the stand, occasionally whispering to his lawyers.

Cohen, who once said he would "take a bullet" for Trump, began a three-year prison sentence in 2019 but was released to home confinement the following year during the coronavirus pandemic. Cohen's testimony during a 2019 congressional probe of Trump's finances was the impetus

for James's lawsuit. Trump has denied wrongdoing and defended the valuations of his properties, saying the case is a "fraud" and a political witch-hunt.

He has occasionally appeared in court over the past month, complaining in inflammatory remarks to reporters that it is a distraction from his campaign. He arrived following a campaign stop in New Hampshire and just days after being fined \$5,000 by Justice Arthur Engoron, the judge overseeing the case, for violating a gag order. In September before the trial began, Engoron found that Trump fraudulently inflated his net worth and ordered the dissolution of companies that control crown jewels of his real estate portfolio, including Trump Tower in Manhattan. That ruling is on hold while Trump appeals. The trial largely concerns damages. James is seeking at least \$250m in fines, a permanent ban against Trump and his sons Donald Jr and Eric from running businesses in New York and a five-year commercial real estate ban against Trump and the Trump Organization. James's civil suit is one of many legal woes Trump faces as he campaigns for the presidency. He has pleaded not guilty to four criminal indictments, including federal cases tied to efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election and the removal of government documents from the White House.

Why does China claim almost the entire South China Sea?

BEIJING (Agencies): The dispute over the South China Sea has been thrust back into the spotlight amid increasing tension between the Philippines and China in the disputed waters. There were two near collisions close to Second Thomas Shoal, which lies within Manila's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), in the most serious incident this year.

Beijing claims Second Thomas Shoal and almost the entire sea on the basis of its so-called "nine-dash line", which it again featured in a new version of its national map earlier this year. The map caused upset among Southeast Asian countries, including Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, which also claim the waters nearest to their coasts. An international tribunal ruled as far back as 2016 that the map provided no legal basis for China's claim, but Beijing has ignored that decision and continues to insist on the line's legitimacy. According to the Sydney-based Lowy Institute, world powers like China use representational mediums like national maps

to "justify their exceptionalism". The map allows Beijing to convey its "maritime territorialisation", the think tank said. Here's all you need to know about the infamous nine-dash line and the long-running maritime dispute. As far as China is concerned, its claim to the South China Sea can be traced back centuries and is embodied in the nine-dash line.

Voyages through the South China Sea can be dated back to the second century, during the Han Dynasty, when emperors sent out explorers and government officials to investigate other parts of Asia. By the Song dynasty, China maintained that it was naming and claiming territory in the island chains it calls Nansha (the Spratly Islands) and Xisha (the Paracel Islands). Trade also took Chinese explorers further into maritime Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Borneo and the Malay peninsula, mostly famously under Admiral Zheng He during the Ming Dynasty. Beijing insists that its historical records show the then-

powerful Chinese dynasties enjoyed near total control over the waters for centuries. However, the arrival of Western explorers and the rise of the Vietnamese Nguyen dynasty in the 19th century challenged China's claims over maritime Southeast Asia. Tempted first by the lucrative spice trade, the Europeans began establishing themselves in Southeast Asia from the 16th century. After the Portuguese established a colony in Malacca on the Malayan peninsula, the British, Dutch and French also began to expand into the region, setting up colonies that lasted until World War II and, in some cases, beyond. Many cities in China were also controlled by Japan, a then-militarised country that also took control of the Korean peninsula in the early 20th century.

By 1942, the Japanese had pushed out the Europeans and expanded their rule into mainland and maritime Southeast Asia, occupying many countries surrounding the South China Sea.

4 suspected NKorean defectors found in a small boat in SK waters

SEOUL (AP): Four North Koreans were found in a small wooden boat in South Korean waters in what is likely a rare case of North Koreans taking a risky sea voyage to flee to the South, Seoul officials said. More than 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea to avoid poverty and political oppression since the late 1990s. A vast majority of them have come via China and then Southeast Asian countries, and defecting by sea is uncommon because it's more dangerous.

A South Korean coast guard ship found the boat south of the two Koreas' eastern sea border, after a report by a fishing boat. The four people on board identified themselves as North Koreans, coast guard officials said. South Korea's military said it secured the custody of the North Koreans in coordination with the coast guard, after chasing their boat along the sea border. A military statement said the North Koreans were suspected of defecting to South Korea, but gave no further details.

South Korean public broadcaster KBS, citing an unidentified government official, reported that the four North Koreans - a man and three women - are members of one family. KBS said they weren't armed and didn't wear military uniforms when they were found.

South Korea's Unification Ministry declined to provide personal details of the four, saying an investigation was underway. Defecting by sea is much more dangerous and many North Korean escapees were believed to have ended up dying after their boats sank amid bad weather. But some still opt to use a sea route because they can defect in a group and it takes much shorter time than the China-Southeast Asian route, which typically takes weeks or months before coming to South Korea, according to Ahn Kyung-su, head of DPRKHEALTH.ORG, a website focusing on health issues in North Korea. Ahn, who has interviewed many defectors, said that North

Koreans typically slip across their country's border with China alone or in pairs without sharing their escape plans with anyone, including their family members, because of fears about arrests. Ahn said the four North Koreans found are likely from one family, who left a coastal town relatively close to the South Korea sea border the previous day. If they are determined to be genuine defectors, it would be the second case of North Koreans fleeing to the South by sea this year. In May, nine defected by sea off the Korean Peninsula's west coast, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry. North Korean defectors are required to undergo questioning by South Korean authorities to determine whether their desire to resettle is genuine.

In 2019, South Korea deported two North Korean fishermen who said they wished to resettle, after determining they were criminals who had killed 16 fellow crew members. Earlier, several North Koreans were arrested after

South Korean investigations concluded they were spies who had entered the country posing as defectors. The 2019 deportation drew withering criticism by human rights groups, which argued that South Korea's liberal government at the time had hurriedly expelled the fishermen in the hopes of improving ties with North Korea, after learning North Korean authorities were pursuing them.

North Korea's state media didn't immediately report on the four North Koreans. Some past defections triggered tensions between the two Koreas. South Korea accepts those who choose to resettle in the South, but North Korea often says its people are held against their will in the South and demand they be returned. Animosity on the Korean Peninsula remain high, with North Korea conducting a barrage of missile tests since last year. South Korea's current conservative government has expanded regular military drills with the United States in response.

Erdogan to Putin: Western ‘silence’ worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza

ANKARA (Reuters): Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in a call that Western countries' "silence" was exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Erdogan's office said. In a statement, the presidency said Erdogan told Putin the "savagery" towards Palestinian lands was deepening and

that civilians were constantly being killed.

He also repeated earlier comments that Turkey, a NATO ally, would continue working to achieve calm in the region, the statement added. Western countries have stressed Israel's right to defend itself following an Oct. 7 assault by Hamas militants on Israeli towns and

kibbutzim that killed 1,400 people, mainly civilians. Since then, thousands of people have been killed during heavy daily Israeli bombardment of Gaza, which is controlled by Hamas. The Kremlin later issued its own statement on the call, saying that Putin had told Erdogan that Russia and Turkey largely agree on the Israel-Palestinian issue.

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World Polio Day and Pakistan’s case

CARETAKER Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has expressed resolve to achieve the dream of a polio-free Pakistan by carrying forward the journey with unshakeable commitment and vowed to resist the individuals propagating against the polio vaccination and causing hurdles in achieving its goal. The Prime Minister appreciated the sacrifices of the polio workers and the security personnel who were striving hard to accomplish the mission of a polio-free Pakistan. During a ceremony to mark World Polio Day, the Premier noted that by opposing the polio vaccine, the anti-vaxxers, intentionally or unintentionally, were partnering with the forces of darkness. He emphasised the role of faith leaders and society to make such people realise that they were partnering with the destroyer of humans.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease that mainly affects children. These viral infections once had been the world's deadliest epidemic during the eighties which killed millions of innocent children and infants along with pushing countless others into permanent disability, impaired vision or organ paralysis. Pakistan launched its first-ever polio eradication program in early 1994 to help end the crippling poliovirus in the country. The global community has almost won the battle against polio, however, Pakistan and its western neighbour Afghanistan are failing to control this deadly disease in their nation despite continuous efforts, massive foreign funding and global support mainly due to the non-cooperation of the public over the past few decades.

Presently, Pakistan's failure to control this epidemic has become a stigma for the entire nation, because the South Asian nation failed to achieve its goal despite massive global support, and availability of resources only due to non-cooperation from the public in certain areas. There have been multiple conspiracy theories and self-coined religious biases linked to the anti-polio endeavours of the government which prompted opposition and refusal of parents to administer polio vaccines to their kids, while the fake polio vaccine campaign by the CIA to confirm Osama Bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad further caused doubts among the masses. Presently, the Pakistani government and its global partners are vigorously pursuing this agenda and are determined to achieve their target through concerted efforts, public awareness, and the imposition of regressive anti-polio measures across the nation.

Meanwhile, the continuous failure to achieve the goal of a polio-free Pakistan is causing great embarrassment for the government at the international level as backward African nations had achieved this target many years ago while nuclear Pakistan is still battling poliovirus in its country. The government has used multiple strategies to motivate parents to immunize their kids including the use of religious clerics, tribal notables, and awareness campaigns in the media but these efforts failed to produce the required results and the deadly viral epidemic still exists in the country and continuously perishing precious lives and causes lifelong disabilities in our infants.

The situation has become so challenging that all traditional strategies, incentives and motivations have proved to be futile over the past three decades, while continued propaganda and false rigidity of parents pose serious risks to national interests, the country's prestige and the well-being of the public, while implementation of harsh measures become unavoidable to accomplish the national cause and secure future generation from grave risks. The government of Pakistan has been considering multiple administrative and legal measures against the parents refusing polio immunization to their kids including prosecution, imprisonment, fines, blocking of bank accounts etc. if they fail to get their kids immunized for polio and eight other infectious diseases. Although such policies are rare, harsh measures have now become essential to achieve public cooperation in the larger interest of the nation. In fact, the Immunization of children is a national and parental duty and every citizen must play his role in the accomplishment of this national cause, therefore, the government must initiate concrete steps without wasting time on cosmetic strategies so the nation can achieve its long-desired destiny of polio-free Pakistan.

Global Disputes and US's Jingoism

The United States has recently renewed its warning that it will defend the Philippines against any armed attacks after the island nation accused Chinese coast guard ships of intentionally hitting its vessels in the South China Sea over the weekend. The Philippines authorities declared it a serious escalation of the illegal activities conducted by the Chinese government in the West Philippine Sea in complete disregard of the global norms, while the United States quickly took the side of its Southeast Asian ally. The US national security adviser Jack Sullivan not only held talks with his Philippine counterpart but issued a stern media warning reiterating Washington's commitment to the seven decades old bilateral treaty which binds both nations to support each other in case of foreign aggression. The Republic of Philippine and the People's Republic of China (PRC) are currently not on cordial neighbourliness, as China claims its sovereignty over entire South China sea which draws a collision with several of its neighbours including Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, Brunei, and Veit naim who also claim their possession over the parts of the South China Sea forming/adjointing their territorial waters. There had been multiple clashes between Philippines Navy and Chinese Coast Guards in the past few years, that not only refreshed their tussle but each time attracted Washington formal political support and courtesy calls by US Naval vessels in show of solidarity with Manila. Currently, an interesting situation has emerged at the global geopolitical scene, as the US and NATO are continuously feuling Russia-Ukraine war and supporting their non-NATO ally with all possible means. The Biden administration has a commitment to defend its regional allies Taiwan, Philippine and Vietnam, together with Washington's self explanatory stance regarding free and open lines of communication in the South China and East China Seas. The US also has closed defence ties and security guarantees with Japan and South Korea, while it is always ready to defend the state of Israel against unarmed Palestinians and owes a conflict with Iran for the same reason. Presently, Washington is a party in a majority of the global disputes directly or indirectly, spreading across the globe from East Asia to Europe and Oceania to the Middle East. The US government is blatantly burning hard earned tax payers money in useless war campaigns, amid serious domestic economic challenges, rising poverty and high cost of living in its nation. It would be better if US strategists steer those issues through political and diplomatic means instead of war-mongering that will not only fulfil their strategic goals but will provide sufficient funds for public welfare along with building a positive image of their nation abroad.

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Netanyahu and Biden offer terrorists all they ever dreamed of

Baria Alamuddin

EXTREMISTS of all varieties have exploited the Gaza violence to go on the offensive - from Daesh and Al-Qaeda to Hezbollah and the Quds Force, to violent racists around the world and radicalized Israeli settlers, threatening to unleash new epidemics of carnage even worse than the appalling bloodshed we've witnessed to date.

Last week's killing of two Swedish citizens in Brussels was the first Daesh attack on European soil in three years. Among the victims of assaults on Jews and Muslims in the West was a six-year-old Palestinian American boy in Chicago, who died after he and his mother were stabbed by their landlord as he yelled: "You Muslims must die!" Those who speak out conscientiously about the slaughter of civilians on both sides have faced a barrage of death threats and hate mail. Western intelligence agencies warn that far worse is to come.

Al-Qaeda jubilantly described Hamas's mass murder of Israeli pensioners, women and children on Oct. 7 as "the jewel of all Islamic battles of our modern history," implying that it was of greater significance than 9/11 in the jihadist pantheon. Contrary to Benjamin Netanyahu's insistence that "Hamas is Daesh," in fact Daesh hates Hamas, denounces them as "nationalist apostates" and commands its fighters to refrain from fighting alongside them. Daesh and Al-Qaeda have nevertheless turned the taps of their propaganda channels on full, exploiting gruesome images of the mutilated corpses of Palestinian babies to attract angry misfits to their diabolic cause. Daesh's Al-Naba newspaper demanded the targeting of Jewish people and places of worship "all over the world," and attacks on Israeli and Western embassies. Alongside images of bereaved orphans and body-strewn Gaza ruins, shadowy Telegram channels provide QR codes for Bitcoin donations to the global jihadist cause.

World leaders such as Joe Biden, Rishi Sunak and Ursula von der Leyen are themselves producing word-perfect jihadist propaganda material. They appear blissfully ignorant

that every expression of love, devotion and unconditional support for Israel, and pledges of weapons and funds, are replayed back through jihadist social media channels to remind supporters that the West has never ceased waging "crusader wars" against the Muslim world, and browbeating them about their "obligation" to embark on jihad against citizens of these "infidel nations." Such ruthless terrorist prop-

Even if Israel critically weakens Hamas, the force that has been imposing some level of dysfunction-al order throughout Gaza over the past 20 years, what manner of entities do they expect to replace it if not infinitely more radicalized factions? Nevertheless, it must be unflinchingly said that Hamas, through its own bloody actions, shares responsibility for the horrendous situation facing Gaza.

aganda capitalizes on the justified frustration and disenchantment felt throughout the Arab world that the West's longstanding biased and racist attitudes toward this issue remain unaltered. The jarring failure of some Western leaders to balance their comments with acknowledgment of the slaughter of Palestinians and contrasts with more compassionate positions adopted by figures such as Canada's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly, who spoke out passionately about the "dire humanitarian situation in Gaza" and the need for "rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access."

