



@thefrontierpost

# The Frontier Post

FIA arrests human smuggler

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has arrested a human smuggler, involved in kidnapping of an innocent citizen in Libya. The Compost Circle Gujranwala took action on the directions of Director FIA Gujranwala Zone. The accused Imran was arrested from Gujrat during an operation against human smugglers. According to FIA spokesman, the accused received Rs700,000 for the recovery of the citizen.

Vol. XXXIX No. 260 Regd. No. 241 RABI-UI-AWWAL 22 1445 -- MONDAY, OCTOBER 09 2023 PESHAWAR EDITION 12 PAGES PRICE. 30

## Israeli air strikes pound Gaza as death toll on both sides climbs

JERUSALEM/GAZA (Reuters): Israel battered Gaza on Sunday after suffering its bloodiest attack in decades, when Hamas fighters rampaged through Israeli towns killing 600 and abducting dozens more, as the spiralling violence threatened a major new Middle East war.

Israeli air strikes hit housing blocks, tunnels, a mosque and homes of Hamas officials in Gaza, killing more than 370 people, including 20 children, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed "mighty vengeance for this black day".

In a sign the conflict could spread beyond blockaded Gaza, Israel and Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah militia exchanged artillery and rocket fire, while in Alexandria, two Israeli tourists were shot dead along with their Egyptian guide.

In southern Israel, Hamas gunmen were still fighting Israeli security forces 24 hours after a surprise, multi-pronged assault of rocket barges and bands of gunmen who overran army bases and invaded border towns.

"My two little girls, they're only babies. They're not even five years old and three years old," said Yoni Asher who had seen video of gunmen seizing his wife and two small daughters after she took them to visit her mother, he said.

Israel's military, which faces questions over its failure to prevent the attack, said it had regained control of most infiltration points along security barriers, killed hundreds of attackers and taken dozens more prisoner.

"We're going to be attacking Hamas severely and this is going to be a long, long haul," an Israeli military spokesperson told a briefing with reporters. The military said it had deployed tens of thousands of soldiers around Gaza, a narrow strip that is home to 2.3 million Palestinians, and was starting to evacuate all Israelis living around the frontier of the territory.

"This is my fifth war. The war should stop. I don't want to keep feeling this," said Qassab al-Attar, a Palestinian wheelchair user in Gaza whose brothers carried him to shelter when Israeli forces shelled their house. The attack by Hamas launched

### Pakistan calls for maximum restraint in Palestine-Israel conflict

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Pakistan has called on the international community to come together for the cessation of hostilities, protection of civilians and for a lasting peace in the Middle East. In a statement, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan is closely monitoring the unfolding situation in the Middle East and eruption of hostilities between Israel and Palestinians.

Meanwhile, President Dr Arif Alvi and Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar have urged for maximum restraint to prevent further bloodshed and loss of human lives.

The President in a post on social media X said he was deeply disturbed over the escalation of violence in the Middle East.

He said the situation calls for an immediate ceasefire, as the hostility and confrontation between Palestine and Israel would further increase the sufferings of people.

The President urged international community to play its active role to prevent both sides from further escalating the conflict and work for a long overdue peaceful resolution of the dispute in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and international law. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar in his statement said enduring peace in the Middle East lies in a two state solution with a viable, contiguous, sovereign State of Palestine, founded on pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif at its heart.

at dawn on Saturday represented the biggest and deadliest incursion into Israel since Egypt and Syria launched a sudden assault in an effort to reclaim lost territory in the Yom Kippur war 50 years ago.

At least 600 people were killed, according to reports by Israeli TV stations. Israel has not released an official toll. The conflict could undermine U.S.-backed moves towards normalising relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia - a security realignment that could threaten Palestinian hopes of self determination and hem in Hamas' main backer, Iran.

Tehran's other main regional ally, Lebanon's Hezbollah, fought a war with Israel in 2006 and said its "guns and rockets" stand with Hamas. "We recommend Hezbollah not to come into this and I don't think they will," Israel's army spokesperson said.

The debris from Saturday's attack still lay around southern Israeli towns and border communities on Sunday morning and Israelis were reeling from the sight of bloodied bodies lying on suburban streets, in cars and in their homes.

Palestinian fighters escaped back into Gaza with dozens of hostages, including both soldiers and civilians.

Hamas said it would issue a statement later on Sunday saying how many captives it had seized.

**Pakistani leaders condemn Israeli atrocities on Palestinians:** Pakistani leaders have voiced their concerns over the escalation of hostilities between Palestine and Israel and condemned the Israeli atrocities on Palestinians. These leaders including President Arif Alvi, Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, former president Asif Ali Zardari and ex-prime minister Shehbaz Sharif have condemned Israeli brutality on Palestinians and sought United Nations rapid action against the Zionist state.

President Alvi said in a message on social media website X, formerly twitter on Sunday time has come to move forward in line with UN resolutions to resolve the Palestine issue.

He wrote in his message that progress towards peace cannot materialize without condemnation of usurpation and brutalization of Palestinian rights and people by Israel. Due to the continuous annexation of Palestinian land by Israel, illegal settlements, disproportionate reactions and killings, there is no hope and no progress towards peace, he added.

## Afghan earthquakes kill 2,445 Taliban say, as deaths mount

KABUL (Reuters): More than 2,400 people were killed in earthquakes in Afghanistan, the Taliban administration said on Sunday, in the deadliest tremors to rock the quake-prone mountainous country in years.

The Saturday quakes in the west of the country hit 35 km (20 miles) northwest of the city of Herat, with one of 6.3 magnitude, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) said.

They were among the world's deadliest quakes this year, after tremors in Turkey and Syria killed an estimated 50,000 in February.

Janan Sayeeq, spokesman for the Ministry of Disasters, said in a message to Reuters that the toll had risen to 2,445 dead, but he revised down the number of injured to "more than 2,000". Earlier, he had said that 9,240 people had been injured.

Sayeeq also said 1,320 houses had been damaged or destroyed. The death toll spiked from 500 reported earlier on Sunday by the Red Crescent. Ten rescue teams were in the area, which borders Iran, Sayeeq told a press conference.

More than 200 dead had been brought to various hospitals, said a Herat health department official who identified himself as Dr Danish, adding most of them were women and children.

Bodies had been "taken to several places - military bases, hospitals", Danish said. Beds were set up outside the main hospital in Herat to receive a flood of victims, photos on social media showed.

Food, drinking water, medicine, clothes and tents were urgently needed for rescue and relief, Suhail Shaheen, the head of the Taliban political office in Qatar, said in a message to the media.

The mediaeval minarets of Herat sustained some damage, photographs on social media showed, with cracks visible and tiles fallen off.

Hemmed in by mountains, Afghanistan has a history of strong earthquakes, many in the rugged Hindu Kush region bordering Pakistan. Death tolls often rise when information comes in from more remote parts of a country where decades of war have left infrastructure in a shambles, and relief and rescue operations difficult to organise.

Afghanistan's healthcare system, reliant almost entirely on foreign aid, has faced crippling cuts in the two years since the Taliban took over and



much international assistance, which had formed the backbone of the economy, was halted.

Diplomats and aid officials say concerns over Taliban restrictions on women and competing global humanitarian crises are causing donors to pull back on financial support. The Islamist government has ordered most Afghan female aid staff not to work, although with exemptions in health and education.

