

Plea against Elahi adjourned

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court on Thursday adjourned hearing till indefinite time in a petition against the arrest of former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. A three-member bench headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood heard the case. During the course of proceeding, the court remarked that where had been written in the law that an accused shouldn't be arrested in any case.

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# Action not only targeted at Afghans: FO

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday said its recent decision to deport illegal residents was not targeted at Afghan refugees but was against all foreigners without having valid visa documents.

Spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch at a weekly press briefing said the national policy towards the Afghan refugees in the country "remained unchanged" and their safe repatriation was a separate issue. The spokesperson said the ongoing operation was against the individuals who had either overstayed their visas or did not have the valid documents to stay.

Baloch clarified that the operation

had nothing to do with the Afghan refugees that Pakistan had been hosting for several decades despite its economic constraints. She confirmed that the bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued to take place, however, stressed that Pakistan would not accept the misuse of transit trade facilities.

Pakistan, she said, had been clearly articulating its concerns about the threats emanating from Afghanistan. "We believe in diplomacy and will continue to engage with the Afghan authorities to ensure that the Afghan soil is not used to foment terrorism," she said. Baloch said Pakistan was in contact with the Indian authorities and urged them to issue visas to Pakistani spectators and journalists

who wished to see the ICC (International Cricket Council) World Cup in India.

She said it was the responsibility of the host country to provide security and a conducive environment for the Pakistan cricket team and emphasized that sports should not be mixed with politics. She said the Pakistan team was visiting India not for a bilateral cricket series, and thus had every right to participate in the international series.

To another question, the spokesperson said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had received the formal communication from the Election Commission to invite international observers for the upcoming general election. She said the process

would be facilitated in accordance with the policy and past practice. On Palestine, she said Pakistan's policy was clear that it supported a two-state solution on the basis of pre-1967 borders.

The spokesperson outlined the engagements of Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, who is currently in China at the special invitation of Foreign Minister Wang Yi for participation in the Third Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation being held in Tibet Autonomous Region. She said the FM in his keynote address delivered today at the opening ceremony of the forum underscored Pakistan's commitment to ecological balance and urged policy coordination and experience-shar-

ing between countries in the region.

She said FM Jilani and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Forum and emphasized the positive trajectory of bilateral ties, they discussed various aspects of the Pakistan-China friendship and exchanged views on regional and global matters. The two foreign ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and pledged to enhance high-level exchanges and strategic communication for continued cooperation, she said.

In Tibet, she said, FM Jilani met Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, Sainbuyan Amarsaikha where the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to

high-level exchanges, and enhance bilateral trade and investment. Baloch said Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had concluded the negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the first such agreement concluded by the GCC with any country since 2009.

"We look forward to the early signing, ratification, and implementation of the Agreement, which we believe will contribute to growth and mutual prosperity and mark a new chapter in economic relations between Pakistan and GCC," she said. In its capacity as the coordinator of the Geneva-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing at the inaugural ceremony of National Emergencies Operation Center established by NDMA.

## PM inaugurates NEOC for coordination on disaster management

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday inaugurated the newly established state-of-the-art National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) to help in coordinated efforts to manage the natural disasters in the future.

Established at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Headquarters, the Center would also help in disaster risk reduction and mitigation of damages. The prime minister lauded the establishment of NEOC and emphasized the importance of disaster resilient infrastructure and policy framework. He said that despite being one of the least contributors of carbon emissions globally, Pakistan was one of the top countries affected by climate change.

"Climate change is a real challenge that will keep haunting our future generations unless we take such concrete steps," he reiterated. The prime minister also praised the coordinated efforts of all state institutions during the devastating floods of 2022, especially NDMA. "Nearly one third of the population of the country was affected by floods in 2022 and USD 30 billion was estimated to be the economic losses," he said.

The prime minister said that the world needed to step forward and help developing countries like Pakistan to cope up the adverse effects of climate change. He also praised the role of NCOC both in COVID-19 and 2022 floods. In a briefing, Prime Minister Kakar was told that NEOC would serve as hub of all technological inputs related to climate change, disasters management and predictive modeling for national emergencies.

First of its kind in Pakistan and the

region, this is Pakistan's indigenously conceptualized capability, which will evolve capacity to predict future disasters with credence and accuracy about likely locations, time of impact and damage intensity. It would generate coordinated response, guiding lower tiers of provincial and district level disaster management authorities. The need was felt for a platform which should perform the functions for developing a national collage of disasters monitoring, high end technology driven capability. It can estimate vulnerable needs of the areas and determine the gap to be pre-coordinated support from global partner through all time ready holistic national outlook in the form of real time National Common Operating Picture.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, conducted the briefing session for the prime minister as well as ambassadors, UN organizations' country heads, lead global NGOs, academia lead institutional and experts who attended the event. He presented key lessons from Pakistan's extensive exposures to disaster and national emergencies in the past and shared new vision of NDMA for pro-active management of disasters through NEOC. The vision was principally approved by Prime Minister's Office and all national stakeholders of disasters response. The ceremony was attended by national and international dignitaries who appreciated Pakistan government in establishing a high end outcome, fast-paced development of NEOC in record time and the swath of multilateral utility it promises of mutual growth and protection of strategic investments.

Pakistan to continue supporting Kashmiris till implementation of

UNSC resolutions: Cartaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, calling the Kashmir dispute an unfinished agenda of the partition, resolved that Pakistan would continue its political, moral and diplomatic support to the people of Kashmir.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, who called on him, said that Pakistan would stand by the Kashmiris until the issue was resolved as per the aspirations of the Kashmiri people as well as the resolutions of the UN Security Council. The AJK prime minister lauded PM Kakar for raising the voice in support of Kashmiri people at the forum of the United Nations General Assembly. "We, the people of Kashmir, are grateful to you for exposing Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir before the world," the AJK prime minister added.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held a meeting with businessman Haji Nawab Damar who called on him here at the PM House.

The meeting focused on the problems faced by the trader community in Balochistan particularly Ziarat, Harnai, and Sanjawi, the PM Office said. The prime minister also met tribal chief Sardar Farid Damar and social worker Lal Khan Kakar.

**Outgoing naval chief Amjad Khan Niazi pays farewell call on PM:** Outgoing Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi paid a farewell call on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar, the Prime Minister Office said. The premier lauded the services of the outgoing naval chief for his leadership of the institution and playing a key role in making the country's defence impregnable.

## Nepra notifies Rs1.71 per unit hike in FCA for Oct

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Thursday notified an increase in the price of electricity by Rs 1.71 per unit on account of Fuel Charges Adjustment (FCA) for the month of Oct 2023.

This surge in power tariff is set to impact all consumer categories. The approved tariff hike will be shown separately on consumers' bills.

## ECP urges Sindh govt to withdraw ex-MPs

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has directed Sindh's Chief Secretary and IG Police to withdrawn protocol still being given to former government officials and cabinet members.

The ECP, in a letter addressed to Sindh's Chief Secretary and IG Police on Thursday, directed them to withdraw the protocol from former government officials immediately. The ECP has urged the chief secretary and police chief to send compliance report of the order within three days. The election commission had earlier on August 15 delivered a letter to Sindh's authorities for withdrawal of official protocol from former cabinet members and government officials.

The election commission had earlier approved the transfer of secretaries, commissioners and deputy commissioners in Sindh and replaced them with the officers suggested by the caretaker Sindh government. The ECP in September okayed a major reshuffle in the Sindh police department on the request of the provincial caretaker government and Grade-21 officer Khadim Hussain Rind was appointed as the new police chief of Karachi, while Syed Asad Raza was posted as DIG South Zone Karachi.

## Petrol prices may drop significantly

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the global oil market, there is anticipation of a significant decrease in petroleum product prices, with a potential drop of \$7 per barrel. This reduction is reflected in the Gulf market where crude oil prices have fallen to \$92 per barrel and the global market, where they stand at \$84 per barrel.

In accordance with international rates, Pakistan is expected to see a substantial decline in petrol prices by approximately Rs22 per liter. Diesel prices are also projected to decrease by more than Rs20 per liter. Additionally, when converted from the dollar rate, the current price of a barrel of oil in Pakistan is estimated to be around Rs26,220. This marks a significant drop from the price of Rs29,898 per barrel on September 15th. It's worth noting that the exchange rate of the Pakistani Rupee against the US Dollar has also witnessed a reduction of more than Rs20 recently.

## Kindness must be shown with Afghans

PAKISTAN has decided to expel the illegal residents which mostly comprise of Afghans residing in Pakistan and they have twenty days remaining to leave Pakistan in a voluntary manner otherwise Pakistani law enforcing agencies will get in action against them.

Pakistan certainly has the right to expel any illegal resident on its land and especially those who are involved in criminal activities. And there is no doubt that hundreds of Afghans are involved in different sorts of criminal activities in Pakistan and many of them are languishing in different jails of Pakistan.

But to say that hundreds of thousands Afghans are involved in criminal activities will definitely be an exaggeration. Also aren't these Afghans from our neighbour country Afghanistan? Are neighbors ever given a deadline? Should they be given a deadline? Doesn't Islam teach us to respect our neighbors and to be kind with them?

In Pakhtuns culture and then specifically in the Pakhtuns belonging to the former Tribal Areas of Pakistan, which mostly borders Afghanistan, the importance of neighbor goes to an extent that one could even legitimately kidnap a neighbor of the person who was hiding



Comment

Jalil Afridi

from paying back someone's loan amount.

Everyone knows that many of the Afghans came to Pakistan during Soviet and Afghan war, many of them came to Pakistan when the Taliban were ruling Afghanistan in the late 90's and then again many Afghans came to Pakistan when the US was Incharge of the helm of affairs in Afghanistan for more than twenty years. During all these times and eras, for Afghans, it was Pakistan where they could take refuge and raise their families in peace. One thing that was always common between those Afghans who came to Pakistan was the feeling of leaving one's own country and one's own family behind. Nobody leaves their own country and their own family unless they feel the need to leave. And most of the times those needs are genuine.

US President, Joe Biden now a days is facing huge criticism for the thousands

of illegal immigrants crossing the Southern border while entering the United States. Despite having the resources to expel these immigrants immediately, the United States is dealing with these immigrants humanely and with patience.

Pakistan needs to review this recent policy of expelling illegal Afghans within a month. I personally don't even know which committee made this decision and how did they make this decision because it's interim government in Pakistan right now and their sole responsibility is to hold free and fair elections. Where did this decision come from?

Blaming the Afghans for car smuggling and dollars smuggling is a petty excuse and everybody knows that those involved in these businesses are not small times businesses. These businesses require millions and these businesses are done with the collocation of Pakistani businessmen. Shouldn't those Pakistani businessmen be brought to justice?

Pakistan should definitely expel the Afghans who are involved in criminal activities but Pakistan should also give the Afghans residing in Pakistan a due process and time to leave Pakistan and in this effort Pakistan should also take the Afghan government on board so they can play a constructive part on their side.

## Illegal refugees starts returning back to Kabul

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Thirty Afghan families, (300 persons) unlawfully resided in Pakistan, returned back to their motherland, Afghanistan via Torkham border in two days after the government announced a short voluntary departure deadline for illegal immigrants.

No special arrangements had been planned for the departed Afghans and the families crossed the border to their native country following a routine clearance of the Kabul bound vehicles, loaded with their household goods, custom and security officials said.

It is worth mentioning here that keeping in view the security situation and poor economic condition, a high-level meeting of the National Security Committee, chaired by Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq held in Islamabad last day decided under the National Action Plan to repatriate all illegal foreign residents.

Briefing the media, caretaker Interior Federal Minister Sarfraz Bugti said the government had set November 1 as the deadline for immigrants to depart the country. He maintained that a definite deadline had been given to expel illegal foreign residents, so that they could sell their assets until the expected deadline and upon the expiration of the deadline, foreign nationals would be dispossessed of their properties in Pakistan.

Afghan citizens can only travel to Pakistan through the legally implemented digitized "e-Tazkira," and only holders of "Proof of

## FM, Afghan counterpart discuss peace in Tibet meeting

TIBET (Agencies): Interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday met Afghan counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi in Tibet and discussed the challenges confronting regional peace and stability.

According to a statement released by the Foreign Office on X on Thursday, Jilani held a meeting with Afghan Foreign Minister Muttaqi and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthen bilateral ties with Afghanistan. He also underscored that challenges confronting regional peace and stability should be addressed in a "collaborative spirit through collective strategies". This meeting comes shortly after Pakistan issued an ultimatum to all undocumented immigrants, including Afghan nationals, instructing them to leave Pakistan by October 31 or face imprisonment and deportation to their respective countries.

FM Jilani is in China on a two-day visit in order to attend the third Trans-Himalayan Forum for International Cooperation. Meanwhile, Zabihullah Mujahid said in a post on social media platform X that refugees should be "tolerated" by Pakistan. "The behaviour of Pakistan against Afghan refugees is unacceptable," he said. "The Pakistani side should reconsider its plan. Afghan refugees are not involved in Pakistan's security problems. As long as they leave Pakistan voluntarily, that country should tolerate them."

Registration" will be eligible for Afghan residency in Pakistan, the Minister added and said that Afghan citizens holding legal visas will also be eligible to travel to Pakistan, while illegal Afghan residents in Pakistan will also be required to return to their home country before the possible deadline.

As per United Nation latest figure, around 1.3 million Afghans are registered refugees in Pakistan and 880,000 more have legal status to remain, however the Minister Sarfraz Bugti said a further 1.7 million Afghans were in Pakistan illegally.

Qaisar Khan Afridi, an official of the UN High Commis-sioner for

Refugees (UNHCR) opposed the deadline and said "Any refugee return must be voluntary and without any pressure to ensure protection for those seeking safe-ty." He said that the UNHCR was prepared to assist Pakistan in establishing a system for overseeing and recording individuals seeking international protection within its borders and addressing 'specific vulnerabilities.'

In a Apex committee meeting it was decided that a massive crackdown will be launched against illegal foreign immigrants from the first of November and as per order they will be arrest, forcibly repatriated

(Continued on Back Page)

## India demands Canadian diplomats leave

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India confirmed on Thursday that it had demanded a further reduction in Canada's diplomatic presence, following reports that New Delhi had ordered dozens of foreign service officers repatriated in a dispute over the killing of a Sikh separatist.

Indian foreign ministry chief spokesman Arindam Bagchi would not confirm a Financial Times report this week that Canada had been told to repatriate 41 of its 62 diplomats by October 10. But he did say that India "assumed that there would be a reduction" in Canada's presence after asking Ottawa to match the number of diplomats New Delhi had serving there.

"Given the much higher diplomatic presence of Canadian diplomats here, and their continued interference in our internal affairs, we have sought parity in our respective diplomatic presence," he told reporters at a regular news briefing. India has already advised its nationals against traveling to parts of Canada and has temporarily stopped processing visa applications to Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has described the situation as "extremely difficult" and said on Tuesday that Ottawa was seeking to avoid escalating the situation.

The affair has complicated US government overtures to India, which have seen both countries steadily

upgrade their relations over recent years. Washington views New Delhi as a key ally in countering Chinese influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Both are members of the Quad strategic grouping alongside Japan and Australia.

US news outlet Politico said Eric Garcetti, Washington's ambassador to India, had warned that ties "could get worse for a time" and may warrant a reduction in contact with Indian officials. A spokesman for the US embassy in New Delhi dismissed the reports. "Ambassador Garcetti is working hard every day to deepen the partnership between the people and governments of the United States and India," the spokesman said.



**LAHORE:** Students of Crafting Histories in NCA are engaged in the preparation of History Art.





## CS hold open *Kachehri* to address public issues



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An open Kachehri took place at the office of the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday, serving a forum for citizens to voice their concerns and seek solutions to issues. The Open Kachehri was presided over by Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, who actively engaged with the public on phone call, addressing their queries and issues. Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, the Minister for Information, Culture, and Tourism, also joined to

interact with the public.

The open Kachehri, facilitating direct interaction between the Chief Secretary's office and the public, witnessed enthusiastic participation from citizens hailing from the provincial capital and various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During these interactions, the public brought forth a range of concerns related to the delivery of public services within the province.

In his opening remarks at the Kachehri, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa underscored the importance of Open Kachehri, emphasizing that

they provide an opportunity for the public to engage one-on-one with government officials responsible for public service delivery. He mentioned that clear directives have been issued to government departments, divisional, and district administrations to conduct Open Kachehri sessions regularly.

Caretaker Minister Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel actively participated in the proceedings, listening carefully to the concerns voiced by citizens. He acknowledged the significance of these interactions in gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges

faced by the public and finding effective solutions. He said satisfaction of the Public is crucial for good governance. Such measures are pivotal for ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to the needs of the people he said.

Chief Secretary reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to promptly resolve the issues raised during the Open Kachehri. He issued directives to the relevant departments for immediate action on the spot, ensuring that citizens' concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel expressed his gratitude to the public for their active participation and commended the arrangement of the Open Kachehri at the Chief Secretary's office. He expressed hope that this tradition of open engagement with the public will continue to flourish.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a meeting regarding Sihat Card Scheme.

## POWA cabinet meets with Add: CS

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Prosecution Officer Welfare Association (POWA) cabinet headed by president Sangeen Shah along General Secretary Javed Ali Mohmand, Senior vice president Fazli Noorani, vice president Amjad Ali, joint Secretary Waheed Asim and member executive Peshawar Division Maria Kanwal met with Additional Chief Secretary Home, on Thursday.

POWA cabinet discussed their issues with Additional Chief Secretary Home Abid Majeed. POWA claimed Additional Chief Secretary directed to send summary forthwith for revision of allowances and be notified soon.

Additional Chief Secretary also directed to prepare a summary for increase of grade 20 posts. Summary be moved Proposed Amendments is Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prosecution Act.

The meeting was also attended by Director General Prosecution Mian Muhammad and Director Monitoring Atiq-ur-Rahman and assured that all be done expeditiously.

## ATC extends former MPA bail plea

### Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Peshawar granted interim bail till 9th October to former Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Asif Khan in 9th & 10th May vandalism and ordered submission of record, on Thursday.

The counsel Syed Sikandar Shah advocate argued that cases registered against former MPA is baseless and no evidence is available in this regard.

The counsel further argued for provision of bail because co-accused in the cases had already obtained bails in this regard. He added that Anti-corruption and session courts had granted bails in separate cases to the petitioner.

Special ATC Peshawar had extended interim bail plea till 9th October after conclusion of arguments.

## NAB to hold Kuli Katcheri

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Director General National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa announced 'Kuli Katcheri' on 9th October (on Monday) at 2:00 PM.

In this regard NAB had issued press release stated that Director General Mian Muhammad Waqar will hold 'Kuli Katcheri' on 9th October at Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) Complex, Peshawar.

The press release stated that Director General along with other concerned officials will hear complaints regarding public servants involved in malpractices including demanding bribery, damages to national exchequers, assets beyond resources and provision of contracts against the law.

## Peshawar crackdown nets major haul: Illegal liquor, drugs and firearms seized

### Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In a significant crackdown on the illegal trade of narcotics, weapons, and contraband substances, Capital City Police Peshawar launched a meticulously planned operation, led by the diligent and resourceful SSP Operations, Kashif Abbasi. The operation, conducted under the watchful eye of SSP Abbasi, saw the apprehension of several individuals involved in nefarious activities, bringing them to justice and ensuring the safety and well-being of the city's residents.

During the operation, which was conducted based on confidential information received, a vacant property in a private residential area was raided. Under the astute supervision of SSP Abbasi, along with his dedicated team comprising of SP Cantt Waqas Rafiq and DSP Haroon Jadoun, law enforcement officers unearthed an extensive network of criminal activities.

The meticulous search of the premises led to the discovery of a significant amount of illegal substances. A staggering 930 bottles of various types of liquor and beer were seized. These illicit goods were destined for distribution not only within the city but also to residential and rural areas, highlighting the



PESHAWAR: SP Cantt Waqas Rafiq addressing a press conference at Police Line.

scale of the criminal enterprise dismantled by this operation.

In addition to the liquor haul, a vehicle used for transporting these illegal substances, a rickshaw, was also confiscated during the operation. The vehicle had been ingeniously utilized by the criminal network to facilitate the widespread distribution of alcohol, posing a significant threat to the peace and order of the city.

What further distinguishes this operation is the cooperation received from the arrested individuals. During preliminary interrogations, they not only confessed to their involvement but also disclosed crucial information about the preparation and supply chain of these banned substances. Their revelations have paved the way for further investigations, leading to the identification of other members involved in this nefarious trade.

The credit for the success of this operation goes

to the unwavering dedication and strategic acumen of SSP Operations Kashif Abbasi. His leadership and determination have undoubtedly played a pivotal role in ensuring the safety of the city's residents. The operation's success underscores the commitment of the Capital City Police Peshawar under the dynamic leadership of SSP Abbasi to rid the city of criminal elements and maintain law and order.

The seized contraband, worth millions of rupees, not only represents a significant blow to the criminal underworld but also serves as a testament to the effectiveness of targeted and intelligence-based law enforcement efforts. The law-abiding citizens of Peshawar can rest assured that their safety remains a top priority for the dedicated officers of Capital City Police, particularly under the exemplary guidance of SSP Operations Kashif Abbasi.



PESHAWAR: Station Director Pakhtunkhwa Radio Ghulam Hussain presenting a shield to Director Information Muhammad Imran during his visit to Station.

## RTS issues showcase notice to CCPO Peshawar

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Right to Public Services Commission (RTPSC/RTS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa issued showcase notice Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar for negligence in the registration of First Information Report (FIR), on Thursday.

Chief Commissioner RTS Muhammad Salim Khan along with commissioners Muhammad Asim Imam and Zakir Afridi hear four public complaints regarding delivery of public services while issuing directions in this regard to concerned officials.

A woman complainant

pleaded for registration of FIR while RTS had directed the police's chief Peshawar to register case on the complaint, however, CCPO didn't comply to commission orders within the stipulated timeframe. RTS had issued a showcase notice to CCPO Peshawar for not complying with the commission orders.

Another complainant named Mian Noor Zeb thanked the RTS commission for redressal of his grievance by provision Fard (land documents) by Deputy Commissioner Nowshera after corrections following the intervention District Monitoring Officer.

Moreover, RTS had wrote a letter to Deputy

Commissioner Chitral for completion of water supply scheme to 150 household on humane basis on the complaint of Sharafat Khan. Because the complaint was beyond the jurisdiction of RTS commission as the it is incomplete developmental project for water supply.

However, hearing on complaint of Fayyaz Noor was adjourned due to absence of applicant from the commission. The commission is committed for provision of public services within stipulated timeframe as well as accountability of public servant to ensure good government, the press statement stated.

## FC celebrates World Teacher's Day

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In celebration of World Teachers Day, the Frontier Corps North, in collaboration with local communities, organized a series of inspiring events in Swat, Lower Dir, Buner and Mohmand districts.

These events were a heartfelt tribute to the dedicated school teachers who play a pivotal role in shaping our society's future. Officials of the Frontier Corps North visited numerous schools in the Swat,

Lower Dir, Buner and Mohmand to personally honour and appreciate the remarkable contributions of our educators.

The events were designed to emphasize the profound significance of teachers in the nation-building process. The school activities were engaging and enlightening, including interactive classroom sessions and speech contests.

These sessions highlighted teachers' tireless efforts and unwavering commitment towards the

noble cause of education. During these events, Frontier Corps North officials underscored teachers' invaluable role in nurturing and guiding the youth, emphasizing that they are the true architects of a brighter nation.