Iranian proxies are also exploiting Gaza tensions to escalate attacks against Western targets in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. With the US shooting down drones and cruise missiles fired from Yemen across the region, the Houthis clearly aren't acting on their own spontaneous initiative. Militant-aligned figures have alluded to threats to global energy security, perhaps in reference to Tehran's access to economic choke points such as Hormuz, through which 20 percent of the world's oil flows. Tehran-backed militias have relo-

cated to Israel-Syria-Lebanon border areas and are said to have established a transnational joint operations room overseen by Quds Force officers for coordinating with Hamas. Among senior Al-Hashd Al-Shaabi leaders sighted at the Lebanon border are Kata'ib Sayyid Al-Shuhada commander Abu Ala Al-Walai. With bitter memories of 2006, Hezbollah is clearly hesitant to throw Lebanon fully into this

bloody actions, shares responsibility for the horrendous situation facing Gaza.

Israel can endlessly dispossess, barricade and bombard the Palestinians, but it can't simply make them disappear - any more than Hamas can make Israel disappear. Over 25 years at the pinnacle of Israeli politics, Netanyahu disregarded warnings that if he blocked off all paths to Palestinian justice, peace and self-governance, Israel stood to reap the whirlwind of despair, in turn unleashing apocalyptic extremist atrocities upon the wider world. All the while, a radicalized Zionist settler movement eager to resort to terrorist violence has year-on-year devoured thousands of hectares of Palestinian land. Settler vigilantes have embarked on a vengeance campaign since the Hamas attacks, killing nearly 100 Palestinians and displacing entire villages - and Israeli generals say they are just getting started.

At the height of the second Palestinian Intifada, Arab and Western leaders prioritized the goal of a just and mutually beneficial two-state solution as a necessary prerequisite to regionwide peace and defusing decades-old geopolitical tensions. That Netanyahu and his extremist ilk vigorously thwarted these objectives does not make them any less necessary and correct. Just as violence breeds violence, justice and hope breed justice and hope. Israel's abandonment of the two-state solution made current and future rounds of bloodshed inevitable.

As participants in the Cairo peace summit on Saturday vigorously argued, the route to ending these ongoing cycles of carnage is blindingly obvious: all parties grasping the path to a peace with both hands within the framework of the rejuvenated two-state-solution. It meanwhile appears that the world must painfully relearn the lesson that Palestine isn't an inconsequential, far-off issue, but rather a gaping wound of soul-destroying injustice and inhumanity, with ramifications for fomenting boundless worldwide tensions and dragging Western capitals back into the crosshairs of terrorist groups.

Arab News

United we stand, divided we fall

Khalaf Ahmad Al-Habtoor

IN today's turbulent world, international challenges and crises are increasingly escalating in a way that does not bode well. The security and stability of the world as a whole have become threatened. We in the Arab region often find ourselves on the brink of the abyss. Our countries, which are among the wealthiest in the world and have a diverse fabric of cultures, societies and religions, are engaged in many pivotal conflicts.

The current international scene is fraught with challenges that threaten peace and stability in the Arab world and beyond. From the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the devastating crises and political and economic turmoil in Syria, Lebanon, Sudan, Iraq, Yemen and others. All these conflicts not only lead to the destruction of those countries, but also hinder economic and social progress in the region as a whole and cast a shadow of uncertainty over the region. Outside the Arab world, tension hangs over the entire globe, specifically in major Western and European countries. There are the ongoing geopolitical issues and territorial disputes in Russia and Ukraine, tensions in North Korea, the South China Sea, Afghanistan and - unfortunately - many others, which have increased global insecurity and instability.

In the face of these escalating global challenges, there is an urgent need for real cooperation, solidarity and support among Arab countries to unify our efforts and protect our security and stability. The formation of a strong alliance between Arab countries could serve as a formidable shield to protect their interests and create proactive strategies to enhance security. Moreover, this cooperation will contribute to protecting our lands and their sovereignty, our freedoms, our beliefs and our sanctities. This can only be done through collective efforts and sincere intentions toward solidarity and by uniting our individual strengths to confront any threat at the regional or global levels. As the saying goes: "When the spears come together, they refuse to break, and when they separate, they break." I constantly reflect on the meanings of these verses and I sincerely believe that this is our situation in the Arab world today. We are in dire need of unity. I am utterly confident that our union would be on par with major blocs such as the EU, for example, because of the significant capabilities we possess in terms of natural resources, geographical position and other factors. In addition, our Arab countries are united under the banner of one language, the Arabic language, and this is what brings us together.

All this makes the Arab union project a nightmare for many countries and parties that are frightened by our cooperation, solidarity and clarity with each other, because their goals are achieved

through our weakness and division. Therefore, we must be extremely wary of the countries whose interests lie in targeting Arabs, sowing discord and changing states' political and religious demographics. The first step to maintaining our security and stability begins with knowing our enemies and understanding their intentions, both hidden and explicit, to prevent them from achieving their regional agendas by sowing division and chaos among the Arabs to undermine our political stability and security. Moreover, at present, there is an urgent need to activate the real and effective role of multilateral institutions, such as the UN, its Security Council and the Arab League, to meet the critical challenges we are witnessing and to enhance cooperation between member states. These institutions play a crucial role in addressing the challenges facing the world.

For example, the Arab League's role must be fully activated through pressure on international actors and effective diplomatic engagement, rather than simply holding meetings and issuing nonbinding statements. The Arab League should take more proactive stances and fulfill the fundamental role for which it was founded, which is to enhance cooperation and stability in the region. It should follow in the footsteps of the Arab leaders who strongly supported the league and participated in strengthening its role and goals, such as King Faisal, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan and President Gamal Abdel Nasser. They supported Arab cooperation initiatives and encouraged coordination between countries to confront regional and international challenges.

The role of global institutions as a whole is activated only by selecting veteran leaders with extensive experience to lead them - leaders who can make influential decisions and deeply understand the challenges and opportunities of our contemporary world. Their role extends beyond rhetoric to adopting a practical, results- and peace-oriented approach to serve the interests of the broader local and international communities. In conclusion, I wonder what the fate of the Arab countries will be as a result of all these crises. What is our fate as Arabs when faced with all these escalating international challenges? We cannot deny that all these complex issues and ongoing conflicts form part of our reality in the region, but I always believe that there is hope and opportunity to improve the situation when striving and working together, and that we remain vigilant against those who fight us, openly or covertly, by understanding and exposing their goals. The path toward stability in the Arab world begins with solidarity, clarity and cooperation, which are key to achieving security and prosperity in the region, protecting our interests and ensuring our existence and our presence with wisdom and sustainability.

Aljazeera

Western feminism and its blind spots in ME

Maryam Aldossari

In our current era where digital platforms wield unparalleled influence, X - previously known as Twitter - is the closest thing we have to a global public square. Within this vast marketplace of ideas, a subset of Western feminists have unilaterally assumed leadership roles, fashioning themselves as the gatekeepers of who is a real "feminist" and what truly constitutes "feminism".

Since October 7, these "leading feminists" have been bombarding this all-important digital landscape with posts vociferously condemning the Hamas attack on Israel, while excusing or simply ignoring the ongoing collective punishment of more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip that followed. Some even attempt to frame Israel's indiscriminate bombardment and total siege of the tiny enclave, which already claimed the lives of over 5,000 men, women, and children, as

acceptable retaliation for Hamas's actions and lawful "self-defence". Let's be clear: What is in question here is not their condemnation of the violence Hamas inflicted on Israeli women, but their apparent indifference to, and in some cases enthusiastic endorsement of, the violence currently being wielded against Palestinian women. These so-called feminists are not only failing to show any empathy or support for the long-standing suffering of Palestinian women, but are also joining in the increasing efforts to silence those expressing any hint of sympathy for them.

Whenever someone, especially someone with a certain public profile, posts a message on X supporting Palestine and acknowledging the decades-long suffering of Palestinian people under Israeli occupation and oppression, they are faced with the same loaded questions many times over:

"Do you support Hamas?", "Do you condemn the attacks on Israeli civilians?" In response, some feel intimidated and reverse course, while others either refuse to engage or try to challenge the assumptions of these self-appointed public interrogators. But however they respond, they face the same barrage of abuse, intimidation and insults from those who "stand with Israel", including many prominent Western feminists.

Phrases and labels such as "anti-Semite", "rape apologist", "support for rape and kidnapping of women", "support for a terrorist group that governs with Sharia law", and notably, "not a true feminist" are liberally bandied about. So I want to ask all those feminists in the West who are not only making posts, signing statements and writing columns unconditionally supporting

Israel's "right to defend itself" but also working tirelessly to "cancel" anybody who dares to either put a spotlight on decades of Palestinian suffering, or call for an end to Israel's indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza, which is killing and maiming hundreds of women and girls every single day: Is this what you call feminism?

Your brand of feminism, which seemingly applies only to a certain subset of predominantly white, Western and Western-aligned women, is difficult to stomach. You rightly condemn the violence Hamas inflicted on Israeli women. Yet you are not only silent on the suffering of Palestinian women, but are trying to silence anyone else who is brave enough to speak up for them. Today, Gaza's women and children are not only under heavy bombardment, but also on a starvation diet thanks to

Israel's "total siege". Is this not a crime against women that merits attention and condemnation? How can you call yourself a feminist while excusing, even supporting, punitive, genocidal actions of a powerful state against a helpless people trapped in an open-air prison? How can you so easily brush away the harrowing experiences of hundreds of thousands of women who lack the power to change their circumstances?

Western feminism's apparent indifference to statements like that of Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, likening Palestinians to "human animals", is deeply alarming. If your feminism does not make you stand up for a people who experienced little other than ethnic cleansing, oppression and occupation since 1948, who have been trying to survive under a crippling blockade for 17 years, who are being defined as "human ani-

mals", and who are now facing what can only be described as a genocide, then what is it for? If these realities do not encourage you to take a stance, it's hard to imagine what will. Are Palestinian women somehow not women enough to be deserving of your feminist advocacy?

I hope this weighs on your conscience: By endorsing Israel's right to "defend itself" at any cost, you're condoning violence against women and children - the very demographic you claim to champion. By ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people, by trying to brand as "anti-Semitic" and "anti-feminist" everyone who dares to support their struggle, you are making it evident that not all lives - not all women - hold the same value in your eyes. Your message to the women trying to survive under Israeli bombs, women cradling the corpses of their murdered children, is loud and clear: you do not matter.

It's a time for choosing

These awful times require each of us to make a choice. Will we choose measure over mayhem? Will we choose humanity over horror? Will we choose armistice over genocide? Will we choose conscience over career?

Josh Paul, a veteran American diplomat, has made his choice.

LAST week, Paul resigned from the State Department in the wake of US President Joe Biden's fulsome, categorical support - rhetorically, diplomatically and militarily - for Israel. In a long, thoughtful letter explaining his decision, Paul wrote that he had devoted the past 11 years trying to make "differences" in the pursuit of outcomes he considered "good and just".

Through it all, Paul understood that he was prepared and obliged to make "moral compromises ... for as long as I felt [sic] the harm I might do could be outweighed by the good I could do". But, to borrow a phrase in vogue these days, Paul had reached an "inflection point" that meant "the end of that bargain". Paul opposed Biden sending even more "lethal arms" to Israel quickly. "Blind support for one side is destructive in the long term to the interests of the people on both sides," Paul wrote. "I fear we are repeating the same mistakes we have made these past decades, and I decline to be a part of it for longer."

Paul had rejected the pernicious policy that has long defined America's cruel attitude towards the Middle East: Kill first, think later. His blunt rebuke of the commander-in-chief was remarkable for a number of extraordinary reasons that, in the coverage of his abrupt departure, have gone largely and predictably unnoticed. With cutting precision, Paul pointed to the galling, marquee-sized hypocrisy at the core of Biden's feckless, historically illiterate response to the murderous mad-

ness engulfing Israel and occupied Palestine. "We cannot be both against occupation, and for it. We cannot be both for freedom, and against it," he insisted.

Let me paraphrase Paul's admonition for the smack-the-forehead, oblivious dunces who are, of course, a staple on US networks and cable news outlets: It's the occupation, stupid. Then, Paul acknowledged what no Western diplomat, let alone an American envoy, has - to my knowledge - conceded publicly at the risk of incurring the retributive wrath of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his hysterical apologists at home and abroad: Israel is an apartheid state guilty of ethnic cleansing and collective punishment.

Paul framed his searing indictment this way: "There is beauty to be found everywhere in this world, and it deserves both protection, and the right to flourish, and this is what I most desire for Palestinians and for Israelis ... collective punishment is an enemy to that desire, whether it involves demolishing one home, or one thousand; as too is ethnic cleansing; as too is occupation; as too is apartheid." Paul has, it seems to me, heeded the warnings - issued by human rights groups based in New York, London and Jerusalem - that his boss, Congress and a prostrate Western media establishment have ignored or discredited in their evangelical fealty to a rogue regime brimming with crooks, racists, and authoritarians.

An apartheid state has, since its engineered inception, wielded carte blanche licence not only to steal Palestinian homes and land, but to traumatisate, jail, torture, maim, and kill Palestinians with impunity. That illegal, deliberate, systemic brutalisation and dehumanisation of generation after generation of imprisoned Palestinians in Gaza, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem is unsustainable and was bound to combust,

Andrew Mitrovica

and, inevitably, fuel Hamas's ruthless, retaliatory outrages. It is instructive and a grievous shame that among the career and appointed diplomats who, together, craft the US's ruinous blueprint for the region, only Josh Paul has had the good and prescient sense to act in the face of an unfolding humanitarian calamity.

It would be easy to dismiss his principled stand as the posturing of a minnow whose quitting will have no impact on the pitiless course that Biden and company have charted. It would be wrong, too. Bureaucracies expect and demand conformity. To get along, you must go along.

So, when a solitary voice breaks from the official line dictated by the president of the US, it is, I suspect, a hard and lonely experience. Still, one crack in the facade of unanimity can lead to a wider, more troublesome fissure. Indeed, Paul can now take considerable solace in knowing that many of his former colleagues have joined him in challenging their government's "unlimited" backing of Israel as dangerous and short-sighted. Reportedly, a "mutiny" is brewing among scores of US diplomats who are plotting to pen a "dissent cable" to express their grave objections to Biden's obdurate pursuit of the US's doomed "kill first, think later" so-called "strategy".

To stem the building tide of discord, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has apparently held "listening sessions" with small groups of perturbed diplomats of Muslim, Arab and Jewish descent to mollify their concerns. It is a sham exercise which reveals that "diversity" is a convenient fig leaf used to camouflage this stubborn fact about who calls the genocidal shots at Foggy Bottom and the White House: white, male warmongers. Nevertheless, dissent is spreading on Capitol Hill.

Adam Ramer, the political director in the office of Democratic Congressman Ro Khanna, quit

after only being on the job for two weeks in protest over the representative's refusal to co-sponsor a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire. "I resigned my job on Monday because of a refusal to call for a ceasefire. I will be doing everything in my power to stand against war & for Palestinian justice," Ramer wrote on X. Days later, in an impassioned open letter, more than 400 Muslim and Jewish congressional staffers demanded that their "bosses" stop "exploiting" their "pain and histories" to "justify violence" and support a ceasefire. The staffers wrote that, in this urgent moment, "we are calling on our elected officials to find a new way forward together, through unbreakable solidarity motivated by our humanity". It was a brave and necessary thing to do. European Union President Ursula von der Leyen has also faced the righteous rod of 800 public servants who, in a letter, have excoriated her blatant "double standards" and "uncontrolled" endorsement of Israel's war crimes in Gaza.