In August, a spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross said it was likely to end its financial support for 25 Afghan hospitals because of funding constraints. It was not immediately clear if the Herat hospital was on that list.

The quakes triggered panic in Herat, resident Naseema said.

"People left their houses, we all are on the streets," she wrote in a text message to Reuters on Saturday, adding that the city was feeling aftershocks. There are a total of 202 public health facilities in Herat province, one of which is the major regional hospital where 500 casualties had been taken, the World Health Organization (WHO) said in a report on Sunday.

A vast majority of the facilities are smaller basic health centres and logistical challenges were hindering operations, particularly in remote areas, the WHO said.

"While search and rescue operations remain ongoing, casualties in these areas have not yet been fully identified," it said.

**Pakistan grieved over massive life, property damages in Afghanistan earthquake:** Pakistan

on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over massive loss of precious lives and properties in the devastating earthquake that hit Western regions of Afghanistan on Saturday.

Foreign Office spokesperson in statement here said, "The Government and people of Pakistan are deeply saddened by the devastating earthquake in Western regions of Afghanistan yesterday, resulting in tragic loss of life and widespread damage to property."

"We extend our sincerest condolences to the families of those who lost their loved ones and pray for the early and complete recovery of the injured." The statement added that Pakistan stood in complete solidarity with the brothers and sisters in Afghanistan during this difficult time.

The FO statement added, "We are in contact with the Afghan authorities to get a first-hand assessment of the urgent needs of those affected by the earthquake. Pakistan will extend all possible support to the recovery effort." It should be mentioned here that more than 2,000 people were killed in earthquakes in Afghanistan and more than 9,000 injured, the Taliban administration said on Sunday, in the deadliest tremors to rock the quake-prone mountainous country in years.

The Saturday quakes in the west of the country hit 35 km (20 miles) northwest of the city of Herat, with one of 6.3 magnitude, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) said.

They were among the world's deadliest quakes in a year when tremors in Turkey and Syria killed an estimated 50,000 in February.



GAZA: Smoke rises following Israeli strikes in Gaza.

## Giving date of elections not mandate of caretaker regime: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said that it was not the mandate and responsibility of caretaker government to give date for general election in the country.

Talking to WE News on Sunday, the minister said Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was an autonomous constitutional institution, and since the day, he took oath as minister, he was in constant contact with the ECP.

The minister said he had full faith and confidence in the capability and leadership of the ECP, and the elections would be held on the date announced by the Election Commission. To a question he said that Pakistan People's Party was one of the major political parties of the country. "We are going through the phase of election and during the environment of election, any party and its leadership had the freedom to give their stand on any important issue", he maintained. Murtaza Solangi said that media in Pakistan enjoyed freedom and the courts were also free, adding all registered political parties had equal opportunities.

The Election Commission of Pakistan and caretaker government would ensure equal opportunities for all political parties in the upcoming elections, he added.

The minister stated that there was

no ban on PTI as a political party.

Replying to a question, he said that the process of privatization was not initiated by caretaker government, previous parliament and its elected government decided to privatize various entities.

"We are bound to implement the decisions of the previous parliament and the previous government," Murtaza Solangi opined.

The minister stressed the need for reformation in the institutions.

Answering a question, he said that public broadcasters were considered essential services, and as they were institutions of compulsory national service they were supported by the state worldwide.

He said he was against privatization of public broadcasters which was as a matter of principle and ideologically wrong. However, the minister said that public broadcasters should not have such people who do not belong to today's modern broadcasting mechanisms. When asked about fundamental changes in national broadcasters, he said making such decisions was not included in the mandate of the caretaker government.

Answering a question about deadline given for deportation of illegal immigrants living in Pakistan, he said those who lecture Pakistan on human rights should check their own record on human rights.

The minister said no other country

in the world had hosted as many refugees during past over four decades as Pakistan has done.

The countries could not survive with soft borders with anybody entering in its territory without documentation and living freely and prepare fake passports and identity cards, he said. The minister said that the people residing illegally in the country should voluntarily leave the country by October 31.

After October 31, he added such illegal foreigners would be forcibly evicted from the country.

"Our aim is to defend our state and our citizens. Our primary responsibility is to defend our citizens and secure our national borders," he remarked.

The minister said Pakistan only wanted deportation of illegal immigrants from its soil and the country would no longer allow anyone crossing the border and living here without fulfilling legal requirements.

He said that Nawaz Sharif's return had nothing to do with caretaker government. The minister acknowledged that Nawaz Sharif was the leader of one of Pakistan's largest political parties and he did not flee the country illegally. He said that on return of Nawaz Sharif law would take its course and Constitution of Pakistan will be abided by.

To a question about who would run the PTI election campaign, he said it was internal matter of that party.

### PMDC project manager killed in Quetta coal mine blast

QUETTA (NNI): Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) Project Manager Shabbar Mirza was killed while another was injured in an explosion near a vehicle in a coal minefield explosion in the suburbs of Quetta on Sunday. According to sources in the police, the project manager was heading to the minefield when the incident occurred.

On March 4, 2023, six miners had lost their lives and five others were injured after poisonous gases accumulated inside a coal mine in the Shahrag area of Harnai district, Balochistan.

Due to the lack of proper ventilation, 11 miners fell unconscious and became trapped. Despite the efforts of rescue workers and fellow coal miners, five miners died before rescue teams could reach the area.

## Terrorist killed, arms recovered in Waziristan



F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: On 7 October 2023, in an intense fire exchange between own troops and terrorists in general area Razmak, North Waziristan District; ter-

rorist "Azeem Ullah @ Ghazi" was sent to hell due to effective engagement by own troops.

Weapon and ammunition was also recovered from the killed terrorist who remained actively involved in terrorist activ-

ities against security forces and killing of innocent civilians.

Locals of the area appreciated the operation. Sanitization of the area has been carried out to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area.

## Pakistan calls for international intervention to end Israel-Palestine conflict

ISLAMABAD (NNI): As the Israel-Hamas fight entered a second day, Pakistan on Sunday called on the international community to intervene to bring an end to the conflict, protect civilians and work towards a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Federal Caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jilani issued the call for the international community to intervene. Jilani wrote a series of tweets explaining Pakistan's position and reaction on the unfolding situation in the Middle East. The foreign minister said that Pakistan was deeply concerned by the escalating hostility in the Middle East and the loss of innocent lives. More than 900 Israelis and

Palestinians have been killed in the conflict's bloodiest escalation in decades which saw Hamas carry out a massive rocket barrage and ground, air and sea offensive on Saturday, with Israel repulsing the attack by striking Gaza with air strikes. "We stand in solidarity with Palestinians and call for an immediate end to the violence and oppression by Israeli occupation forces," Jilani stated in one of the posts on X, erstwhile Twitter.

The minister also called for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state on the basis of pre-1967 borders and according to the United Nations resolutions. Pakistan is "closely monitoring the unfolding situation in the Middle East

and the eruption of hostilities between Israel and Palestinians", the Foreign Office said in a statement released shortly after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared a war against Palestine.

Pakistan has consistently advocated for a two-state solution as the key to enduring peace in the Middle East, with a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian question anchored in international law and in line with relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions, the FO said. "A viable, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine should be established on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital," added the FO.