By imparting knowledge and values, teachers are instrumental in securing the future of our nation. In response to this thoughtful initiative, teachers expressed their gratitude for the recognition and support provided by FC North.

## Seerat-ul-Nabi conference was organized:

## No space and justification for terrorism within Islam: Chairman



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A one-day Seerat-ul-Nabi conference was organized in Peshawar in collaboration with the Department of Auqaf, Hajj and Religious Affairs and Muttahida Ulema Board Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The aim of the conference was to shed light on the solution of the contemporary problems in the light of the Prophet's life. Justice (r) Arshad Hussain Shah, the Provincial Minister for Auqaf, Hajj and Religious Affairs, participated as a special guest.

Secretary Auqaf, Hajj and Religious Affairs Dr. Asad Ali Khan, Chairman Muttahida Ulema Board Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Syed Yusuf Shah, Chief Khatib Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Tayyab Qureshi, officials of Ittehad Tanizmat Madrasahs, Provincial Government Focal Person for

Religious Affairs Mufti Zafar Zaman and others learned scholars, religious scholars and a large number of people also participated in the conference.

Secretary Auqaf, Hajj and Religious Affairs Dr. Asad Ali Khan while speaking said that he will stand with the scholars of the province at every turn. Jaranwala incident was a very sad incident.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government set a good example of unity and agreement by sending the delegation to Jaranwala in the past few days. The rights of the minority community will be protected. Dr. Asad Ali Khan further said that by adopting the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the difficulties disappear.

Chairman Muttahida Ulema Board Maulana Syed Yusuf Shah said that the organization of the

Seerat Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) conference is welcome. There is no space and justification for Terrorism within Islam. Light spread in the world after the arrival of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We feel proud that we are the ummah of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and it is our responsibility to convey the message to the ummah.

Chief Khatib Maulana Tayyab Qureshi said that the role of Muttahida Ulema Board is important. Efforts for peace and harmony in the entire province are commendable. In the biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) there is a solution to all the problems of the present age.

Arshad Hussain Shah, the provincial minister for Auqaf, Hajj and religious affairs, addressed the Sirat-ul-Nabi conference and

said that I consider it an honor to participate in the conference. The solution to all the problems of human life is found in Iswa Hasna. Brotherhood among themselves. The lesson of agreement and unity is found only in the Prophet's biography Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, will be pleased only by implementing the Prophet's way of life. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) migrated to Medina, he emphasized social development

The provincial minister further said that today Muslims are in decline. This is the reason why we are not following Quran and Sunnah.

At the end of the conference, commemorative shields were distributed to the chief guest and other speakers. And a special prayer was offered.

## DGIPR instructs for innovation in programs during his visit

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Director General Information and Public Relations (DGIPR) Muhammad Imran visited Pakhtunkhwa Radio FM 92.2 Peshawar for the first time following his appointment and made a detailed inspection of various sections of the Radio Station here on Thursday.

DGIPR visited various sections including the on-air and off-air studios.

Deputy Director Admin

Sahibzada Hasan Ali also accompanied him while Station Director of Radio Ghulam Hussain Ghazi briefed him about the line of action of the radio besides the news bulletins, current affairs and infotainment programs.

Mohammad Imran expressed his satisfaction over the performance of the radio programs and directed to bring more innovation in it. He said that Radio Pakhtunkhwa

can play a key role in highlighting the developmental and people-friendly initiatives of the provincial government at the national and international level, for which the Radio staff will have to endeavor round the clock.

Mohammad Imran directed to activate news bulletins and programs in regional languages including Chitrali language Kahwar, Afghan language Dari and Hindko in addition to Urdu and Pashto so

that all communities across the province can be connected to the radio infotainment network.

He asked for quick resolution of all its problems including lack of space in the radio station, installation of new transmitters, provision of new computers, live streaming of radio network, continuation of talent hunt, focus on research & inventions and lack of staff. He also issued instructions in this regard on the spot.

## PTIP to stand against crackdown on NCP vehicles, says Mehmood

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian (PTIP) vice chairman and former Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mehmood Khan said that will oppose crackdown against Non-Custom Paid (NCP) vehicles in Malakand division at every forum, on Thursday.

This he said while talking to political and civil society leadership from Swat at Peshawar. He claimed that the residents of Malakand division suffered from terrorism as well as from natural calamity. He added that imposition of taxes and customs on vehicles will further sharpen the financial burden on the residents of Malakand division. He added that PTIP will stand with the residents of Malakand at every forum and wouldn't leave them alone.

The delegation informed former Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mehmood Khan regarding grievances of local residents regarding crackdown against NCP vehicles in Malakand division.

PTIP vice chairman argued that he belongs to the region and aware regarding hardships of local

residents while committed to uphold the voice of public at every forum. Former CM added that welfare of residents is his top priority and initiated people-oriented projects in the division earlier.

Former Chief Minister blamed Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDMO) lead allied government for

inflation and economic hardships facing by citizens.

He added that PDM leaders had amended laws to protect their corruption at the sake public sacrifice. He claimed that crackdown against NCP vehicles alike economic deprivation of deprived segments of Malakand division.

## Significance of teachers highlighted

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Dr. Muhammad Qasim Jan, the caretaker minister for Primary, Secondary, and Higher Education in KP has emphasized the significant role of teachers in society, stating that they are the most esteemed group as they contribute to nation-building.

He expressed gratitude

for their services and highlighted their pivotal role in the country's development. Dr. Jan also urged students to honour and respect their teachers, recognize their role in nurturing society and shaping the future generation.

The minister assured that economic challenges would be addressed, and teachers' issues, including their upgradation, would be

resolved soon. These remarks were made during his special guest appearance at an event commemorating International Teachers Day at Government Higher Secondary School No. 1 in Peshawar. The event featured speeches, national songs, and tributes by students to their teachers.

Dr. Jan stated that teachers today receive modern training and opportunities

for advancement, and efforts are underway to address teacher shortages in schools.

He emphasized the increasing societal value of the teaching profession.

He conveyed that the responsibility of educating and shaping the future generation, including professionals like doctors, educators, and officials, lies in their hands.





## In brief

### AKF holds free medical camp F.P. Report

**TIMERGARA:** Al-Khidmat Foundation Dir Lower organized a one-day free medical camp for patients with congenital cleft lip and palate at Zawal Baba, on Thursday. The free medical camp was inaugurated by Al-Khidmat Hospital Director Majidullah, Haji Saeed Gul, Shad Nawaz Khan, Hafeezullah Khaksar. The specialist doctors and other technical team who came to Lahore in the camp conducted free examination and testing of dozens of patients with congenital cleft lip and palate and operations were recommended to many patients. According to doctors, cleft lip and palate is a congenital disease, more than 10 Million children in the world are suffering from this disease, while three lakh children are affected by this disease in Pakistan. If these patients are operated by a stick surgeon, the appearance of the child becomes close to normal. Do not hand over to an untrained doctor for the operation because it risks creating more complications instead of improvement.

### Disable person gets assistance F.P. Report

**MALAKAND:** Frontier Corps (FC) North is proud to announce its ongoing efforts to help those in need within the community. In a heart-warming initiative, Abdul Rasheed, a disabled tailor in Batkhela, whose daughter is a special child, has been given financial support. As part of this initiative, Frontier Corps North is providing Abdul Rasheed with a monthly stipend of Rs 19,000, covering essential expenses such as house rent and other necessities. Additionally, furnished his home with essential household items, including a refrigerator, crockery, cupboards, charpoys, mattresses and kitchen utensils. Furthermore, Frontier Corps North has also helped him in repairing his motorcycle, which is vital for his daily transportation needs. Frontier Corps North is deeply committed to the well-being of Abdul Rasheed's family, including the medical treatment of his special needs daughter. Abdul Rasheed has expressed his heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the support he has received from the Senior Officials of the Frontier Corps North. He is grateful for the lifeline of assistance provided during this challenging time.

### Tribesmen hold jirga F.P. Report

**WANA:** Govt should provide free electricity to the people of lower Waziristan as Ahmadzai Wazir had given the land for Gomal Zam dam free of cost so that in return they would obtain free power to the people. These things were said by Ahmadzai Wazir elders while addressing a large Jirga in Wana. They said that the former Chief of the army staff general Pervez Keyani had promised to provide free electricity from Gomal Zam dam on the occasion of the inauguration of Gomal Zam road, but the later rulers could not fulfill that promise. The tribesmen said that the Ahmadzai tribal wazir made great sacrifices by evicting the foreign militants from their area and cleaned the area from the monster of unrest. They claimed that since the Gomal Zam dam area belongs to Ahmadzai tribal Wazir, we have the first right over it. Elders hailing from Wazir tribe strongly demanded the government to provide electricity from Gomal Zam dam.



**MINGORA:** Additional Deputy Commissioner Relief, Ibrar Wazir in a group photo with participants of a seminar on Human Rights.

## World Teachers' Day celebrated in Dir

F.P. Report

**LOWER DIR:** The government and private educational institutions in the Lower Dir district celebrated the World Teachers' day here on Thursday. The students arranged functions at their schools and colleges to salute their teachers. The students of government high school Dherai Talash arranged a colourful function to pay tribute to their students. Addressing the events the speakers lauded the role of teachers in building the nation.

They said that those nations were leading the world which had respected their teachers. The students said that teachers were their real heroes as they guided and taught them good lessons. The students also presented gifts to their teachers.

Meanwhile addressing the functions, some of the influential asked the teachers to devote themselves to their job of teaching students. They said the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) always felt proud of being a teacher who brought a revolution in the world through his deeds and devotion. The speakers said the teachers should follow the footprints of the Prophet of Islam. They said the teachers had an important and attractive status in society as they were considered as spiritual fathers. The educational institutions also held walks to pay trib-



ute to teachers in parts of the district.

**Traders' demand:** Anjuman Tajiran Chakdara president Khwaja Faizul Ghafoor has appealed to well-off people and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali to compensate the shopkeepers whose shops were destroyed by market fire at Chakdara on Sep. 21. Speaking at a news conference at the Chakdara press club here on Thursday, the traders' leader said that two dozen shops at the Shal market had been reduced to ashes due a market fire but the affected shopkeepers had not been compensated. Other members of the cabinet and some of the affected shopkeepers were also present on the occasion.

Khwaja Faizul Ghafoor said the business community had collected Rs 1.06 million on its own for the affected traders while the

district administration and the government had done nothing for their support. He said that a delegation of the affected traders had met the KP Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in Peshawar for seeking assistance but to no avail.

He said the fire had destroyed everything that was stocked at the shops and now the affected shopkeepers were unable to run their businesses. He said the district administration had sent teams but it proved only up to a photo session. The traders' leader appealed to well-off people to financially support the affected shopkeepers so that they could resume their business activity. He also demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor and caretaker chief minister Azam Khan to announce compensation amount for the affected traders for resumption of their small businesses.

## Wheel jam strike paralyze AJK

**BAGH (INP):** Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is currently in the grip of a total shutdown and wheel jam strike, as residents protest against soaring inflation and rising costs of living. This widespread demonstration is causing significant disruption throughout the region.

In the Bagh area of Azad Kashmir, the strike is particularly pronounced, with demonstrators targeting the government's taxation policies on electricity bills and the recent hikes in petrol prices. Key roads have been blocked with barricades, effectively bringing transportation to a standstill.

The strike has resulted in the closure of markets, bazaars, and various business centers, causing significant economic disruption. Furthermore, academic activities have been affected, as examinations scheduled for today at Mirpur and Poonch University had to be canceled due to the strike.

The strike is organized in response to a call by the Awami Action Committee, which has garnered substantial support from commercial centers, markets, and educational institutions. Notably, this strike has impacted eight locations within the Neelum Valley's district headquarters, including the sub-divisions of Sharda, Keil, Kundal, and Shahi.

The residents of Azad Kashmir are making their voices heard, utilizing peaceful demonstrations to protest against the economic challenges they are facing due to inflation and rising living costs. As the strike continues, it remains to be seen how the government will respond to the demands and concerns of the people in the region.

## Cops awarded for better policing F.P. Report

**D I KHAN:** Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dera Ismail Khan Division Nasir Mehmood Satti on Thursday distributed cash prizes and commendation certificates among the officers for their outstanding performance.

Addressing the ceremony held in this regard here, the RPO lauded police officers for making best efforts and showing excellent professionalism to maintain peace and improve security in the area. He said they played an effective role in successfully handling blind murder and narcotics related cases, which contributed to convictions and penalties in court cases, adding all this was a testament to the professional commitment and their better policing.

Moreover, he said that challenging cases were being worked out successfully due to the dedication of police professionals. He said all the officers who improved the prestige of the police force through their dedication and professionalism would be encouraged at every forum.

He said that people had pinned high expectations on the police, so it should leave no stone unturned to come up to their expectations by eliminating crimes from the area and protecting the lives and prosperities of citizens. The police officers who received the award during the ceremony included Sub-Inspector Nasrullah, Sub-Inspector Allah Wasaya and Assistant Sub-Inspector Farmanullah.

## Provision of timely salaries WSSC Mardan directed

Anees Takkar

**MARDAN:** Mayor Mardan, Hamayatullah Mayar, has issued directives to the Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC) authorities to ensure prompt salary disbursements for their employees. He emphasized that no deductions or delays should be tolerated.

Mayor Mayar conveyed these instructions during a meeting with officials from WSSC and Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA). The meeting was attended by WSSC General Manager Engineer Mohammad Khalil Akbar, HR and Admin Manager Imran Afreedi, Finance Officer Ayaz Mahmood, as well as union representatives, Munir Khan and Abdul Hakeem.

In the meeting, it was decided that WSSC would release the employees' salaries every month without fail. Both organizations agreed to exchange budget documents to facilitate the creation of a comprehensive report for future reference.

Mayor Hamayatullah Mayar, in his address, acknowledged the dedication of WSSC workers who tirelessly maintain the city's cleanliness, ensuring that their hard work does not go unrewarded. He directed the Finance Officer to issue salary checks for employees on Thursdays and stressed that any delay in this regard would not be tolerated.

Furthermore, Mayor Mayar urged TMA to take

the necessary steps to release the remaining dues owed by WSSC for their employees' salaries promptly. The mayor's directives aim to ensure the financial stability of WSSC employees and streamline the salary disbursement process, recognizing their essential services they provide for the city's well-being.

**Admin initiates crackdown against illegal billboards:** In response to Deputy Commissioner Mardan Abdul Rahman directives, Additional Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Junaid Khalid led an enforcement operation against illegal billboards along Mardan-Noshehra Road. During the operation, authorities removed illegal billboards that had been installed along the road.

The billboard owners were warned to voluntarily remove the unauthorized structures, or face legal action as part of a continued crackdown against illegal billboards in the district. Additional Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Junaid Khalid stated that the district administration will persist with this operation until all illegal billboards are eradicated, ensuring that Mardan is free from such unauthorized structures.

**Madrasa plays key role in shaping society:** Commissioner Mardan Shaukat Ali Yousafzai observed that madrasa could play an important role in promoting religious studies and shaping posi-

tive religious thinking in society. He said that the government was trying to consolidate and formalize the Madrasa system so that it could efficiently serve the community.

He expressed these views in a meeting of the Divisional Steering Committee setup to regularize the system of religious schools and register them. The meeting was attended by Regional Police Officer Mardan Muhammad Sulaiman, Deputy Commissioner Swabi Gohar Ali, DC Mardan Captain Retired Abdul Rehman and other relevant officials.

The Deputy Commissioners of Mardan and Swabi informed the meeting about the number of religious schools in their respective districts, their registration, the number of students studying in them, the citizenship of teachers and students and their sources of income.

Commissioner Mardan Shaukat Ali Yousafzai while appreciating the report submitted by the administration and police regarding Madrasas, directed all relevant institutions to ensure data comparison and provision of correct information in this regard so that ambiguities found in this regard can be removed.

He said that the registration of Madrasas will make it easier for the government to take measures to support these institutions and the welfare of the students studying in them and acquire accurate data about these institutions.

## PML-N Buner plan to welcome Nawaz

F.P. Report

**BUNER:** Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) activists finalized arrangements to welcome former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 21st October at Lahore with thousands of supporters at the airport.

In this regard meeting of PML-N workers held at Koga area of Mandantehsil in which party leadership were present to settle grievances of party's activists and ensure the participation of large number of people from Buner district in welcome gathering at Lahore.

PML-N aspirant candidate for PK27 Dilawar Khan, Local Government councillor Muhammad Uzair, tehsil chairman candidate Douraj Khan, general secretary Amir Zeb, Saeed-ur-Rehman, Iktisham-ul-Haq, Shah Nazir Khan and Noor Hakim Shah along with other addressed the participants. They claimed that internal differences among workers should be settled with mutual con-

sultation.

The aspirant candidate for provincial assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dilawar Khan claimed that workers have been mobilized in every nook and corner of PK-27 for maximum participation for welcoming PML-N supmo Nawaz Sharif at Lahore on 21st October. He claimed that thousands of workers would reach Lahore to welcome Nawaz Sharif and will initiate election campaign.

The tehsil candidate Dauraj Khan stressed upon workers to throw back internal differences and dispute till 21st October. He claimed that the demands of activists regarding party organization and cabinet would be addressed on priority after arrival of Nawaz Sharif.

Local Government farmer councillor Muhammad Uzair said that provincial and district party leadership had ignored workers of Mandantehsil. He claimed that PML-N had secured maximum votes in PK27 while cabi-

net is comprised from area with low vote-bank.

Moreover, Iktisham-ul-Haq and Saeed-ur-Rehman agreed with views of party's workers for ignoring them during PDM lead allied government. They said that the workers will uphold their grievances at every forum after arrival of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 21st October.

**One killed over old enmity:** An old enmity took life of Hamid Khan resident of Bajkatta when the rivals opened fire on him at Shaheen Market in Swari bazaar. The deceased died on the spot while killer escaped from the crime scene. Police registered First Information Report and started raids for arrest murderer.

Meanwhile, a 26 years old Roshan Khan resident of Matwany village of Buner sustained bullet injury while playing pistol and shifted to DHQ hospital Daggar. The police station Gagra registered the case and is investigating to find the facts behind.

## Most-wanted terrorist killed in D I Khan

F.P. Report

**D I KHAN:** A most-wanted terrorist of a banned organization was killed in a joint operation by security forces and Dera Ismail Khan police in Tehsil Kalachi on Thursday.

Haibat Khan was wanted by Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and a bounty of Rs6 million has been announced on his head. Police personnel also recovered arms and ammunition from the slain terrorist's hideout. The operation was conducted on an intelligence report, and during the operation an accomplice of the killed terrorist managed to escape while search operation by Dera Ismail Khan Police was

going on to trace him down.

**Awareness drive on filing Income Tax returns begins:** A drive to create awareness about filing income tax returns for the year 2023 has begun in Dera Ismail Khan on Thursday. In this regard, Assistant Commissioner of the Federal board of Revenue (FBR) Unit 37 and 38, Dera Ismail Khan Adnan Khan and Income Tax Officer of Unit 39 Sher Alam held meetings in their offices with various trader associations to raise awareness and enlighten the business community about the process of filing income returns.

Central President of the Traders' Association Dera

Sohail Azam along with other traders of the district participated in the meetings.

Assistant Commissioner Adnan Khan expressed his commitment to collecting Income Tax returns on time and said that guidance and assistance could be provided to traders if they faced any difficulties in this process.

He said that the filing of returns could yield significant advantages like saving employees from paying higher differential rate of taxes introduced for the filers and non-filers. In this regard, another meeting was held in which representatives of CMH Dera participated. They were trained about online registration and filing of returns.

## Girl gang-raped in Jhelum

**JHELUM (INP):** A female matchmaker in Jhelum enticed a 23-year-old girl and sold her to a man in lieu of Rs90, 000, police reported on Thursday. Gulzar then kept raping the girl for days before selling her to another man named Mashooq for

Rs150,000, who raped her with his friends.

They disclosed that Fehmida, the matchmaker, asked the girl to accompany her to bazaar where she handed her over to Gulzar. In a complaint to the police, the victim girl has said that

Fehmida befriended her mother and would visit her home.

Police, on the other hand, have said the complaint has been received and that the DSP CIA will register the FIR after listening to the girl's story.





## Philippine boats breach a Chinese coast guard blockade in a faceoff near a disputed shoal

MANILA (AP): Two Philippine supply boats breached a Chinese coast guard blockade in the South China Sea in a recurring confrontation near a disputed shoal some fear could spark a larger security crisis that could draw in the United States. Two Philippine coast guard ships escorted the smaller supply boats, but it wasn't immediately clear whether the ships were blocked by the Chinese coast guard from coming closer to the Second Thomas Shoal, where a small contingent of Filipino marines has stood guard for years aboard a long-marooned but still actively commissioned warship, the BRP Sierra Madre.

China also claims the shoal and has surrounded it with its coast guard ships and militia vessels to prevent the Philippines from delivering construction materials that Beijing fears could be used to reinforce the Sierra Madre and turn it into a permanent territorial outpost. "Despite attempts by a significant number of China coast guard and Chinese maritime militia vessels to block, harass, and interfere with the routine rotation and resupply mission," the two Philippine boats managed to deliver provisions to the Filipino forces at the shoal, a Philippine government body overseeing the disputed waters said in a statement late Wednesday.

"The Philippines' resupply missions and maintenance of BRP Sierra Madre are part of regular operations in line with domestic and international law and ensures safety and well-being of our stationed personnel," the inter-agency body said. It didn't provide other details of the Chinese coast guard's actions, which it has condemned in the past as dangerous maneuvers that have nearly caused collisions, and violated international safety regulations at sea.

The Chinese coast guard said in a statement Wednesday night that the Philippine vessels entered the waters "without permission from the Chinese government" and that "China firmly opposes the Philippines illegally transporting building materials to the 'grounded' military boat." It said it gave a stern warning to the Philippines vessels and monitored them throughout the process.



The dangerous confrontation on Wednesday is the latest flare-up from the long-simmering territorial disputes in the South China Sea, one of the world's busiest trade routes. The conflicts, which involve China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei, are regarded as a potential Asian flashpoint and have also become a delicate fault line in the US-China rivalry in the region. In early August, a Chinese coast guard ship used a water cannon against one of two Philippine supply boats to prevent it from approaching the Second Thomas Shoal. The brazen move, which was caught on video, outraged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and prompted the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila to summon the Chinese ambassador to hand a strongly worded protest. Washington reacted by renewing a warning that it's obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces, aircraft and vessels come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry accused Washington then of "threatening China" by raising the possibility of the US-Philippines mutual defense treaty being activated. Beijing has repeatedly warned the US not to meddle in the territorial disputes. Later in August, the Philippines again deployed two boats, which succeeded in maneuvering past the Chinese coast guard blockade and

completing the delivery of supplies to the Filipino forces at the Second Thomas shoal. Two Philippine coast guard ships securing the supply boats, however, were blocked and prevented by Chinese coast guard ships from maneuvering closer to the shoal. A US Navy surveillance aircraft flew in circles in support of the Philippine vessels as the standoff lasted for more than three hours. Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro expressed concern over China's dangerous actions at sea and said the government was ready to respond to potential emergencies, including a possible collision of Chinese and Philippine ships in the disputed waters.