"If Israel does not stop immediately, the whole Gaza Strip and its inhabitants will be erased from the planet," the letter read. They are right. Which leads me, finally, to the choice the mostly unrepentant keyboard cavalry who are happily saddling up once more - in derivative columns and hyperbolic appearances on TV - made to side with their home team's, by now, familiar mantra: Kill first, think later. We remember when, not too long ago, you made the same disastrous judgements in Afghanistan and then in Iraq.

When the dreadful human and geopolitical consequences of your inexcusable folly became apparent, a few of you admitted your complicity and apologised - half-heartedly. We did not accept your apologies then and we will not accept your apologies when Gaza is turned to dust and memory. We will remember, since most of you will no doubt prefer, as always, to forget the catastrophic choice you have made yet again.

The American centre's embrace of the far right fuels Israel's war machine

ON October 18, US President Joe Biden travelled to Israel to show support for its war on the Palestinians in the Gaza strip. He was greeted at the airport by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who gave him a warm welcome and an embrace. In the statements to the press afterwards, the narrative both leaders adopted reflected an attempt to dehumanise the Palestinians and justify the ongoing genocidal violence against them.

"Just as the civilised world united to defeat the Nazis and united to defeat ISIS, the civilised world must unite to defeat Hamas," Netanyahu said. President Biden remarked in response that Hamas has "committed evils that and atrocities that make ISIS look somewhat more rational", and that "Israel has a value set like the United States does and other democracies, and - and they're looking to see what we're going to do".

Biden's visit to Israel and his rhetoric was consistent with a US foreign policy that is always on the side of those with the power to oppress. That is because there is a bipartisan consensus between the centre right and the far right on relations with detestable regimes around the world. Centrists in the US have a long history of supporting abhorrent policies of oppression against marginalised peoples at home and abroad, while usurping the rhetoric of human rights and democratic values.

Their support for Israel is hardly surprising given the US's own history of settler colonialism and genocide. Centre-right elites appear to be bothered little by Israel's apartheid, occupation, and clear end goal of ethnically cleansing the Palestinian population in order to take full control of historic Palestine under its ideological version of white supremacy. Zionism. Successive centre-right US governments have backed Israel's bloody "right to defend itself" with billions of dollars of military aid every year going back to 1971. There is no denying this history and reality. Not with more than 4,000 dead and over one million displaced in Gaza, the largest displacement of Palestinians since the 1948 Nakba. Not with a 75-year-long record of bloody Israeli attacks on the Palestinians in the name of Israeli security. Not with Israel fighting for an Arab-free homeland while claiming every Arab around them is a "terrorist", a "militant", or an "anti-Semite".

Every US president since Harry S Truman has recognised Israel "as the de facto authority" in Palestine. That is despite the fact that in the 1930s and 1940s, Zionist militias embraced violence - what the Americans identified as "terrorist activity" - to drive the British out of Palestine and terrorise the local Palestinian population. Truman issued the US government's recognition of Israel on May 14, 1948, only 11 minutes after the British relinquished authority over Palestine. As both a US citizen and a former member of the Hebrew-Israelite community - Black Orthodox Jews who believe African diasporic people are the descendants of the 10 lost tribes of ancient Israel - it took me years to grasp this history.

I practised for three and a half years, during which time I sympathised with our white-skinned brethren and sistren who, I believed, had established a modern homeland in the Middle East. I hated wearing a yarmulke and kufi and eating raw horseradish at seders on Passover night, but I learned a few things - like the Hebrew character for life, *chai*, the blessing *l'chai* ("to life") and the celebration that life ought to be. By the time I went to college and began studying the injustices that were commonplace around the world, from the US to South Africa to the Middle East, I often thought hard about the contradictions between a firm belief in *l'chai* and the denial of human rights to oppressed people, who struggled for freedom and justice.

The nonviolent civil rights movement in the US in the 1950s and 1960s and the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa with its mass protests and violent acts of

Donald Earl Collins

sabotage between the 1950s and the 1980s both fought for an end to state-sanctioned apartheid and violent oppression. The same has been true for those leading the Palestinian struggle for freedom, whether it is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its acts of violence in the 1970s and 1980s or the nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which was launched in the 2000s. Those who have vilified their methods refuse to understand that oppressed people need *l'chai* as much as anyone.

I have seen that in others' reactions to my own support for a free Palestine, too. During Israel's continuous bombing of Gaza in July and August 2014, someone I had known since ninth grade all but accused me of being anti-Semitic. This was a Jewish man who believed in tolerance, and had shown me as much when I was a practicing Hebrew-Israelite. But not this time. "Some of your arguments seem to suggest

majority of Americans supported Israel's efforts in bombing and shelling Gaza, but with some doubts about the disproportionality of the Israeli response and America's role in it. There are some in the US who want a ceasefire and an end to the Israeli assault on Gaza, but they are a minority. They are mostly a mix of centre-right and centre-left Americans whose activism is limited to stopping the immediate bloodshed.

Even fewer are those who see Israel as an apartheid state with a deliberate policy of settler colonialism and genocide and who believe the US must help put an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. The 2022 Pew Research Center survey showed that only five percent of those surveyed supported the BDS movement, an organised effort that stresses this more radical approach. This embrace by the American centre right of far-right causes and attitudes has done much harm to social justice movements in US history. Rev Dr Martin Luther

A 2022 Gallup poll showed that although there had been an uptick in American sympathy for the Palestinians in the past decade (26 percent view Palestinians favourably), most Americans support Israel more (55 percent). A 2022 Pew Research Center survey showed similar trends, but reported the most positive views of Israel being among white evangelicals and Republican-affiliated voters, representing those in the US on the far right. In the past week, an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist University poll showed a majority of Americans supported Israel's efforts in bombing and shelling Gaza, but with some doubts about the disproportionality of the Israeli response and America's role in it. There are some in the US who want a ceasefire and an end to the Israeli assault on Gaza, but they are a minority.

you too want Israel to 'completely disappear,'" he wrote in response to a blog post I had written about the hypocrisy of the US support for a two-state solution in which Israel holds over the suffocating power of Palestine's apartheid zones. In the past two weeks, I have seen similar reactions. My own congressperson, Representative Jamie Raskin (D-Maryland), sent out an email to me and his other constituents about "the brutal terrorist attacks in Israel". Raskin's office offered a compilation of "resources to assist US citizens in the region", most of which were meant to help those wishing to leave Israel, not Gaza. Sylvia Burwell, the president of American University, where I teach, initially issued a neutral statement calling for peace, which was followed by a university-wide email full of condemnation. It was all about "Hamas' brutal assault on Israel and its people", "atrocities committed by Hamas", and "terrorist attacks", adding, "many from our Jewish community and beyond have shared their hurt and sorrow".

In these communications - as with the majority of media coverage and official statements in the US - the context of occupation and violent apartheid in Palestine is erased. Israel's wholesale destruction of Gaza and the slaughter of Palestinians in orders of magnitude higher than anything Hamas has done is not even registered as "repugnant" at all. Apparently, Palestinian and Arab American communities do not need support for their "grief and sorrow" from their political representatives and local institutions. These responses reflect the dominance of the centre-right and far-right in American society, which is also confirmed in opinion polls. A 2022 Gallup poll showed that although there had been an uptick in American sympathy for the Palestinians in the past decade (26 percent view Palestinians favourably), most Americans support Israel more (55 percent).

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King, Jr said it best in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", where he wrote about the civil rights movement's campaign to end segregation in Alabama in 1963: "I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is the white moderate, who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice ... who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom."

Dr King's grievances apply to all of America's moderates, or really, centre-right people, and not just on anti-Black racism. If being centrist or moderate politically is the furthest left most Americans lean, it means that most don't value *l'chai*. It means they support both Biden's centre-right administration and Netanyahu's far-right government, which was well-known for its brutality even before the latest war on Gaza. In the past year before this latest conflict, it had ramped up Israeli army raids and supported settler violence against the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank. The two-state "peace process" American moderates have supported since the 1970s is really a "piece process", one where Israel can occupy and seize control of pieces of Palestinian land at will.

Their backing for this farce will only result in the US becoming complicit in genocide against the Palestinians, as Israel continues to pursue its Zionist vision with impunity. This is a celebration of death and not *l'chai* at all. All violence is abhorrent, but state-sponsored and superpower-supported violence is barbarity beyond the play. The ceasefire many seek in Gaza today, though very much needed, is hardly enough to stop the bloodshed. If there is ever to be a real path to peace in Palestine and Israel, America's centrists would have to break with the far right and support a radical approach to end Israel's oppressive policies in Palestine.

Just like with South Africa in the 1980s, they would have to join the small American left in pushing the West, and especially the US, to divest from the state of Israel and Israeli businesses and to impose embargoes, including on all arms shipments. Maybe then, Zionism would finally yield to *l'chai*.

Poland is back in Europe's mainstream - and that could secure the EU's future

IT was meant to have been Poland's "Orbán moment". Last August, the country's ruling nationalist Law and Justice party voted that parliamentary elections in October should be accompanied by a referendum. Citizens would be asked populist-inflected questions about selling off state assets to foreigners, increasing the retirement age and illegal immigration. The referendum was copy-pasted from a strategy successfully used by Viktor Orbán to consolidate his illiberal regime in Hungary. It was not simply a cynical ploy to allow unlimited public money to be spent on the ruling party's electoral campaign, it was an effort to frame the elections as a referendum on Polish sovereignty. To oppose the referendum and to vote for the opposition meant not only that you favoured a loss of sovereignty, but that you endorsed neoliberal economic policies and economic occupation by "foreign" powers such as Germany. Law and Justice was sure that it was a tactic that could not go wrong.

As we know, the ploy failed. The fact that the opposition successfully boycotted the referendum held alongside general elections on 15 October (only about 40% of voters took part) reveals one of the least-discussed consequences of the national populists' long rule in Poland: the paradox that eight years of culture war against liberalism has resulted in Polish society's dramatic liberalisation.

Pursuing a strategy of maximum polarisation, Law and Justice initially transformed the soft conservative cultural consensus that defined Polish politics prior to 2015 into a conservative electoral majority - but at the cost of destroying this consensus. As a result, the church-supported government has overseen a dramatic decline in church attendance by younger Poles and anti-church sentiment has led to a pro-choice

majority. Many of the opposition's older voters, who only yesterday were queasy at the idea of equal marriage or the reproductive health policies favoured by the EU, suddenly became reconciled with liberal cultural policies and values. Many probably still feel uneasy about the direction of modern liberal societies, but muted themselves because opposing LGBTQ+ rights and migration into Poland implied support for the hated governing party. Similarly to the way in which Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine has given birth to a new, radically anti-Russian Ukrainian identity, Jarosław Kaczyński's intra-Polish war has created a liberal political identity in Poland that didn't exist before. The 15 October elections also represented a kind of closure for Polish post-communist politics. When speaking at the grandiose pre-election "march of a million hearts", the opposition leader Donald Tusk called the democrats' mobilisation during the election campaign "the third wave of Solidarity" (the first being in 1980-81, the second in 1989) - emphasising that Civic Coalition positioned itself as Solidarity reborn. Tusk made it clear that the elections were not only about who will decide the county's future, but also about who owns Solidarity's past.

These elections may be the last in which the leaders of the two major blocs were members of the heroic generation that toppled communism. Both Tusk, 66, and Kaczyński, 74, were once card-carrying Solidarity activists. But they represented two different strands within the anti-communist movement. Kaczyński pined nostalgically for prewar Poland; Tusk dreamed of liberal Poland. The two visions could coexist in the struggle against communism, but were in constant tension after 1989, both claiming the Solidarity legacy as their political identity. Which is the

legitimate heir of the Solidarity moment: the nationalist, Catholic Poland represented by Kaczyński, or the liberal Poland exemplified by Tusk? Voters were asked precisely this question. Polish history, in its peak moments, has always resounded like a Chopin nocturne, so we should not be surprised that on election night Tusk sounded like a person who had won not only power but a symbolic battle for the past. He has succeeded in transforming his coalition into the party of national pride, while reclaiming national history for the liberals' cause.

Law and Justice has failed in its grand experiment to cast 21st-century Polish identity as a never-ending war on two fronts, against the Russians and the Germans. Andrzej Wajda's 2007 film, *Katyń*, has a short segment that brilliantly expresses the tragedy of Polish history. It captures the moment in 1939, soon after Germany invaded Poland, when the Soviets moved to occupy the eastern part of the country. Two columns of Poles walk past each other: those fleeing the Germans in the hope of a better chance of survival in the lands occupied by Moscow, and those from the east with fresh memories of Russian rule, who head towards the German zone. For Kaczyński, fighting Russia and Germany is the permanent Polish condition, and he has made this fight his personal religion. When Russia started its full-fledged war against Ukraine, the Polish government was one of Kyiv's strongest and most ardent supporters, and Polish society welcomed hundreds of thousands of refugees. But Kaczyński did everything he could to convince Poles that the Germans were an even more dangerous - invisible - enemy and that the EU is no better than a vegetarian version of the Fourth Reich. In government-controlled media, Tusk has always been portrayed as a German puppet, the

agent of both Angela Merkel and Putin.

Kaczyński, it seems, saw an opposition victory as a bigger threat to Poland's sovereignty than a Russian victory in Ukraine. It is telling that in his first public remarks since Law and Justice lost its parliamentary majority, he suggested that foreign forces - especially Germany and Russia - were behind the main opposition parties now set to form a new government. In this context, Law and Justice's defeat is an opportunity for the end not only of the "Polish-Polish" war, but also of the undeclared Polish-German war. The future is never as bright as it is portrayed in the speeches of the winners on election night. The opposition has won, but these elections reconfirmed the existence of two Polands, and this second, Kaczyński's Poland, will not disappear. The new governing coalition will also not be an easy one. The opposition's victory does not mean that mistrust of Germany will disappear or that Polish criticism of Germany was wrong in the first place.

But this victory does signal both a political change in Poland and a mood change in Europe. Europe's turn to the right now looks less irreversible. Tusk's victory in Warsaw leaves Orbán politically isolated in the EU as never before. Orbán's political future now seems to depend on the outcome of the next US presidential election. At a moment when the war in Ukraine has shifted the EU's centre of gravity to the east, Poland's return to the European mainstream is of existential significance. The improved dynamic of German-Polish relations today is as important for the future of the EU as the rapprochement between France and Germany was in the 1950s. A self-confident and pro-European Poland could turn out to be a critical force in reinventing the union. But Poland being Poland, we should be ready for any surprise.

The Guardian

Ukraine's options appear limited for now

MORE than 19 months into Russia-Ukraine war, the nerves are fraying among Ukraine's closest friends and allies as fatigue has clearly set in. Ukrainian counter offensive began in June and by all accounts, has made progress but it has been slow and gruelling. Military experts have been frustrated at the lack of bigger gains and all the while, fatigue with the conflict is growing in the countries that have supported Ukraine with military supplies.

For most of the last year, Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelensky, had acquired something of a cult status with the overwhelming support of the West lead by the United States. But only last month, he came back from a trip to the US and Canada which was mixed in its outcomes. For one, Zelensky got a \$325 million package from Washington but it was not the \$24 billion he had hoped for. Politics in DC has crippled functioning of the US Congress which has to sanction the bigger amount.

The Republicans have made no secret of the fact that they want to turn off the tap to Ukraine and are tired of spending American money on it. Zelensky was not even allowed to address a joint session of the House of Representatives and the Senate as the Republicans push back against the Biden administration's support of Ukraine.