"Progress towards peace cannot materialise without

condemnation of usurpation and brutalisation of Palestinian rights & people by Israel [...] Time has come to move forward in line with UN resolutions. The international community can play a big role today towards world peace," Dr Alvi wrote on his X account today (Sunday). Prime Minister Kakar, in a post on X handle, Saturday stated he was heartbroken by the escalating violence in the Middle East which underscored the need to address the "Palestine Question". "We urge restraint and protection of civilians. Enduring peace in the Middle East lies in a two state solution with a viable, contiguous, sovereign State of Palestine, founded on pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif at its heart," PM Kakar went on to say.





## Hamza says Nawaz Sharif never indulged in revenge

LAHORE (NNI): Former Punjab chief minister and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) leader Hamza Shehbaz Sharif has said that history is a witness that party supremo Nawaz Sharif never took revenge.

Hamza said in a statement on Sunday that Nawaz Sharif's mission is to unite the nation, revive economy, and help the nation to get rid of inflation. He said that Nawaz Sharif must become prime minister for the fourth time and help the nation rid inflation for the fourth time. He said that every time Nawaz Sharif came, he took care of the fallen economy and national dignity. He said that history is a witness that Nawaz Sharif never took revenge.

Hamza Shehbaz further said that under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, Muslim League (N) has always delivered, fulfilled every promise, the development of Pakistan and the salvation of the people from inflation is only in the hands of Nawaz Sharif.

## Food testing lab established in KU

KARACHI (NNI): Director General Sindh Food Authority Agha Fakhar Hussain has visited Food Sciences and Technology Department Karachi University. On this occasion, he chaired a meeting regarding arrangements to celebrate World Food Day in collaboration with Karachi University on October 16. Director General Agha Fakhar Hussain said that Food Testing Lab established in Karachi University would be inaugurated on World Food Day. He also inspected the Food Testing Lab established in Karachi University. On this occasion, Chairperson Food Sciences Department Madam Shahina, Assistant Professor Karachi University Dr Ghafran Saeed, Professor Syed Tufail Hussain Shah Sindh University, Director Technical Sindh Food Authority Dr. Ahmad Ali Shaikh and Moin Qureshi of Nutrition International were also present.

## 500kg dead meat discarded

**F.P Report**

LAHORE: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has foiled an attempt to supply 500kg of dead meat while carrying out a special raid in the provincial metropolis here on Sunday.

PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar said that acting on the tipoff, PFA intercepted a passenger van near Ravi Toll Plaza and recovered 12.5 maunds of dead meat hidden under the seats in the vehicle. He said that PFA had set ablaze the dead meat after seizing it during a raid.

# Governor, Umar Saif discuss IT and minorities related issues

LAHORE (INP): The caretaker federal minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif and federal Minister for Human Rights, Khalil George called on Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore on Sunday.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the promotion and improvement of the IT sector during the meeting with Umair Saif, while Federal Minister for Human Rights, Khalil George briefed Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman in detail about the work regarding minorities.

Speaking on the occasion, Balighur Rehman said that it was very important to provide education of information technology to the youth. He said that Information Technology (IT) was shaping the future of the world, and expertise in IT was very important in today's modern world. He said that students can take advantage of numerous online earning opportunities by doing IT courses.

He said that the caretaker federal government was doing a good job in the IT

sector. He said that Umar Saif has vast experience in the field of IT. He expressed hope that Umar Saif will bring improvements in the IT sector.

During the meeting with the Federal Minister for Human Rights, Khalil George, Governor Punjab said that according to the Constitution of Pakistan and the vision of the Father of the Nation, Qauid-e-Azam, the minorities have full protection, freedom, and equal rights in the country. He said that the government stood by the effectees of the Jaranwala incident. He further stated that the federal and Punjab governments set a good example by helping the effectees of Jaranwala incident and restoring the churches in a timely manner. On this occasion, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif said that he would spare no effort to improve the IT sector. He said that he is also determined to increase Pakistan's IT exports in the world. Human Rights Minister Khalil George said that minorities in Pakistan have equal rights and full freedom.

## JI Karachi's rally converges at governor house against inflation

KARACHI (NNI): Karachi on Sunday witnessed a significant demonstration as the Jamaat-e-Islami rally held a sit-in before the Governor House against the escalating prices of petrol, electricity and inflation. A considerable contingent of Jamaat-e-Islami workers and supporters took part in this protest. The atmosphere around the Governor House was marked by the temporary suspension of traffic, as roads leading to the venue were sealed.

This march, which is making waves in the city's political landscape, is being led by Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi Ameer Hafiz

Naeemur Rahman.

He is at the forefront of the rallying cry against the economic hardships facing the common citizens.

Participants of this sit-in began assembling in substantial numbers outside the Jamia Masjid Khizra. From there, they embarked on a spirited march towards the Governor House in Sindh, covering the distance on foot to make their voices heard. Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Ameer Sirajul Haque is scheduled to speak to the gathering of protesters after the Isha prayer.

# FIA kickoff searching properties, assets of Creek Marina owners, accused

KARACHI (NNI): The alleged mega money laundering scam upto the tunes of billions of rupees have finally entered into another stage where the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) have started search of assets and properties owned by the owners and nine other accused of Creek Marina project.

In latest updates of probe, after submitting an interim challan to the court, the FIA has started hunting of the properties owned by the nine accused including Creek Marina Pakistan, Singapore & Meinhardt Singapore project owner Naseem Shahzad, his son CEO Umar Shahzad, Director Sadia Kashif, Nudrat Mand Khan, others and their families.

The investigation body have sought all necessary details from different concerned organizations and departments including KDA, Bahria Town, DHA, ABAD and others. According to the details, FIA Banking Circle have registered a case number 14/2023 under Section 25 of the Anti-Money Laundering Act against all the accused.

The accused named in this case are project owners, shareholders, Creek Marina Singapore and Pakistan, Meinhardt Singapore owner Naseem Shahzad, his son CEO Umar Shahzad, Abdul Rahim son of Abdul Ghafoor, CFO Nudrat Mand Khan son of Shaukat Mand Khan, Sadia Kashif wife of Syed Kashif Khalid, Bankers Shahryar Khalid

son of Khalid Majeed Khan, Faisal Hameed son of Abdul Hameed, Faisal Jameel Khan son of Jameeluddin Khan and Syed Ali Murad Naqvi son of Syed Ali Zaman Naqvi are included. In this regard, the FIA investigation officer have written a letter to various institutions and agencies across Pakistan including Bahria Town Karachi, Peshawar, Nawab Shah, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, MDA Karachi, KDA, DHA Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Chairman Abad, Inspector General Revenue Karachi, Registrar Cooperative Housing Societies Karachi, Registrar Properties Karachi, Clifton Cantonment Board Karachi, in which it is clearly stated that with the connivance of the bank officials, these accused opened and operated forged bank accounts illegally and in violation by setting aside the prescribed rules and regulations and the code of the conduct of the State Bank's Anti-Money Laundering, Board of Investment and others in the name of Creek Marina Pakistan and Singapore.

It is further alleged that huge amount was withdrawn from these accounts and the accused owners utilized that amount for their private gain and made several personal properties through that amount rather than spending that money in the construction of the project rightly.

FIA has urgently sought this information from all these institutions.



LAHORE: Customers are selecting old books from a roadside stall.