"Naturally the concern is always there, and we take that into account," Teodoro said in response to a reporter's question. "We have plans depending on what happens." The Philippine coast guard invited a small group of journalists, including two from The Associated Press, in August to join its ships that secured the supply boats as part of a new strategy aimed at exposing China's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea. A 2016 arbitration ruling set up under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea invalidated Beijing's claims on historical grounds to virtually the entire South China Sea. But China refused to participate in the arbitration sought by the Philippines, rejected the decision as a sham and continues to defy it.

## New Mexico police officer charged for shooting Black nurse

MEXICO CITY (Reuters): New Mexico's attorney general has charged a police officer with voluntary manslaughter in the shooting death of a Black nurse during a struggle last year in which police say the nurse took an officer's taser. Las Cruces police officer Brad Lunsford allegedly shot Presley Eze, a 36-year-old Connecticut man working in a Las Cruces nursing home, in the back of the head in August 2022 at a gas station. The officers had stopped Eze after an employee reported he shoplifted a beer from the station, according to police records and video.

State Attorney General Raul Torrez said the killing was an unjustifiable use of force and another example of "poor police tactics." Torrez said in a statement that his office consulted with use-of-force experts who concluded that deadly force was not reasonable in the circumstances.

Eze is among Black Americans killed by police in recent years whose deaths have sparked protests and a renewed push for civil rights and curbs on police brutality. Lunsford was booked on the charge and released, a spokesperson for Torrez said. Luis Robles, a lawyer for Lunsford, said that during a struggle Eze fell atop a second officer, tried to take the officer's handgun, then took his taser as Lunsford attempted to pull Eze off.

Lundsford feared he and the second officer could be tasered and possibly shot with one of their own handguns while incapacitated, Robles said.

## Journalist gets 8 1/2-year sentence in absentia

MOSCOW (AP): A Moscow court on Wednesday sentenced a former state TV journalist 8 1/2 years in prison in absentia for protesting Russia's war in Ukraine, the latest in a crackdown on dissent that has intensified since the invasion began nearly 20 months ago. Marina Ovsyannikova was charged with spreading false information about the Russian army, a criminal offense under a law adopted shortly after President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine.

She staged a protest near the Kremlin in July 2022, holding a sign that said, "Putin is a killer. His soldiers are fascists. 352 children have been killed. How many more children need to die for you to stop?" She was detained and placed under house arrest, but managed to escape to France with her daughter. Russian authorities put her on a wanted list and prosecuted and tried her in absentia. Ovsyannikova formerly worked for state-run Channel One, one of Russia's most popular national TV stations. She made international headlines in March 2022 after appearing behind the anchor of a Channel One evening news broadcast with a sign that said, "Stop the war, don't believe the propaganda, they are lying to you here." She quit her job at the channel, was charged with disparaging the Russian military and fined 30,000 rubles (\$270 at the time). Since the start of the invasion, nearly 8,000 Russians have faced misdemeanor charges and over 700 people have been implicated in criminal cases over publicly speaking out about or protesting the war, according to the OVD Info human rights and legal aid group.

The authorities have also used legislation outlawing criticism of what it insists on calling the "special military operation" to target opposition figures, human rights activists and independent media. Top critics have been sentenced to long prison terms, rights groups have been forced to shut down, independent news sites were blocked and independent journalists have left the country, fearing prosecution. Many of those exiled abroad have been tried, convicted and sentenced to prison terms in absentia.

## Israeli arms quietly helped Azerbaijan retake Nagorno-Karabakh

TEL AVIV (AP): Israel has quietly helped fuel Azerbaijan's campaign to recapture Nagorno-Karabakh, supplying powerful weapons to Azerbaijan ahead of its lightning offensive last month that brought the ethnic Armenian enclave back under its control, officials and experts say. Just weeks before Azerbaijan launched its 24-hour assault on Sept. 19, Azerbaijani military cargo planes repeatedly flew between a southern Israeli airbase and an airfield near Nagorno-Karabakh, according to flight tracking data and Armenian diplomats, even as Western governments were urging peace talks.

The flights rattled Armenian officials in Yerevan, long wary of the strategic alliance between Israel and Azerbaijan, and shined a light on Israel's national interests in the restive region south of the Caucasus Mountains. "For us, it is a major concern that Israeli weapons have been firing at our people," Arman Akopian, Armenia's ambassador to Israel, told The Associated Press. In a flurry of diplomatic exchanges, Akopian said he expressed alarm to Israeli politicians and lawmakers in recent weeks over Israeli weapons shipments. "I don't see why Israel should not be in the position to express at least some concern about the fate of people being expelled from their homeland," he told AP.

Azerbaijan's September blitz involving heavy artillery, rocket launchers and drones - largely supplied by Israel and Turkey, according to experts - forced Armenian separatist authorities to lay down their weapons and sit down for talks on the future of the separatist region. The Azerbaijani offensive killed over 200 Armenians in the enclave, the vast majority of them fighters, and some 200 Azerbaijani troops, according to officials. There are ramifications beyond the volatile enclave of 4,400 square kilometers (1,700 square miles). The fighting prompted over 100,000 people - more than 80% of the enclave's ethnic Armenian residents - to flee in the last two weeks. Azerbaijan has pledged to respect the rights of ethnic Armenians. Armenia calls the exodus a form of ethnic cleansing.

Israel's foreign and defense ministries declined to comment on the use of Israeli weapons in Nagorno-Karabakh or on Armenian concerns about its military partnership with Azerbaijan. In July, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visited Baku, the Azerbaijan capital, where he praised the countries' military cooperation and joint "fight against terrorism." Israel has a big stake in Azerbaijan, which serves as a critical source of oil and is a staunch ally against Israel's archenemy Iran. It is also a lucrative customer of sophisticated

arms. "There's no doubt about our position in support of Azerbaijan's defense," said Israel's former ambassador to Azerbaijan, Arkady Milman. "We have a strategic partnership to contain Iran."

Although once resource-poor Israel now has plenty of natural gas off its Mediterranean coast, Azerbaijan still supplies at least 40% of Israel's oil needs, keeping cars and trucks on its roads. Israel turned to Baku's offshore deposits in the late 1990s, creating an oil pipeline through the Turkish transport hub of Ceyhan that isolated Iran, which at the time capitalized on oil flowing through its pipelines from Kazakhstan to world markets. Azerbaijan has long been suspicious of Iran, its fellow Shiite Muslim neighbor on the Caspian Sea, and chafed at its support for Armenia, which is Orthodox Christian. Iran has accused Azerbaijan of hosting a base for Israeli intelligence operations against it - a claim that Azerbaijan and Israel deny. "It's clear to us that Israel has an interest in keeping a military presence in Azerbaijan, using its territory to observe Iran," Armenian diplomat Tigran Balayan said.

Few have benefited more from the two countries' close relations than Israeli military contractors. Experts estimate Israel supplied Azerbaijan with nearly 70% of its arsenal between 2016 and 2020 - giving Azerbaijan an edge against Armenia and boosting Israel's large defense industry. "Israeli arms have played a very significant role in allowing the Azerbaijani army to reach its objectives," said Pieter Wezeman, senior researcher at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, which tracks arms sales. Israeli long-range missiles and exploding drones known as loitering munitions have made up for Azerbaijan's small air force, Wezeman said, even at times striking deep within Armenia itself. Meanwhile, Israeli Barak-8 surface-to-air missiles have protected Azerbaijan's airspace in shooting down missiles and drones, he added.

Just ahead of last month's offensive, the Azerbaijani defense ministry announced the army conducted a missile test of Barak-8. Its developer, Israel Aerospace Industries, declined to comment on Azerbaijan's use of its air defense system and combat drones. But Azerbaijan has raved about the success of Israeli drones in slicing through the Armenian defenses and tipping the balance in the bloody six-week war in 2020. Its defense minister in 2016 called a combat drone manufactured by Israel's Aeronautics Group "a nightmare for the Armenian army," which backed the region's separatists during Azerbaijan's conflict with Nagorno-Karabakh that year.

## New York City moves to suspend 'right to shelter'

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP): New York City is challenging a unique legal agreement that requires it to provide emergency housing to anyone who asks for it, as the city's shelter system strains under a large influx of international migrants who have arrived since last year. The city filed a request asking a court to allow it to suspend the requirement when there is a state of emergency where the shelter population of single adults increases at a rapid rate.

The filing came as Mayor Eric Adams embarks on a four-day trip through Latin America, starting Wednesday in Mexico, where he said he will discourage people from coming to New York, telling them the city's shelter system is at capacity and its resources are overwhelmed. The city has been moving to suspend the so called right to shelter for months under the surge of migrants, arguing the requirement was never

intended to be applied to a humanitarian crisis such as the latest influx. The shelter requirement has been in place for more than four decades in New York City, following a legal agreement struck in 1981 that required the city to provide temporary housing for every homeless person. No other big city in America has such a requirement.

"With more than 122,700 asylum seekers having come through our intake system since the spring of 2022, and projected costs of over \$12 billion for three years, it is abundantly clear that the status quo cannot continue," Adams, a Democrat, said in a statement. "New York City cannot continue to do this alone." Adams had heralded the shelter requirement at the start of the crisis as a display of the city's empathy toward asylum seekers. In the months since, his rhetoric has hardened as the city has spent more than a billion dollars to rent space in hotels,

erect large emergency shelters and provide government services for migrants who arrive without housing or jobs. "This issue will destroy New York City," Adams said last month.

The mayor has also recently tightened New York shelter rules by limiting adult migrants to just 30 days in city-run facilities amid overcrowding. Josh Goldfein, a staff attorney at The Legal Aid Society, said the city's request, if successful, would be disastrous for the city. "What is the alternative? If we do not have a right to shelter, if we are turning people away from the shelter system, if people are now living in the streets, in the subways, in the parks, is that the outcome that they want?" he said. "That is something we have not seen in decades. I don't think any New Yorker wants to see that. I don't think city officials want to see that but that will be the result if they were to prevail here."

## 3 Filipino fishermen die in South China Sea

MANILA (AP): Three Filipino fishermen died in the disputed South China Sea after their boat was accidentally hit by a passing commercial vessel, the Philippine coast guard said. The fishermen's boat, F/B Dearyn, was moored in a fishing area in the high seas off the northwestern Philippines when it was hit before dawn by the passing vessel and capsized, killing its skipper and two crew members. Three other fishermen aboard the Dearyn survived, the coast guard said.

Eight other men were fishing separately on board smaller boats at the time of the accident, officials said. Due to adverse weather conditions and the darkness, "the crew on board the mother boat failed to detect an unidentified vessel approaching, resulting in a collision that caused the mother boat to

capsize," the coast guard said. It was not immediately clear if the three fishermen died due to injuries from the collision or drowned. A police report said they died due to "possible head trauma" from the collision. Their bodies were brought back to their hometown in the northern Philippines by the three surviving fishermen and several other companions.

There was no indication that the deadly accident was related to the long-simmering territorial disputes in the busy waterway. The coast guard said it happened more than 150 kilometers (93 miles) northwest of Scarborough Shoal, a fishing atoll fiercely contested by China and the Philippines. The dispute over Scarborough flared recently after the Philippine coast guard said it removed a floating barrier installed by the Chinese

coast guard at the mouth of the shoal to prevent Filipinos from entering. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. expressed sadness over the deaths of the fishermen and said a coast guard investigation was underway.

"We assure the victims, their families, and everyone that we will exert every effort to hold accountable those who are responsible for this unfortunate maritime incident," Marcos said in a statement. An initial assessment based on the surviving fishermen's account and sea traffic at the time of the accident indicated that a crude oil tanker under the flag of the Marshall Islands may have hit the Filipino fishing boat, the coast guard said in a statement. The Philippine coast guard said it would try to locate the oil tanker and its crew as part of the investigation.

## Gunman who shot and wounded 10 riders to be sentenced

NEW YORK (AP): A man who sprayed the inside of a New York City subway train with gunfire and then slipped away in a stunned crowd is set to be sentenced Thursday in the morning rush-hour attack, which wounded 10 people and set off a citywide manhunt. Frank James, 64, pleaded guilty to terrorism charges in the April 12, 2022, mass shooting aboard a Manhattan-bound train. Prosecutors have asked for a life sentence, saying James spent years carefully planning the shooting in order to "inflict maximum damage."

The gunman's attorneys have asked for a reduced sentence of 18 years, saying James didn't intend to kill anyone and suffered from serious mental illness. Disguised as a construction worker, James waited until the train was between stations, denying his targets a chance to flee. Then he ignited multiple smoke bombs and unleashed a barrage of bullets from a 9mm handgun at panicked riders

in the crowded train car. The attack wounded victims ranging in age from 16 to 60 as the train pulled into a station in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

As emergency responders tended to the victims, James walked calmly out of the subway station and vanished. The search for the gunman lasted for roughly 30 hours. Police identified James as a suspect relatively quickly, using a key to a rented moving van left behind on the bloodied subway car. He was eventually arrested in Manhattan's East Village after calling a police tip line to turn himself in. "The fact that no one was killed by the defendant's 32 gunshots can only be described as luck as opposed to the defendant's intentional choice," Brooklyn prosecutors wrote in a memo to US District Judge William Kuntz.

The attack stunned New Yorkers, heightened anxiety about safety in the transit system and prompted local officials to add addi-

tional surveillance cameras and police to the trains. Before the shooting, James, who is Black, posted dozens of videos online under the moniker "Prophet of Doom," ranting about race, violence, his struggles with mental illness and a host of unnamed forces he claimed were out to get him.

In one 2019 video, James alluded to a pending conflict in his hometown, stating that "it's going to be very interesting what happens in New York with me." By that time, prosecutors allege, James was already in the process of planning the subway shooting. When James pleaded guilty to the terrorism charges earlier this year, he said he only intended to cause serious bodily injury, not death. His attorney, Mia Eisne-Grynberg, suggested that while James may have initially planned to kill people, he changed his mind in the heat of the moment.

"In a society where, sadly, we learn nearly every

day that mass shooters who intend to kill readily achieve their goals, it is far more likely that Mr. James lacked that specific intent than that he simply failed in his mission," Eisner-Grynberg wrote in a sentencing memo. Referencing the defendant's abusive childhood in the Bronx and his ongoing struggles with both alcoholism and paranoid schizophrenia, she added, "Mr. James is not evil. He is very, very ill."

Prosecutors, however, say the trajectory of the bullets show that James aimed at the "center mass" of riders for maximum lethality. They say James only stopped firing his semi-automatic Glock pistol because the gun jammed. James has spent the past 17 months held at the Metropolitan Detention Center without bail. He was previously forced to appear in court after refusing to leave his cell. Judge Kuntz said US Marshals should use all necessary force in order to produce James for the sentencing.

## Biden admn waives 26 laws to allow border wall construction

McALLEN, Texas (AP): The Biden administration announced it waived 26 federal laws in South Texas to allow border wall construction on Wednesday, marking the administration's first use of a sweeping executive power employed often during the Trump presidency. The Department of Homeland Security posted the announcement on the US Federal Registry with few details outlining the construction in Starr County, Texas, which is part of a busy Border Patrol sector seeing "high illegal entry." According to government data, about 245,000 illegal entries have been recorded so far this fiscal year in the Rio Grande Valley Sector which contains 21 counties.

"There is presently an acute and immediate need to construct physical barriers and roads in the vicinity of the border of the United States in order to prevent unlawful entries into the United States in the project areas," Alejandro Mayorkas, the DHS secretary, stated in the notice. The Clean Air Act, Safe Drinking Water

Act and Endangered Species Act were some of the federal laws waived by DHS to make way for construction that will use funds from a congressional appropriation in 2019 for border wall construction. The waivers avoid time-consuming reviews and lawsuits challenging violation of environmental laws.

Starr County's hilly ranchlands, sitting between Zapata and McAllen, Texas, is home to about 65,000 residents sparsely populating about 1,200 square miles (3,108 square kilometers) that form part of the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Although no maps were provided in the announcement, CBP announced the project in June and began gathering public comments in August when it shared a map of the additional construction that can add up to 20 miles (32 kilometers) to the existing border barrier system in the area. Starr County Judge Eloy Vera said it will start south of the Falcon Dam and go past Salineño, Texas. "The other concern that we have is that area is highly

erosive. There's a lot of arroyos," Eloy Vera, the county judge said, pointing out the creeks cutting through the ranchland and leading into the river.

Concern is shared with environmental advocates who say structures will run through public lands, habitats of endangered plants and species like the Ocelot, a spotted wild cat. "A plan to build a wall through will bulldoze an impermeable barrier straight through the heart of that habitat. It will stop wildlife migrations dead in their tracks. It will destroy a huge amount of wildlife refuge land. And it's a horrific step backwards for the borderlands," Laiken Jordahl, a southwest conservation advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity, said Wednesday afternoon. During the Trump administration, about 450 miles (724 kilometers) of barriers were built along the southwest border between 2017 and January 2021. Texas Governor Greg Abbott renewed those efforts after the Biden administration halted them at the start of his

presidency.

The DHS decision on Wednesday contrasts the Biden administration's posturing when a proclamation to end the construction on Jan. 20, 2021, stated, "building a massive wall that spans the entire southern border is not a serious policy solution." In a statement Wednesday, CBP said the project is consistent with that 2021 proclamation. "Congress appropriated fiscal year 2019 funds for the construction of border barrier in the Rio Grande Valley, and DHS is required to use those funds for their appropriated purpose," the statement said. "CBP remains committed to protecting the nation's cultural and natural resources and will implement sound environmental practices as part of the project covered by this waiver." The announcement prompted political debate by the Democratic administration facing an increase of migrants entering through the southern border in recent months, including thousands who entered the US through Eagle Pass at the end of September.



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## Emerging risks and Pak-US ties

**C**HIEF of the Army Staff General Asim Munir discussed a string of issues with a special focus on security matters during a phone call with US Defence Secretary Lloyd J. Austin, on Wednesday. Both leaders discussed areas of mutual interest and recent regional developments and emphasized the need for greater liaison and cooperation between the militaries of the two nations.

Pakistan and the United States have a long history of bilateral relations and partnership. Both countries have enjoyed a multifaceted and broad-based relationship, driven by mutual interests and cooperation in all walks of life ranging from education, trade and investment to Intelligence collaboration, defence, and security. Historically, the resource-deficient and security-centric Pakistan remained heavily dependent on American military and economic aid while American strategists successfully invented a trustworthy ally in South Asia to carry forward their anti-communism agenda in the region. Pakistan played a pivotal role in checking communism during the Cold War and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, while Islamabad's bridging role in the US-China rapprochement during the 70s was the landmark achievement of Pak-US friendship. Later, Pakistan became an important Non-NATO ally of the United States in the War on Terror (WoT), brokered the Doha agreement and also facilitated US withdrawal from neighbouring Afghanistan about two years back.

Historically, Pakistan-US ties had gone through several ups and downs at periodic intervals, however military to military contacts and strategic cooperation remained in place between the two nations throughout history. On several occasions, both sides' military establishments have played a role in melting ice and resetting ties between the two countries. Apparently, the Pak-US partnership was the need of both nations and the two countries benefited each other through political and diplomatic engagement, military cooperation, intelligence sharing, and the provision of strategic assistance in the hour of need. Pakistan is an important Muslim state that holds tremendous importance for the United States due to its geostrategic location, military power, Nuclear arsenal, association with Beijing, and political stature in the Muslim world. The same goes for Pakistan which could not afford the US's animosity and intends to maintain its durable security and economic partnership with Washington.

Currently, the ongoing US-Russia rivalry and Sino-America tussle are at their peak and the entire world is passing through a defining movement. The bloc politics became the order of the day and caused serious foreign policy and trade challenges for the South Asian nation as Washington views Islamabad-Beijing engagement with suspicion and doubts. However, Pak-US military ties and counter-terrorism cooperation had always continued throughout the past. The current regional geopolitical situation, particularly the recent insurrection of terrorism in Pakistan, the growing risk of IS-K, and the congregation of terror outfits in neighbouring Afghanistan has specifically converged US-Pakistan interests and brought both parties on the same page against their common enemy at this point. Realistically, there had been distrust and flaws in the Counterterrorism strategies of both allies in the past that ultimately benefited the terror outfits which are flourishing right now, while Pak-US policymakers are still mulling over the scenarios to tackle that challenge once more.

Despite diverging interests in certain avenues at the global level, Pakistan and the United States have tremendous scopes for mutual teamwork and cooperation in multiple domains particularly trade and investment, renewable energy, education, science and technology, defense and security, counter-terrorism and organized transnational crimes including human trafficking, drug enforcement and smuggling. There is a dire need for concerted efforts and apolitical approaches to achieve shared objectives that would have tremendous benefits for both countries and surely would have crucial effects on regional peace and stability in the days to come.

## Police station diary versus public diary

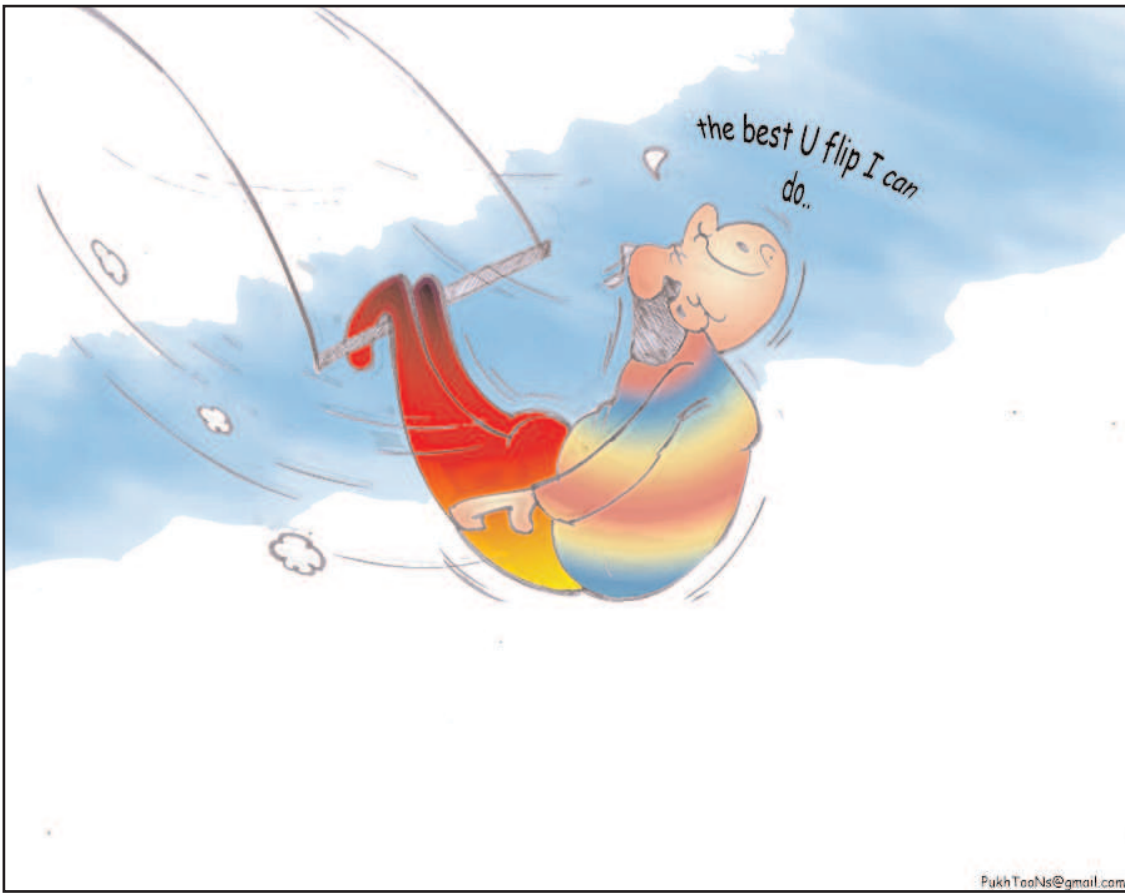
**I**NSPECTOR General Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar has launched a new initiative in the Punjab Police namely "Police Station Diaries", which aims at evaluating police performance, acknowledgement of contributions and encouragement of the Police officials and top brass in the line of their duty. In the initial phase of Police Station Diaries, IG Punjab reviewed the performance of Sargodha Police, which traced high profile cases and uncovered several criminal networks in its area of jurisdiction. As said, the Sargodha Police foiled the deliberate conspiracy of inter-religious dispute and sectarianism with the timely actions and effective strategy, and tackled several cases of blind murders including the abduction of a newborn child. IG Punjab bucked up the SHO's and investigating officers who investigated the cases and brought the criminals to justice.