The US has given Ukraine over \$113 billion in aid since the start of the war started and as the country heads into an election year, domestic politics will take precedence. If the United States actually starts scaling back the quantum of assistance it provides, it will have a knock on effect in other capitals, especially in Europe, which will leave Ukraine in a tight spot. Earlier this month, a Pro Russian politician won the Slovak parliamentary election and has vowed to withdraw military support for Ukraine saying, "people in Slovakia have bigger problems than Ukraine". In other countries

including France, Germany and Spain, parties weary of continued support for Ukraine command levels of support that make them difficult to ignore. The recent elections in Poland were also dominated by the question of aid to Ukraine.

Ties between both sides had recently plummeted over the import of Ukrainian grain. In fact, the way Poland's relationship changed with Ukraine has been quite startling. Poland was an ardent supporter of Ukraine earlier, sending them military aid and equipment.

The Polish President however recently compared Ukraine to a drowning man who risks dragging his rescuers down with him. Now, with the world preoccupied with Israel's war with Hamas, the fatigue with Ukraine looks like it will set in even faster even though some leaders are at pains to say otherwise. US Treasury secretary Janet Yellen told SKY News that America can "certainly" afford to support wars on two fronts and that

Nidhi Razdan

Gulf News



NBP records pre-tax profit of PKR 70.6b, 46% up YoY

26.7% YTD growth in total assets to achieve PKR 6tr milestone

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Board of Directors approved the results of the National Bank of Pakistan for the nine-month period ending September 30, 2023 in its meeting held other day.

The strong financial performance of the Bank is a consequence its continued efforts in serving the national agenda of extending financing to priority sectors as well as extending access to financial services to those segments of the country's populace that lack facilities. The Bank's results are a balance of a focus on prudent financial management and the Bank's tradition of serving the nation which has led to NBP being a Bank that is trusted by its stakeholders.

The Bank demonstrated an exceptional performance by reporting a profit before tax of PKR 70.6 Bn, depicting an impressive 46% increase YoY as compared to PKR 48.3 Bn for 9M'22. These results were driven by robust performance in revenue streams as well as an effective cost management. Despite a persistently challenging environment, the Bank's profit after tax doubled to PKR 38.2 Bn, reflecting a substantial increase of 99.1% over the PKR 19.2 Bn in the same period of the previous year. Consequently, Earnings Per Share closed at PKR 17.9, up from PKR 9.0 in 9M'22. This outstanding performance was a result of an efficient portfolio mix, mature risk profiling, effective risk

management, and maintaining a stable funding pool that contributed to an improved and sustainable operating performance.

In an environment of rising interest rates, gross interest income recorded a YoY increase of 119.4% to close at PKR 728.7 Bn, a significant rise from PKR 332.2 Bn for the same period in 2022. Similarly, the Bank's cost of funds also increased by 141.7% YoY, closing at PKR 608.1 Bn. Consequently, net interest income closed at PKR 120.6 Bn, representing a YoY increase of 49.6%. Despite the challenging business environment and lackluster stock market performance for most of the review period, the Bank generated total non-fund income of PKR 24.7 Bn, slightly below the PKR 25.3 Bn of corresponding 9 month period of previous year. While equity investments of the Bank generated dividend income of PKR 3.4 Bn (9M22: PKR 3.4 Bn), a 1.2% decrease YoY, Fee and commission income earned through branch banking operations stood at PKR 14.9 Bn, marking a 3.4% increase YoY.

Amid the high inflationary pressures and Rupee depreciation, the Bank's operating expenses for the nine-month period under review amounted to PKR 65.2 Bn, a 19.2% YoY increase compared to PKR 54.7 Bn for the same period last year. However, proactive cost management efforts, leading to an

improved cost/income ratio from 51.7% in 9M'22 to 44.9% in 9M'23. The Bank is presently making significant investments in a major upgrade of its IT systems and infrastructure.

Adhering to a prudent risk-profiling strategy and keeping in view the prevailing economic conditions, the Bank has prudently maintained general loan loss reserves to buttress its balance sheet. Hence, net provision charge for the period amounted to PKR 9.2 Bn, higher by 229.5% or PKR 6.4 Bn compared to PKR 2.8 Bn for 9M'22. Specific and General provisions held against NPLs were at PKR 204.7 Bn (Dec'22: PKR 190.7 Bn) and PKR 24.3 Bn (Dec'22: PKR 17.3 Bn) respectively. Thus, specific provision coverage as of September 30, 2023, stood at 92.6%.

With a YTD growth of 26.7% in its assets base, the Bank achieved the PKR 6 trillion milestone in its balance sheet, with total assets reaching PKR 6.6 trillion from PKR 5.2 trillion at the end of 2022. This establishes NBP as the largest bank in Pakistan in terms of total assets. While investments (at cost) increased by 19.5% to reach PKR 4,192 Bn, gross advances recorded a 6.0% growth to reach PKR 1,524.4 Bn. The Bank maintains a robust funding and liquidity profile through a well-diversified funding portfolio. As of September 30, 2023, total deposits amounted to PKR 3,345.0 Bn, with CASA ratio at 78.9%, and

Liquidity Coverage and Net Stable Funding remaining high at 200% and 255% respectively.

Capital Adequacy Ratio further improved to 23.16% from 21.59% at the YE'22, reflecting the strong financial soundness of the Bank. The Bank holds the highest credit ratings of AAA/A1+ categories for both long term and short term, as reaffirmed by both PACRA and VIS Credit Rating Company in June 2023.

The Bank operates one of the largest branch networks with over 1,500 branches in Pakistan and is aggressively pursuing a significant organizational transformation program through IT upgrades, digital product enhancements, and initiatives to promote financial inclusion, with a particular focus on commercial and rural segments. Simultaneously with its business growth initiatives, the Bank has continued to make progress in remediating legacy issues in the areas of international franchise, risk management, asset quality, operational effectiveness, and HR.

With the delivery of commendable financial results, the management's strategic focus remains on enhancing its service quality levels, diversifying its outreach through digitalization, and expanding its range of products and services. As the Nation's bank, enhancing access to financial services for all remains a key goal of the Bank, a commitment since its establishment in 1949.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad with Rector CUI Prof. Dr. Sajid Qamar and Director Wah Campus Prof. Dr. Muhammad Abid conferring a medal to students during convocation ceremony 2023.

Convocation 2023 of CUI Wah Campus organized

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Convocation of COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Wah Campus was held at Jinnah Convention Center, Islamabad in which degrees were conferred to 938 graduating students of Wah Campus at undergraduate and graduate levels in the discipline of Management Sciences, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Computer Science, and Management Sciences.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) graced the event as a Chief Guest.

On the occasion, the Director, COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Abid, T.I., presented a Campus report in which he highlighted the achievements and future plans

silver, and bronze medals at the Institute and Campus level on account of their excellent academic performance. 20 graduates were awarded with the PhD degrees in the disciplines of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Computer Science, and Management Sciences.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) graced the event as a Chief Guest.

On the occasion, the Director, COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Abid, T.I., presented a Campus report in which he highlighted the achievements and future plans

including the ongoing construction of Academic Block-I. He congratulated the graduates and their parents for the successful completion of their educational journey and advised them to continue hard work and dedication in the coming years of life. Director Campus also highlighted the University Ranking, Campus facilities, scholarship opportunities, laboratories, and highly qualified faculty available at Campus.

Dr. Mukhtar, in his remarks, congratulated all graduating students and their parents on attaining degrees and advised them to work hard, and contribute to the development of the country and nation.

He also congratulated the teaching faculty of the University who stand behind the success of these graduates as equally as their parents. He stressed that the research of faculty should focus on the impact on the community.

The Rector CUI, Prof. Dr. Sajid Qamar advised graduating students to be ready and learn rapid technological advancement in the world for future challenging opportunities and to contribute to the economic development of the country. He acknowledged the contributions of the faculty and staff for the success of this Convocation and COMSATS University Islamabad.

MCB continued its growth momentum in Q3 2023 and registered increase of 71%

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Board of Directors of MCB Bank Limited (MCB) in its meeting under the Chairmanship of Mian Mohammad Mansha, on October 25, 2023, reviewed performance of the Bank and approved the interim financial statements for the nine months' period ended September 30, 2023. The Board of Directors has declared a 3rd interim cash dividend of Rs. 8.0 per share i.e. 80%, in addition to 130% already paid, bringing the total cash dividend for the nine months period ended September 30, 2023 to 210%.

Through focused efforts of the Bank's management in building no-cost deposits and optimizing its earning assets mix, MCB successfully sustained its growth momentum in core earnings to post historically high nine months Profit Before Tax (PBT) of Rs. 88.1 billion; registering an impres-

sive increase of 71% on a year-on-year basis. The Profit After Tax (PAT) was recorded at Rs. 44.1 billion (+122%) and translated into an Earning Per Share (EPS) of Rs. 37.25 compared to an EPS of Rs. 16.75 reported in the corresponding period last year.

Strong volumetric growth in current account and timely repositioning of the asset book resulted in a 73% increase in net interest income for the period under review as compared to corresponding period last year.

Non-markup income increased to Rs. 22.6 billion (+12%) against Rs. 20.3 billion in the corresponding period last year with major contributions coming in from fee commission income (Rs. 14.2 billion), income from dealing in foreign currency (Rs. 5.9 billion) and dividend income (Rs. 2.0 billion).

Improving customer and interbank flows, diversification of revenue streams through continuous enrich-

ment of service suite, investments towards digital transformation and an unrelenting focus on upholding high standards of service delivery supplemented a broad-based growth of 38% in income from fee commission; with trade and guarantee related business income growing by 95%, cards related income by 48%, branch banking customer fees by 12% and income from home remittance by 18%.

The Bank continues to manage an efficient operating expense base and monitor costs prudently. Amidst a persistently high inflationary environment, currency devaluation, rapidly escalating commodity prices and continued investments in human resources and technological upgradation, the operating expenses of the Bank were reported at Rs. 37.4 billion (+23%). The cost to income ratio of the Bank improved significantly to 29% from 37% reported in correspon-

ding period last year.

Navigating a challenging operating and macroeconomic environment, the Bank has been addressing asset quality issues by maintaining discipline in management of its risk return decisions. Diversification of the loan book across customer segments and a robust credit underwriting framework that encompasses structured assessment models, effective pre-disbursement evaluation tools and an array of post disbursement monitoring systems has enabled MCB to effectively manage its credit risk; the Non-performing loan (NPLs) base of the Bank was reported at Rs. 54.6 billion as at September 30, 2023. The coverage and infection ratios of the Bank were reported at 82.86% and 8.45% respectively.

On the financial position side, the total asset base of the Bank grew by 15% and was reported at Rs. 2.39 trillion. Analysis of the

assets mix highlights that net investments increased by Rs. 279 billion (+29%) whereas gross advances reported a decrease of Rs. 151 billion (-19%) over December 31, 2022.

The Bank continued its focus on building no cost deposits, leading to a robust growth of Rs. 190 billion (YoY: +30%) in average current deposits.

The average current to total deposits ratio improved to 51.5% during the period under review from 41.3% in corresponding period last year. Despite the exceptional increase in interest rates during the period, the domestic cost of deposits was contained at 8.63% as compared to 6.21% in the corresponding period last year.

Return on Assets and Return on Equity significantly improved to 2.63% and 31.84% respectively, whereas the book value per share was reported at Rs. 167.81.

SNGPL: 147 connections disconnected, fine imposed

F.P. Report

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 147 connections while imposing fine of Rs. 2.9 million and 221 under billing cases processed.

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected ten connections on illegal use of gas and another 11 on use of compressor, 4 Under billing cases have been processed and amount of Rs 0.53 booked against gas thieves and under billing cases. In Bahawalpur, the regional team disconnected 59 connections on use of compressor. The company disconnected nine connections on illegal use of gas while another one on use of compressor, 32 Under billing cases have been processed and fine of Rs0.08 Million imposed against gas pilferers in Multan. In Sheikhupura, 17 on illegal use of gas while one on use of compressor were disconnected by the region and 38 Under billing cases have been processed, amount of Rs 0.32 booked against gas thieves and under billing cases.

In Peshawar, the company disconnected 34 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal connections. The regional

team also lodged 2 FIRs against gas thieves. The team also imposed fine of Rs 0.95 against gas thieves. In Rawalpindi the regional team disconnected 36 gas connections and 16 Under billing cases have been processed. In Mardan Four Under billing cases have been processed while imposing fine of Rs 0.08million.

In Sialkot, the company booked 58HM3 volume booked against Under billing cases. In Sargodha 38 under billing cases have been processed 10n illegal use of gas and Rs 0.02 million has been booked against under billing cases. The regional team in Gujranwala 49 under billing cases processed and 03 meters were disconnected on the use of compressor and 2 on illegal use of gas. The region also imposed fine of Rs. 0.07 million on gas theft and under billing cases.

The company disconnected 08 connections on illegal use of gas in Islamabad. In Sahiwal, three connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas. The regional team in Faisalabad 40 under billing cases processed and 02 disconnected on illegal use of gas and another 01 on the use of compressor. Fine of Rs. 0.22 million was also imposed against gas pilferers. The Regional team in Abbottabad also disconnected 01 connection on illegal use of gas.

Khawaja Wajih ud Din

There are almost 500 verses of the Holy Quran which provide laws and legal principles. Almost 230 verses amongst them are relevant to enforceable rights and administration of justice. The most commonly referred is Surah Nisa (4:58) "Surely Allah commands you to deliver trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between people, judge with justice. Surely, excellent is the exhortation Allah gives you. Surely Allah is all hearing, all seeing".

Surely, we have revealed to you the book with the truth, so that you may judge between people according to what Allah has shown you. Do not be an advocate for those who breach trust (4:105).

In Surah Hood (11:113) Allah says that, "And do not lean towards wrongdoers, less the fire should touch you, and you have no supporter besides Allah, then you will not be helped."

The commandments of Allah as ordained in the Holy book and Saying of his Holy Prophet (MPBUH) should serve as basis of the rule of law. The commandment of the God Almighty is also to do justice, follow merit and enforce rights.

It is always very painful to see people criticizing the judicial organ of the state and blaming it for everything. Some of the criticisms might be justified.

Throughout, the history of Pakistan we have seen political fights being brought to the courts. It is a sad truth that political leaders instead of sorting out their differences prefer to get them sorted out by other means. As far as the courts are concerned there is a visible lack of consistency in the approach to different happenings, which has not served the concept of the rule of law at all. It's a painful reality that the legal system is made fun of by every Tom, dick and harry in the streets.

Keeping all those hard facts in mind I always thought that in whatever capacity, we should play our part in improving the system wherever possible. The guiding principles in my heart and mind have always been the Commandments of Almighty Allah mentioned above and the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). I can recollect my experience as a Dean of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy and as director general with great satisfaction. A concerted effort was made to train all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of rule of law. So that they work efficiently, dedicatedly to promote the interest of justice.

In complete departure from the age old methodology of teaching the text of the civil procedure code and criminal procedure code to judicial officers of 10 to 15 years of service, we focused on the practical implementation of the rule

of law, court and case management, situational handling, stress management, Capacity building, team building, sentencing and all the latest concepts in the world relating to administration of justice. The areas of training focused on the practical implementation of law.