# Huge crowd to welcome Nawaz Sharif on return: Maryam

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sunday said that the crowd shows that the public will give Nawaz Sharif a grand reception on October 21.

She said that a huge crowd of the people of only one area has gathered. How huge will the gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan be on October 21 when their leader returns.

Maryam said that Nawaz Sharif will bring along hope and prosperity of the nation with him when he returns. She said the inflation in Nawaz Sharif's tenure was just 2% and the prosperity of the country was ousted. For the sake of the people, he witnessed lesser days of power and more of difficulties. Nawaz Sharif is responsible for making Pakistan an atomic power and bringing the CPEC to Pakistan. He gave 14 mega projects to Pakistan and made possible the production of 14000 megawatts of electricity and ended the load-shedding. He worked his best and ended the terrorism in the country.

What he got in return was 11 years in exile, said PML-N Senior Vice President.

She said that had conspiracies not concocted against Nawaz Sharif, the country would not have been in this turmoil. Maryam said that the country was ruled by "jokers" for four years. Nawaz Sharif was born and raised here unlike others. He never received any foreign funds. The ones who mocked PML-N themselves became a mere joke and an example.

Pakistan is under crises and in turmoil without Nawaz Sharif. The public is waiting for him because he stands true to his words and leads the country to prosperity.

**Maryam condemns Israeli occupation forces' attacks on Gaza:** Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief organizer and Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed solidarity with the Palestinians and condemned the occupation forces' attacks on Gaza.

Maryam said it is the right of the Palestinians to fight for their freedom

against the usurping army, adding that supporting the oppressed against the tyrants and usurpers was true justice. The PML-N official said the usurper army that has flouted agreements was responsible for the current situation. She added that India was involved in state terrorism in Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, while Israel's state terrorism in the occupied Palestinian territories was a crime.

Maryam Nawaz remarked that lasting peace can be established only by implementing the resolutions of the UN Security Council.

She also suggested that Islamic countries ensure provision of relief items to the Palestinians.

The sun of freedom will dawn with the sacrifices of brave Kashmiris and Palestinians, Maryam stressed.

Israel and Palestine-based Hamas are fighting again. Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel that was retaliated with airstrikes. Resultantly, at least 313 Palestinians and over 350 Israelis have been killed, and more than 2,000 injured on both sides.

# Theatre Festival serves as a vehicle for expression of societal concerns: CM

KARACHI (NNI): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar has said that the Arts Council's commitment to giving our people the chance to reclaim public spaces is not only limited to this festival, all year round, they beckon the people of Pakistan to step out and participate in various events, not only in Karachi, and the rest of Sindh but all over the country," he said.

This he said while speaking at the closing ceremony of the Pakistan Theatre Festival organized by the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi. He congratulated the directors and artists who have participated in the grand theatrical journey put together by the Arts Council of Pakistan. He said that seven international troupes, alongside numerous national theatre groups, actively participated in this festival." It brings me great joy to acknowledge that during their presence here, individuals from diverse nations had the opportunity to witness the softer side of Pakistan

and experience our warm hospitality," he said.

Justice Baqar said that the Arts Council has facilitated the participation of these groups, and the engagement of various consulates, effectively conveying our message of peaceful cultural exchange.

The interim CM said that the festival held great international significance and came at a time when our own society was grappling with numerous challenges. "The Pakistan Theatre Festival, with its diverse and thought-provoking performances, serves as a vehicle for the expression of societal concerns," he said. He commended the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, for taking the lead in bringing forth positive public entertainment that serves as a beacon of light in times of strife.

"The Arts Council's commitment to giving our people the chance to reclaim public spaces is not only limited to this festival, all year round, they beckon the people of Pakistan to

step out and participate in various events, not only in Karachi, and the rest of Sindh but all over the country," he said and added that it was a call to action, a call to engage collectively in the creation of a harmonious society built on principles of peace and tolerance.

The CM said that while we were concluding the event, let's not forget the power of art to deliver messages that resonate deeply with our hearts and minds.

"It is through such messages that individuals can go home, ponder the world around them, and contribute to positive change," he said and added "Let's celebrate the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, for being a beacon of creativity, enlightenment, and social responsibility. The Pakistan Theatre Festival is a testament to the transformative power of art," he said.

He hoped that many festivals like this continue to thrive, inspiring us all to engage in the creation of a better, more enlightened society.

## More than 1.96m motorcyclists issued fine tokens

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Traffic Police said on Sunday that it had issued a staggering 1.96 million fine token while more than 2.9 million motorcyclists were educated by giving warnings in the helmet, licence campaign during the current year.

CTO office sources told APP that the CTO Mustansar Feroze had ordered zero tolerance policy against motorcyclists without license, helmets, adding around 2.9 million motorcyclists were educated by giving them warnings in the on-going helmet campaign. The sources further said that more than 100,000 motorcycles were impounded in various

police station sectors, adding the documents of 490,555 motorcycles were seized. Likewise, action was taken against more than 2000 government and semi-government employees in the helmet enforcement campaign, even police officers and employees of government and semi-government institutions were exempted from the ban. The traffic police issued challan tickets to 257,716 drivers for driving without licenses. A senior official at CTO office revealed that 33 license centers had been opened in the city, adding that challan was not intended, rather protection of citizens was the first priority.

## Another 143 dengue cases reported in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The battle against dengue virus continues in Punjab as 143 new cases were reported on Sunday, according to the latest data from the Health Department.

This year, a total of 5,469 confirmed dengue cases have been reported across 36 districts in Punjab.

Lahore leads the unfortunate tally with a staggering 2,130 cases, closely followed by Rawalpindi with 1,561 cases, Multan with 620, Gujranwala with 268 and Faisalabad with 245 cases.

As many as 52 new dengue cases were reported in Lahore, 47 in Rawalpindi, 10 in Multan, 11 in Gujranwala, 10 in Faisalabad, Sheikhupura recorded 3 new dengue cases, 2 cases reported from Kasur,

Gujrat, Chakwal, Okara, Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur and Rajanpur each confirmed one new dengue case during the same period. Currently, 118 dengue patients are receiving treatment in various hospitals across Punjab, with 36 of them hospitalized in Lahore alone. Secretary Health Punjab Ali Jaan Khan, issued a compelling plea to citizens, urging them to maintain clean and dry surroundings as a crucial preventive measure against Dengue fever.

For those seeking dengue treatment, information, or wishing to register complaints, a free helpline is available through the health department at 1033.

Vigilance and proactive measures are indispensable to contain the alarming spread of dengue in Punjab.

## LESCO detects 407 power pilferers on 31st day

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) detected a total of 407 connections from where the customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts (Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara) on the 31st day of the grand anti-power theft campaign.

The LESCO spokesman told the media here Sunday that the company had also far submitted FIR applications against 405 electricity thieves, out of which 193

FIRs had been registered in respective police stations, while 43 accused had been arrested.

Grand anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and the LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider was supervising these operations. The LESCO chief vowed that the operations would continue without discrimination until the

complete end of electricity theft. The electricity pilferers as well as the LESCO officers and employees who facilitate them are also being brought to justice.

On the 31st consecutive day (Oct. 08) of the anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, large agricultural and commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units.