Inspector General Police is a professional Police officer who is vigorously working for professional improvement and uplift of Punjab Police department as well as endeavoring hard for the welfare of the Police force and their family members. The Punjab Police is one of the largest Police forces which deals with the law and order issues of the biggest province in the country. Punjab Police is notorious for its corruption, poor professionalism, misbehaving with the public and murder of innocent citizens through fake encounters. The visionary Police Bureaucrat has introduced a new scheme to maintain discipline and enhance work ethics in his Department. However, the cunning Police staff tactfully handed him a long list of achievements and claimed averting sectarian and religious violence in their area while referring to the recent Gujranwala incident in which Punjab Police played the role of a spectators and violent mob torched churches and homes of Christian community. In fact, the Police failed to curb street crimes in the major cities, and avoid filing FIRs on different pretext to project false statistics, while no genuine efforts are usually carried out to resolve the case except high profile cases.

The IGP is a gentle man who gets satisfied through vainglory and strutting music of Police officials, otherwise the top Police Executive can open a direct window with the public through launching a website, whats app number, or email so people can directly file their complaint against the Police force to him. Such an arrangement would be a public diary that will not only expose the fake narrative of the Police stations but also provide a true picture of the law and order situation vis-a-vis performance of the Police Force in the province.

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## Matt Gaetz broke Kevin McCarthy for sport

Jill Filipovic

**A**S the Republican Party continues its Trump-led descent into the kind of crass and constant drama usually only found on reality TV, one man has emerged to be the breakout star of this ignominious circus: Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida. He succeeded Tuesday in removing Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy. Gaetz and other Republicans who voted to remove McCarthy couldn't forgive him for staving off a government shutdown last weekend with the help of Democratic votes.

McCarthy began an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden despite, so far, being unable to present any evidenced that links the president to wrongdoing. Nevertheless, Gaetz accused McCarthy of being too cooperative with Democrats and the current president. And the far-right Gaetz lined up enough unhinged members of his increasingly unhinged party to remove McCarthy and grind Congress to a halt. That, clearly, is the plan: not to improve the functioning of the House or deliver for constituents, but simply to break as much as possible. And it's a strategy that seems to be drawn from former president and former reality TV star Donald Trump, whose actions during his campaign and his presidency seemed more targeted at capturing attention than actually making America great.

The former president decried House Republicans' infighting, in an apparent reference to Gaetz moving to oust McCarthy, ahead of the House vote Tuesday. "Why is it that Republicans are always fighting among themselves, why aren't they fighting the Radical Left Democrats who are destroying our Country?" Trump posted on Truth Social. That seven other Republican members of Congress lined up behind Gaetz to oust the speaker also says quite a bit about how unprincipled and vile the party has become. What happens next - who House Republicans could agree on to fill McCarthy's shoes - is anyone's guess.

Gaetz and other Republicans object to McCarthy's leadership in part because the speaker has worked (a tiny bit) with Democrats to avoid a gov-

ernment shutdown, and because the House has held votes on sending aid to Ukraine. American voters don't align with Gaetz: According to a CNN poll conducted by SSRS, a large majority of Americans want bipartisanship and to see their party working across the aisle. Gaetz is also a man who seems to court controversy and the eye of law enforcement. As the New York Times first reported, he faced a Department of Justice inquiry into whether he broke federal sex traffick-

Gaetz has denied wrongdoing. And this isn't the first time Gaetz has been investigated by the Ethics Committee. In 2019, the day before Trump's former personal lawyer Michael Cohen was set to testify before the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Gaetz tweeted, "Do your wife & father-in-law know about your girlfriends? Maybe tonight would be a good time for that chat. I wonder if she'll remain faithful when you're in prison. She's about to learn a lot."

**A spokesperson for Gaetz told CNN back in 2021 that the congressman had never paid for sex with anyone. The congressman also has been reported to be the subject of a House Ethics Committee investigation encompassing the accusations about sexual misconduct as well as, reportedly, mishandling campaign funds and other possible financial improprieties.**

ing laws after he allegedly had sex with a 17-year-old girl who he also paid to travel with him across state lines. Gaetz was never charged, but his old friend and political ally Joel Greenberg, who was also caught up in the investigation, pleaded guilty to six federal crimes, including sex trafficking of a child, wire fraud, stalking, aggravated identity theft, producing a false identification document and conspiring to commit an offense against the US government.

The DOJ investigation into Gaetz concluded with no charges against him as prosecutors reportedly were concerned that a jury might not find the woman's testimony credible. A spokesperson for Gaetz told CNN back in 2021 that the congressman had never paid for sex with anyone.

The congressman also has been reported to be the subject of a House Ethics Committee investigation encompassing the accusations about sexual misconduct as well as, reportedly, mishandling campaign funds and other possible financial improprieties.

woman sends a nude photo to a partner, it's the partner's right to do whatever he wishes with the image. Gaetz has since been accused of showing nude images and videos of women he says he slept with to other lawmakers on the US House floor. Gaetz denies these claims.

He was also the only member of Congress to vote against one bill that would have helped centralize state efforts to combat human trafficking, and has voted against several others. This column could go on for many thousands more words about Gaetz's actions. He's been a loud proponent of the false conspiracy theory that the 2020 election was stolen. He has suggested that the US government "hunt down" its own citizens, tweeting during the George Floyd protests, "Now that we clearly see antifa as terrorists, can we hunt them down like we do those in the Middle East?" After Kyle Rittenhouse went down to a Black Lives Matter protest and killed two people, Gaetz said he might offer him an internship. He has pushed the racist "great replacement" theory that people of color are overtaking White Americans (he says that "the left" took him out of context and that the great replacement theory isn't defined "solely on race/ethnicity terms").

This is the man who led the anti-McCarthy uprising. Speaker McCarthy isn't exactly a hero or an admirable person. He has thrown his support behind Trump, gone after Biden without evidence and for political gain, and caved time and again to the far-right wing of his party. He's hardly a reasonable Republican. But he does at least appear to be grounded and interested in governing, not showboating.

Gaetz, on the other hand, seems interested in a toxic combination of attention and destruction. That so many in his party are following him in his annihilation mission is yet another confirmation that this is not a party focused on getting things done for the American people. It's a party focused on emulating and grabbing the attention of the reality TV star former president who may have permanently broken this country.

CNN

## West's unlimited support for Kyiv beginning to waver

Mohamed Chebaro

**W**HICHEVER way you spin it, Ukraine will surely feel a bit left out in the cold by last weekend's deal that prevented a shutdown of the US government. The fight against Russia in Ukraine is suddenly at the mercy of right-wing populist Republicans in Congress, which is likely to put the US' reputation and leadership in the world in the spotlight. It may also, by stalling any new US military aid that is desperately needed in Ukraine for its counteroffensive, scupper all Western efforts to stand up to what is coined as a belligerent Russia.

The funding bill passed in Congress late on Saturday will keep federal agencies running for another 45 days. But further bargaining and brinkmanship is likely in November, as Congress has failed to allocate the necessary funding for the 438 government agencies for the whole fiscal year that began on Oct. 1. Barely a week after the president of Ukraine was in New York appealing for more funds to support the war machine to stop Russia, the question now is whether a new approach is needed, since Congress, as a compromise, decided to drop new funding for Ukraine from the fiscal package due to opposition from hard-line Republicans.

Despite President Joe Biden reminding everybody that America has a duty to help Ukraine stand up to Moscow's brutal invasion, it seems the issue has become politicized and is now being used by Republicans against the Biden administration. The fate of that vital military aid is now in jeopardy, as Kyiv tries to make progress in its sluggish counteroffensive before winter sets in. Biden pushing House Speaker Kevin McCarthy to rush a separate Ukraine funding bill through Congress will not be enough, as the speaker himself was on Tuesday ousted by a small band of pro-Donald Trump Republican legislators. His removal following the introduction of a motion to vacate by Rep. Matt Gaetz throws the day-to-day running of the House into even greater disarray.

The US administration's scramble to assure its allies, the people of Ukraine and the world that they can count on American support and that Washington "will not walk away," as Biden said after the funding bill vote, only goes to show how weakened it has become in the face of growing domestic politicization and polarization, particularly within the Republican Party.

But there is also a possible feeling of war fatigue among more moderate lawmakers that risks derailing further US commitments in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world. Most worrying is that the high inflation that has hit Western societies means many countries, particularly the US, are now reluctant to write a blank check to Ukraine. An ABC/Washington Post poll released at the end of

September showed that 41 percent of respondents said the US was doing too much to support Ukraine, up from 33 percent in February.

Many fear that even a temporary delay in the supply of weapons or funds to Ukraine would be a big boost to its enemies and that the US domestic quarrels are likely to start to weigh heavily on the plight of the Ukrainians and Western efforts to stop Moscow's aggression. It is not an exaggeration to say that the shutdown brinkmanship can only point to America sliding further toward a type of neo-isolationism that will likely only get worse. This is especially so when you hear statements from populists like Florida Sen. Rick Scott, a Republican, calling on Congress to have "a conversation with the American public," as he claimed that people in his state want to be helpful to Ukraine but also helpful to Americans too. McCarthy was not far behind when he suddenly asked to know what would constitute a victory in Ukraine before he would advance another bill authorizing further military aid to Kyiv.

The US has approved four rounds of aid to Ukraine in response to the Russian invasion, totaling more than \$113 billion. In August, Biden called for a further \$24 billion and he this week urged Republicans to "stop the games" and secure the passage of a separate bill to fund Ukraine soon. However, any bill on funding for Ukraine is likely dependent on the approval of more money to stop immigrants crossing the US' border with Mexico, which is a key Republican demand. Clearly, there needs to be a shift in approach if countries are to remain united and with the necessary resolve to face and defeat Russia in Ukraine. The Ukrainian support file must not be part of the partisan competition between various parties in the US and Europe. The events in Congress over the last week might have lasting repercussions for Ukraine. In Europe, the picture is not any better. Monday's meeting of EU foreign ministers in Kyiv was a good show of resolve, but it only put a plaster on a bleeding wound, especially as another country in the bloc of 27, Slovakia, yielded in its election to a pro-Russia politician who will now head its government on the back of a promise to stop all weapons transfers to Kyiv.

Meanwhile, for Ukraine, it is a zero-sum game. Without aid and weapons, the war will be lost. The flow of weapons from the West is unlikely to stop soon, but the events in Congress are likely to dent the certainty previously felt in Ukraine about that unwavering support. Meanwhile, all these events on Capitol Hill are welcome news in the Kremlin, which has been betting for the past 20 months on the resolve of the democratic Western nations wavering sooner or later.

The Los Angeles Times

## Putin is using high oil prices to test support for Ukraine

Simon Johnson & Catherine Wolfram

**W**ARS are won and lost on battlefields. But public finance plays a critical role in determining what the combatants can afford. This is particularly true for a long war, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine has already become. In declining to include funding for Ukraine as part of the recent deal to avert a government shutdown, Congress sent a signal of encouragement to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, the increase in global oil prices (now above \$90 per barrel) is providing new revenues for Russia's war effort.

Congress needs to restore funding for Ukraine, a move supported by both Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch

McConnell (R-Ky.). Just as important, the US must take further steps to reduce Russia's oil revenues. John McCain, the late US senator from Arizona, once famously quipped that Russia is "a gas station masquerading as a country." Even before its attack on Ukraine in February 2022, when Russia had full access to international markets, nearly half of its government revenues came from energy taxes and energy exports. Now almost all of its foreign-exchange revenues come from oil exports.

The price cap on Russian oil, pioneered by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and introduced by a G-7-led coalition in late 2022, was designed to reduce those revenues while keeping Russian oil on the market to hold world prices in check. An initial price cap of \$60 per barrel was introduced in

December 2022, and through the first half of 2023, the cap helped reduce the Kremlin's revenues by 45% year over year. Many hailed it as a success. The price cap applies to shipments of Russian oil that use services from price cap coalition countries. For example, shipments that travel on Greek-owned ships, or are insured by U.K. insurers or re-insurers, must comply with the price cap. The G-7 coalition also devised a system to require a party to the transaction to provide an attestation that the price is below the cap.

But two things have happened in the last 10 months to make the price cap less binding. First, Russia acquired its own fleet of tankers, primarily older and in some cases damaged ships that were

not seaworthy by international standards and not participating in the market. Those tankers not only help Russia subvert the price cap, they are also more at risk of causing a catastrophic spill or other environmental disaster. Second, Russia is allegedly offering (or arranging) false attestations, dishonestly attesting to prices below the cap. In response, some commentators have thrown up their hands and claimed that the price cap policy must be abandoned - a response that the Kremlin would greet with delight. Just as markets adapt to new circumstances, so must policymakers - which means increasing the pressure on Russia's oil revenues.

The first step is to tighten enforcement of the price cap and lean on shippers,

insurers and other service providers to screen for false attestations. If that is not enough, the US should work with its partners and allies to impose transit fees to reduce the revenue going to Russia. The G-7 coalition, for example, could set up a sort of tollbooth at crucial chokepoints - such as the Danish straits - that Russian oil tankers must traverse to reach global markets.

The maritime tollbooth could then charge all Russian oil shipments the difference between the price cap and the current world market price. If this does not stop Russian oil sales at high prices, the US could use secondary sanctions to target any transaction involving Russian oil above the price cap, regardless of whether it is carried on Russian, Cameroonian or Greek ships and insured by British or Russian com-

panies. Secondary sanctions would mean that any entity tied to a Russian oil shipment above the current \$60-per-barrel cap would risk losing the ability to engage with the US financial system if caught.

Russia is earning fistfuls of money from its oil sales, and using the revenues to buy tanks, pay soldiers and keep the war out of the minds of ordinary Russian citizens.

High oil prices enable Putin to test Western democracies' resolve, and the dysfunction on Capitol Hill plays into his hands. That makes maintaining the oil price cap, with added protections, all the more important for reducing Putin's ability to continue fighting. The G-7 and its allies have the economic tools to undermine Russia's war effort. It is time to use them.



# ‘But what about the Palestinian cause?’

Faisal J. Abbas

**SAUDI Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman made four things crystal clear about the Palestinian-Israeli issue during his recent interview on Fox News:**

One: Yes, it is true that there are ongoing talks relating to a potential solution that will improve the lives of Palestinians.

Two: Riyadh is edging closer toward normalization with Israel.

Three: The Biden administration is leading the initiative.

Four: No, it is not true that Saudi-Israeli talks were suspended.

This clarity came after months of speculation, with many international policy analysts apparently confused by Saudi Arabia's long-standing and legitimate demands for a written security pact with the US, assistance in developing its peaceful nuclear program, and removal of previous restrictions on arms sales to the Kingdom at the expense of a solution accepted by the Palestinian leadership. What many pundits also missed is that these asks of Washington are a natural result of a Saudi-Israeli normalization deal. None of them would have been possible without this, as it would be almost an impossible mission for any US administration to approve such arrangements for any country which does not have a deal with Israel.

Needless to say, countries have a right to focus on and pursue their own interests. In this case, we are seeing a regional powerhouse that is insisting on including a Palestinian angle when there is really nobody forcing it to. Other regional countries have had no reluctance in pursuing similar normalization deals in exchange for

the recognition of a disputed land, such as in the case of Morocco and the Donald Trump-era recognition of Western Sahara. Or even the more extreme case of the Hezbollah-dominated Lebanon, which still managed to sign a maritime border agreement with Israel (despite not recognizing it officially) in return for rights to offshore gas reserves.

However, none of the Arab countries that have signed deals with Israel have the weight, importance and influence of Saudi Arabia. So, the inevitable questions cynics will soon raise are: But what about the Palestinian cause? And does this mean Saudi Arabia has sold out on this crucial principle? Well, nobody responded better than the crown prince himself: "For us, the Palestinian issue is very important. We need to solve that part ... We hope that will reach a place that will ease the life of the Palestinians." However, skeptics and warmongers will always do whatever it takes to muddy the waters, so no attention should be paid in my opinion, as actions will always speak louder than words.

Let us not forget that Saudi Arabia was the country that presented the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002. What the crown prince said does not deviate from any attempt since then to give peace a chance. At the end of the day, Saudi Arabia - just like any other country - cannot negotiate or decide on behalf of either the Palestinians or the Israelis. Peace and the terms of peace have to be agreed by them alone.

What Saudi Arabia can do - and, from what I understand, has been

doing for the past two years - is work on an initiative to make peace a more attractive proposition than war for both parties. In fact, there is a whole team at the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs that has been working with serious and concerned parties such as the EU and the Arab League on imagining a 2.0 version of the Arab Peace Initiative. How would the region look if peace were achievable and how could we pool resources to ensure both parties understood its value?

My understanding is that every detail imaginable has been examined, including how to boost the Palestinian economy through exports to Israel and other neighbors. In fact, one could argue that this could be a lesson learned from Jared Kushner's plan. Yes, it could be argued that Kushner ended up giving more to Israel than to Palestine and that his team could have done a better job by not alienating the Palestinian Authority (and the PA could have bothered showing up nevertheless), but if anything it gave, for the first time, an idea of how to support the economy and give Palestinians a chance. With steps like appointing the Saudi Ambassador to Jordan, Nayef bin Bandar Al-Sudairi, as the Saudi consul general to Jerusalem, its continuous condemnation of any intimidation of worshippers at Al-Aqsa and by continuing to offer both sides a carrot (including allowing some Israeli ministers to attend international summits in the Kingdom), Saudi Arabia is doing its best to enable a real and verifiable framework for peace - and that is the maximum it

can probably achieve.

Can a miracle take place over the next few weeks or months? Well, if anything can be learned from Saudi Vision 2030 and what it has accomplished over the past six years, it is never to say never. Could there be peace with the most right-wing government in Israeli history? The best answer to that came from Rabbi Marc Schneier during his conversation on Arab News' "Frankly Speaking" this week: "Often when it comes to these negotiations, when it comes to concessions, you need the people who are more to the right to lend credibility and legitimacy and authenticity to what would be a genuine and real peace."

After all, the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty was agreed and signed by then-Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin - a staunch Zionist and former leader of the brutal Irgun militia that committed atrocities in the years leading up to Israel's foundation - and it still stands to this day. Begin even shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Egypt's Anwar Sadat. And who would have thought that Irish republican leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, who for so long were hated in London due to their terrorism links, would ultimately play a key role in bringing peace to Northern Ireland through the 1998 Good Friday Agreement?

But what if Hamas decides to once again sabotage a deal? Well, all we can say in that case is that one of the definitions of insanity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. The events of the past 70 years suggest that the Palestinian cause has been losing ground, not winning it.

Arab News

## Can the US trust Israel to live up to its visa waiver agreement?

Ray Hanania

**PRESIDENT Joe Biden last month allowed Israel to join the US' Visa Waiver Program - an important decision that grants special privileges to Israeli citizens who enter the country. From the end of next month, travelers with Israeli citizenship will be able to stay in the US for up to 90 days without requiring a visa, allowing them to sidestep the process of vetting, security checks and reviewing of a visitor's status as being law-abiding before being allowed to enter. Visas are often denied to individuals with bad reputations, criminal histories or who are suspected of possibly threatening American citizens or causing them harm.**

But the Visa Waiver Program also requires Israel to reciprocate, meaning they will have to allow American citizens to enter Israel for periods of up to 90 days without requiring a preapproved visa. By accepting entrance to the US Visa Waiver Program, Israel is stating that it will treat visitors with American citizenship the same way the US will treat visitors with Israeli citizenship. But can Israel be trusted to treat Americans as fairly as America treats Israelis? Israel has a documented history of not only blocking visitors with American citizenship, but also of harassing them at Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv and at the three land crossings on its border with Jordan: the Wadi Araba Crossing, the King Hussein Bridge and the Jordan River Crossing.

I personally have experienced waves of harassment when arriving

in Israel. Even though I was born in the US and have an American passport, I also have a "Palestinian" name. I have had to wait many hours while Israeli security reviewed my history, examined my computer, checked my writing online and even quizzed me about my parents and grandparents. They have strip searched me, ripped through my possessions, "overcooked" my computer laptop and held me for hours. They eventually let me through, but should any visitor be put through such a process without justification? Israel does not care if you are American. If you are a Palestinian American, whether Christian or Muslim, or if you have criticized the Israeli government's policies - remember that freedom to criticize the government is a fundamental foundation of any true democracy - then Israel will either harass you when you enter the country as a form of intimidation or, as has been happening more frequently in recent years, prevent you from entering at all and force you to return, at your own expense, to the US.

But the problem is not just that Israel discriminates against non-Jews who have legitimate critical views of Israel's government. The problem is that Israel has a special law, called the Law of Return, which grants special privileges to any person who is Jewish and has Israeli citizenship - a citizenship that is granted almost automatically just by virtue of someone being Jewish and entering Israel. The moment an individual who is Jewish steps on to

Israeli soil, most of which has been stolen from non-Jews, they are protected, including from agreements Israel has signed with foreign countries. In 1962, Israel and the US signed a bilateral agreement granting extradition rights, allowing each country to claim the return of individuals convicted or charged with the most serious of crimes, including murder. However, in 1978, Israel passed an amendment to its own Extradition Law that gives it the right to exempt any Jewish citizen who entered the country under the Law of Return.

Be sure not to confuse Israel's Law of Return with the Palestinian right of return. The former involves people with the most tenuous ties to Israel being allowed to move to Israel and live there, while the latter involves non-Jewish people with documented land ownership and citizenship from the time before Israel was created.

The latter have no right of return at all and are usually the ones harassed by Israeli security staff at airports and border crossings. Under the 1978 revision, an Israeli national may not be extradited except for an offense committed prior to becoming a national. Extradition can be granted only if the person has been charged or convicted of a felony or some other specific extradition offense. The offense must be a criminal offense under the laws of the requesting state and an extradition offense under Israeli law.

Israeli citizens may be extradited to the US for the sole purpose of

standing trial, not to serve out a criminal conviction. As a consequence, many convicted and accused mobsters and murderers have been protected from the extradition treaty Israel signed with the US. For example, Samuel Sheinbein was wanted in the US for the 1997 murder of a 17-year-old Maryland high school student. Sheinbein, who was Jewish, fled to Israel and claimed citizenship, resulting in a protracted legal battle with the US. Although an Israeli judge ordered that Sheinbein be extradited, the Israeli Supreme Court eventually overturned the extradition on the premise that it violated the Law of Return.