All the stakeholders regularly invited for examining the loopholes in the system including reasons for the conviction/acquittal and development of SOP's for effective administration of justice. I remember to have been a part of two case analysis regarding understanding the counter terrorism response and Pakistan's action to counter terrorism. It seemed all the more important as the various organs of the state were better off to sit together and chalk out a common strategy, instead of blaming each other for the failure. The criminal justice coordination committees at the district level and its role in effective administration of justice was highlighted. SOP's were developed for the issues which could not be solved in the criminal justice coordination committees were to be sent to the provincial justice committee for ultimate solution. The capacity building of the stakeholders was specially focused.

National Seminar on Case Management and Summary Judgment Rules

(Amendments in CPC) Civil management rules was held in which the draft was deliberated upon. Ultimately the government approved the draft and issued notification making it as a part of the civil procedure code. Its main focus was to avoid delay in civil litigation and suggested ways and means of doing it. The biggest challenge was faced when the government decided to move to merge erstwhile FATA and PATA into the settled districts.

A series of activities were conducted to study the methodology, scheme of things, line of action, Procedure, modus operandi and action plan. All the stakeholders including elected representatives, media men, lawyers, local elders, intellectuals, Government officials and judges were regularly invited to deliberate upon the matter. Special focus in regard was to study the customs and traditions prevalent in the area. The internationally recognized principles of knowledge, skills and attitude were always kept in mind as guiding principles. Interaction with the media was a regular feature.

Judiciary act was developed, which is still pending with the government. A vision document called, "vision 2027" Watch developed planning the activities of the Academy for the next 10 years. Establishment of a

research /search cell was one of the activities that we were proud of.

The cell provided researched materials and searched case law when asked to do so. Newsletter and annual report was a regular feature. Same was the case with annual calendar and general training program. Through the planned activities a record number of trainings were conducted in the particular calendar year. Training for lawyers was introduced for the first time by the Academy enabling capacity building of a very important component of the system. For improving judgment writing the concept of creative writing was made use of. The concept of training-based promotion was introduced. Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment, commercial disputes, Juvenile justice, financial crimes, intellectual property disputes were also focused. National conferences on Alternate dispute resolution were also held.

Regular interaction with the other High court's, lawyers and judges were made for mutual learning and thought sharing. Instead of picking and choosing the audience software was developed which would automatically choose participants who had not undergone training in a particular field. Merit was ensured in every field

and human discretion was brought to minimum.

Our conclusions in the debates, activities were that the problem in Pakistan is not of dearth of legislation but actually of enforcement and execution of law. In other words enforceability of the rule of law is the area to be focused. This important area is connected with the governance in general and effective administration in particular. Another lesson learned was that one can only improve one's credibility if one continues to perform in the best interest of the public as per the essence of rule of law and it's equal treatment without fear or favor. I remember a question that the participants frequently asked me as to why the non-Muslim judges in the history of Pakistan have had the highest credibility. Majority of the participants thought that the legal system does not encourage, efficiency, honesty, dedication and hard work. They also thought that the legal system has a lot of discretion and in majority of cases it is not exercised to promote the interest of Justice and fair play.

The participants also complained about lack of basic facilities to the lawyers, litigants and officers involved in the implementation of the rule of law. Nonexistent Career progression and very slow promotions were other areas that were highlighted. They use

to tell me in private meetings, with the request not to be quoted, that the competition for elevation is not fair.

It was also the opinion of the participants that on the policy side everything changes with the change in the judicial hierarchy and hence there is no consistency in policy and guidelines. It was a unanimous conclusion that ethics and morality have to be inculcated in the judicial system. The ultimate conclusion was that the com-

Court Notice

In the court of Senior Civil Judge (Admin) Judge Model Trail Magistrate Court, Malakand at Bathkela, Case No 34/1 of 2021, Next date: 30/10/2023, Noor Mahal d/o Said Nawab w/o Shah Khisro resident of ASC Colony Nowshera Versus Mr. Bakht Nawab S/O Said Nawab and others president Mohallah Suleman Khel Khar Proclamation Against Legal heirs: (17) Muhammad Bilal s/o Jehan Alam resident of Kotkey Khar Tehsil Bathkela District Malakand, Present Saudi Arabi (KSA). In the above title case the service of you above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this court on 30/10/2023 at 08:00am in person or through appointed agent/attorney or through counsel, otherwise you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.

mandment of the God Almighty is to do justice, follow merit and enforce rights.

(To be concluded)

Court Notice

In the Court of Qaisar Khan Afridi Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No. 34/13. Institution 14/4/2023. Date of hearing: 8/11/2023. Hazrat Jouhar etc VS Mera Khan etc. Notice to no 3.Namen s/o Bajawry of Daggar. 12/1. Faren. 12/2. Merawas. 12/3. Qaisar. 12/4. Yousaf sons. 12/5. Mstz Janena. 12/6. Bakht Naz. 12/7. Gul Naz daughters of Bibi (late). 13/2. Shafiullah s/o Khalida (late) residents of Rega tehseel Gagra District Buner. 17. Esa s/o Mohamad Shuib. 18/3. Nasar. 18/4. Said Alam. 18/5. Zahor Alam sons of Jaben (late). 19. Mstz Aysha. 20. mst Shakila. 21. Bibi Shahana daughters of Mohamad Shuib. 22. Binyamen s/o Bajowray residents of Daggar tehseel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 8/11/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

**In brief****Zeeshan set 1st World Record**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani mixed martial artist Zeeshan Mehsood has set a Guinness World Record for the most high knee exercises in 30 seconds. "Mehsood, an MMA fighter from South Waziristan, did 126 most high knees exercises in 30 seconds. He was the first one to set the record," Irfan Mehsood told APP on Wednesday. Mehsood was an amateur MMA South Asian level top-rank fighter. He was the younger brother of Irfan Mehsood, who holds 80 Guinness World Records. So far 15 students of Irfan Mehsood have made Guinness World Records and his club has set 113 Guinness World Records to date.

PM's Squash League

MULTAN (APP): Prime Minister's Squash Talent Hunt Youth Sports League will be kicked off in the city from tomorrow on Thursday, October 26. The squash league event, organized by Higher Education department, would be held at Bahauddin Zakaria University (BZU) in which men and women teams from five regions including Multan, Lahore, Sialkot, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad region will participate. Focal person of the event Abida Khan said that Multan will host the big squash competition. The Prime Minister's Squash Talent Hunt Youth Sports League will continue for the next five days from 26 to 30 October for which all arrangements have been finalized at university Squash Court. On this occasion, Muhammad Raza, Muhammad Yahya, Zain Ali and Ali Zaib said that they were very happy that they have been selected for the Multan Region team in the Prime Minister's Squash Talent Hunt Youth Sports League 2023 and they will compete with squash players from all over Punjab.

Tent Pegging's inclusion in Olympics

ISLAMABAD (APP): Upon assuming the leadership of the Tent Pegging Chair at the Asian Equestrian Federation, Sahibzada Sultan Muhammad Ali has embarked on a significant mission to advocate for the inclusion of Tent Pegging in the Olympics. During his recent tour to Oman, he engaged in discussions with the President of the Asian Equestrian Federation, Ahmad bin Abdulrahman Al Attiyah, said a statement on Wednesday. During the meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was officially executed between the International Tent Pegging Federation and the Asian Equestrian Federation in Oman. Sahibzada said this groundbreaking MoU would open doors for Tent Pegging's potential inclusion in the Asian Games. He expressed his commitment to advancing the global presence of Tent Pegging as a sport.

SNSR Tournament kicked off in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): After the successful experience of "CM Gold Cup Tournament", the caretaker government of Balochistan has initiated Shaheed Nawabzada Siraj Raisani (SNSR) Tournament in Quetta. Football, volleyball, squash, body building, badminton and karate are among other sports events wherein athletes will prove their flair during the SNSR," said Caretaker Sports Minister of Balochistan Nawabzadar Jamal Raisani.

Maxwell hits fastest WC ton as Australia thrash Netherlands

Delhi (Agencies): Glenn Maxwell hit the fastest men's World Cup century in 40 balls as Australia inflicted a record tournament defeat on the Netherlands in Delhi.

The right-hander beat Aiden Markram's record of 49 balls, set 18 days ago for South Africa against Sri Lanka. The Netherlands were bowled out for 90 in response, to suffer a 309-run loss.

David Warner also made his second century of the tournament as Australia racked up 399-8, with Bas de Leede conceding an ODI record 115. Maxwell's innings was full of power and extraordinary strokeplay, and is the

fourth fastest in ODI history and Australia's quickest, beating his 51-ball ton against Sri Lanka in the 2015 World Cup.

South Africa's AB de Villiers' 31-ball century is the fastest, coming against West Indies in 2015.

The margin of defeat beats Afghanistan's 275-run defeat by Australia in the 2015 World Cup, while it is also Australia's biggest ODI win. Australia have now won three consecutive games, after starting with three defeats, and are starting to consolidate their place in the top four, with this huge victory boosting their net run-rate. The Netherlands' only win came against South Africa last

Tuesday, and they are now bottom of the 10-team table.

Maxwell delivers as Australia build momentum

When Maxwell came to the crease, Australia were 266-4 and in danger of throwing away a platform that suggested a score of 400 was possible.

That soon became 290-6 with Josh Inglis and Cameron Green falling before Maxwell decided to take the game on. He was only on 15 at that point and took the arrival of captain Pat Cummins to put his foot down again. There were outrageous reverse sweeps over point, a reverse pull for six and crashing drives back down the ground before three successive sixes over the leg side took him to

the landmark.

He celebrated by letting out a huge roar, before cradling his bat after recently becoming a father, with his partner and baby arriving in India in recent days. The platform had been set by Warner, who hit four successive fours early in his innings, and there was an air of inevitability about his sixth World Cup century.

He is now level with Sachin Tendulkar and only one behind Rohit Sharma, while he is fifth on the all-time World Cup run-scorers list. Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne both made half-centuries too, but Green scored just eight and that place in the side, which had been occupied by Marcus



Glenn Maxwell screams after getting to a scorching hundred.

Stoinis in previous games, is likely to be taken by Travis Head when he recovers from a broken hand.

The Netherlands offered little fight with the bat, with only five batters mak-

ing double figures, and Vikram Singh's 25 the highest score. Leg-spinner Adam Zampa continued his impressive campaign, taking 4-8 in mopping up the tail, and he now has 13

wickets in the tournament.

Australia will now fancy their chances of reaching the semi-finals with games against New Zealand, England, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to come.

PSL 9: Registration opened for foreign players

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The registration window for foreign players has been opened for the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Wednesday.

The upcoming edition of Pakistan's marquee league will tentatively run from 8 February to 24 March.

"The category renewals of the local players will be finalised and published shortly as well. Following the category renewals, the trade and retention window will be opened," stated PCB.

"Once the trade and retention window is open, the pick order for the player draft for the upcoming season will also be shared.

"The retentions and trades are to be finalised ahead of the HBL PSL 9 Player Draft, which has been tentatively scheduled for mid-December, after the completion of the National T20. The final of the National T20 is set to be played on 10 December in Karachi."

Notably, the PCB announced last month that the PSL 9 will feature six teams.

The chairman of the PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf presided over the meeting of the PSL Governing Council at the National Cricket Academy here.

The high-profile meeting saw a wide range of issues being discussed, including the number of teams for the upcoming PSL 9.

"The upcoming ninth season will be played with six teams. No additional team will be added in the upcoming season," stated PCB.

For the unversed, former chairman of the PCB Management Committee Najam Sethi, in March this year, expressed his strive to expand the PSL by adding two more teams in the next edition.

"If you ask me what are our plans for the next PSL, keeping it brief my strive is to add two more teams. But obviously, this decision is

subject to the approval of the franchises and is impossible without doing the homework," said Sethi.

"That is because if any franchise suffers a loss by the addition of two more franchises then it is not a good thing to do. It must be a win-win situation for everyone. So I'm doing homework on this.

"We had a brief discussion with the franchises and after the conclusion of this PSL, we will formally start consulting them the next month about the addition of teams and the model after the completion of 10 years."

The previous edition of the PSL was won by Lahore Qalandars, who defeated Multan Sultans in the final at Gaddafi Stadium to become the first side to clinch two successive PSL titles.

Islamabad United ended the season as third, while Peshawar Zalmi was fourth in the standings. Karachi Kings and Quetta Gladiators finished fifth and sixth, respectively.

Moeen backs England to end slump with aggressive approach

BENGALURU (Agencies): England may need to take a leaf out of the test side's "Bazball" playbook and reignite their 50-overs World Cup campaign with an aggressive approach against fellow strugglers Sri Lanka, spin all-rounder Moeen Ali said on Wednesday.

Under test coach Brendon "Baz" McCullum England have forged a result-oriented approach in the longest format and Moeen said the one-day team guided by Matthew Mott must look to play more attacking cricket after losing three of their four games.

"The thing is, Bazball is in test cricket. One day cricket's different and we've been playing different all the time," Moeen told reporters ahead of Thursday's match against the 1996 champions at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

"We've been playing aggressive cricket throughout since 2015 and done it quite well. Probably the lack of that way of cricket has cost us a little bit in this tournament. "We haven't been playing that way in my opinion and we need to play that way without slogging the ball. Just be that really aggressive side we know we can be." Defending champions England crashed to a team record 229-run defeat by South Africa in the last game leaving their semi-final hopes hanging by a thread.

The clash with Sri Lanka, who have also lost three of their four games, comes at the right time for England and Moeen said the players had to take responsibility. "We're obviously disappointed from the result and not just the result, but the way we played. But in the competition you've got to move on as quick as you can and regroup," Moeen added.

"Everything is a must-win and we know we've been in this position before, probably not to this degree, but we have to get our confidence and perform well and bat and bowl and field better than we have done so far in this tournament."

Bangladesh Women edge Pakistan in low-scoring first T20I

CHITTAGONG (Agencies): Nahida Akter returned with astonishing figures of 5/8 and powered Bangladesh Women to edge Pakistan Women by five wickets in the first T20I of the three-match series here on Wednesday.

Put into bat first by Bangladesh captain Nigar Sultana, Pakistan Women's batting lineup failed completely and could only accumulate 82 runs before being bundled out in the final over.

The touring side, after 12 overs, were 52/2 with experienced batters Bismah Maroof and Nida Dar at the crease before both set batters perished in the next two successive overs.

Pakistan Women's captain Nida Dar scored 14 in 21 deliveries with the help

of a boundary while Bismah Maroof top-scored with a 29-ball 20.

Pakistan Women then lost three more wickets in quick succession and thus slipped to 67/7 in 16.3 overs. Coming out to bat at number six, Natalia Pervaiz then added valuable runs at the backend with her 16-ball 15 before perishing in the penultimate over.

Bangladesh Women's bowlers then ran through Pakistan's batting tail and booked the visitors on a modest total. Nahida Akter spearheaded Bangladesh's bowling attack with a five-wicket haul while Shorna Akter, Rabeya Khan and Sultana Khatun contributed with a wicket apiece.

In response, Bangladesh Women completed the pur-

suit for the loss of five wickets and three balls to spare.

The home side had a shaky start to the 83-run pursuit as they were two down for 33 in 9.5 overs.

Skipper Nigar Sultana then joined Murshida Khatun in the middle and put together a vital 24-run partnership before the latter perished in the 15th over.

Khatun scored a cautious 40-ball 23 with the help of two boundaries.

Bangladesh Women then lost two more wickets in the modest run chase but their captain Nigar Sultana stood her ground firm and led the home side to a narrow victory in the final over. She top-scored with an unbeaten 26. Her 28-ball knock featured three boundaries.