# Government employees protest

**F.P Report**

Dear Journalists: We all government employees who are performing their duties in Karachi want to draw your attention to the controversial allotment policy of government accommodation of Sindh government under which 238 government houses have been allotted by the section officer of the Department of Services and General Administration. Eviction notices have been issued. In this regard, we would like to place the following facts before your media friends so that this very important issue can be resolved by revising this eviction notice.

Sir as we all are permanent government employees and all of us at different times this government accommodation has been done by the Section Officer State SGA and CD after completing all the formalities mentioned in the allotment order. While many of our employees were given this accommodation 27 years ago and since that day none of us employees have failed to pay any government dues or dues and have not deviated from any other conditions.

This matter started when the Supreme Court took suo motu notice on the seizure of government property by unrelated persons, and our



lawfully allotted orders were declared illegal under a controversial policy. It should be noted that this controversial policy is not only discriminatory between the employees and officers of the Sindh Government but also against the Constitution of Pakistan which states that all are equal. Rights are available. It should also be remembered that this department of the Sindh government is taking undue advantage of its administrative powers and is restricting all the benefits to itself, which included secretariat allowance, self-hiring allowance and other allowances.

The provincial cabinet meeting, held on January 14, 2019, while giving instructions in the light of CP 6793/2018 entered in the Sindh High Court, we were given a one-time waiver. Now the Section Officer State SGA and CD has issued us eviction

notice citing the controversial allotment policy and said that, we are non-secretariat employees, we are not posted in the secretariat and once the concession is withdrawn by the provincial cabinet. (Though many of our employees and officers are posted in Sindh Secretariat) Humayun House Garden West, GOR II Sindh Muslim Society and Preparations are being made to vacate flats for non-secretariat government employees in Shadman Town. In this regard, all the non-secretariat government employees whose names are flat allot holders have protested peacefully at Press Club Karachi today.

Non-secretarial officers of Shadman Humayun House, PECHS employees were also included.

These illegal eviction notices have not only caused us disappointment and immense pain, but along with mental torture,

we have to create a feeling of unnecessary prejudice and loss of rights on the part of the secretariat and non-secretariat, while we are all employees of the government of Sindh, along with these the eviction notices are causing insecurity to our family and completely disrupting our children's education and schooling. As the said allotment policy has been challenged in the Sindh High Court by the non-secretariat employees CP 4757/2023

Therefore, we request the Sindh Government not to evict our children until the Sindh High Court decides on the above-mentioned controversial policy. In this case, the Supreme Court in its recent judgment CP 1290-K/2020 DATED: 29-06-2022 has given way to the Sindh government to change this controversial allotment policy.

All the government officers have appealed to the Chief Minister Sindh, Chief Secretary Sindh and other senior officers to please revise the policy that will benefit us and not evict us from our homes. We are also government employees and we should be given the right to stay here or an effective strategy or policy should be made from which we can also benefit and get rid of mental agony and anxiety.





Eradication of polio virus from region:

## Chief Secretary stresses joint efforts

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary Sunday directed authorities to vaccinate every eligible child against the crippling polio virus.

He stressed the need for meticulous monitoring of anti-polio drives to ensure complete eradication of the virus from the region.

The Chief Secretary, gave the instructions on Sunday during his visit to several parts of the provin-

cial capital including Hayatabad and Rigi to monitor the anti-polio campaign, along with Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Afaq Wazir.

Chief Secretary Chaudhry personally met with polio workers and appreciated them for their excellent performance during the campaign.

He appealed to parents, urging them to cooperate with polio teams and vaccinate their children to protect them from permanent disability.

He reiterated the importance of collective action, saying that eradication of polio requires joint efforts of all stakeholders.

It should be noted that a seven-day anti-polio campaign is currently underway in Peshawar, under the supervision of district administration, which aims to administer polio vaccines to 901,985 children.

To achieve this, 2,496 teams have been formed, with robust security arrangements in place to support their efforts.



PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary talking to health workers during monitor anti-polio campaign.

## Digital connectivity vital for better efficiency: Faraz

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Mineral Development, Planning and Development and Energy and Power Dr. Syed Sir Faraz Ali Shah on Sunday said that the corona pandemic has highlighted the need for a strong and organized digital infrastructure at the global level.

Digital transformation is essential for faster connectivity, better efficiency and adapting to new challenges.

He expressed these

views in a meeting with Faisal Shehzad project director of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Mobilization and Public Resource Management in Civil Secretariat Peshawar.

Senior Manager EY Azeem Sani and Program Manager NETSOL Zahid Mushtaq were also present in the meeting.

On this occasion, the caretaker provincial adviser was given a detailed briefing about the steps taken, ongoing projects, challenges and suggestions for e-governance and digital

transformation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Caretaker Advisor Dr. Syed Sir Faraz Ali Shah expressed interest in the subject of reforms and digitization of institutions and said that this will ensure faster service delivery.

The Caretaker Adviser expressed satisfaction over the steps taken in e-governance and digital transformation.

He also emphasized on ensuring the establishment of modern digital infrastructure and teaching digital skills to the youth.

## CSC unveils free Chinese language course for students

PESHAWAR (INP): The China Study Centre (CSC) at the University of Peshawar has announced a free-of-cost Chinese language course tailored specifically for school-going children.

Recognizing the advantage of acquiring language skills at a young age, this program aims to provide an accessible and comprehen-

sive opportunity for students to learn the Chinese language, Gwadar Pro reported. School-going children, ranging from 6th to 10th grade, now have the opportunity to learn the Chinese language, specifically the one-month-long HSK1.

The Chinese language course, designed with the needs and learning prefer-

ences of young learners in mind, will be accessible to students who wish to embark on this linguistic journey.

“The course is free of charge for school-going children,” said Farooq Jamal, an official from CSC University of Peshawar, while talking to Gwadar Pro.

## Hamza Foundation appealed for financial help

PESHAWAR (APP): Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Hospital Peshawar Sunday appealed for financial assistance to children suffering from the dangerous disease Thalassemia, where the number of patients registered in the institution has exceeded 1475.

The body of these children, with the sparkle of life in their bright eyes, is in the grip of a deadly disease, said founder of the institu-

tion Ijaz Ali Khan while talking to media men here. He said the 14-year-old son of parents is under treatment at Hamza Foundation. Imran Khan is suffering from a very dangerous disease of thalassemia, which every blood is urgently needed after 10 days.

Blood as well as the most expensive medicines which are far away from the reach of other children including Imran. He said,

Hamza Foundation is providing free blood and blood components, medicine and lunch to 40 to 50 sick children every day.

Cooperating for the treatment of sick patients, Ijaz Ali Khan appealed. Imran Khan's treatment is ongoing, but his parents cannot bear the burden anymore, so Hamza Foundation can be contacted on 0915845553 to help the suffering humanity.

## Disaster awareness day celebrated

PESHAWAR (APP): The Rescue 1122 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sunday celebrated October 8 as National Disaster Awareness Day in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with prayers were made for the reward and high status of those who were martyred in the national calamities.

Dr. Khateer Ahmed Director General Rescue 1122 was the chief guest on this occasion. Rescue 1122 events have been organized in every district. Rescue 1122 is working as a first responder in natural disasters in KP. Dr. Khateer Ahmad said in his address to the gathering. Rescue 1122 is equipped with the latest equipment of international standards, Dr. Khateer Ahmed said, adding, “Rescue 1122 has trained and professional personnel.”