Israel conducted its own trial and Sheinbein was convicted and sentenced to 24 years in an Israeli prison. But Sheinbein was granted many privileges and furloughs to leave jail. In 2014, he used a handgun that had been smuggled into the prison to shoot six guards before he was shot dead by Israeli police after a standoff. As a consequence of the legal battle over Sheinbein, Israel changed its laws to allow the extradition of Israeli citizens only on condition that they are returned there to serve any sentence imposed.

There appears to be only one certainty when making agreements with Israel: Israel's government will always be thinking of ways to sidestep and create exceptions to them. Expect the same to continue with the Visa Waiver Program, especially when it comes to Palestinian Americans and those who have criticized Israel's often abhorrent government policies.

## El-Sisi awaits competitors ahead of Egypt's landmark presidential election

**EGYPT is set to hold a presidential election in December, with incumbent Abdel Fattah El-Sisi confirming that he will stand for a third term in office during this week's closing session of the Hikayat Watan conference held in the New Administrative Capital. He emphasized his commitment to fulfilling Egypt's dreams in this new term and pledged to continue his efforts for the country and its people.**

His announcement followed weeks of widespread advertisements advocating for his candidacy in the streets and media. Other potential candidates have also emerged, including Abdel-Sanad Yamama, leader of the liberal Wafd Party, Hazem Omar, head of the Republican People's Party, and Farid Zahran, head of the Egyptian Social Democratic Party. These candidates have met the nomination criteria, having gained the support of more than 20 MPs. Additionally, Ahmed Tantawy, the former president of the Dignity Party, is working to gather more than 25,000 popular endorsements from citizens eligible to vote in at least 15 governorates, which is an alternative requirement for candidacy. The next president will face the challenging task of addressing Egypt's complex economic issues. The country has been grappling with economic problems and these challenges have been a topic of discussion in daily life, in media outlets and on social media.

Economists and politicians in Egypt attribute part of this economic crisis to global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic's lockdowns and trade restrictions, as well as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, the duration and consequences of which remain uncertain. They argue that even the world's strongest economies have faced consecutive crises, leading to debates in the US Congress, for example, over economic measures and defense spending priorities. Some also point to issues within Egypt's own economic policies, questioning spending priorities that may not necessarily benefit the citizens.

Therefore, it is not surprising that El-Sisi and the other potential candidates are focusing on addressing the country's economic challenges in their speeches and campaign messages. Many political forces, as well as the supporters of El-Sisi, believe that him continuing the tasks he has started would be the best solution. He assumed office in 2014 and has since launched significant economic

projects, with the most prominent being the New Suez Canal project, which serves as a crucial source of foreign currency for Egypt. Additionally, there is the New Administrative Capital project and other initiatives involving land reclamation and enhancing road and transportation networks throughout the country to boost development.

Supporters of El-Sisi believe that he is the essential candidate and the most suitable person to complete these development plans. They argue that the president, through his continuous engagement, demonstrates a deep understanding of the country's affairs. They also believe that the upcoming years hold the promise of reaping the benefits of these projects for all Egyptians and it is the president's right to continue them according to his vision and the vision of those who have formulated the development plans. Opponents of the current administration argue that the development plans were not meticulously thought out and economic measures have negatively affected people's income sources, leading many citizens into a cycle of economic hardship. They are also concerned about declining growth rates and rising external debt levels, which have reached record highs.

Regardless of such differing perspectives, the next president faces a substantial responsibility to address Egypt's economic challenges with innovative solutions, rather than relying solely on slogans, assurances or acknowledgments of the difficult situation. It is a daunting task that requires careful consideration and proactive action. The preliminary list of candidate names and the number of supporters and endorsers of each will be published on Oct. 16. The scrutiny of candidacy applications and the settlement of objections will take place from Oct. 19 to Oct. 21. Candidates who are disqualified will be notified of the decision and the reasons behind it on Oct. 22. Until this date arrives, candidates are expected to gradually disclose their positions on various pressing issues.

El-Sisi exudes confidence on a range of issues. He urges the people to display patience and faith, emphasizing that the initiatives he has launched during his presidency will prove beneficial for the nation. He underlines his role as a symbol of security and safety for Egyptians, especially in light of the

turbulence between 2011 and 2013. Meanwhile, Omar echoes his backing for the evolving priorities of the Egyptian state, recognizing the stable and secure environment, albeit facing distinct challenges compared to past security threats. Omar's previous statements consistently reaffirmed his support for El-Sisi and the projects initiated under his leadership.

Yamama consistently emphasizes his support for both the state and the president. He firmly denies any disagreements with El-Sisi regarding security and foreign policy, instead focusing on differences in economic strategies. Regarding his electoral agenda, Yamama asserts that he possesses a comprehensive plan to tackle Egypt's economic and political issues. However, he has yet to reveal the specifics, indicating that his official candidacy for the presidency is a certainty, not merely a possibility. Zahran leans toward endorsing his party's liberal perspective, highlighting the importance of wealth redistribution to benefit the working class within a market-driven economy. He takes issue with the current government's economic policies and asserts that he has developed a specialized program in cooperation with specialists from various domains.

In contrast, Tantawy stands out as a vigorous critic of the current leadership. He says his electoral program encompasses political, economic and social dimensions, complete with specific programs and strategies. The finer details will be unveiled during a press conference after he has gathered the necessary endorsements for his presidential candidacy. Further candidates have announced their intention to run despite not having a strong presence either in the public sphere or within parliament. These include Gameela Ismail, the current head of the Constitution Party, and Ahmed El-Fadaly, head of the Democratic Peace Party and the Independence Current.

The forthcoming presidential election will have significant importance for several reasons. Firstly, it comes at a critical economic juncture, with citizens eagerly anticipating tangible improvements. Secondly, the election will be the first to be held in accordance with the amended constitution, which extends the presidential term to six years. And thirdly, it will significantly shape the future parliament, which will be responsible for enacting many laws that Egyptians hope will be in their favor.

## EU's growing protectionism a dangerous sign

**THE European Commission's launch of an investigation on Wednesday on subsidized electric cars from China and its recommendation on Tuesday of risk assessment for critical technologies are the latest signs of rapidly growing protectionism in the 27-member bloc. While the commission has not named China in its so-called collective risk assessment of critical technologies, it is abundantly clear that China is the main target.**

The four technology areas that the commission listed for initial investigation include advanced semiconductor, artificial intelligence, quantum technology and biotechnology. Further investigations could be expanded to advanced connectivity, navigation and digital technologies, advanced sensing technologies, space and propulsion technologies, energy technologies, robotics and autonomous systems and advanced materials, manufacturing and recycling technologies. If agreed by the member states on the four areas by spring of 2024 as the commission hopes, EU could adopt investment and export restrictions on a wide range of technologies in the name of protecting its economic security.

Such protectionist measures, however, will only lead to the technological bifurcation that many, including the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, have

Chen Weihua

warned against in a potential new Cold War where the world is divided into rivaling political blocs. China has conducted fruitful technological cooperation with other countries, including EU member states, the United States and Japan, in the past decades. It is hard to imagine that such cooperation, which has benefited both sides and the whole world, will be stopped due to political and ideological differences.

EU's export restrictions could slow down China's technological development for the short term, but they will also hurt EU and its member states since China has become one of the technological powers in the world in multiple areas including quantum computing, artificial intelligence and clean technology. In a similar stunt, the arms embargo on China imposed by the US and EU 34 years ago have not prevented China's advance in military technologies. On the contrary, it has propelled China to make greater strides in its national defense modernization. It is just a reminder that any EU technology curbs on China are doomed to fail.

In the past few years, EU has been coerced by Washington to ban Huawei 5G on groundless national security allegations. It has let the US government dictate and bully its technology companies, such as chipmaking equipment

giant ASML of the Netherlands, to restrict exports to China, a move that aims to hurt China's technological rise but in reality also harms ASML, the Netherlands and EU sovereignty. What is more disturbing is that EU, which touts itself as a global leader in fighting climate change, has been targeting China's electric vehicles, solar panels and other technologies related to fighting climate change. These measures are undermining the badly needed global cooperation on climate change and are sending a dangerous signal ahead of the COP28 to be held later next month in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

China, the US and EU have all been subsidizing their green technologies as reflected in the US Inflation Reduction Act and EU's Green Deal Industrial Plan. But China's huge progress in green technologies from solar and wind to EVs should be attributed to the nation's early start and great emphasis on clean technology, rather than subsidies. It should be applauded as great achievements for tackling the most urgent global challenge of climate change and not be demonized or undermined as the European Commission is trying to do. The latest EU moves will not only risk a tit-for-tat trade wars between the two large trade partners but also divide the world and undermine the climate fight, making everyone worse off.

The China Daily

## Rishi's speech showed what's next for the Tories - and it isn't him

Martin Kettle

**RISHI Sunak has spent Conservative party conference week claiming he wants to do politics differently. If only. In fact, yesterday's speech - quite possibly the only one he will ever give to a Tory conference as leader - was politics as usual. A series of policy announcements delivered from on high, some expected and others not, framed by an attack on Labour, made it the sort of speech that Tory prime ministers make on such occasions. But it was delivered to an audience and a party that know he may not be around to implement any of them.**

True, it was the best-constructed and best-delivered conference speech by a Conservative prime minister since David Cameron. That may not be saying very much, given that the competition consists of spluttering Theresa May, blustering Boris Johnson and a self-destructing Liz Truss. But at least it had a theme running right through it. The theme was an attempt to redefine the party of government for the past 13 years as the party of change. The problem is that this is a trick, and not a good one, and Sunak isn't the leader to pull it off anyway. It was his cones hotline moment. The audience could have greeted his speech with a chant of "One more year! One more year!"

Sunak's real problem, though, is that he does not do politics well. Politics was broken, he said. That's true. But this was not the speech to change that. Not after 13 years and after two traumatic lurches rightwards in the form of the Brexit vote and the Truss disaster. Doing politics differently could mean focusing on the long term, working with other parties, reforming the way parliament

works and changing the electoral system. But Sunak's approach is prescriptive, not creative. It is indistinguishable from gimmickry. A few eye-catching announcements - and there were some - don't alter that.

It didn't help, of course, that the biggest headline from the speech will be the one that everyone knew was coming, and which embodies as few others could have done the widespread feeling in Britain that the country isn't working. Scrapping the northern leg of HS2 is a humiliation for the government, for the politicians, for the companies involved and, above all, for the nation. The failure to complete one single line of the kind that France was able to roll out nationwide more than three decades ago is a devastating verdict. Nothing Sunak can say gets round the failure that blankets what he said - and in Manchester of all places. There is no credit to be won from being a zombie government in charge of a ghost train. There is no disguising either that the cancellation is a volte face on the levelling-up conceit, which, fraudulent or not, was undoubtedly at the "Get Brexit done" heart of Boris Johnson's successful national agenda in 2019.

It is hard to dispute Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham's verdict that the north has been treated as a "second-class" part of Britain, especially with Sunak's confirmation, which rubbed salt in the wound, that HS2 will terminate at Euston, as it should, not at Old Oak Common. But it should have gone to Manchester and Leeds, too. The north has been betrayed. So has the Midlands. The West Midlands' Conservative mayor,

Andy Street, who fought for the project to the last, would be right to resign. He could win re-election standing as the independent that he actually is. The humiliation is reinforced by the fact that the promise to spend "every penny" saved from cancelling HS2 on the road and rail projects in the north and Midlands that Sunak rattled off in his speech is also a trick. These projects are years away from both undertaking and completion. The one thing we can know for certain in the months to come is that the motorways will be more choked and overcrowded than ever. You wonder whether Sunak himself ever uses motorways like the M6 when he glibly condemned them to another generation of upgrading yesterday - making life miserably frustrating for the motorists about whom Sunak affects to care so much, and inflicting even more damage on the environment.

Pretending to lead the party of change had one immediate benefit for Sunak, though. It meant he did not need to refer to his predecessors. Only Disraeli, Churchill and Thatcher got mentions. Cameron, May, Johnson and Truss, by contrast, have all become unpersons in the Sunak Tory party. Except, of course, that they haven't to the members. May and Truss were at the conference in person. Johnson remains an all too real spectre at the Tory party's self-devouring feast. The real story at Manchester this week is not that Sunak has reformed the Tory party. It is that the Tories are a dangerously broken party. Truss's return to peck at the carrion was part of that. So was the performative nastiness of Suella Braverman's speech on Tuesday.

The Guardian





# Pak banking system sound, deposits perfectly safe: SB

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan, Thursday, stated that banking system in Pakistan is safe and sound under a robust regulatory and supervisory framework of SBP with a layer of protection through insurance cover and all the deposits were perfectly safe.

The banking system in Pakistan is adequately capitalized, highly liquid and profitable and its ability to withstand a set of severe shocks has further improved while 94% of the depositors were fully protected under the Deposit Protection Act 2016, the central bank clarified through a statement issued here.

The SBP spokesperson said that certain sections of the media, on the basis of a

statement given by Deputy Governor SBP, Dr. Inayat Hussain during the meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, were implying as if bank deposits above Rs500,000 in the banking system in Pakistan were unsafe.

The SBP categorically stated that the deposits were safe owing to a sound banking system in Pakistan that was working under a robust regulatory and supervisory framework of SBP while the sector was adequately capitalized, highly liquid and profitable with a low level of net non-performing loans, i.e. bad loans.

The banking sector posted a strong profitability of Rs284 billion in first half of CY23, which is almost 125

percent higher than the first half of CY22 and the higher earnings, in turn, also strengthened the capital of banks and the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) of the banking sector increased to 17.8 percent by end June 2023 compared to 16.1 percent as of end June 2022.

The ratio was substantially higher than SBP's minimum regulatory requirement of 11.5 percent and international standard of 10.5 percent, the statement noted adding that with improvement in solvency buffers, the ability of the banking sector to withstand a set of severe shocks has further improved.

It further stated that in addition to the soundness of the banking system, Deposit Protection

Corporation (DPC) has added another layer of protection by providing insurance cover of up to Rs500,000 to every depositor that was in line with the best international practices and global trends.

Deposit protection, is one of the key elements of safety net used by supervisory authorities and deposit protection agencies around the world to provide protection to the depositors' funds in the unlikely event of a bank failure.

The amount insured by the DPC becomes immediately available to depositors in case a bank fails while the remaining amounts of the deposits are also recoverable as the troubled bank is resolved through a regulatory assisted process, the statement further clarified.



PESHAWAR: Women visiting stall at International Livestock Agri Fisheries Expo. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 372 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 372.55 points, a positive change of 0.79 per cent, closing at 47,452.38 points against 47,079.83 points the previous day.

A total of 462,865,965 shares valuing Rs8.998 billion were traded during the day as compared to 330,249,094 shares valuing Rs7.304 billion the previous day.

As many as 355 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 238 of them recorded gains and 91 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 26 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 190,161,011 shares at Rs1.39 per share, K-Electric Ltd with 52,233,286 shares at Rs2.21 per share and Maple Leaf with 21,305,930 shares at Rs32.35 per share.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum increase of Rs112.50 per share price, closing at Rs20,600.00, whereas the runner-up was Sanofi-Aventis with a Rs33.00 rise in its per share price to Rs690.00. Pak Tobacco witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs19.90 per share closing at Rs700.10, followed by Khyber Tobacco with a Rs8.53 decline to close at Rs400.00.

**Rupee gains Rs1.06 against US-Dollar**

Pakistani Rupee on Thursday witnessed the 22nd consecutive recovery session as it gained Rs1.06 against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs283.62 against the previous day's closing of Rs284.68. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs281.25 and Rs284 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 20 paise to close at Rs298.13 against the last day's closing of Rs298.33, according to SBP.

The Japanese Yen went down by 01 paise to close at Rs1.90, whereas an increase of 19 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs344.16 as compared to the last closing of Rs343.97.

# SCCI calls for signing FTAs

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: President of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fuad Ishaq stressed the signing of free trade agreements (FTAs) with neighbouring countries to further enhance regional trade.

The chamber president said the country's economy would be stabilized by enhancing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan and exports to Central Asian Republics.

He urged the government to take pragmatic steps to remove hurdles in the way of cross border trade.

Fuad Ishaq expressed these views during a meeting with PAJCCI Coordinator and former senior vice president Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, former vice president Abidullah Yousafzai, Pakistan Tea Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chairman Muhammad Ashfaq, Pakistan Flour Mills Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Group Leader, Naem Butt, Chairman Iqbal Khan, Chitrali Bazar Association General Secretary Ihsanullah, for-

mer executive member and Chitral Union Peshawar leader Fahad Amin led delegation, All Pakistan Agriculture Produce Traders Federation Malik Ali Sohni, Khyber Ice Manufacturing Association, along with Imtiaz Ali, Saddam Gul, Faiz Rasool, Nadeem Rauf, Ishtiaq Muhammad and others as these delegations came to SCCI house to congratulate him.

Ijaz Khan Afridi, the chamber's vice president was also present in the meeting. The delegations of traders, industrialists, exporters and importers extended heartfelt felicitations to President SCCI Fuad Ishaq and expressed their best wishes and hope that he will play a role in resolution of the business community issues.

Fuad Ishaq in his views on the occasion said SCCI will draft a proposal for promotion of regional trade and to send it to the relevant government authorities. In light of these recommendations, he said efforts would be made to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan,

transit trade and onward to Central Asian Republic and country's exports.

He said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa business community was mostly dependent on mutual trade with Afghanistan and other regional countries, which are being faced with numerous problems.

The SCCI's president urged the government and relevant authorities to take practical steps to facilitate cross border trade.

Fuad Ishaq suggested allowing trade with Afghanistan, China and Iran in Pakistani rupee instead of dollars to improve the bilateral trade and exports and bring economic prosperity and development in the country.

The chamber's chief assured the business community to take up their issues with relevant authorities and would make vigorous efforts to resolve them on priority grounds.

He said SCCI believes in selfless service of the business community, which is their sole platform and it always plays a vital role in resolution of issues.

# Unity through diversity

## Aiman Khan

I hope this letter finds you well. In these times of change and uncertainty, I find myself reflecting upon the concept of unity and its importance in our lives.

Unity is a powerful force that brings people together, transcending differences and fostering a sense of belonging. It's a reminder that we are all interconnected, sharing the same planet and the same dreams for a better future. When we unite, we can achieve remarkable things, breaking down barriers and overcoming challenges that seemed insurmountable when faced alone.

Our world is a tapestry of cultures, beliefs, and perspectives. Embracing unity means recognizing and celebrating these diversities while finding common ground that unites us. It's

about understanding that each individual has a unique contribution to make, and by working together, we can create a harmonious symphony of ideas and actions.

In a time where division seems to be more pronounced than ever, let us remember the strength that comes from standing together. Let us listen, learn, and empathize with one another, striving for a world where compassion and understanding prevail over hatred and prejudice.

As we move forward, let us actively seek opportunities to bridge gaps, to build bridges between communities, and to extend a hand of friendship to those who may be different from us. Whether it's within our families, workplaces, or larger communities, unity can be the guiding principle that helps us navigate through challenges and emerge stronger.

# TDAP Chief Executive visits SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Chief Executive Muhammad Zubair Motiwala and Secretary TDAP Dr. Fareed Iqbal Qureshi, along with their team visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) for an engagement with the business community.

Upon their arrival, they received a warm welcome from the SCCI Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir and Vice President Amer Majeed Sheikh.

The meeting centered on addressing various industry-related concerns and TDAP assured their full commitment to promptly resolve these issues.

Addressing the business community, TDAP Chief Executive M. Zubair Motiwala said that Sialkot was a place which had diversification and whatever you were doing was truly required for the country.

# Lucky Cement win Corporate Excellence Award 2023

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Lucky Cement Limited has won the Management Association of Pakistan's Top Corporate Excellence Award 2023 in the Industrial Category amongst all corporate sector organizations in Pakistan.

Noman Hasan, Executive Director of Lucky Cement Limited received the award at the 38th MAP Annual Corporate Excellence Award Ceremony held at a local hotel.

The Corporate Excellence Awards was instituted by MAP in 1982 with the sole aim to recognize and honor companies showing outstanding performance and demonstrating progress and enlightened management practices.

Muhammad Ali Tabba, CEO Lucky Cement Limited, said "It is with great pride that we accept this award. We are extre-

ly grateful to all our employees and stakeholders for helping us achieve repeated success over the years."

He further added, "We are committed to fostering growth and sustainable business practices as we strive to reach new heights. Our top priority remains meeting the needs of our stakeholders, while always keeping in mind the larger objective of advancing Pakistan's economic growth."

Lucky Cement received the award based on having the best corporate practices and governance in the Industrial sector.

The primary criteria for this award emanates from best Corporate and Management practices reflected by Leadership, Corporate Governance, Customer and Market Focus, HR, Strategic Planning and Communication, Social Responsibility, Risk Manag-



ement, IT Infrastructure, Service Delivery and Security.

Lucky Cement Limited (LCL) is the flagship company of the Yunus Brothers Group, which has a solid history of exceptional growth performance since its inception in 1993. LCL is one of the largest producers and leading exporters of quality cement in Pakistan, with a production capacity of 15.3 million tons per annum. The Company is listed on the Pakistan stock exchange.

Lucky Cement Limited is having global presence in cement sector by venturing into Iraq and the DR Congo. The Company has diversified into various industries. This includes LCI Pakistan Limited, Lucky Motor Corporation Limited (formerly KIA Lucky Motors), and mobile manufacturing in partnership with Samsung Gulf Electronic Co.

Further, The UFG task force team raided at plastic bag manufacturing unit located on Charsada Road, Peshawar and caught a gas theft case red-handed. Consumer was using gas illegally from domestic meter installed in reverse direction and using gas for commercial purposes in the manufacturing of plastic bags. Team disconnected the domestic meter on spot.

**Meanwhile,** Lahore Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited, acting on the special instructions of the Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Energy and Sui Northern Administration, has received more than 4 crore dues from various defaulting institutions/ departments. Apart from this, gas connections of other defaulted institutions/departments worth more

# SNGPL cuts off another 114 meters over gas pilferage

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 144 connections while imposing fine of Rs. 5.9594 Million and 333 under billing cases processed.

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected 07 connections on illegal use of gas and 04 disconnected on the use of compressor.

In Bahawalpur, the regional team disconnected 05 connections on use of compressor and 31 under billing cases processed. Rs0.198 Million booked against underbilling.

In Multan, the company disconnected 15 connections on illegal use of gas, 02 disconnected on the use of compressor and 07 under billing cases processed. Rs0.044 Million booked against underbilling.

In Sheikhupura, the regional team disconnected 18 connections on illegal use of gas and 68 under billing cases processed. Rs5,000 fine against gas theft and Rs3.406 Million booked against underbilling.

In Peshawar, the company

disconnected 51 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal connections. 01 FIR launched against gas thief. Rs0.60 Million has been booked against gas theft.

In Rawalpindi the regional team disconnected 03 gas connections on illegal use of gas. SNGPL's team in Mardan 06 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas, 100 under billing cases processed and Rs0.6 Million booked against underbilling.

In Abbottabad, the regional team disconnected 03 connections on illegal use of gas.

The regional team in Gujranwala were disconnected 04 meters on the use of compressor and 03 disconnected on illegal use of gas. Rs0.165 Million has been booked against gas theft and Rs0.2728 Million booked against underbilling.

In Sialkot, 02 connections were disconnected on the use of compressor.

The company disconnected 12 connection on illegal use of gas in Islamabad.

In Sahiwal, 03 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas and 01 connection disconnected on the use of com-

pressor. Rs0.033 Million has been booked against gas.