Islamabad to face Lahore in Inter Division National Basketball C`ship Final

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad and Lahore division emerges victorious in the thrilling semifinal matches of ongoing Inter Division National Basketball Championship at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad.

On day four of the championship, Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Secretary General Khalid Bashir, Federal Basketball Association (FBBAA) Secretary General Ouj E Zahoor, Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Deputy Director General Saeed Akhtar and other dignities were witnessed two exhilarating semifinal matches of the championship which

held under the supervision of the Federal Basketball Association.

The first semifinal featured a nail-biting showdown between the talented squads of Islamabad and Peshawar. The match had fans on the edge of their seats as both teams displayed exceptional skills and fierce determination. After an intense battle, it was Islamabad that emerged victorious with a final score of 67 to 59 points.

Asharab Butt shone as the star player for Islamabad, leading his team with a remarkable 18 points. He was ably supported by Rizwan Khursheed, who contributed 12 crucial points.

Peshawar's efforts were led by Abdul Wahab, who scored 14 points, and M. Faisal, who added 13 more to their total.

The second semifinal featured a dominant performance from Lahore, as they secured an easy win with a final score of 81 to 48 points against defending champion Faisalabad.

Lahore's Saifullah was the standout player, contributing a staggering 22 points to his team's victory. Taimoor Mehdi also played a vital role with 17 points to his name. For Faisalabad, Usman Talib emerged as the top scorer with 11 points, followed closely by Hassan Tariq, who also added 11 points to the scoreboard.

Heard Babar Azam cried after loss to Afghanistan, says Mohammad Yousuf

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Yousuf said that he heard that current skipper Babar Azam cried after the loss to Afghanistan in the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 match on Monday.

Expressing concern for the prolific batter, who tops the ICC Batting Rankings, Yousuf said that he and the entire nation stand behind Babar during this difficult phase. In the match that took place on October 23 between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Afghan team displayed a remarkable performance and secured an eight-wicket victory over the national team.

In the post-match press conference, Babar was visibly disappointed and dejected as he voiced his concerns. "I watched the press conference very carefully, in which Babar looked very worried, I heard that he was crying," Yousuf said while speaking on a private TV channel.

"The outcome of a match should not be attributed to one individual but should be seen as a collective effort involving the entire team and coaching staff," he added. The former batter said that Pakistan should support Babar and the team since they are still not out of the competition.

"Losing is a natural part of the game, and we should all support Babar during this difficult time. We all feel the pain, and it's something every player goes through," Yousuf also pointed out certain areas for serious discussion, including Pakistan's low run total against Afghanistan and the performance of their bowlers. He mentioned that the team appeared to have a fear of losing or losing wickets.

"Don't know what players are thinking," Babar

In his post-match conference, Babar reprimanded the team's poor fielding performance leading to a humiliating World Cup 2023 loss against

Afghanistan in Chennai's Chidambaram Stadium.

Babar blamed below-par performances in bowling and fielding departments for their consecutive third loss in the ongoing mega event. "Players are absent-minded during fielding [...] don't know what they are thinking," the skipper said while admitting that the team is "saddened" after today's loss.

"We didn't perform well in bowling and fielding [departments]", he said and also acknowledged that the "spinners didn't bowl well in the middle overs and didn't put [enough] pressure [on Afghan batters]". The 29-year-old also turned down any "added captaincy pressure" and said that he keeps both aspects of his responsibilities separate from each other. "There is no truth in [team] being under pressure after India's loss." "Our [game] plans are not seeing success [...] Whatever we plan, is not being implemented to the fullest," the skipper added.



PESHAWAR: Captains of teams to participate in Media Cricket League posing for the photographers with President Peshawar Press Club Arshad Aziz Malik. Former PPC President M. Riaz is also present.



In brief

IRSA releases 89,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 89,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 64,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1528.29 feet and was 130.29 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 32,000 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1207.55 feet, which was 157.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 8,500 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 38,400, 45,000, 37,900 and 10,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

ANF recovers 397 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 397 kg drugs and arrested 10 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that four suspects including two women, residents of Charsadda and Peshawar, were arrested near M-1 Motorway Islamabad. ANF recovered 1.2 kg heroin and 1.5 kg Ice drugs from the possession of the accused. A huge quantity of drugs was recovered from secret cavities of the vehicle near Motorway Toll Plaza Sheikhupura. Over 20.4 kg opium and 3.6 kg hashish were recovered from the possession of the accused, a resident of Lower Dir. 900 grams heroin was recovered from the possession of a resident of North Waziristan at Sialkot Airport. The accused was leaving for Dubai by flight number FZ-332. During the operation in the Winder area, a huge amount of hashish was recovered from a truck loaded with apples. 360 kg hashish concealed under apple crates was recovered. Two accused residents of Pishin, who were trying to smuggle hashish to Karachi, were rounded up during the operation.

73rd Nobel Laureate Meetings

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as nine Pakistani young scientists have been selected for participation in the 73rd Nobel Laureate Meetings (NLM) on Physics at Germany. According to a press release issued Wednesday, the interviews of short-listed candidates for participation in the 73rd Nobel Laureate Meetings (NLM) on Physics were held on October 23 in Islamabad. The interaction of Young Pakistani Scientists with Nobel Laureates is a joint programme of HEC, PIEAS, and the Council for Nobel Laureate Meetings in Lindau, Germany. The project is being funded by HEC out of its recurring funds for the promotion of higher education and human resource development in Pakistan. Interview panel comprised of Prof. Dr. Naseem Irfan (Rector, PIEAS), Prof. Dr. Abdullah Sadiq (Former Rector, PIEAS), Dr. Shaikat Hameed (Visiting professor, COMSATS University), Dr. Mutawarra Hussain (Former Director NLM programme), Dr. Aftab Rafiq (Director NLM programme, PIEAS).



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Tourism Syed Wasi Ahmad Fatimi meeting with Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IT Professionals at PTDC Head Office.

Parliament's proactive response on public priorities imperative to raise democratic index

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Parliament's proactive mechanisms to address public priorities, especially the needs of masses, vulnerable classes and youth day is imperative to improve country's standing on international democratic index.

This was stated by Shahida Rehmani, former Member National Assembly (MNA) and Secretary General Women Parliamentary Caucuses, while speaking at the certificate award ceremony of 2nd National Training of Trainers on Parliamentary Studies at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services on Wednesday.

She reiterated that reforms to immediately enhance performance of legislatures was required so that they meet up public expectations on dire challenges of poverty, unemployment and inflation.

She eulogized the remarkable initiative of Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) in organizing this nation-wide ToT with galaxy of university professors teaching courses in parliamentary studies.

Senator Farhat Ullah Babar complimented the PIPS efforts in commencing and consolidating the Parliamentary Studies initiative that had helped introduce courses in 20 universities around the country. PIPS has played an

imperative role of connecting people and the Parliament.

Senator Mushtaq Ahmed highlighted that effective working of the Parliament always kept the executive in check so that it delivers to the people on state-responsibilities.

The PIPS with the support of EU-Mustehkam Parlmaan Project and GIZ organized three-day 2nd National Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop on Parliamentary Studies attended by around 55 participants including 40 faculty members from universities around all federating units of the country as well as the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in addition to learned Members of Parliament and parliamentary experts of the country.

Director General (Research), Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka, shared the three key program objectives to set the context of the 3-day national ToT. He informed that since the start of parliamentary studies in 2015, the PIPS had successfully held 70 orientation sessions, one national ToT in 2017, provided internships to over 250 students, supervised researches on Parliament, produced over 1800 research papers and organized an international conference with more than

11,000 youth across the country discussing "Parliament, Constitution and State Building."

In this context, he shared that this advanced level 2nd National ToT on Parliamentary Studies for Faculty members and parliamentary experts, endeavours:

i. To review, promote and consolidate the teaching of parliamentary studies courses in social science and law degrees in Pakistan;

ii. The National ToT will encourage faculty to supervise Research thesis and papers on various aspects of the working of Parliament;

iii. ToT will help consolidate a Network of MPs, academicians and parliamentary experts all over the country who can inculcate the democratic values of "we agree to disagree," and "unity of diversity," as envisioned by the Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the founding father of Pakistan.

iv. The ToT has been designed in a way that it will enable faculty members to contribute in reiterating inclusivity, national cohesion and responsible citizenship amongst our youth.

v. ToT will streamline the promotion of courses on parliamentary studies in universities and law schools.

PR all set to upgrade Rawalpindi Railway Station

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is all set to upgrade and commercialize the Victoria-era Rawalpindi Railway Station aimed at facilitating the passengers and making it the business hub, considering its location in the centre of business activities.

"The Railway Station is built a century ago in a British style, the value addition to station and its surroundings would make it commercially viable and would generate significant revenues for all the stakeholders involved", an official in the Ministry told APP. He said the upgradation was already decided in a

meeting that reviewed the upgradation as well as commercialization plan of Rawalpindi Railway Station, and observed that the railway stations will remain important commercial hub in the future, earning substantial revenue and generating economic opportunities at a large scale. The official said that besides improving passenger facilities, the redevelopment of Rawalpindi Railway Station can become a business hub.

As per the plan, he said around 100-kanal space available adjacent to Jinnah Road (City Saddar Road) would be commercialized,

besides uplifting the railway station. However, the Victorian-era building depicting 'Indo-Saracenic' architecture will remain intact. He said the main purpose of the plan is to redevelop the Rawalpindi Railway Station as a business hub and multi-model network; expanding platforms and creating separate cargo platforms; bringing inside the retail space; service apartments and motels; connecting it to all transport services; ensuring energy as well as water efficiency and commercially and financially viable interventions on the adjacent land.

Police ensuring enhanced security measures in high-security zone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police have taken robust measures to bolster security arrangements in the high-security zone and ensure effective measures around important buildings.

The diligent efforts of the Islamabad Capital Police teams in the high-security zone have been instrumental in ensuring the safety and security of crucial hearings in the superior courts.

Under the guidance of senior police officers, police spokesman said that all personnel on duty have been instructed to prioritize the security of vital government offices, superior courts, and embassies situated within the high-security zone.

Furthermore, strict adherence to duty protocols has been emphasized, with all officers and personnel urged to display unwavering commitment in maintaining peace and security. Any form of negligence or complacency during duty hours is strictly prohibited.

Islamabad Capital Police is resolutely implementing all necessary measures to safeguard the lives and property of the citizens. Any disruptions to public peace will be dealt with firmly and swiftly. Citizens are earnestly requested to collaborate with the police by promptly reporting any suspicious activities or items to their respective police station or by contacting the emergency helpline "Pucar-15."

Meranwhile, In a concerted effort to tackle pending cases and bolster law enforcement, the Islamabad Police, under the guidance of the City Police Officer, initiated a comprehensive ten-day campaign that yielded commendable outcomes. During the campaign period, the focus was on expediting pending cases, ensuring the completion of prosecutions, and the successful apprehension of wanted criminals, showcasing the department's commitment to maintaining law and order.

14 FIRs registered for violating dengue SOPs in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Health Authority (DHA) had lodged 14 FIRs and sealed two premises on violations of anti-dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood Wednesday said that the health department, in collaboration with allied departments, had issued tickets to 15 and imposed a fine of Rs 157,000 on violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours.

Presently, the health officer informed that 86 patients were admitted to different district health facilities, of which 60 were confirmed cases while 2,125 were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad added that with the arrival of 16 more cases during the last 24 hours, the district's total tally had reached 2,186 confirmed cases.

Among the new cases, he informed that ten patients had arrived from the Potohar town urban area, three from the Municipal Corporation area and one each from Potohar rural and Gujjar Khan area.

Ismail Gulgee remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Globally famous painter and sculptor Ismail Gulgee was remembered Wednesday on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

Born on October 25, 1926 in Peshawar, he was a qualified engineer in the U.S. and self-taught abstract painter and portrait painter. Before 1959, as a portraitist, he painted the entire Afghan royal family. Initially, he went to Aligarh University to study civil engineering before heading off to USA for continuing his higher education. Gulgee started to paint while acquiring his training as an engineer in the United States at Columbia University and then Harvard. His first exhibition was held in 1950.

Gulgee was a gifted and consummately skilled naturalistic portrait painter. He was perhaps best known worldwide for his abstract work, which was inspired by Islamic calligraphy and was also influenced by the "action painting" movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

'LDF entitlement not charity for climate vulnerable countries'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) is an entitlement for the climate vulnerable countries and not a charity which the developed world must understand to ensure climate justice. She was addressing at a Pre-COP28 national consultation titled "Community resilience to disasters and climatic hazards- Amplifying voices of the vulnerable people from the frontline" as keynote speaker organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in partnership with Oxfam, Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) and other partners.

Senator Sherry Rehman said the global climate change discourse has shifted inwards with the focus on indigenous solutions to cope with the risks of environmental degradation.

In Pakistan, she said that there was a hope that it would receive something from the international community because it had emerged as the most vulnerable country due to climate change despite very low carbon emissions.

The Senator said this cynicism must end that if the country is not getting compensation for its losses at the hands of climate catastrophes, then it should halt cli-

mate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. "These are the rights of a country like Pakistan to address its climate vulnerability if there is no help from the world community. Don't let your minds affected by cynicism and colonization," she said.

In his welcome remarks, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said it is easy to make policy for the vulnerable communities, but it is they who are the best teachers to guide policy decisions for preventive and mitigation measures during climate catastrophes due to their direct exposure to the natural hazards and their local knowledge which is of paramount importance.

"Pakistan should also establish its own loss and damage fund to address the inequalities due to climate crisis as there are areas that are variably impacted due to climate disasters" he suggested.

Executive Director, Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC) Aisha Khan said it is necessary to observe the geography of the country to learn about the socio-economic realities that vary from community to community and area to area for informed climate action. She mentioned that the communities' voices exist, but it did not matter and for that it is necessary to empower those voices through inclusive engagement.

'World AIDS Day' to be observed with full zeal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretake Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan on Wednesday said that the 'World AIDS Day' would be observed on December 1 with full zeal and zest.

He was chairing a preparatory meeting in that regard, which was attended by representatives from Common Management Unit, APLHIV, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO.

The minister said HIV outbreaks typically occurred due to factors like unsafe injection practices, unprotected sexual activity, or the sharing of contaminated needles. "It is essential to address these issues through education, prevention, and healthcare interventions," he added.

Dr Nadeem said, "We do not want to see another outbreak of HIV like Larkana, Ratodero (Sindh) in 2019," adding the government was committed towards controlling AIDS.

"Our work will ensure that people of all ages, genders, and population groups have equitable access to life-saving HIV prevention and treatment services based on the most up-to-date science," the minister said. He said that World AIDS Day was a time to show support and solidarity for individuals living with HIV. "This can include providing information on available resources, support groups, and advocating for the rights and well-being of people with HIV," he added.

MD NBF invites neighbour countries to open cultural book corners

ISLAMABAD (APP): Managing Director (MD) of the National Book Foundation Dr. Raja Mazhar Hameed on Wednesday opened its book corners to foreign countries to exchange the culture of reading books and to provide an environment to promote reading habits in future generations. Talking to the PTV news channel, he stressed that reading books is important for everybody to cope with new knowledge in the changing world of the technological age.

He further said that the aim of NBF is to promote book reading culture in different countries and organize exhibitions at national and international levels.