Rescue 1122 is providing teaching and practical training at the regional level to deal with natural disasters, said Director General Rescue 1122 Dr. Khateer Ahmed. Rescue 1122 has saved millions of precious lives in natural calamities such as floods, earthquakes and other incidents, says Dr. Khateer Ahmed.

Rescue 1122 has provided services in more than 1 million different emergencies since its inception including 712,000 medical, 171,000 traffic accidents, more than 32,000 fires, 18,000 crimes, Dr. Khateer Ahmed said.

## Two key smugglers arrested

PESHAWAR (APP): Another important operation of the Excise Intelligence Bureau (EIB-1&2), spokesperson Excise said on Sunday.

Two key operatives of the international drug network arrested with 80 capsules (588 grams) of heroin were recovered from the arrested suspects, Excise Spokesman said.

The suspects were to smuggle heroin-filled capsules first to Punjab and then to Gulf countries, Excise spokesperson said, adding, “The two suspects, Hanifullah son of Amin Gul and Abdul Wajid son of Nabi Gul, residents of Bara District Khyber, were arrested on the spot.”

A case has been registered in Excise Police Station Peshawar for further investigation and legal action, Excise spokesman said.

Meanwhile, Police Station Excise Mardan Region Operations by arresting two suspects for facilitating drug trafficking and dealing, the Excise Spokesman said. Important evidence of buying and selling drugs and sending money through money changers were found from the mobile phones of the accused, Excise Spokesman informed.

He said that the accused were arrested along with vehicle number LE 7337 near Rashakai Interchange on a secret tip-off. The accused were brought under control after stiff resistance, said Excise spokesperson.

The two suspects, Nasrullah son of Amanullah and Muhammad Ismail son of Rehman Gul, residents of Gulshan Colony, Linde Road, were arrested on the spot, Excise spokesperson said. A case has been registered at Excise Mardan Region for further investigation, an Excise spokesman said.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan in a group photo during a wedding ceremony of niece of KP Minister Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel.

## Mayor for quality education in Municipal institutions

PESHAWAR (APP): The Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali has said that steps have been taken for ensuring and improving quality of municipal educational institutions on priority basis. This he said while addressing a meeting here on Sunday. He said the educational institutions of the Municipal are playing their key role as compared to other private and public educational institutions of Peshawar.

It is gratifying to see 98% percentage of Metropolitan Schools and Colleges in the recent matriculation and FAFSC results, Haji Zubair Ali said. Mayor Haji Zubair Ali said that he is trying to achieve education from the first day and will play his key role to improve the quality of other private and public educational institu-

tions of Peshawar along with municipal educational institutions.

The meeting was held in which Director General Capital Metropolitan Government Syed Waqas Ali Shah, Director Administration Owais Ahmad Khan, Director East Rehman Khattak, Director West Riaz Awan, Admin Officer Khudaday Nazar, Deputy Director Audit, Municipal Inter College Wazir Bagh Boys, Principal Qazi Farman, Municipal Girls College Shahi Bagh, Principal Nusrat Mustal, Principal of City Degree College Najma Shafiq and others participated on this occasion.

Mayor Peshawar said that they are the future of this country, so students should study hard to raise the name of their country and nation. Capital

Metropolitan Government Peshawar Mayor Haji Zubair Ali while appreciating the performance of municipal inter-colleges in the recent intermediate examinations, said that compared to previous years, 98% results have been obtained in schools and colleges managed by the Metropolitan this year which is proud.

It was only possible with the support of the relevant officers of the Metropolitan Government and the management of schools and colleges. Mayor Haji Zubair Ali while issuing instructions to the administrative officers, asked them to allocate a place for the uniforms and books of their school colleges from where the students can easily buy their uniforms and books.

He further said that uniforms and book stalls

should be set up for two or three days after the annual examinations in the municipal educational institutions. Announcing the cash prize for the male and female students, he said that the students who got the first position will be given Rs. 100,000, second position holders would get Rs. 50,000 and third position holders would be awarded Rs. 25,000 respectively.

He expressed the hope that other students would have good marks, would study with hard work and dedication and would get a better position. Haji Zubair Ali stressed on the teachers and lecturers of municipal educational institutions that they should improve their graphs and focus on the education of students so that municipal educational institutions will be able to improve their education.

## Income Tax Department extends awareness campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): The Income Tax Department has extended awareness campaign to educational institutions to appraise academia about significance of filing income tax returns by October 31 and its utility in the country's socioeconomic development process.

Tufail Jaber, Inland Revenue Officer Income Tax Department paid a visit to the University of Technology (UoT) Nowshera where he informed academia and researchers about importance of filing of income tax returns and its significance in the country's economic growth and development.

He said holding of the meeting with academics was a part of the awareness campaign launched in Nowshera on the directives of Zaffar Iqbal Khan Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office Peshawar, Shaheed Mehboob Commissioner IR Mardan Zone Mardan and Muhammad Alam Additional Commissioner IR Mardan Zone Mardan to sensitize people especially academicians about importance of filing of income tax returns.

The Inland Revenue Officer Nowshera said the filers of income tax returns would get enormous finan-

cial benefits in taxes while purchasing properties, vehicles and others business.

“Taxes are considered to be very crucial for the economy of any country to finance its social projects besides minimizing dependency on foreign loans,” he said.

“The government requires that people who make a certain amount of money annually file a tax return by the deadline specified. The person is respon-

sible for paying the tax as calculated and the Income Tax Department has the power to impose fines for non filling and unpaid taxes.”

Earlier, Tufail Jaber held an important meeting with office bearers of Jewelry Association Nowshera and asked them to take full advantage of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)'s extension date of income tax returns and submit it by October 31, 2023 as no further extension would be

granted. The faculty members of University of Nowshera and jewelers association assured full cooperation with FBR regarding filing of income tax returns in large number by the said date.

They appreciated the campaigns and thanked FBR and Income Tax authorities for extending the date to October 31, 2023 that would help bring a large number of people under taxation net.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali addressing during a meeting with officials of Metropolitan Schools and Colleges meeting.

## Swarms of beggars irk winter shoppers in city

PESHAWAR (APP): The last night rain has turned weather cold in Peshawar where rush of buyers were witnessed mostly in garments markets with swarms of beggars that annoyed customers on Sunday.

The beggars have tried hard to cash the situation after witnessing an increase of buyers at Dean's Trade Centre, Karimpura, Qissa Khwani, University Road and others famous bazaars of wollen garments flooded with customers.

Inspite of begging has been declared illegal under the country's laws, the beggars' influx including male, female, children and persons with disabilities are being witnessed in crossing points, mosques' gates and mostly frequented public places and food outlets in the city and cantonment areas, making shopping dif-

ficult. Hashtnagri, Gantagar, Firdus, Nothia, Tehkal, Gulbahar, Faqirabad, Meena Bazaar, Karimpura, Shafi Market, Saddar Road, University Town, City Tower, Jawad Tower and Deans Trade Centre were flooded with beggars.

Occupied key points in front of shopping malls, mosques, road signals, bus terminals, railway stations, traffic squares and streets, the professional beggars used different indecent techniques to get maximum alms.

“I came from Wapda Town Nowshera to buy woolen garments for my family and faced difficulty in shopping due to swarm of beggars,” said Shaheen Bibi, a house wife while talking to APP.