The regional team in Faisalabad 24 under billing cases processed and 04 disconnected on illegal use of gas and another 01 on the use of compressor. Rs0.586 Million has been booked against gas theft and Rs0.0496 Million booked against underbilling.

Further, The UFG task force team raided at plastic bag manufacturing unit located on Charsada Road, Peshawar and caught a gas theft case red-handed. Consumer was using gas illegally from domestic meter installed in reverse direction and using gas for commercial purposes in the manufacturing of plastic bags. Team disconnected the domestic meter on spot.

**Meanwhile,** Lahore Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited, acting on the special instructions of the Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Energy and Sui Northern Administration, has received more than 4 crore dues from various defaulting institutions/ departments. Apart from this, gas connections of other defaulted institutions/departments worth more

than 8 crores have been disconnected which is detailed below.

Defaulted government institutions and departments worth more than 8 crores whose gas connections were disconnected.

Assistant XEN Pak PWD Federal Lodge-II Sector G-5 Islamabad Rs 25,653,420/-, Dy Director Mech Div II CDA, MNA's/Govt. Hostel G-5 Islamabad Rs23,639,530/-, Asstt. XEN Pak PWD Federal Lodge-I Sector G-5 Islamabad Rs7,106,380/-, Asstt. XEN Pak PWD Females Hostel Sector G-5 Islamabad Rs6,254,800/-, Dy Director Mech Div II CDA Pak Secretariat "Q" Block Islamabad Rs5,514,360/-, Pakistan Planning & Management Institute Sector H8/I Islamabad 3,665,650/-, Dy Director Mech Div II CDA (Parliament Lodges) Sector F-5/2 Islamabad 3,261,290/-, Principal Physically Handicapped Children G-8/4 Islamabad Rs1,877,200/-, Principal Govt. Girls High School Eid Gah Village Mirza Attock Rs2,083,870/-, District Officer Social Welfare Complex Kahna Road Rawalpindi Rs1,020,240/-, Post Master General G-6/3 Islamabad Rs622,270/-, TMO Tourist

Guest House Kashmir Point Murree Rs538,940/-, District Account Officer ADLG Office Attock Rs325,870, Dy. Commissioner Civil Rest House Attock Rs323,470/-, MS Civil Hospital Khewra Rs300,160/-, PMG GPO Office Mail Road Murree Rs283,900/-, Asstt. Director Local Government Rural Development Chakwal Rs277,610/-, Dy. District Officer THQ Hospital Choa Saidan Shah Chakwal Rs254,870/-, Incharge Old Home Social Welfare Complex Kahna Road Rawalpindi Rs235,310/-, Office of the Govt. Poultry Farm Attock Rs208,020/-, SDO Machinery Maintenance Sunny Bank Road Murree Rs212,970/-, XEN Provincial Highway Civil Lines Rawalpindi Rs207,300/-, The Head Master FG Boys Secondary School G-8/4 Islamabad Rs197,680/-, Asstt. Director Anti-Narcotics Force Civil Hospital Road Attock Rs183,910/-, Principal Govt. College for Women Murree Road Rawalpindi Rs183,820/-, MS THQ Hospital Pind Dadan Khan Rs182,100/-, MS Basic Health Unit DHQ Hospital Village Dab Chakwal Rs173,880/-, MS DHQ Hospital Chakwal Rs173,710/-,

Secretary Jamia Masjid Village Pind Nasrullah Tarnol Islamabad Rs166,200/-, Tehsil Nazim Municipal Administration Railways Road Pind Dadan Khan Rs163,160/-, Dy. District Officer Agriculture Office Jhelum Road Pind Dadan Khan Rs157,460/-, Asstt. XEN Islamabad Holiday Home - I Block C Bank Road Murree Rs149,530/-, XEN Office Provincial Machinery Maintenance Division Peshawar Road Rawalpindi Rs146,080/-, Head Mistress Govt. Girls Model School G-10/I Islamabad Rs145,050/-, District Emergency Officer Rescue 1122 Pirwadhai More GT Road Rawalpindi Rs143,310/-, SDO Provincial Highway C&W Camp Bank Road Murree Rs131,860/-, The Director Postal Staff College G-8/4 Islamabad Rs130,460/-, The Secretary Station Officers Mess POF Wah Cantt. Rs120,040/-, AC Office Old Katchery Talagang Road Chakwal Rs118,850, Head Mistress FG Primary School G-8/4 Islamabad Rs117,760/-, Parks & Horticulture Authority DG Residence Kashmir Point Murree Rs115,410/-, District Emergency Officer Rescue

1122 B Block Murree Road Rawalpindi Rs104,830/-, Dy. Director Punjab Emergency Services 1122 Tipu Block DHA Phase II Islamabad Rs102,970/-

Recovery worth more than 4 crores from defaulting government bodies and departments.

Recoveries have also been made from government defaulting consumers against gas dues are Holy Family Hospital Rawalpindi Rs8,774,510/-, Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology Rs8,431,460/-, Mayo Hospital Lahore Rs5,148,540/-, PIMS Hospital Islamabad Rs4,943,855/-, Punjab Institute of Cardiology Lahore Rs4,493,010/-, Police Training Centre Chung Lahore Rs3,207,631/-, DHQ Hospital Nowshera Kalan Rs2,054,530/-, Capital Hospital Islamabad Rs2,004,960/-, Principal Public Health Nursing School Kamra Attock Rs267,000/-, The Curator Archeological (Museum) Taxila Rs196,690/-, MD Educator School Fateh Jhang Road Attock Rs146,950/-, MS THQ Hospital Fateh Jhang Rs135,865/-, Cantonment Executive Officer Kamra Cantt Attock Rs120,970/-, Ch. Qamar Zaman Plot No.3 Main Road New City Wah Rs115,000/-.





In brief

Biles wins 20th world title

A N T W E R P (AFP/APP): Simone Biles claimed her 20th world title as she continued her return from a two-year break to lead the United States to a seventh straight women's team gold at the world gymnastics championships in Antwerp on Wednesday. The USA extended their domination going back to 2011, in the absence of Russia, the last team to beat them in a major competition. "It's crazy, we still pulled it out, I'm really proud of the team," said Biles. "It's the seventh title in a row for the United States. For some girls, it's their first World Championship. I'm excited to share that with them." The Americans scored 167.729 points to take gold ahead of Brazil (165.530) with Olympic hosts France winning bronze (164.064). "She's the leader, having someone so inspiring and so encouraging..." Team USA came together and we did what we needed to do tonight," said Biles' teammate Shilese Jones. The team victory gives Biles her 26th world medal and a record-extending 20th world title. And she could extend that tally as she is still in the running for five other podiums in Antwerp. The Texan has made an impressive comeback, two years after the Tokyo Olympics.

Twins, Rangers advance in MLB playoffs

L O S A N G E L E S (AFP/APP): The Minnesota Twins won a Major League Baseball playoff series for the first time in more than two decades Wednesday, beating Toronto 2-0 to sweep their best-of-three wild card set. The Twins lined up a best-of-five Division Series against the World Series champion Astros, starting on Saturday in Houston. The Texas Rangers also advanced in the American League with home runs from Adolis Garcia and rookie Evan Carter fueling a 7-1 victory over the Tampa Bay Rays. In the National League, the Philadelphia Phillies set up a showdown with the top-seeded Atlanta Braves after beating the Miami Marlins 7-1 to complete a 2-0 series win. Bryson Stott crushed a grand slam in the sixth inning to seal Philadelphia's victory. The Arizona Diamondbacks meanwhile will face the Los Angeles Dodgers in the divisional series after downing the Milwaukee Brewers 5-2 in another series sweep. The Twins wrapped up their first playoff series win since they beat the Oakland Athletics in the AL Division Series in 2002.

Asian Games records first doping case

H A N G Z H O U (A F P / A P P ) : Turkmenistan's Tejen Tejenov on Thursday became the first medalist at the Hangzhou Asian Games to fail a doping test, officials said, and fifth athlete in all. The 30-year-old, who came second in the heavyweight 90kg category of kurash, an ancient form of wrestling, tested positive for anabolic steroids, the International Testing Agency said. He has been provisionally suspended and is in danger of being stripped of his silver medal. "The athlete has been informed of the case and has been provisionally suspended with immediate effect," said the ITA, which handles some areas of doping control at the Games. "He has the right to request the analysis of the B-sample." Tejenov won silver behind Uzbek winner Mukhsin Khismomiddinov on September 30 and was tested the same day.

# Empty feeling as fans trickle in for Cricket World Cup opener

A H M E D A B A D (AFP/APP): England and New Zealand opened the Cricket World Cup on Thursday faced with a largely empty stadium -- and those in the crowd donned tops and face-paint in the national colours of India. A ripple of excitement went through the crowd as the England players made their way into the world's biggest cricket arena, a 132,000-seater stadium named after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "It's just huge to watch the World Cup... you can understand the excitement," said Zubair Ahmed, a fan with his cheek painted in the Indian flag colours of orange, white and green, as the game got underway in Ahmedabad in western India at the start of a marathon tournament. The opener is a rematch of the epic final in the 2019 edition when hosts England won the tied game on boundary countback at Lord's in London. But numbers of fans were low at the start, with just a few hundred trickling into the mega-stadium and the vast majority of seats empty.

Temperatures sizzled around 32 degrees Celsius (89.6 degrees Fahrenheit) with blazing sunshine, but those fans in the seats were undeterred, donning colourful costumes in the stands. Amid the India flags, some fans were out to support the playing teams. England skipper Jos Buttler has a strong fan base in cricket-mad India, as he plays for the Indian Premier League team Rajasthan Royals. "Jos is the boss," said Santosh Dodiya, wearing an England jersey with the captain's name across the back. "It's my first time here and I am excited to watch my favourite player at this huge stadium." Dodiya had travelled for over 500 kilometres (340 miles) from the neighbouring Rajasthan state. "I have especially come to watch him bat," he said. "Of course I want India to win, but England should reach the final." Jyoti Malhotra, wearing a sari in Indian tricolour flag colours, said she was just "so excited" to be at the match. But the big game she is looking forward is the tournament's blockbuster clash between arch-rivals

India and Pakistan. "I'm still looking for an India-Pakistan ticket," she said. "I'll be here for the final, hopefully India-Pakistan." The match on October 14 in Ahmedabad is the most anticipated clash of the 50-over showpiece event. With seats already all sold out, the fans have been turning to the black market and touts, with tickets for a normal stand costing 2000 rupees (\$24) shooting up more than 25 times in cost to as much as 50,000 rupees (\$600). Fan Zubair Ahmed said if he could, he would go. "It's the most loved match in the world," he said. "The kind of emotions that flow when India win are so great, I can't explain it in words." Despite the buzz, organisers fear stadiums will continue to look empty if fewer than 50,000 fans turned up for Thursday's game -- a likely scenario in matches not involving India. The women's wing of Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party sent out messages offering as many as 40,000 free tickets for Thursday's opening match to women, a senior party leader said.

# Gauff glides into China Open quarter finals

B E I J I N G (AFP/APP): US Open champion Coco Gauff shook off an indifferent first-set performance to glide into the women's quarter-finals of the China Open with victory over Russia's Veronika Kudermetova in Beijing on Thursday. The world number three triumphed 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 to set up a quarter-final tie with either Greece's Maria Sakkari or homegrown talent Wang Xinyu. Gauff roared into a 3-0 lead in the first set but was pegged back by an aggressive Kudermetova and had to save four set points to stay in it. But she forced a tie-break and stole the set when the world number 16 double-faulted -- producing a howl of frustration --

before planting a forehand wide. Set two was a much more comfortable affair for Gauff with the 19-year-old quickly notching a double-break and wrapping up the win when Kudermetova shovelled a forehand long. "I was really just trying to push through, and honestly at (4-5), 0-40 I don't even know what happened," Gauff said when asked about her first-set comeback. "I think obviously winning that first set... she probably was a little bit frustrated so she gave me a little bit more errors," she added. "I don't really think I changed much in the second. I think I was just trying to continue to be aggressive." Sakkari and Wang go

head-to-head later on Thursday, as does world number one Aryna Sabalenka who faces Jasmine Paolini of Italy. Earlier, world number 10 Caroline Garcia progressed to the quarter-finals with a 6-3, 6-2 defeat of Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina. Garcia will play second-ranked Iga Swiatek in the next round after the Pole swatted aside compatriot Magda Linette on Wednesday. The China Open is taking place for the first time since 2019 after Beijing did away with its long-standing zero-Covid policy. The men's draw culminated on Wednesday when Italy's Jannik Sinner downed world number three Daniil Medvedev to take the trophy.



BAHAWALPUR: A view of football match played between Yazman and 45 DB Government teams during Inter-District Government Schools Sports Tournament.

# Star Babar Azam's Pakistan eyes history in India in ICC Men's Cricket World Cup

HYDERABAD (APP): Star Babar Azam's Pakistan eyeing history in India in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup-2023 when Pakistan begin their campaign against the Netherlands at Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium here on Friday. Since arriving in the city eight days ago, which also marked the first instance of a Pakistan men's side landing in India in seven years, the Babar Azam's side has made the most of the training sessions and two warm-up games to acclimatize in the city where they play first two of their nine league matches. The warm-up games against New Zealand and Australia also served as opportunities for Pakistan to fine-tune their combinations and provide the much-needed match time to the entire squad. "We have been in Hyderabad for a week and our preparations have been really good," Babar told PCB Digital on the eve of Pakistan's tournament opener. "We have had two practice matches in which we tried different combinations and gave everyone an opportunity to see if they could play in any situation.

Overall our practice went well and we will give our best," he added. Pakistan entered the 50-over World Cup as one of the favorites after an impressive run in the just-concluded World Cup cycle as they had the best win-loss ratio of 2,400 with 24 wins in 36 matches. That the team has performed so consistently has also been because of their mainstays emerging as solid performers over the years. Their captain, Babar, has evolved into a modern-day great since recording the most runs for a Pakistani at a World Cup in the 2019 iteration and is perched at the top of the ICC ODI rankings for batters. He is one of the two players to score over 2,000 runs in the last four years. His impressive 2,196 runs have been at an average of 66.54 and a strike rate of 93.72. He has smashed nine centuries in this period, which is the joint-most with Shai Hope, who is the other batter to breach the 2,000-run mark. Babar's compatriot and a close friend Imam-ul-Haq is ranked sixth with 1,284 runs at an average of 45.85 and a strike rate of 84.41. He has struck two

centuries and 13 half-centuries in the past four years. Shaheen Afridi, who became the youngest bowler to bag a five-wicket haul in his last ICC Men's Cricket World Cup contest, has emerged as one of the most-feared bowlers in the game. Such has been his impact in the format that despite being on the sidelines for around seven months because of a knee injury, Shaheen has been one of the key bowlers in the vaunted Pakistan's pace attack. He has 46 wickets in the last four years at 25.26 and with an impressive economy of 5.42. In between the two editions, Pakistan continued to produce exciting fast bowling talents. Haris Rauf, who debuted in October 2020, has made a name for himself by producing excellent spells in arguably the hardest phase of the ODI game -- the middle overs. He surpassed the 50-wicket mark in the recent Men's ODI Asia Cup 2023 and has 53 scalps to his name, but the most fascinating bit of his bowling has been the economy, which has been 5.68. "Both bowling and

batting are our strengths," Babar replied when asked what he felt his side's strengths are. "Our batters have been performing from the top-order down to the lower-order. Every player is stepping up and taking responsibility. In bowling, our fast bowling has always been our strength but even our spinners are showing promise. Since we have come to India, we have seen our spinners take wickets in the middle overs, which is a good sign. We will try and keep this momentum going." When Pakistan takes on the Netherlands on Friday, it will be the first time in a little less than 11 years that they will play an ODI on Indian soil. They have not played a single 50-over international game in Hyderabad since 1987, but the team has made sure that they have all preparations in place for the mega-event. "As far as my experience goes, and having watched matches in India on television, I'll say the pitches seem really good. Matches are going to be high scoring. As for the boundaries, they are normal-sized, not

too small but not too big either. The pitches are true -- sometimes you need a little more time (as a batter) early on (in the game), but once you play on it for a while it feels really good. There is not much margin for the bowlers as they have to keep their lines wicket-to-wicket and deploy variations. If they err in lines, then the batters are going to make the most of it." Speaking about his last four years, the Pakistan captain said, "My journey has been really good. There have been ups and downs, which is natural. There have been challenges at times, but I have tried to live up to the expectations of the fans. I have met a lot of good people in the process. I met some very good teammates and was able to forge a bond with them. It has been three years since I have been playing with these boys so we have bonded well in this time. At the end of the day, we spend more time with each other than we get to spend with our families. We try to be happy with each other's performance and try to give our best for Pakistan." Recalling the Pakistan team's

reception at the Hyderabad International Airport last week, Babar expressed his gratitude towards the Indian people who have turned up in numbers to greet his side, and expressed hope that he will soon see the Pakistan fans across the country in the World Cup cheering their side. "We weren't expecting such a reception, to be honest. Many people showed up at the airport when we arrived here. They cheered for us and showed us support. A large crowd turned up in the last match. They seemed to really enjoy the game and they showed support for some of their favorite players. So it feels nice. I feel if we had Pakistani fans here, it would feel even better." The Friday meeting between Pakistan and the Netherlands would be the seventh time they face off in an ODI. The two sides have faced off six times in the format, their first meeting in the 1996 iteration of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, and Pakistan have come out victorious on each occasion. Pakistan toured the Netherlands last year for what was the first bilateral series between the two sides, and recorded a clean-sweep.

# Conway and Ravindra hand England a thumping to kick off World Cup



AHMEDABAD (Cricinfo): Revenge for the final of the 2019 World Cup was never going to come in the first match of the 2023 edition. But a nine-wicket demolition of England in the Ahmedabad curtain-raiser will have provided New Zealand ample satisfaction. The defending champions have been battered, comprehensively, wearing what might end up being one of the most emphatic beatings of the tournament. Pursuit of a target of 283 came with 82 balls to spare thanks to a brutal southpaw combination, with an unbeaten 152 from Devon Conway and an unbeaten 123 from Rachin Ravindra - ODI centuries number five and one, respectively. The former broke Martin Guptill's 88-ball record for the fastest 50-overs World Cup century, bringing his up in just 83, before Ravindra went one ball better to become the country's youngest centurion in a global tournament at 23. Together, these two Wellington teammates now possess the Blackcaps' highest partnership in the tournament's history. That their unbroken 273-run stand began at the start of the second over when Sam Curran snared Will Young down the leg side for a first-ball duck made it all the more remarkable. That was the last moment of jeopardy before Kiwi dominance prevailed, in the fastest chase of a 250-plus target in World Cup history. They even blitzed the boundary count 38 to 27. The defending champions looked to have reached a competitive total at the halfway stage. Joe Root's 77 stitched together a total of 282 for 9 after Tom Latham had won the toss and opted to bowl first. Yet it was a stuttering effort, thanks largely to Matt Henry's 3 for 48 dovetailing with 2 for 37 from Mitchell Santner, whose 10 overs did not feature a single boundary. The last player to manage that against England was Kuldeep Yadav in July 2018. Conway's quality in this format is rubber-stamped, and this was his fourth century this year alone, the

previous coming in a similarly one-sided affair against England in Cardiff at the start of September. For Ravindra, this was his first international hundred outright, in a first go in the top five. He had only previously passed fifty once. His presence in the XI was as much on bowling balance as to give Kane Williamson a little longer to recover from a ruptured ACL sustained six months ago in the opening match of the IPL. It felt particularly neat that an expensive 10 overs with the ball, costing 76, was covered when he reached the same number of runs off 60 deliveries. Conway put England on alert when driving the first ball of the chase through point off Chris Woakes. But Curran's early strike, along with his two maidens from the get-go, suggested there was something to work with. By the 35th over, Curran was merely fodder for Conway's whims, as he smashed the seamer for 20, starting with a six heaved over wide long-on before a brace of fours through despairing fielders. His 22nd and final boundary - a slapped four through square leg off Liam Livingstone in the next over - took him to 150 off 119. Ravindra's shotmaking was crisp

from the off, notably when crunching a flat six over square leg from a Mark Wood delivery that registered 148kph, bringing up the team fifty in just 6.5 overs. Wood's first over would go for 17 and his first three for 38. Just like that, one of Jos Buttler's difference-makers was rendered obsolete. England calling upon Adil Rashid, the fifth bowler, after 12 overs, spoke of the need for a shift in fortunes, with the 100 up with a single taken off the legspinner's first delivery. It never came. Even the guest appearance of Ben Stokes during the first drinks break on 17 overs could not bring about a shift. The hero of Lord's was only there to offer advice, missing out on selection with a hip issue. That he is at this tournament in a non-bowling capacity means he'd have hardly made a difference. But even one of his miracles might have only reduced the margin of defeat. England's efforts with the bat had various jumping-off points for a score greater than the 282 for 9 they managed from 50 overs. For the first time in an ODI innings, all 11 batters reached double figures, yet with just one fifty-plus stand - a 70 between Root and Buttler, ending with the latter's failed attempt at guiding Henry down to third.

# Governor KP to open Pak-Army Grand Greater Universities Sports Gala on Oct 9: Prof. Dr. Jehan Bakht

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali would open the Pakistan Army Greater Grand Sports Gala involving 10,000 male and female athletes from four universities and as many colleges here on October 9, 2023. This was stated by Professor Dr. Jehan Bakht, Vice Chancellor University of Agriculture Peshawar, while addressing a press conference here at Directorate of Sports University of Peshawar on Thursday. Pro Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar Professor Dr. Muhammad Saleem Khan Haveed, former international athlete and organizing secretary of the Gala Bahre Karam were also accompanying him. He said over 10,000 students male and female players will be taking part in 10 male and 6 female Games wherein in this connection Pakistan Army is providing all financial and moral support. He also thanked Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen Hassan Azhar Hayat Khan for extending all out support to holding the Pakistan Army Grand Greater Sports Gala-2023 for the first time in the history of the province. He said more than 10,000 athletes, both male and female, from University of Agriculture Peshawar, University of Engineering and

Technology (UET) Peshawar, Islamia College University and University of Peshawar (UoP), along four colleges including Khyber Medical College, Khyber Dentistry College and Imum Institute Peshawar and Pakistan Forest Institute Peshawar would taking part in 10 male Games comprising Cricket, Squash, Table Tennis, Badminton, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Table Tennis, Tug of War and Athletics while the female would be taking part in six different Games including Table Tennis, Badminton, Volleyball, Tug of War, Carrom Board and Ludo. Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University Prof. Dr. Jehan Bakht More than 10,000 male and female students are jointly organized by University of Peshawar, University of Agriculture Peshawar, Islamia College University Peshawar, University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar. The opening ceremony will be held at GM Khattak Sports Complex, Agricultural University Peshawar on October 9 at 10.00 am. Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali will be the chief guest, while the closing and prize distribution ceremony will be held on October 13 at 4.00 pm wherein Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen. Hassan Azhar Hayat would grace the occasion as chief guest and would

give away trophies and cash prizes to the position holders athletes. He also appreciated the all University Committee who is looking after all arrangements and hopefully the Gala would be memorable besides providing an opportunity to the students to show their skills and come up at national and international levels in various Games. He said, it is for the first time that such a grand Greater Universities Sports Gala has been planned inside the campus wherein it is open participation for the students. He said that all the players would be provided complete uniforms and playing kits. Pro VC University of Peshawar Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Haveed on this occasion said that all venues are in excellent condition. He said draws of various games have already been distributed among all the teams and the matches will start from 10.00 am. He said that this is the first time in the history of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that Pakistan Army is sponsoring these competitions which wants to attract the students towards healthy activities. He said with this Grand Greater Universities Sports Gale would not only help in promoting healthy activities among the students, rather, it will help in establishing an atmosphere of brotherhood among students.