He appreciated the efforts of NBF and

the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies in the way of book culture promotion and literary activities in the country. Besides the government, all segments of society need to play an effective role in the promotion of book-reading habits in the country, he added. In response to a question, he said that book corners of different countries will help our children to understand the values and cultures of each community and lead to mutual coexistence. National Book Foundation (NBF) has taken various initiatives to launch a series of innovative projects to promote book reading culture, he said, adding, recently NBF had opened an Indonesia book corner which helps learn about the culture of this country.

Residents welcome CDA's user-friendly service

ISLAMABAD (APP): The residents of the federal capital have welcomed the initiative of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to introduce a user-friendly online payment service for utility bills as a part of the digitalization process, ensuring customers' convenience.

"The online payment service is set to simplify the payment process for all utility bills to offer a more convenient and efficient way for customers to fulfil their financial responsibilities," said a resident Fateh Muhammad.

He said the advantages of the digital payment service go beyond convenience as allowing residents to pay their utility bills online minimizes the environmental hazards caused by paper billing and physical transactions.

Another resident, Naseem Begum said that it is a direly needed step towards

reducing the use of cash and promoting a more secure and efficient financial system.

Such steps bring ease and comfort in the lives of the general public and ensure a safe and secure payment system which are important at a time when societies are becoming cashless.

Another user of this online facility, Shagufta Mehmood who is a working woman said that today is the era of digitalization and all institutions and departments must adopt digital ways to compete internationally. Digitalization of such services which are accessed by the general public is essential to make their life easier and ensure transparency. The CDA has taken a significant step toward enhancing customer convenience and digitalization by introducing a user-friendly online payment service for utility bills, an official in the authority told APP.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Mushaal Hussein Mullickin a group photograph with students during Mefil-e-Milad in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) at Roots International Schools and Colleges.

Baghlan man freed

PUL-I-KHUMRI (Pajhwok): Security forces have rescued a 75-year-old man from confinement at the hands of his sons in Pul-i-khumri, the capital of northern Baghlan province. Police spokesman Maulvi Sher Ahmad Burhani said the elderly man, Syed Gul, had been chained in his house by his sons in the Hussainkhel village of Pul-i-khumri. He said the man, around 75 years-old, was rescued on Tuesday, had been kept in confinement by his sons for the last 15 months.

The Frontier Post

Rabi-us-Sanni 09, 1445 — Thursday, October 26, 2023

Moscow to stay in touch

KABUL (Pajhwok): Moscow will continue to stay in touch with Beijing, Tehran and Islamabad on Afghanistan, says a senior Russian diplomat. The Russian presidential envoy for Afghanistan said: "There are no plans for such (contacts) with exact dates in the near future." Zamir Kabulov, however, indicated his country remain in contact with the regional quartet. "But we have no concrete dates," Zamir Kabulov told TASS.

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

WFP: EU's \$21m to aid Afghans in need

KABUL (TOLOnews): The World Food Program reported more than \$21 million in aid from the European Union to Afghanistan will be distributed to needy people in Afghanistan.

"The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Afghanistan welcomes a humanitarian aid contribution over US\$21.6million from the European Union. This contribution will help WFP reach a planned 21 million vulnerable, food-insecure people across the country," report said.

But in the corner of Kabul city, Shir Zaman, 62, said he has received 3,000 afs in aid once in the past two years and complains about what he sees as a reduction in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

"I have not received help so far. I go daily from morning to night and buy bread whatever I get, the rest of the money is spent on rent until I get home," Shir Zaman told TOLOnews.

The Ministry of Economy asked institutions and other countries to continue supporting the Afghan people and to invest in the

development sector of the country.

"With the coming of winter, the people of Afghanistan need help and the international community has to pay attention to this issue and our demand is that the aid should not be only humanitarian, development programs should also be in hand," said Abdul Latif Nazari, Deputy Minister of Economy.

"If this aid is distributed fairly and honestly, it will solve the problems of the people for a while," said Qutbuddin, an economic analyst.

Iran expelling illegal Afghan migrants, not anti-Afghan



TEHRAN (Khaama Press): While Afghan citizens are being expelled from Iran, the Iranian Minister of Interior Affairs has clarified in a recent statement that addressing illegal immigrants entering the country doesn't imply being against Afghans.

Ahmad Vahidi, the Iranian Minister of Interior Affairs, has stated in a press briefing that Afghan immigrants who have entered Iran without proper legal documentation should promptly depart from the country.

He has stated that in the past month alone, approximately 200,000 Afghan migrants who had entered the Islamic Republic of Iran illegally have been returned to Afghanistan.

Mr. Vahidi emphasized the need for a more robust judicial mechanism to deal with individuals who are repatriated and return.

On the other hand, the Iranian Minister of Interior Affairs stressed that the expulsion of Afghan citizens from Iran is unrelated to the water issue between Iran and Afghanistan.

These remarks come as Afghanistan has witnessed a recent surge in the forced return of Afghan migrants from Iran and Pakistan.

The Pakistani Ministry of Interior has given migrants without legal documentation until November 1st to leave the country. Pakistan has warned that if these migrants do not depart by the specified date, they will be forcibly deported, and their properties and businesses will be seized.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation of Afghanistan announced that over 8,000 Afghan migrants have been forcibly repatriated from Iran and Pakistan in recent days.

Restrictions imposed on banking sector be lifted

KABUL (Agencies): In a meeting with the United Nations Special Coordinator for Afghanistan, officials at Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) demanded the release of the country's foreign exchange reserves and said that due to the problems of the Afghan people, the restrictions imposed on the country's banking sector should be removed.

Hedayatullah Badri, acting chief of DAB, met and discussed some financial and banking issues with Feridun Sinirlioglu, the special coordinator of the United Nations for Afghanistan affairs, the bank said in a statement.

Badri said that DAB is looking for better relations with all the financial and banking institutions of the world in the light of international laws and regulations.

He asked the special coordinator of the United Nations to present a real report of the developments



in Afghanistan to the international community so that the international community can get real information about the developments in Afghanistan.

Also, in the meeting, Director General of the Governor's Office Department, Sediqullah Khalid, referring to the

restrictions imposed on the banking sector, provided detailed information about the developments in the banking sector to the UN special coordinator, saying that due to the problems of the people of Afghanistan, the restrictions should be removed on this sector.

Khalid called the coun-

try's foreign exchange reserves the right of the Afghan people and pointed out that blocking these reserves affects the Afghan people. He expressed hope that the international community would take effective steps in this regard for the benefit of the Afghan people.

Richard Bennett reports to UNGA: Afghanistan facing many challenges

KABUL (Agencies): The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, said that Afghanistan is facing a convergence of challenges, including a deteriorating human rights situation.

He said in a report to the UN General Assembly this was due to the Islamic Emirates repressive policies and practices, a culture of impunity, an ongoing humanitarian and economic crisis, recent deadly earthquakes, and the possibility of massive involuntary returns [from Pakistan], all of which require urgent action to avoid further suffering and potential instability in the country and the region.

He said: "A grave picture has emerged, providing a glimpse of what may lie ahead for the human rights of many Afghans,

particularly women and girls, and also for other groups including human rights defenders, journalists, ethnic and linguistic minorities, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, former government officials and military and security personnel."

He also said the recent earthquakes had severely affected already vulnerable communities in Herat, and urged the international community to provide needed assistance.

The expert stressed the need to resume the education of girls beyond the sixth grade and women's tertiary education, noting that the IEA had repeatedly stated that the suspension was temporary.

"The Taliban's (IEA) actions may amount to gender persecution," Bennett said. "Systematic discrimination, oppression and seg-



regation of women and girls require further examination of the evolving phenomenon of 'gender apartheid'."

However, the Islamic Emirate has repeatedly said that international institutions do not reflect the true image of Afghanistan, especially when it comes to human rights, they rely more on propaganda.

"We are a war-torn country, there were no economic resources, and we are try-

ing to revive the economic resources so that they can be created in order to eliminate the poverty and hardship of the people." In this regard, we don't sit quietly and work day and night, but unfortunately, these organizations always focus on the negative points instead of the positive points in publishing their reports, and which is devoid of truth," said Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Islamic Emirate.

NRC Country Director calls for world's engagement with Kabul

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Norwegian Refugee Council's country director for Afghanistan has called for the world to diplomatically engage with Afghanistan.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with TOLOnews, Neil Turner said that the ties are important for delivering humanitarian aid to needy Afghans for the reconstruction of the country. "The Norwegian Refugee Council is a humanitarian, impartial and independent organization. I don't think that we have an opinion on recognition, what we are calling for is diplomatic engagement, so we need to make sure that there is some future with the support of the wider international community for Afghanistan and that ought to be possible. We need to have diplomatic representation within Afghanistan, there are many embassies that are here, but we need more," said Neil Turner, NRC's country director for Afghanistan.

The country director said that current limitations on Afghan women and girls will harm the future of the country he urged a change in the policies. "We are obviously calling for those [limitations on women] to be lifted, one is the education system where women and girls are not allowed to proceed to secondary school or university. That is very damaging for the future of



Afghanistan because where are the nurses and the doctors other professionals going to come from if you are excluding half the population from higher education? So obviously there needs to be a change in that policy," said Neil Turner, NRC's country director for Afghanistan. Norwegian Refugee Council's country director for Afghanistan stressed the need for better planning for Afghanistan and a regional mechanism for resolving the problems of Afghan refugees settled in the neighboring countries.

Neil Turner has too criticized the

forced repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan and added that return should be voluntary.

"We have to make sure we have job facilities for people who want to stay in their former settlements... and also those who want to return maybe to the place of origin which they may not been to for many years but they are also able to return... return should be voluntary and based on the international law so that people are not forced to return if they don't want to," said Neil Turner, NRC's country director for Afghanistan.

Afghanistan ranks last in global index on women's status



NEW YORK (Agencies): Afghanistan ranks worst of 177 countries in terms of the status of women, according to this year's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) index released Tuesday in New York.

The WPS Index is published by Georgetown

University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and the Centre on Gender, Peace and Security at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

It draws on recognized data sources to measure women's inclusion, justice and security in 177 coun-

tries. The WPS Index uses 13 indicators to measure women's status, ranging from education and employment to laws and organized violence, PRIO said.

Denmark leads the 2023 rankings as the top country to be a woman, scoring more than three times high-

er than Afghanistan at the bottom. Yemen ranks second lowest and the Central African Republic is third in the global listing.

The United States ranks 37th this year, scoring similarly to Slovenia, Bulgaria and Taiwan in the second quintile.

"Since 2021, Afghanistan has ranked the worst in the world to be a woman. Afghan women wake up each day to no jobs, no education and no autonomy over their lives. This report should serve as a wake-up call to world leaders that all Afghanistan's women are imprisoned," said Torunn L. Tryggestad, Director of the Peace Research Institute Oslo's Centre for Gender, Peace and Security.

This comes as the IEA has repeatedly said that it is committed to ensuring women's rights according to Sharia.

Story of an Afghan woman who said, 'if hunger doesn't kill us, cold will'

KABUL (Khaama Press): Today, the cold winter winds have arrived, causing a frail elderly woman to shiver as she bears the weight of her suffering daily, with the wear and tear of her life's journey behind her.

She is an elderly, delicate woman who shoulders the responsibility of her family all alone. Amidst the other challenges of life, her greatest fear is the arrival of the winter season. She often says, "If hunger doesn't kill us, the cold certainly will."

As the winter season approaches, the concerns of the impoverished segment

of society grow increasingly severe, and 50-year-old Reza Gul is among those who consider winter a "life-threatening disaster" for the poor.

Reza Gul, just a few days before the rise of the Taliban, had become a refugee in Kabul from Herat due to the war. The passage of time and her displacement without proper shelter have gradually pushed her towards a slow and agonizing death.

Signs of destitution manifest in every corner of this family's four walls: signs of illness, despair, and the hardships brought by the advent of the Taliban

administration in Afghanistan. She sits in a cold room, narrating the highs and lows of her life. The lines and wrinkles on her forehead bear witness to the hardships and injustices that have unfairly burdened her.

Mohsen, Reza Gul's husband, cannot work due to his advancing age and the loss of physical abilities. This has led Reza Gul to take matters into her own hands. She uses a handcart to sell various plastic items in the city and the market.

Reza Gul lives with her sick husband and two children. Parviz, her eleven-year-old son, is battling

stomach cancer, and his condition deteriorates daily. His illness has prevented him from attending school, and he works as a porter with a handcart, earning 50 Afghani a day.

Reza Gul says that Parviz's illness is worsening every day. He loses weight daily, and doctors have diagnosed his condition as cancer. The lack of financial means and access to healthcare facilities has made Parviz vulnerable to the disease, and his mother watches as her son takes steps closer to death each day.

Parviz says, "When I come home from outside, I

wish we had good food. We could have lived well. We could have had a good home." Parviz last had a proper meal at one of their relatives' homes, and it has been at least three months since then.

A young girl in tattered clothes is visible on the other side of these four walls. They call her Parveen. She is the youngest member of the family and the only one with an education. While her eyes are filled with tears, she expresses her wish for a life like others, having a home where they could sleep peacefully without the fear of winter,

rain, and the ceiling collapsing.

The four walls, devoid of doors and windows, where Reza Gul and her family live, have been entrusted to them by a man, according to him, as a form of charity for a specified period. Previously, these four walls were used to shelter animals like sheep and cows, but now they serve as a refuge for Reza Gul. The allotted time for living in these four walls is until the end of the winter season.

Reza Gul says, "When the sky becomes cloudy, my fear starts because our room lacks doors and windows. Rainwater easily

enters the room, and my little daughter and I throw the water outside with a bucket and flatten the rugs and mattresses again."

She says that after displacement and life's hardships, she couldn't provide household items like rugs, mattresses, and blankets for herself.

Reza Gul continues, "If we had shelter, we wouldn't need to worry day and night about covering the gaps, cracks, and holes in the roof of these four walls without doors and windows. I could go to sleep with peace of mind."

Reza Gul, who is in a dire economic situation

with her family, appeals for help from humanitarian organizations. She says, "We don't have enough food to eat, and we don't have wood or coal to heat our home. My sick husband needs warm air, but our house is cold. My children eat in the cold every night. I don't have the means to treat my son, who has cancer, and every day, he gets closer to death, and there's nothing I can do. I can only watch, and I can do nothing for my son."

Reza Gul says that if their life continues this way, the cold weather will eventually lead to the death of her and her family.

President stresses upon holding of free, fair, credible elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday emphasized that for the future of the country, free, fair and credible elections should be held in which all the political parties be given a level-playing field to contest.

In an interview with a private Tv (Geo News) talk show, the president said different quarters were talking about ensuring level-playing field to all the political parties in the country. He said the basic norm should be the democracy and all the political leaders should be given equal opportunities to contest the upcoming elections.

To a question, the president maintained that he had condemned 9th May incidents as he was always against such acts of damaged and destruction. To another query, he said that the constitution provided that a president might continue in the office till election of his successor and as the electoral requirement could not be met in the absence of assemblies, so leaving his office in vacuum was not good for him. In the parliamentary system, changes could take place to governments, he said adding, in the past, unconstitutional elements had derailed the democratic system in the country.

The president expressed that despite difficult times, the country was moving on the path to democracy and there was a path to move forward. Appreciating former premier Benazir Bhutto, the president recollected that during 2001 when he was arrested and sent to jail, he

was told by the jail authorities that contrary to dictatorship era, the environment in jails had been changed under the PPP government.