She said some beggars roaming with exposed

wounds keep on holding and touching customers when they come out of their vehicles, which could expose them to contagious diseases and viral infections.

Most professional beggars employ various tricks to exploit human nature and religious sentiments by crying, weeping and chasing people in public places while wearing miserable attire.

The unchecked trained beggars are pestering shoppers in markets or running after them or behind their cars to collect maximum alms in name of Sadqa and Khairat.

It has been witnessed that some beggars were emotionally blackmailing people by carrying medical prescriptions and disability certificates.

Charity seekers can also

be seen in city markets asking money in the name of construction of mosques while many beggars were resorting to lame-duck excuses like seeking treatment of their ailing family or lost jobs.

“Begging has emerged as a major social evil in recent years to the nuisance of Peshawarties,” Professor Dr Muhammad Naem of Swabi University who was irritated by beggars during shopping at Qissa Khwani bazaar Peshawar, told APP on Sunday.

He said one of the reason of increased in beggars was price hike and inflation in the country. He said the last year devastated floods have also contributed to increase in inflation.

Besides bazaars and shopping arcades, he said shoppers were facing great inconvenience at traffic sig-

nals, food restaurants, bus terminals, railways stations, mosques, hospitals, markets and public places due to swarms of beggars in Peshawar.

“It is heartbreaking to see young girls and boys' beggars carrying wipers in hands often start cleaning cars windows on traffic signals without permission in order to get money.”

Some beggars come with water bottles, flowers, garlands, caps and rosary to give an impression that they are selling it, but actually they beg for money without an intention of selling anything.

Riaz Khan, a resident of Nowshera said he was busy in winter shopping along with his family at Qissa Khwani where a teenage beggar with black colour in hand rushed towards him, asking for money or other-

wise his clothes would be made dirty.

“In order to save my clothes, I immediately offered him Rs70, which was refused. On several requests, the beggar accepted Rs 100 and started running towards other shoppers by using the same technique that was intolerable in a civilized society.”

He demanded the KP government to take instantaneous action against swarms of beggars in the city so that people could take a sigh of relief and do winter shopping with ease.

“Beggary has been declared illegal under West Pakistan Loitering Ordinance 1958,” said advocate Noman Bokhari, adding this law had not been fully implemented, which resulted in an increase of beggars.

He said the central and

provincial laws such as Control of Narcotics Substance Act 1997, West Pakistan Vagrancy Ordinance 1959, Pakistan Employment of Children Act 1991, KP Child Protection and Welfare Act (KPCPWA) 2010 and KP Orphanage Supervision and Control Act 1976 had been promulgated to check drug addiction and streets begging.

Similarly, KPCPWA was enacted in 2010 to protect rights of women and children, but it has not been fully implemented on ground, resulting in swarms of beggars in Peshawar.

He said the role of Child Welfare Commission (CWC) was important to provide protection to child beggars in KP.

KP government has been urged to impose a ban on child beggars on the pattern

of Sindh province and may direct the social welfare department to pick child beggars from markets, roads, traffic signals, streets and rehabilitate them at their welfare centres.

The spokesman of social welfare department said that special drive have already been launched to shift drugs addicts beggars to rehabilitation centres for treatment.

Besides treatment, these beggars were being provided vocational education and training to make them useful citizens of the society.

He urged well off people to donate alms and charity to their known poor deserving people and reputable organizations having clean service record so that their alms could be used for a noble cause.





## In brief

### SHO awarded for performance

PESHAWAR, Oct 08 (INP): Station House Officer (SHO) Risarpur was awarded cash prize and appreciation certificate for foiling suicide attempt of a youth. According to details, a youth attempted to take his life by shooting him with pistol but SHO Risarpur reached the scene and saved the life of youth. The video went viral on social media reacting to which the provincial police awarded the SHO with cash prize and appreciation certificate.

### Police arrest criminal

KOHAT (INP): Kohat Police arrested a wanted criminal in an attempted murder case on Sunday. Talking to the media, SHO Kohat Development Authority (KDA) Police Station Zafar Khan said that they received a tip-off about the whereabouts of the accused, Ismail, a resident of Sector 4 KDA. A police team was dispatched to the location, where they arrested Ismail and recovered a pistol from his possession. Ismail was wanted in a case of attempted murder that took place in the KDA area a few weeks ago. The victim, a local shopkeeper, was shot and injured in the incident. The SHO said that Ismail is being interrogated and further investigation is underway.

### 128 illegal foreigners held

QUETTA (INP): As many as 128 illegal foreign nationals were arrested during ongoing operation in different areas of Quetta. Meanwhile, cases were registered against 38 people under Foreign Act. According to details, as part of mass deportation of illegal Afghan nationals, police continues operations in Quetta. During separate actions, 128 illegal foreigners were detained and cases were registered against 38 under Foreign Act. Police officials said that data of 33,000 foreigners have been collected so far.

### Man kills mother-in-law

PAKPATTAN (INP): A man gunned down his mother-in-law for not sending disgruntled wife with him here on Sunday. Police arrested the accused with murder weapon. According to details, the incident took place in Rang Shah police station jurisdiction in Pakpattan where accused Imran visited house of in-laws to take back his exasperated wife to home. Upon refusal from in-laws, the culprit opened straight fire killing his mother-in-law. The police arrested accused Imran with murder weapon who in preliminary investigation stated that his wife wanted to go with him but her mother refused to allow her after which shot him dead.

### Revenue officers directed

FAISALABAD (APP): Divisional Commissioner Silwat Saeed has directed revenue officers to expedite the recovery campaign to collect maximum revenue from defaulters. Chairing a meeting on Sunday, she reviewed the performance of recovery officers of the revenue department and expressed her dismay over their poor performance. Divisional Commissioner Silwat Saeed directed the revenue officers to speed up their efforts for ensuring maximum recovery under the head of stamp duty, registration fee, capital valuation tax and water rate. No negligence will be tolerated in this regard, she warned. Divisional Commissioner Silwat Saeed also directed deputy directors of the division to monitor the performance of recovery teams and send their reports on a weekly basis.

# Study tour for students arranged

TAXILA (APP): Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar in collaboration with Directorate of Museum and Archaeology, government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday organized one day Study Tour/ Exposure Tour to Taxila Valley (Jaulian) for students of the University and its Affiliated Colleges.

The Study and Exposure Tour was attended by 70 students of following departments of SBBWU and its Affiliated Colleges, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, Department of Political Science, Govt Girls Degree College, Bacha Khan Govt Girls Degree College Dabgari. The participant actively engaged in a series of guided tours, interactive sessions, and on-site examinations during the exposure visit. The program aimed to foster a deep understanding of the archaeological significance of Taxila Valley and the challenges posed by

climate change.

The participant gained insights into the rich history and cultural heritage of Taxila Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, through visits to prominent archaeological sites such as the Dharmarajika Stupa, Sirkap, and the Taxila Museum.

The program provided an in-depth exploration of the effects of climate change on the archaeological sites of Taxila Valley. Discussions and presentations highlighted the threats posed by changing weather patterns, extreme events, and rising temperatures.

The participants actively engaged in discussions on conservation strategies and preservation efforts employed to safeguard the historical monuments and artifacts in the face of climate change. The visit included interactions with local communities to understand their perspectives on the changing climate and the collabor-

ative efforts undertaken to protect the archaeological sites.