## In brief

### 41 more dengue cases surface

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 41 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 1,506 in the district. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Thursday said that, among the new cases, 22 cases had arrived from Potohar town urban, ten from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi, four from Chaklala, two from Rawalpindi Cantonment and three from outside the district. He added that 165 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 130 were confirmed cases while 1,376 were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 39 FIRs, issued tickets to five, sealed one premise, and a fine of Rs 14,500 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. During indoor surveillance, in the last 24 hours, the teams checked 15,863 houses and found larvae in 782 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 4,367 places, the teams found larvae at 55 sites during outdoor surveillance.

### Gunjmandi police arrest four robbers

RAWALPINDI (APP): In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted a gang and arrested four robbers and street criminals besides recovering over Rs 421,000 cash, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Gunjmandi Police arrested four accused namely Khan Bacha, Adil, Kamran and Numan, who were allegedly involved in various robberies, and street crime cases. He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Gunjmandi Police Station on the directives of SP Rawal, Faisal Saleem conducted a raid and managed to net the criminals who were record holders. The arrested accused have been shifted to jail for an identification parade, he added. The SP said that the Police were taking strict action in accordance with the law against the lawbreakers and criminal gangs.

### New OPF Boys College's campus

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrah Malik, emphasized the government's unwavering support during the inauguration ceremony of the new OPF Boys College campus here in the Federal Capital. The Special Assistant applauded the OPF for inaugurating the new campus, catering to the educational needs of the children of overseas Pakistanis, according to a press release. He stressed the importance of nurturing the youth in a conducive environment with access to top-quality resources, making quality education for overseas Pakistani children a paramount concern of the current administration. Malik reaffirmed the government's top priority of extending comprehensive assistance to overseas Pakistanis, recognizing their pivotal role in bolstering the nation's economy. He underlined the government's keen interest in facilitating the integration of overseas Pakistanis into the national mainstream, citing the favorable environment for further initiatives. Earlier today, Malik formally inaugurated the new OPF Boys College junior campus located in the H-8 sector, expressing his admiration for the facility's management and infrastructure.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on Breast Cancer Awareness with a delegation of Siemens Healthineers Pakistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Aneeq stresses eternal legacy of Holy Prophet, emphasizes learning, unity among Muslims

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Thursday the era of Prophethood had concluded, yet the everlasting legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) persevered. Addressing the third annual 'Seerat-un-Nabi Conference' organized under Auqaf Islamabad here at Faisal Mosque as special guest, he opined that a single life was not enough to gain a profound comprehension of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)'s exalted and virtuous character. Minister Aneeq further emphasized that the Holy Quran instructed us to

follow the path shown by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) raising question whether we had learned from His life and incorporated it into our own lives. He highlighted the success in following the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)'s teachings, stating, "True believers are those whose character and conduct reflect the qualities of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him)." He said, "If our way does not align with the noble path of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), it is a complete failure."

Speaking about the value of knowledge, Minister Aneeq said, "Knowledge is the essence of fear of God,

and those with knowledge hold a profound reverence for Allah," adding that a true believer was one whose ethics and actions reminded others of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). He stressed that by learning from the character of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), we could improve our society.

"We aspire to enhance the beauty of this land and eliminate despair from Pakistan," he said, emphasizing unity among the Muslim community. Concluding his address, Minister Aneeq said, "Laylat-ul-Qadr holds great significance for Pakistan, and may Allah Almighty bless our nation."

### Railways to solarize entire power its network in phases

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is all set to start switching its entire stations' power network including major railway stations, offices, workshops, and factories to solar systems in different phases which would help to save billions of rupees for the department. "The step is expected to save Rs. 1.8 billion in the first phase to the department, later on, more stations, offices, and other facilities will be added in the subsequent phases," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. Initially, in the first phase, he said that Pakistan Railways wanted to switch around 99 formations, including major railway stations, nine divisional headquarters, and other vital offices, to solar power.

He said Pakistan Railways is going to hire the services of the National Engineering Services Pakistan (NESPAK) to convert its network to a solar system. The official said that the department has decided to shift the railway network to solar energy to minimize the economic burden of Pakistan Railways. On the other hand, due to the ongoing energy crisis and the surge in utility bills, PR management has implemented a policy that prohibits its officers from using air-conditioning before 11 a.m. daily.

### Eight drug peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up eight accused on recovery of over seven kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Rattaamral police held Suleman for having 1600 grams charras while Saddar Wah Police netted Imtiaz on recovery of 1450 grams charras. Westridge police recovered 1360 grams charras from the possession of Azeem and Bani police seized 1100 and 460 grams charras from the possession of Saif Naeem and Yasir. Taxila and Waris Khan police held Ahmed and Rizwan and recovered 1065 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.

## UNFPA representative calls on Health minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): UNFPA Representative in Islamabad, Dr. Luay Shabaneh called on Caretaker Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Thursday and discussed issues related to the health sector. The minister informed that the Ministry of National Health Services is all set to organize "All Pakistan Women Convention on family planning and population management" at the Convention Centre on 16th October 2023.

The minister said that the objective of this convention is to empower the women and mothers by raising the awareness and knowledge of women, particularly rural women on population issues and family planning based on the Islamic concept "Tawazun" which calls for balancing

between the resources and the population. He said that the audience at the Convention will include 500 women of reproductive health age from rural and peri-urban areas.

Scholars and national and international experts will participate in the convention to highlight the Islamic point of view on family planning.

The minister said that the government was working under an integrated strategy to control the growing population. The Population Task Force was following a comprehensive strategy to control the population.

Dr. Luay Shabaneh appreciated the measures taken to control population growth and assured full support in this regard from UNFPA.

## PBM assists 11.6 million, aids 250,000 in medical care

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Bait ul Mal (PBM) has provided assistance to more than 11.616574 million individuals in need and has allocated financial support for medical treatment to 250,000 individuals during last year, said an official.

He informed APP that Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) serves as a means of support for the underprivileged, including widows, impoverished women, orphans, and individuals with disabilities. This assistance encompasses various areas such as general aid, education, medical treatment, and rehabilitation.

The financial assistance has been provided to 3,000 patients over the last three years. PBM offers medical treatment for significant illnesses and disabilities among financially disadvantaged patients. It also fosters economic empowerment through rehabilitation initiatives and provides education stipends to deserving and talented students

from low-income backgrounds enrolled in public educational and technical institutions.

He mentioned that in the fiscal year 2022-23, 8,390 individuals received medical assistance, 4,391 were granted educational scholarships, and 18,375 received educational stipends.

PBM aids underprivileged students in government educational institutions but excludes those in private schools or with parents who are government servants.

## Sanjrani extends heartfelt appreciation to teachers on World Teachers' Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): In connection with World Teachers' Day, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has released a poignant message expressing sincere gratitude to the dedicated educators across the nation.

In his statement, the Chairman Senate commended the tireless efforts of teachers in shaping the future of Pakistan, said a news release issued here on Thursday.

Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani highlighted the invaluable contribution of educators, emphasizing their crucial role in building a knowledgeable and

empowered society.

Sadiq Sanjrani further underscores the Senate's commitment to advancing education through the recently established Education Parliamentarians Caucus (EPC). This caucus aims to support and work towards an educated society in Pakistan, promoting education for all.

By recognizing and appreciating the pivotal role of teachers, the Senate, through EPC, reaffirms its dedication to fostering a robust educational landscape for the nation.

The message encourages a collective celebra-

tion of the profound impact teachers have on the lives of individuals and the development of the nation as a whole. It underscores the importance of expressing gratitude for the unwavering dedication exhibited by teachers in nurturing young minds.

As Pakistan joins the global community in honoring educators on World Teachers' Day, Chairman Senate's message stands as a testament to the Senate's multifaceted approach in promoting education and recognizing the integral role teachers play in shaping the nation's future.

## Dolphin squads directed for prompt response in emergency cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Dolphin squads of Islamabad police have been directed to ensure the safety of the city's residents and provide prompt assistance in times of emergency.

In adherence to the directives of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the SSP Safe City conducted a comprehensive briefing session for the officers and personnel of the Dolphin Squad (Emergency Response Unit), as reported by a public relations officer.

During the briefing, the SSP Safe City underscored the critical importance of swift responses to calls

received via the Pucar-15 helpline, urging officers and personnel to take appropriate actions based on the nature of each incident.

Stringent patrolling protocols were emphasized to ensure the safety of the city's residents and their property. Officials were instructed to interact courteously with citizens, providing prompt assistance in times of emergency.

The officers and personnel received specific directives to maintain vigilant scrutiny of suspicious individuals during their duties, including thorough checks and swift action against criminal elements.

Furthermore, the impor-

tance of maintaining a professional and courteous demeanor towards the public, in contrast to traditional approaches, was stressed.

Driven by the top priorities of the Islamabad Capital Police, which are crime prevention and citizen safety, any disruption to public safety will be met with zero tolerance. Officers were reminded of their role in implementing comprehensive strategies against criminal activities and ensuring the efficacy of these measures. Negligence in this regard will not be tolerated, ensuring a steadfast commitment to public safety.

## ANF recovers over 150 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations across the country managed to recover over 150 kg drugs and arrested four accused.

According to ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday, in an operation, 42 kg hashish was recovered from secret cavities of a vehicles intercepted near Zero Point on Coastal

Highway. The accused was trying to smuggle drugs from Quetta to Hub. On pointination of the arrested drug smuggler, another accused who was waiting in Hub area to receive drugs was also arrested along with a motorcycle. In third operation, six hashish-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a passenger, resident of Bannu, who was leaving for Sharjah by flight number G-9547. In fourth operation, 96 kg hashish and 12 kg opium were recovered from a car intercepted on Ring Road Peshawar. Separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused while further investigations are under process.

## Construction work on Rwp Ring Road project to be completed by Sept 2024

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Construction work on the Rawalpindi Ring Road project will be completed by September 2024, said Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chhatta here on Thursday.

The Commissioner and Station Commander, Rawalpindi, Brig Salman Nazir jointly chaired the first meeting of the Steering Committee for Urban Development Projects which was held here and directed the authorities to accelerate the pace of work on the Rawalpindi Ring Road project.

The Commissioner informed that work on the Rawalpindi Ring Road project

would be completed on a fast track within the stipulated time frame.

Brig. Ahmed, Brig (r) Ijaz Qamar Kiani, Director of Development and Finance, Nazia Parveen Sudhan, Director General, Rawalpindi Development Authority, Saif Anwar Jappa, SE Building Khalid Azim, and other officers concerned attended the meeting. Brig. Salman on the occasion directed the authorities that completion of the development projects should be ensured within the stipulated period. He said, no compromise should be made on the quality of the construction work.

## CDA demolishes 7,867 illegal structures in markets, sidewalk tracks, green belts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Directorate of Enforcement, Capital Development Authority (CDA) has demolished over 7,867 illegal structures in the markets, roads, green belts, and sidewalk tracks in the federal capital in one and a half years.

"During the operation, around 13,243 items of encroachers have also been confiscated, subsequently, these articles are auctioned. Besides, fines worth Rs. 5.126 million has also been recovered from trespassers as a penalty," sources in the CDA told APP. They said, "The Directorate of Enforcement has launched as many as 1,423 anti-encroachment operations carried out across the board in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT)."

The sources said, "The Directorate was vigorously undertaking anti-encroachment operations on a regular basis throughout Islamabad in order to curb the illegal constructions in the ICT."

They said the continuous operations were being carried out on a day-to-day basis 24/7 for the retrieval of state land from land grabbers and encroachers.

The matter was being dealt with by the

Directorate of Municipal Administration, working under the administrative control of the Municipal Corporation Islamabad (MCI), they added.

About the steps taken for the protection of citizens, provision of emergency medical assistance, and water facility on hiking tracks, they said, "The forest guards keep patrolling throughout the day in all the trails and hiking tracks of Margalla Hills, National Park."

Moreover, they said the forest guards were equipped with wireless sets which were connected to the centralized control room of the Environment Wing, CDA, whenever any medical emergency or any untoward situation arises at any trail or hiking track, these forest guards directly communicate with the centralized control room system, where the control room further calls on rescue teams to attend medical emergencies. "Any type of water pipeline and provision of electricity in Margalla Hills National Park is prohibited to avoid any hazard to wildlife except notified villages," they added.



ISLAMABAD: Country Head of World Bank Waleed called on Federal Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hasan Fawad.



### Arms, ammunition discovered

SARI PUL (Xinhua): Police have discovered arms and ammunition including RPG-7 in north Afghanistan's Sari Pul province, Din Mohammad Nazari, an official, said. The contraband, including four pieces of AKM, a machine gun, an RPG-7 rocket launcher and a US-made M16 assault rifle, was recovered during a series of operations in parts of Sari Pul province a couple of days ago, said the spokesperson of the provincial police.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Rabi-ul-Awwal 19, 1445 — Friday, October 06, 2023

### 2 travelers killed, 28 injured

TALUQAN (Xinhua): At least two persons lost their lives and 28 others sustained injury as a passenger bus turned turtle in north Afghanistan's Takhar province, provincial police spokesperson Abdul Mubin Safi said Thursday. The road accident took place in the province's Bangi district on Wednesday night, leaving two dead on the spot and injuring 28 others, including women and children, some in critical condition, the official added.

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

## Afghan students, teachers mark World Teachers' Day

KABUL (Khaama Press): Students and teachers in Afghanistan are commemorating World Teachers' Day for the second consecutive year while the doors of schools and universities remain closed to girls.

October 5th marks World Teachers' Day. This day is celebrated worldwide yearly, but gender-based discrimination in Afghanistan has also affected the teaching profession.

Although there are no exact statistics on the number of unemployed female

teachers, before the rise of the Taliban administration, approximately 78% of school teachers in Kabul were women. According to informed sources, this number has significantly decreased, almost to zero, in Kabul and other cities.

Vahideh Azim, a teacher in one of Kabul's schools, says she is a teacher and a mother. She agonizes over overseeing her daughters and other students deprived of education.

According to Ms Azim, half of society consists of

women, and if girls are denied education, society will "never progress."

She has been teaching for 30 years and adds, "I am happy that I am a teacher and can serve society, people, and the country through this."

Ms Azim, who also heads her family, says making ends meet with this income is challenging and calls on the government to pay attention to their economic situation.

Marwa, a student, says that if schools were open,

she would be on the verge of completing the twelfth grade. She mentions that World Teachers' Day was celebrated enthusiastically in past years, and students were very prepared to celebrate this day.

At 17 years old, she adds that the celebration of World Teachers' Day has been significantly different in the past two years due to the closure of schools for girls. It was celebrated with special programs and appreciation for teachers in the past, but now, none of

that remains.

Marwa reminisces about the celebrations three years ago, saying, "Every street was filled with female students dressed nicely, carrying gifts and various treats. Teachers also came to class with happy faces, and we celebrated this day by singing songs."

She is deeply concerned that she cannot attend school this year and celebrate World Teachers' Day, and she says, "My heart aches for the teachers and those days."

One of the teachers in Kabul province, who did not want his name mentioned, says he has been teaching for 38 years in one of Kabul's schools, and now, the difficult economic situation has made life hard for him.

According to him, the situation in schools has changed compared to the past, and the number of teachers has decreased due to migration to countries like Pakistan.

He adds that female students are very disappointed

about the closure of school gates. Some have come to his home and asked when schools will reopen for girls.

This teacher emphasizes the psychological impact of closed school gates on girls and says, "One of the female students had a nervous breakdown due to the immense pressure."

He also complains about economic problems, saying that the cost of rent and supporting his family has made life difficult.

It is worth noting that on

World Teachers' Day, no female teachers were present at the ceremony held in Kabul's Amani High School, despite the presence of government officials and educational authorities.

Abdul Salam Hanafi, the administrative deputy of the Prime Minister's office in the Taliban administration, highlighted the meagre income of teachers in this ceremony and stressed that the current government cannot change their living conditions.

## NPC approves projects worth around 7b afghanis



KABUL (Pajhwok): The National Procurement Commission (NPC) has approved contracts for 25 projects that would cost around billion afghanis.

The Deputy Prime Minister's office for economic affairs in a statement said that the NPC hold meeting under the chairmanship of deputy prime minister for economic affairs Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar.

It said a detailed discussion was held on 27 proj-

ects and contracts of 25 were approved and the contracts of two projects were canceled.

The approved projects were related to the information and technology, ministries of finance, higher education, energy and water, rural rehabilitation and development, the Afghan National Bank and Kabul Municipality, with their total value reaching around seven billion afghani.

The approved projects

included the remaining works of Pashdan, Shah Wa Aros and Kamal Khan dams, drinking water will be supplied to the people in Kandahar, Balkh and Badghis provinces, the citizens in different provinces will be provided with their need and adequate electricity, provision of high-quality and fast internet services to citizens and a number of other projects which will provide job opportunities to thousands of people.

## Police smash drug lab in Baghlan

PUL - E - KHUMRI (Xinhua): Police have discovered and destroyed a drug processing lab in Dushi district of Baghlan province, district police chief Mawlawi Khalidin Saqib said Thursday.

Acting on tip-off, the police raided a place in Dara-e-Kayan area of Dushi district on Wednesday, destroying a drug lab with a quantity of heroin and the objects used in manufacturing drugs, the official added. Four suspects have been arrested with regard to the case for further investigation, the official went on to say.

In similar operations, police also discovered and destroyed a drug lab in Patoy district of the central Daykundu province a day earlier on Tuesday and took into custody five people on charge of involvement in the illegal business.

The Afghan caretaker government banned the cultivation of illicit crops including hashish, poppy, drug processing and drug trafficking in April 2022.

Since then, the administration has intensified the war on producing illegal drugs and trafficking to get rid Afghanistan of drug menace.

## Muttaqi promotes Afghanistan as 'economic connectivity hub'

KABUL (Agencies): The Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi has said that the time has come for Afghanistan to be turned into a center of economic connectivity in the region.

Zakir Jalali, head of Asian Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs quoted Muttaqi as saying, at the 3rd China Xizang Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation on Thursday, that the current direction of international politics is towards regionalism.

Muttaqi said that the Himalayan region has great potential in this area and this forum is an effective means for these discussions.

"Taking advantage of Afghanistan's security and stability, the time has come to turn Afghanistan into a center of economic connectivity in the region instead of a battlefield," said Muttaqi.

According to Muttaqi, Afghanistan's government is interested in working on the Wakhan Corridor with China to connect the two countries.

"The government of Afghanistan is interested



in working on the Wakhan

Corridor with the agreement and cooperation of China, and the Himalayan mountain range is not a sign of separation between us and China, but an example of connection and connecting Afghanistan and China face to face," Jalali quoted Muttaqi as saying.

Muttaqi told the forum that Afghanistan has also been affected by climate change.

"As a result of climate change, many animals have disappeared and human life has been severely affected, and up to 21 million of our people, who constitute half of the population, are facing a shortage of safe drink-

ing water," said Muttaqi.

He says that due to long years of instability and the lack of a responsible government, Afghanistan's percentage of forests has decreased from 3 to 1.5%.

Muttaqi said that Afghanistan is fully committed to fighting climate change and to benefit from its resources.

"The adverse effects of climate change are not limited to specific regions. Most of the poor and backward countries are affected by the bad consequences of this change. On this basis, it is necessary to jointly fight climate change," Muttaqi said.

Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi left

Kabul for China on Tuesday to participate in the third Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation.

Deputy Minister of Economy Abdul Latif Nazari and a number of other officials of the Islamic Emirate are accompanying Muttaqi.

In the meeting, the countries surrounding the Himalayas will discuss economic cooperation, regional connectivity and ecological changes.

The Islamic Emirate delegation will also have bilateral meetings with the Foreign Minister of China and representatives of other countries on the sidelines of the forum.

## ADB throws WFP a lifeline of \$100m for critical food aid in Afghanistan

KABUL (Agencies): The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Afghanistan has welcomed a contribution by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) of \$100 million to help provide critical food assistance to more than 1.3 million people across the country.

A special focus will be on widow- and women-headed households and other highly vulnerable groups like people with disabilities or families surviving solely on begging. For

many of these families, WFP has become their last lifeline.

"Afghanistan has faced an unprecedented humanitarian crisis compounded by climate change and intense droughts, floods, and earthquakes", Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a statement.

"Women and children are disproportionately affected with many women-led households suffering a lack of food and reduced access to services

given women's restrictions on movement outside their homes."

With this contribution, WFP will also train food-insecure women on marketable and entrepreneurial skills and alternative livelihoods along the agricultural value chain, such as fruit and vegetable processing.

During the training, they will be supported with monthly cash transfers, while improving their long-term livelihoods and ability to stand on their own feet

and buy food for their families thanks to their new skills.

"This contribution comes at a critical moment for Afghanistan, where 15 million people are going hungry and WFP only can still support three million people with emergency food assistance due to a massive funding crisis", said Hsiao-Wei Lee, Country Director of WFP Afghanistan.

"We are grateful for this generous contribution from

the Asian Development Bank that will help us reach families in need starting before winter, when hunger bites hardest."

This is the second contribution from Asian Development Bank (ADB) to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Afghanistan, following \$135 million in the past year which put it amongst the top five contributors. This year, ADB is the biggest partner of WFP, to date.

## Union: Kandahar to export \$600 million worth of dried fruit this year

K A N D A H A R (TOLNews): The Kandahar Dried Fruit Union reported that during the current solar year, this province will export dried fruit worth 600 million dollars to foreign countries.

According to the officials of this union, in addi-

tion to Pakistan and India, Kandahar's dried fruit is currently exported to other countries of the world.

"Annually, we export about 100,000 or 110,000 tons, and we export an amount worth about 600-500 million dollars," said Abdul Ahad Sediqi, head of

Kandahar Dried Fruit Union.

From a single factory in Kandahar Industrial Park, up to ten tons of dried fruits are exported to foreign countries after processing and packaging every day.

Some businessmen said that Kandahar's dried fruit

have s good market in the world.

"Trucks are loaded here and go to Pakistan and from Pakistan to India," Sardar, a businessman told TOLNews.

"Our dried fruits are so good in quality that they are exported even to Russia

and India," Abdul Rahim, a businessman, told TOLNews.

According to the figures of the Kandahar Dried Fruit Union, the export of dried fruits from this province to foreign countries constitutes 70% of the country's exports.

## Giru residents, drivers want key bridge rebuilt

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): Some residents of the Giru district of southern Ghazni province have asked the government to rebuild a bridge washed away by last year's flashfloods.

The destruction of the bridge has created a whole host of problems for area residents, they say, stressing the link's reconstruction. Residents say although the bridge was temporarily rebuilt by locals in a short time, they fear it may collapse as a result of snow and rain.

Majeed, who belongs to Abdullah Kala area, told Pajhwok Afghan News a wide river separates Andar and Qarabagh districts.

Water from Sultan and Sardi dams also flow into this river, making it difficult for the people to cross it in the wet season.

According to Majeed, the 45 metres long and 8 metres wide bridge connects Giru and Andar dis-

tricts. Passengers from Paktika province also use the bridge to reach Ghazni City.

"Unfortunately, the bridge's plank was destroyed in the previous war. But the floods washed it away completely last year and left it useless."