He said credit should be given to the PPP as a political party that was the standard bearer of democracy and women's rights.

The president also lauded former president Asif Ali Zardari for raising the slogan of 'Pakistan Khappay'. To a question, the president said the people had the confidence in the superior courts and appreciated incumbent Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Isa as 'highly respectable personality', adding that the CJP had unified the court.

The nation had great expectations from Justice Qazi Faez Isa, he said and expressed the optimism that the CJP would deliver. The president also reiterated that he had not sent reference against Justice Isa, as he had received it from the office of former prime minister who also maintained that he was not willing to send it. Elaborating his viewpoint, the president said that the democratic system in the country was continuing but there was always a danger from a lobby that had been working to project that the democratic system in the country had failed.

"There is need to unite the country. Pardoning and forbearing are the qualities that can build nations," he added. In the religion of Islam, he said, consultation and public opinion were given due importance and with regard to the democratic system, the Islamic traditions were marvelous, he opined. About holding of elections in

the country, the president said that the matter was subjudice before the courts that would decide the issue. President Alvi termed the number of out of school children, mental health, malnutrition and stunting issues as the grave ones which could not be resolved if they continued their political wrangling.

The president reiterated that two-state was the only solution to Palestine issue, adding on March 23, 1943 two resolutions were passed, one for Pakistan and other for Palestine. Pakistan pursued a policy over Palestine as pronounced by its founder Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he maintained.

Feeling immense grief over a video clip showing a Palestinian child, identifying the bodies of his parents, the president decried it as huge cruelty to the Palestinian people and stressed that no one could accept such inhuman acts. The president said in the Islamic teachings, sanctity was accorded to a human life.

To a query, he replied that on September 13, he had sent a letter to the Election Commission of Pakistan for holding of elections in the country and suggestion to consult the superior judiciary over the issue. He said that election law was changed under an amendment and signed by the acting president when he proceeded to Hajj. The president further said that the caretaker law minister and the relevant caretaker provincial ministers were of the opinion that the President had no mandate to give a date for holding of the elections in the country after the amendment.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the 12th All Pakistan Camp of Pakistan Girl Guides Association.

Pakistan asks UN to hold Israel accountable for war crimes in Gaza

NEW YORK (NNI): At a tense UN Security Council meeting on Tuesday, Pakistan reiterated its strong condemnation of Israeli air strikes and military action in Gaza, warning that further massive civilian casualties in the Palestinian enclave could trigger a 'wider and more dangerous' conflict.

"Pakistan calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire," Ambassador Munir Akram said during a 15-member Council's high-level debate on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

"Continuation of the Israeli campaign in the Gaza will lead to further massive civilian casualties and could trigger a wider and more dangerous conflict," the Pakistani envoy told the meeting addressed by a total of 86 speakers from countries and regional groups – including more than twenty ministers – that pushed the conflict to the centre of world geopolitics.

In his speech to the Security Council, Ambassador Akram conveyed Pakistan's full support and solidarity with Palestinian brothers and sisters in these tragic and challenging times. Israel's relentless and indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza over the last 17 days has killed more than 5,800 people and injured another 16,000, the Pakistani envoy said, 'strongly and unequivocally' condemning Israel's airstrikes and military actions in Gaza, particularly attacks on schools, residential buildings and hospitals.

"These Israeli attacks on civilians, civilian objects and infrastructure, blockade of water, food and fuel as well as the forced transfer of people from the occupied territory, are flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes," he said, adding those responsible for these atrocity crimes

must be held accountable.

Ambassador Akram regretted the Security Council has been unable to issue a call for a ceasefire. "In this regard, a heavy responsibility rests on those who contribute to the prolongation of this conflict," he said.

Last week, the Security Council failed to adopt two previous draft resolutions addressing the escalation in the Middle East. The first from Russia calling for an immediate ceasefire, failed to get enough votes, while a Brazilian draft was vetoed by the United States. Although it called for humanitarian pauses for aid access, the US determined objected to the fact it did not mention Israel's right to self-defence. "Any attempt to create a false equivalence between Israel, the occupying power, and the Palestinians, the victims of this occupation, is untenable – legally, morally and politically," the Pakistani envoy said.

The displacement of the Palestinian population of Gaza violated international humanitarian law, he said, demanding that the Council must reject Israel's attempts to displace the Gazans, within or outside Gaza. Under international law, he said, the struggle of people living under foreign occupation for self-determination and national liberation is legitimate and cannot be equated with terrorism. "It is the suppression of this struggle, which is illegal," the Pakistani envoy said, pointing out that throughout history, colonial powers have portrayed national liberation movements as terrorism. "Some in this council have offered protection to their allies who are oppressing occupied peoples in Palestine or Kashmir," he said.

"Under the UN Charter, States have the right of self-defence against attacks on their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Yet, a State, which is in forcible occupation of a foreign

territory, cannot invoke the 'right to self-defence' against those whose territory it has illegally occupied," Ambassador Akram.

"The perpetuation of Israeli occupation will not bring peace to the Holy Land. Durable peace will emerge from the internationally agreed two-state solution and from the creation of a secure, viable, contiguous, and sovereign state of Palestine on the basis of the pre-June 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital." During the day-long debate, most speakers voiced alarm at the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, stressing the need for water, fuel and medicine to enter the besieged enclave. Many delegates underscored the urgent need to avoid a regional conflagration and to recommit to a two-state solution.

The speakers, however, varied in emphasis, with some full-throatedly asserting Israel's right to defend itself against an existential terror threat, while others deplored the blockade and the seemingly indiscriminate nature of the strikes and called for international law to be respected.

Riad Al-Malliki, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine, urged the Council and the international community to put an end to the ongoing massacres perpetrated by the occupying Power, Israel, against the Palestinian civilian population. "The Security Council has a duty to stop them. Continued failure at this council is inexcusable," he emphasized, calling on the 15-member organ to call for a ceasefire, secure humanitarian access in all parts of Gaza, end the forced displacement, provide international protection for the Palestinian people, and achieve justice through accountability.

FM Jilani, Kyrgyz president discuss strengthening multiple bilateral ties

BISHKEK (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Wednesday called on President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Zhaparov, and exchanged views on the current state and prospects of Kyrgyz-Pakistani bilateral cooperation.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 22nd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization being held in Bishkek.

On Thursday, Pakistan will assume the Chair of CHG SCO.

The meeting will be attended by the heads of government of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, vice-president of Iran, and foreign ministers of Pakistan and India. SCO observer

states namely Belarus and Mongolia as well as guest state Turkmenistan will also attend the meeting.

In a post on the social media platform 'X', Foreign Minister Jilani said that in the meeting, he conveyed warm greetings of the Pakistan leadership and people.

Both sides expressed a mutual desire to build stronger economic, political, and educational relations.

The Kyrgyz leader noted that Pakistan occupied an important place in the system of international and regional relations, and Kyrgyzstan was interested in developing cooperation in bilateral and multilateral formats, according to Kabar, the national news agency of Kyrgyzstan.

He emphasized great opportunities for increasing the volume of mutual trade between the countries.

In this context, Zhaparov expressed interest in diversification of export-import positions with Pakistan, and active work with Pakistani investors on promising projects. Jalil Abbas Jilani conveyed warm words of greetings to the Kyrgyz head of state from President Arif Alvi and Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. He expressed Pakistan's readiness to further establish relations between the two countries in all spheres of mutual interest. Foreign Minister Jilani extended an invitation to Sadyr Zhaparov to visit Pakistan.

Court issues perpetual arrest warrants for 10 PTI leaders

ISLAMABAD (NND): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Wednesday issued perpetual arrest warrants for 10 PTI leaders, including Murad Saeed, Omar Ayub Khan and Ali Amin Gandapur, in the Judicial Complex attack case.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain issued warrants for the PTI leaders for not appearing in the court despite having been repeatedly issued summons.

Others whose warrants were issued were: Shibli Faraz, Farrukh Habib, Hammad Azhar, Ali Nawaz Awan, Hassaan Khan Niazi, Umar Sultan and Colonel (r) Muhammad Asim. The judge said that since all of them had been declared proclaimed offenders (POs), they should be arrested whenever and wherever police found them.

On the other hand, PTI leader Tayyaba Raja filed a petition in the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday, seeking details of the cases she was nominated in. She made the federal government, the Punjab government, DG FIA and IG Police respondents in her petition.

Court issues non-bailable arrest warrants for Gill

ISLAMABAD (NNI): A court in Islamabad on Wednesday for the second time issued non-bailable arrest warrants for PTI stalwart Shahbaz Gill in the case of inciting people to rebellion. However, citing the Supreme Court of Pakistan order, Additional Sessions Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra said that the apex court had directed that trial against Imad Yousaf, a co-accused in the case, be brought to a close.

Sipra ordered the SHO to arrest and produce Gill in the court whenever and wherever he was seen.



ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a group photo with party senior members after meeting.

Exposure of government sponsored propaganda unveils disturbing realities

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In a startling revelation, it has come to light that the government's social media teams, operating under the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regime, have been actively involved in propagating misleading narratives. Through official social media accounts, a deliberate attempt was made on May 9th to inflame emotions among workers and the general public, inciting them to attack military installations.

Documents indicate a staggering budget allocation of 870 million PKR in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's budget for this particular project. Shockingly, these

funds were utilized to fuel divisive propaganda through the social media teams. These teams were specifically instructed to spread condemnatory messages amid the annual developmental program. What makes this revelation even more alarming is the blatant misuse of social media platforms for political gains, propaganda campaigns, and disseminating false information.

The employees involved in these government-sponsored social media teams were drawing monthly salaries ranging from 25,000 to 40,000 PKR, all funded by taxpayers' money.

A meticulous investigation into 800 existing accounts engaged in anti-

government propaganda was conducted. Surprisingly, 72.5% of these accounts exhibited no political bias towards PTI before 2021.

However, a significant shift occurred after June 2022, with 86% of these accounts aligning themselves with PTI's opposition.

This change in political allegiance prompted the initiation of posting PTI's narratives on these 86% social media accounts, further deepening concerns about the ethical implications of government-funded misinformation campaigns. The revelation underscores the urgent need for transparency, accountability, and responsible use of social media platforms in the country's political landscape.

India to resume some visa services in Canada

MUMBAI (Reuters): India will resume some visa services in Canada with effect from Oct. 26, its High Commission said on Wednesday, in a move that could reduce tensions caused by the murder of a Sikh separatist leader in Canada.

India last month suspended new visas for Canadians

and asked Canada to reduce its diplomatic presence after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited what he said was credible evidence of a potential link between Indian agents and the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, in a Vancouver suburb in June. Canada subsequently with-

drew 41 diplomats. India denies any connection to the shooting. On Wednesday, the Indian High Commission said it had decided to resume issuing some categories of visas after reviewing the security situation and taking into account recent Canadian measures, which it did not enumerate.

49 PIA flights cancelled amid financial crunch

KARACHI (NNI): The payment of Rs70 million to the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) failed to produce desired results for the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) as another 49 flights of the airline were cancelled on Wednesday. Karachi-Lahore flights PK-302, PK-303, PK-304 and PK-305 were cancelled.

Similarly, Karachi to Faisalabad flights PK-340, PK-341, Karachi-Islamabad flights PK-368, PK-369, Karachi-Gwadar flights PK-503, PK-504, Karachi to Multan flights PK-330 and PK-331 were cancelled.

Likewise Islamabad to Sharjah flights PK-181 and PK-182, Islamabad to Dubai flights PK-233, PK-211 and PK-234, Islamabad to Gilgit flights PK-601, PK-602, PK-605 and PK-606, Islamabad to Riyadh flights PK-753, PK-754 were also cancelled. Similarly, Islamabad to Skardu flights PK-451 and PK-452, Islamabad to Sukkur flights PK-631 and PK-632, Islamabad to Abu Dhabi flights PK-261 and PK-262, and Islamabad to Damam flight PK-246 were also cancelled. Lahore to Dubai flights PK-235, PK-203 and PK-204, Lahore to Jeddah flight PK-759 and Abu Dhabi to Lahore flight PK-264 were also cancelled.

Sialkot to Sharjah flights PK-209, PK-210, Sialkot to Masqat flights PK-281, PK-282 and Dubai-Sialkot flight PK-180 failed to take off either. Likewise Peshawar to Dubai flights PK-283, PK-284, Peshawar to Sharjah flights PK-257 and PK-258 and Abu Dhabi to Peshawar flight PK-218 were also cancelled. PK-224 flight from Dubai to Faisalabad, PK-293 flight from Multan to Sharjah and Dubai to Multan flight PK-222 were also cancelled.

SC rejects Army Housing Dte's plea as inadmissible

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Supreme Court of Pakistan Wednesday threw out the petition filed by the Army Housing Directorate against the Sindh High Court's (SHC) order of stopping construction of a multi-storey building in Askari-IV, Karachi, saying it was inadmissible for hearing.

A three-member bench of the apex court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa, heard the directorate's petition. Raising objections to the petition, the SC asked as to what was the legal status of the directorate. "Is anywhere in the constitution, Rules of Business 1983, or in any other law there is any information about the subject?" the CJP asked. He said that since

the directorate had no legal status, it could not file a petition. "The directorate is neither a corporation nor a welfare organization," he remarked.

When, he went on to say, neither the law nor the constitution recognized it, then how could it file a plea?

"If the directorate is an aggrieved party, it can file the petition, and that too through the federal government," CJP Isa said, adding, "In this case, the directorate has made the federal government and others respondents."

He wondered whether in this case the federal government had filed the petition against itself.

Speaking on the occasion, Advocate Abid Zuberi said it was the presidential order of 1982 under which

the Directorate was established. The chief justice asked Zuberi where in the order reference had been made to the constitution. "Read article 245, and tell us what does it say?" Justice Athar Minallah asked Zuberi.

Reading out the article, the lawyer said that under it the armed forces, on the order of the federal government, were bound to defend the country from aggression. Justice Minallah remarked this showed that the armed forces had no other business except what was laid down in the article. CJP Isa asked Zuberi being a senior lawyer, how he deemed it appropriate to defend an organization, which did not have any constitutional status.

Provincial gov't always welcome foreign investment: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has said that the provincial government will always welcome foreign investment for the development of the province and wellbeing of its people; and will extend all possible support to foreign investors willing to invest here. He has said that since the province has suffered a lot due to regional issues prevailing for the last so many decades, and as such it needs more and more investment specially in the field of Science & Technology and Information Technology; and there is a lot of scope for foreign investment in these sectors in the province adding that the overall environment for foreign investment is also conducive in the province.

He was talking to a delegation of US-based private investor firms who called on him here on Wednesday and discussed with him matters related to investment in various sectors in the province. Caretaker Provincial Minister for ST & IT, Dr.

Najeebullah and other relevant authorities were also present on the occasion.

It was informed on the occasion that TRAM- a US-based investment firm has agreed to invest in a fund worth 100 million US dollar for the development and growth of startups and growing companies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; and an MoU to this effect has already been signed between the department of ST & IT and TRAM.

It was further told that the investment will be deployed across a range of sectors including Information Technology, Fin-Tech, Bio-Tech and Artificial Intelligence. Similarly, the department of ST&IT has inked an MoU with another US-based company-TINGO with the aim of rolling out its proven business model in the region, and accelerate digital transformation; it was further told and added that, through the MoU, both the parties are committed to collaborating on various initiatives that will enhance digital infrastructure, foster entrepreneurship, and promote technology-driven solutions.