If the bridge was rebuilt prior to the winter season, problem of the people would be resolved, Majeed believed.

Mohammad Esa, a driver, confirmed the locals had rebuilt the link, using materials of poor quality, addressing the problem to some extent.

Eng. Nasratullah, another resident of the area, said the bridge had been reconstructed in a non-standard way and it could collapse anytime.

Both residents asked the authorities of Islamic Emirate (IE) to help them in rebuilding of the bridge.

The provincial administration also acknowledge two bridges in Shela and Parcha areas, connecting Giru and Andar with Ghazni City, were destroyed by last year's flash floods.

Hafiz Omar, the governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok floodwaters destroyed the bridges in Giru, causing problems for residents.

According to Omar, provincial officials have shared the issue with higher-ups in Kabul. He hopes the reconstruction of these bridges will begin soon.

The bridge in Shela area was built on the river that receives water from Sardi and Sultan dams. It also connects Giru with many areas of Paktika province and Ghazni City through Andar.

Giru district, situated 80 kilometres south of Ghazni City, has 400 small and big villages.

## Traffic accidents: 374 people killed, 3,105 hurt in 6-month

KABUL (Pajhwok): Over 370 people were killed and 3,105 others injured as a result of traffic accidents in the past six months in 32 provinces, according Pajhwok Afghan News reports during this period.

More than half of the casualties from these traffic accidents occurred in Kandahar, Ghazni, Faryab, Nangarhar and Herat provinces while 59 percent of the entire casualties happened in the first three days of last Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha and on Ararat Day.

Nearly 89 percent of the victims are men, four percent are women, three percent are children and the gender of five percent victims could not be identified.

Casualties' figure from traffic accidents may be higher because figures provided in this report are

drawn from 123 traffic accidents the reports of which are published by Pajhwok Afghan News. Pajhwok don't publish traffic accidents reports in which nobody is dead or the number of injured are less than five.

**More than half of the casualties occurred in three provinces**

Most people from Faryab, Baghlan, Sar-i-Pul and Badakhshan provinces which most people from Kandahar, Ghazni, Nangarhar and Faryab provinces are injured in these accidents.

According to Pajhwok Afghan News reports 45 people have been killed and 322 others injured as result of traffic accidents in Faryab province, 35 killed, 113 injured in Baghlan, 29 killed and 15 injured in Sar-i-Pul, 25

killed and 28 injured in Badakhshan, 22 killed and 22 injured in Balkh, 22 killed, 80 injured in Bamyán, 19 killed and 330 injured in Nangarhar, 14 killed, 29 injured in Badghis, 12 killed, 48 injured in Maidan Wardak, 12 killed, 84 injured in Laghman, 12 killed, 40 injured in Samangan, 11 killed, 34 injured in Daikundi, 11 killed and 218 injured in Zabul, 10 killed and 37 injured in Kapesa, 10 killed and 202 injured in Kunduz.

More over nine killed 47 injured in Jawzjan, seven killed two injured in Kabul, seven killed 17 injured in Logar, six killed and 61 injured in Farah, six killed and 370 injured in Ghazni, six killed 16 injured in Helmand, six killed 449 injured in Kandahar, six killed and

50 injured in Paktia, six killed 61 injured in Parwan, five killed 14 injured in Parwan, five killed 54 injured in Takhar, four killed, 260 injured in Herat, three killed 59 injured in Ghor, three killed 16 injured in Khost, three killed in Nimroz, three killed and 22 injured in Panjsher and six injured in Kunar.

Major part of this casualties happened in the first three days of last Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha and on Ararat Day.

According to reports during the first three days of last Eid-ul-Fitr 659 people and during Araft Day and first three days of Eid-ul-Adha 1,401 people killed and injured.

Men made major part of the entire casualties.

**Men's casualty is 11 time higher comparing to**

**women and children's casualties**

According to Pajhwok Afghan News previous reports men's made major part of the traffic accidents casualties because they travel more comparing to women and children.

These facts and figures were shared with the Traffic Department Policy and Plan Directorate and questions were asked regarding solutions but no answers were provided.

According to the Traffic Department earlier information last year 1,304 traffic accidents registered nationwide last year which resulted in the killing of 944 people and injured 2,077 others.

Most of these accident occurred on highways.

The Plan and Policy Director Abdul Wadud Khairkhwā linked traffic

accidents on highways with reckless driving, and dilapidated condition of roads. He also said that some drivers take narcotics such as Hashish in order to evade sleep and it also causes accidents.

He said in urban areas traffic accidents occurred due to narrowness of roads, lack of parking areas, increasing number of vendors and reckless driving.

He asked drivers to implement traffic rules because it could help evade accidents.

**Reasons and solutions**

Mohammad Nabi Afghan, deputy head of the Transport Companies Solidarity Council, said the number of traffic accidents is higher and there are some problems which need solution.

"In short-term, it is difficult to address this issue

because right-hand drive vehicles, which are the main source of accidents, were distributed documents during Republic regime and also during the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan regime recently."

He said some drivers are addicts, some are reckless while sometimes companies ask drivers to reach on time due to which sometimes accidents happen.

He said relevant authorities are working on strategy on the bases of which traffic accidents would be reduced.

Referring to government future steps he said: "The best way is those drivers that violate rules should be put in prison because Afghans know the language of force."

He believed this will help spread positive impression among people

regarding the strictness of IEA against traffic rules violation.

Referring to Traffic Accidents in Eid, Afghan said: "Travel increases during Eid and some people cross the limit and driver vehicles at high speed. In ruler areas youth drive motorbikes with speed, the right-hand drive vehicles also causes accidents because they are not suited with Afghanistan traffic direction."

But Najibullah, a passenger bus driver, termed the dilapidated condition of roads as main reason behind growing traffic accident.

He drives bus on the Kabul-Kandahar Road from the past 12 years.

He rejected the use of narcotics by drivers and said during long drive no one could take narcotics.





LANDI KOTAL: Trucks loaded with household of Afghans, voluntarily repatriated to Afghanistan via Torkham border.

## Russian strike kills 51 gathered for wake in Kyiv

KYIV (AFP): A Russian strike killed at least 51 people gathered for a wake in an eastern Ukrainian village on Thursday, in what a UN official called a “horrific” attack. AFP journalists on the scene in the aftermath saw rescuers carrying a corpse from the rubble and several charred bodies in civilian clothes lying side by side, and others in white body bags.

The mourners were in a cafe and there were also victims in a shop in the same building in the village, which has a population of 330 people, in the northeastern region of Kharkiv. Volodymyr Mukhovaty, 70, said he had lost his son in the attack and was still looking for his wife and daughter-in-law, who had attended the funeral reception. “My son was just found without a head, without arms, without legs, without anything. They recognised him from his documents,” he told AFP. He had “little hope” of seeing his daughter-in-law or wife again but was watching rescue workers from a distance in case they were found.

“I lived with my wife for 48 years,” he told AFP. “I will not last long alone.” There were piles of body parts next to two children’s swings nearby while under floodlights, rescuers were still digging through the rubble of what was left of the cafe. A six-year-old child was among the victims, said Interior Minister Igor Klymenko, who added that a total of 60 people had been attending a “memorial service for a deceased fellow villager. Groza is located more than 30 kilometres (18 miles) from the frontline town of Kupiansk in an area where Russian forces have been pushing to recapture territory they lost to Ukrainian troops last year. Klymenko said initial evidence showed an Iskander missile had been used. “The search and rescue operation is ongoing,” Klymenko said. “There may still be people under the rubble.”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who was attending a European summit in Spain, condemned the attack on social media. Zelensky posted an image of a woman kneeling over the body of some-

one apparently killed in the strike, with other corpses around her. He called the strike “completely deliberate” and said it was a “brutal Russian crime”. Defence Minister Rustem Umerov said Ukraine needed more air defence “to protect our country from terror”.

“We are discussing this with partners,” he wrote on social media, repeating Ukrainian calls for more protection against the daily barrages of drone and missile strikes. Denise Brown, Ukraine coordinator for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), also condemned the alleged Russian strike. Brown said she was “appalled”, adding that the images from the scene of the strike were “absolutely horrifying”.

“Intentionally directing an attack against civilians or civilian objects is a war crime,” she said in a statement. A spokeswoman for the regional assembly quoted by Ukrainian media said it was the single most deadly attack since the start of Russia’s invasion on February 24, 2022. The head of the Kharkiv region Oleg Sinegubov said the strike took place around 1:15pm (1015 GMT). Regional authorities had recently ordered mandatory evacuations in the area after an uptick in Russian strikes.

Large swathes of the Kharkiv region were captured by Russian forces in the early days of their invasion launched in February last year. Ukrainian forces recaptured much of the border territory during a lightning offensive late last year, but the regional capital, also called Kharkiv, still comes to regular shelling. Zelensky’s advisor Mykhailo Podolyak said the attack had “no military logic”.

“This is a reminder to anyone who is willing to smile and shake hands with war criminal Putin at international conferences,” he said, referring to Russian leader Vladimir Putin. “A reminder to all those who want to sell something to Russia and return to bloody business as usual,” he said, adding: “Putin’s Russia is a true evil”.

## NAB amends: Govt to file review petition against SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government on Thursday decided to file a review petition against the Supreme Court (SC) verdict in the NAB amendment case. The Supreme Court of Pakistan on September 15 struck down amendments made to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) laws as it announced its reserved verdict on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman’s plea.

In a majority 2-1 verdict, the top court approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan’s petition challenging amendments made to the country’s accountability laws during the tenure of the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government.

Sources said that the review petition will be filed in the top court next week. The law ministry has also started preparing a draft of a review petition. The three-member bench, headed by then CJP Umar Ata

Bandial, and comprising Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ijazul Ahsan had reserved judgment on September 5.

Ex-CJP Bandial and Justice Ahsan declared Imran’s plea to be maintainable while Justice Shah disagreed with the verdict. The top court also restored graft cases against public office holders that were closed down following the amendments to NAB laws. Following the verdict, the references against some of the country’s political bigwigs will once again land in the accountability courts.

These include the Toshakhana reference against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Supremo Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan Peoples Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari and former prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani. LNG reference against former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, rental power reference against former prime minister Raja Pervaz Ashraf and assets

beyond means case against former finance minister Ishaq Dar. In June 2022, the former premier had moved the apex court against amendments made to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) ordinance under the National Accountability (Second Amendment) Act 2022.

The NAB (Second Amendment) Bill 2021 states that NAB’s deputy chairman, to be appointed by the federal government, would become the acting chairman of the bureau following the completion of the tenure of the chairman. The bill has also reduced the four-year term of the NAB chairman. After approval of the law, NAB will not be able to act on federal, provincial or local tax matters. It has also set a three-year term for the judges of the accountability courts. Under the proposed law, it has been made binding upon NAB to ensure the availability of evidence against an accused prior to his or her arrest.

had convicted their client in the Toshakhana case. However, it added that the IHC in its August 28 verdict only suspended the sentence of the PTI chief and not the trial court order.

“That it is settled principle of law that inherent powers of High Court are very wide and undefinable. High Court can make all such orders to do real and substantial justice and it is a fit case to exercise the powers under Section 561-A Cr.P.C. as the omission in not recording the con-

tentions of the learned counsel for the applicant/appellant at the bar praying for suspension of the impugned order dated 05.08.2023 and subsequent non mentioning of the same in the order dated 28.08.2023 is an omission floating on the face of the order,” states the plea. The petition further contends that Khan’s “rights” faced “serious prejudice” because of the non-suspension of the trial court verdict as ECP barred him from contesting elections.

## IHC issues notices over Bushra Bibi’s plea

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday served notices to parties over Bushra Bibi’s plea for security of her spouse in jail. The high court bench comprises of Chief Justice Aamer Farooq issued notices to parties and summoned their reply. “I will order, what this court can do,” Justice Farooq said.

Latif Khosa pleaded to the court to allow home food for the chairman PTI. “He is kept in a jail cell, where he hardly offers his prayers,” lawyer said. “History tells that every president or prime minister have to become a guest of Adiala or Attock jails,” counsel said.

The court adjourned further hearing on the petition until the next week. Bushra Bibi, former first lady and wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) incarcerated chairman, had earlier expressed fears that her husband life’s was ‘under threat’ in jail.

Former first lady in her statement on oath submitted to the Supreme Court, said she met with her husband in Attock Jail on August 22 and found her in ‘bad’ health condition. The PTI chief stands united with the constitution and supremacy of law, the statement of former first lady read.

The former first lady further said the health of the chairman PTI in prison was deteriorating. The declining health of the person aged 70 years, is a serious threat to his life, the statement added. On August 18, former first lady also wrote a letter to Home Secretary Punjab, demanding ‘B-Class facilities’ for her husband under ‘Pakistan Prison Rules’.

In the letter, Bushra Bibi noted that B-Class facilities are liable to be given to her husband, the PTI chief, as a matter of right for reasons, which include having served as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

## Shehbaz’s car stopped in protest

LAHORE (PPI): Senior leader of PML-N Shehbaz Sharif’s car was stopped in protest from reaching the desired location by the citizens of Lahore, according to a report on Thursday. The local residents of Lahore stopped the car of the former premier Shehbaz Sharif in protest as he was on his way to attend the public outreach campaign prior to the general election which is likely to be held at the end of 2023.

The incident took place last night on Ferozpora Road – the old Kehna area of Lahore – where the locals established their protest camp against the former chief minister of Punjab. The residents demanded the rehabilitation of Rohi Nala, claiming that the chemical waste from factories were polluting the underground water level for the residents of the Ferozpora locality.

The protestors said that the former premier Nawaz Sharif was the member of National Assembly from this constituency – NA 132. The protestors didn’t allow Shehbaz Sharif to pass through after which the former premier took the application regarding the concerns of the locals and called them for the meeting today [Thursday].

# Pakistan intends to develop itself as progressive, peaceful nation: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Thursday said that Pakistan intended to move forward by developing itself as a progressive and democratic nation that desired peace within its frontiers and across the world.

Speaking at an international conference “Navigating Peace & Security in the Region and Beyond: Pakistan’s Role,” organised at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), he said: “We want to be a nation that wants to look after its people and intends to focus on the welfare of its masses.” The minister said now the Pakistan government had a clear vision to focus on its people, and economic revival and it had recently taken several initiatives to bolster the economy and explore new prospects for trade and investment.

He said the countries and political leadership did make mistakes in the past and Pakistan also had its share of mistakes and adding “but now we want to move on”. The minister said it was in Pakistan’s interest to avoid the ongoing confrontation between major world powers. He said that Pakistan had some lessons from its role with regard to the confrontation of major powers in the past.

Solangi said now Pakistan was desirous of establishing good relations with its neighbours including India and Afghanistan, and added

Islamabad already enjoyed good relations with China and Iran. He said that Pakistan also enjoyed very good relations with Middle East countries and now it was focusing to further improve economic and trade ties with the oil-rich states.

He said Pakistan also wanted to have pragmatic relations with Kabul. There had been no positive outcomes so far despite Pakistan’s sincere efforts to improve ties with Afghanistan, he added. He said that unfortunately out of 24 suicide attacks in the recent past, 14 had the involvement of Afghan nationals.

**Solangi, Turkish envoy agree to enhance cooperation in diverse fields:** Pakistan and Turkiye agreed to promote bilateral cooperation in diverse fields including economy, trade, culture, tourism, media and people to people contacts. This was decided in a meeting between Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi and Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Pacaci who called on the minister here.

Murtaza Solangi said that Pakistan highly valued its relations with the brotherly country Turkiye. “Pakistan and Turkiye have always supported each other in difficult times,” Murtaza Solangi added. Strongly condemning the recent bomb blast in Turkiye, the minister said Pakistan had faced the scourge of terrorism and Turkiye was also suffering from the same menace.

“We are a strong country and inci-

dents of terrorism cannot weaken us as a nation,” reiterated Murtaza Solangi. In the meeting, the need to expand cooperation in the fields of media, drama and films was also emphasized. “Film and drama can play a key role in improving the global image of any country,” Murtaza Solangi said adding Turkish plays were very popular in Pakistan.

Expressing the desire to co-produce movies with Turkiye, Murtaza Solangi said that Turkish filmmakers could benefit from tax amnesty given the film industry in Pakistan. “Northern parts of Pakistan are rich in natural beauty and Turkish filmmakers can utilize these beautiful tourist areas,” Murtaza Solangi remarked. Moreover, he said that cooperation between the two countries in the fields of media was the need of the hour. He suggested that Pakistan and Turkiye should promote their culture together and in this context, joint films can also be exhibited at Pakistan, China Center.

Turkish ambassador said that Pakistan and Turkiye were cooperating in every sphere of life including media. He said the Turkish government wanted to bring Turkish films to Pakistani cinemas. Mehmet Pacaci said that the Republic of Turkiye was celebrating its 100th anniversary, and they wanted to make these events memorable together with Pakistan. The Turkish ambassador also appreciated the interest of the minister for information in the promotion of regional cooperation.

## KP CM reviews Sehat Card Scheme

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An important meeting regarding Sehat Card Scheme was held here at Chief Minister’s House Peshawar on Thursday with the Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan in the chair. Matters related to the implementation of reforms approved by the provincial cabinet to run the scheme on sustainable basis, and payment of out-standings to the implementing partner i.e. State Life Insurance Company came under discussion.

Advisor to the Chief Minister for health Dr. Riaz Anwar, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Chief Executive Officer of the State Life Insurance

Company and other concerned authorities attended the meeting. It was agreed in the meeting that in future, payment will be made to State Life Insurance Company on regular monthly installments. Relevant authorities of health department were directed to ensure implementation of newly approved reforms in the minimum possible time.

Talking on the occasion, the caretaker Chief Minister said that his government was not only committed to run Sihat Card Scheme on sustainable basis but also taking concrete steps to this effect. He said that the provincial government was facing financial crunch due to non-payment of due shares by the federal government on

time, and that’s why the provincial government is facing difficulties in paying the dues to State Life Insurance Company, and added that despite the financial crunch, it was the top most priority of the caretaker provincial government to continue the provision of free healthcare facilities under the Sehat Card Scheme.

He maintained that all possible efforts were being made to make this scheme more pro-poor and sustainable adding that reforms have been introduced to this effect with the aim that maximum benefit of the schemes goes to the underprivileged ones. It was also agreed in the meeting that emergency operations would not be suspended under Sehat Card Scheme in any case.

## Awareness about breast cancer: Efforts needed

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that public and private sectors need to put collaborative efforts to create awareness about breast cancer besides supporting the affectees.

This was stated by him on Thursday while speaking a meeting with a delegation from Siemens Healthineers in Pakistan. CEO of Siemens, Khurram Jameel, and the First Lady Begum Samina Alvi attended the meeting virtually.

Dr. Arif Alvi said that media and other relevant stakeholders should join hands in the breast cancer awareness campaign and encourage women to engage in regular self-examinations and seek timely medical guidance for the early diagnosis of this life-threatening ailment.

During the meeting, the

President highlighted the potential of digital technologies in addressing healthcare challenges, particularly in enhancing awareness, improving healthcare accessibility, and raising the quality of care while minimizing costs. He underscored the importance of early screenings, self-examinations, and improved medical services.

He also underlined the pivotal role that private sector partners could play in raising awareness through media campaigns, standee displays in hospitals and public areas, distribution of pamphlets, and organizing educational workshops and seminars in women’s educational institutions. He also called for organizing breast cancer awareness events during October.

President Alvi also commended the role of the Pakistan Tele-

communication Authority (PTA) and telecom companies, who had initiated a call-caution tone from 1st October on the advice of Presidency urging women to conduct self-examinations and seek medical advice if they noticed any unusual growth. He said that spreading the message of self-examination for early breast cancer detection should not be regarded as taboo.

He called upon media houses to broadcast/telecast messages regarding the significance of self-examination during their morning shows and talk shows, as well as in public service announcements to create awareness about the disease. He emphasized that increased awareness could lead to significant cost savings, given the expenses associated with treatment at the later stages of breast cancer.

## Action not only targeted

(Continued from Page 1)

(OIC) Group, she said, Pakistan co-organized with the OIC Observer Mission in Geneva an event titled ‘Mapping the efficacy of normative framework on religious discrimination, intolerance, and hatred’.

The event aimed to raise awareness of the growing phenomenon of religious discrimination, intolerance, and hatred and the need for

strengthening the normative framework for its redressal from a human rights perspective, she said. The FO spokesperson said the Indian forces continued to commit serious human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

She said that in September, the Indian troops killed 13 Kashmiris in extra-judicial killings and arrested 157 civilians and

activists. Those arrested were mostly booked under the draconian laws promulgated by the occupation authorities in IIOJK - Public Safety Act (PSA) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). “Such oppressive measures and human rights violations must end and the Kashmiri leaders be set free so that the Kashmiri people can freely exercise their right to self-determination,” she said.

## Illegal refugees starts

(Continued from Page 1)

in addition to confiscation of property and businesses.

October 10 was set a deadline for ordinary Takzira (Afghan ID card) for Afghanistan and till October 31 only computerized Takzira will be acceptable that will follow proper legal travelling documents (passport and

visa), the government order stated. On the other hand the Afghan government rejected the decision of Pakistan to expel illegal Afghan citizens. A spokesperson in the Taliban administration in Kabul said, the behavior of Pakistan against Afghan refugees is unacceptable. The Pakistani side should reconsider its plan. Afghan

refugees are not involved in Pakistan security problems. As long as they leave Pakistan voluntarily, that country should tolerate them. Meanwhile, the Afghan government established a relief camp in Lalpura, the bordering area to facilitate the Afghan nationals who returned back to Afghanistan from Pakistan.

## PTI: Delay in election not acceptable for nation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was constitutionally bound to hold elections within the stipulated 90 days; hence the electoral watchdog and the caretaker government have only 34 days to meet the constitutional deadline.

In a statement on Thursday, he categorically stated that the nation would not tolerate any unconstitutional attempts to delay the polls beyond the constitutional deadline come what may. The PTI spokesperson made it clear that it was electoral body’s main constitutional responsibility and the fundamental right of the people to hold elections within the constitutionally mandated timeframe of 90 days.

Therefore, he demanded that the honorable Chief Justice of Pakistan should intervene preemptively in order to thwart any attempt of violation of the Constitution and to make the ECP and the caretaker government bound to ensure holding elections within the constitutional time limits. The spokesperson further stated that the state was subject to the constitution and the constitution made the free will of the public the basis of the political and governmental system.

“Suspension of any article or part of the Constitution is akin to suspending the entire Constitution, which is a serious crime,” he said, adding that the constitution did not give any authority to any state institution alone or in association with others to take any decision contrary to its intent regarding holding of the elections. The PTI spokesperson underlined that the constitution was very clear about the five-year term of the elected assemblies and about conduct of elections in the wake of the timely or premature dissolution of these assemblies.

He stated that in case of premature dissolution of the assemblies, the constitution mandated the conduct of elections within timeframe of 90 days, which was interpreted by the top court and approved by the President. PTI spokesman made it clear that the ECP and the caretaker government have only 34 days to conduct the elections, as the President of the state in his letter to the electoral watchdog suggested November 9 as the date for the elections.

He alerted that if the constitution was violated by avoiding holding polls within 90-day limits, then the ECP and the caretaker prime minister along with his cabinet would be guilty of constitutional violation, which was punishable crime under Article 6. PTI spokesperson vowed that the nation would not accept any attempt to delay the poll for an indefinite period at any cost.