Dr. Hamida Bibi, in-charge department of History and Pakistan studies, Dr. Sumaira Gul, department of Political Science, Tashfeen Zia Deputy Registrar Affiliation and Monitoring section and Sania Siraj, Department of Art & Design organizers from Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar are thankful to Dr Abdul Samad Director, Archeology and Museums, Ahsan Zildar Shah, President Reimagine Gandhara, Khalid Taimour and the entire team of Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for hosting and providing exposure to the students of our University and affiliated colleges.

The event concluded with the distribution of certificates and shields among the participants.



**TAXILA: Students of SBBWU and affiliated colleges visiting Taxila Museum in collaboration with Directorate of Museum and Archaeology Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.**

## Project manager perished

QUETTA (INP): The Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) Project Manager Shabbir Mirza was killed while another was injured in an explosion near a vehicle in a coal minefield explosion in the suburbs of Quetta on Sunday.

According to sources in the police, the project manager was heading to the minefield when the incident occurred.

On March 4, 2023, six miners had lost their lives and five others were injured after poisonous gases accumulated inside a coal mine in the Shahrag area of Harnai district, Balochistan.

Due to the lack of proper ventilation, 11 miners fell unconscious and became trapped.

Despite the efforts of rescue workers and fellow coal miners, five miners died before rescue teams could reach the area.

The dead bodies were transported to the Basic Health Unit Shahrag along with the injured miners.

Dr Muhammad Akbar, in charge of the health unit, confirmed the deaths and injuries.

“We received a total of six dead bodies and five injured,” he said.

## FIA arrests human smuggler

GUIJRANWALA (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has arrested a human smuggler on Sunday, involved in kidnapping of an innocent citizen in Libya.

The Compost Circle Gujranwala took action on the directions of Director FIA Gujranwala Zone.

The accused Imran was arrested from Gujrat during an operation against human smugglers.

According to FIA spokesman, the accused received Rs700,000 for the recovery of the citizen.

A few months ago, the victim was abducted by human traffickers in Libya and the accused is a facilitator of a gang involved in human trafficking.

However, FIA started an investigation after the arrest of the suspect.

Moreover, raids are also being conducted to arrest other involved elements, said the FIA spokesperson.

## Role of Pak Army never be forgotten

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that unparalleled help provided by the Pakistan armed forces to the earthquake victims would never be forgotten by the people of Azad Jammu Kashmir.

In a statement, he said that compensation for the loss of human lives caused by the earthquake was not possible, but the government tried its best to rehabilitate the victims, rebuild and reconstruct the damaged infrastructure.

Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry thanked the international community for its generous support for rescue and relief of earthquake victims in 2005.

# Nation remembers earthquake's victims

BALAKOT (APP): People of Balakot and adjoining areas Sunday observed the 18th anniversary of the devastating earthquake that took thousands of lives and destroyed Balakot City, where hospitals and schools are still waiting for reconstruction.

At 8:52, a memorial ceremony was held at Balakot, where the survivors of the earthquake, members of civil society, and other organizations were present and also observed a minute of silence. 18 years ago, on October 8, 2005, at 8:52 a.m., some 80000 people died and houses were destroyed when an earthquake of 7.6 magnitudes hit Azad Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to the statistics, the earthquake left more than 17,000 people dead in Balakot alone. Collective prayers for the victims will be offered at different places in Balakot.

The deadly earthquake brought a wave of destruction to the Hazara division, particularly in Balakot and surrounding areas. According to the figures of

the Provincial Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (PERRA), 2,959 schools and colleges were destroyed, and less than half of the destroyed buildings could be rebuilt.

On the 18th anniversary, the survivors are still waiting for the reconstruction of schools and health centers.

Owing to the delay in the construction of New Bakriyal City, where the victims of the 2005 earthquake would be accommodated, the people of Balakot are deprived.

The devastating earthquake of 2005 destroyed the buildings and infrastructure of Balakot; unfortunately, rehabilitation projects have yet to be finished after 18 years, and no complete schools or hospital facilities are available in the earthquake-hit areas of Balakot.

Meanwhile, The 18th anniversary of victims of the deadly earthquake of October 8, 2005, is being observed across Pakistan including Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The 2005 earthquake

claimed thousands of lives besides causing massive damage to infrastructure especially in Azad Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Different events are being organized in different parts of the country including Azad Jammu and Kashmir to express solidarity and sympathies with the victims of calamities. The day dawned with special prayers in mosques for the martyrs and prosperity of the country.

One minute of silence was observed at all district headquarters at 08.54 am. Last year in September, a strong earthquake of 5.8 magnitude brought disasters to different parts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The quake hit some urban and rural parts of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) including Muzaffarabad, Kotli and many other scattered places.

At least 40 people died and more than 500 were injured as a result of an earthquake. Around 6,000 houses were destroyed completely, while 7100 cattle farms have been damaged in the quake.

## Police recovers hostage

NAWABSHAH (INP): The police in an operation in katcha area of Dadu recovered a hostage kidnapped 53 days ago, police reported on Sunday.

SSP Shaheed Benazirabad Hyder Raza has said that the police recovered a youth, Soomar Larik, in an operation in katcha area of Dadu district, who was kidnapped by bandits 53 days ago from Mashaikh, an area near Qazi Ahmed.

Recovered hostage Soomar Larik is son of a Patwari, a lower rank official of revenue department.

After recent decision of the government to launch a law enforcement operation in katcha areas (riverine forests) along the Indus River in upper Sindh districts to curb activities of bandit gangs and other outlaws involved in rampant kidnapping for ransom and other crimes in the region.

In a rocket explosion in katcha area of Kandhkot district recently nine people

were killed including four children.

“A rocket exploded at a house of Shah Ali Sabzoi in Bangi Khan Sabzoi village in katcha area leaving nine people dead including four children,” local police said. “Six others were injured in the incident”.

Caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh Maqbool Baqar while taking notice of the rocket launcher blast in katcha area of Kandhkot, summoned report from the IG Police.

It is to be mentioned here that the Sindh government has decided to launch a law enforcement operation in katcha areas (riverine forests) along the Indus River in upper Sindh districts to curb activities of bandit gangs and other outlaws involved in rampant kidnapping for ransom and other crimes in the region.

## Injured policeman expired

KASUR (INP): The Police Inspector injured in firing exchange over property dispute expired on Sunday during treatment in hospital.

According to details, Inspector Tariq Bashir Cheema was injured in firing over property dispute in border area, Mandi Usmanwal police station jurisdiction.

Three people were killed in retaliatory firing of police inspector and police guards.

Inspector Tariq Bashir Cheema was under treatment in ICU ward of General Hospital where he succumbed to his wound raising death toll in the incident to four.

The deceased was Investigation Incharge of Nasirabad police station Lahore and he served as SHO in various police stations of Kasur.

## DPO inaugurates chowk

SARGODHA (APP): District Police Officer Muhammad Faisal Kamran on Sunday inaugurated the “Nishan-e-Haider Chowk” at Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Town.

SSP Patrolling Akhtar Abbas Joyia, ASP City Usman Mir, DSP Traffic Arshad Gondal, Electronic Media Club Chairman Nadeem Khan and a large number of residents also participated in the ceremony.

The DPO said, “Martyrs are our pride, and their sacrifices continue to inspire us. They live in our hearts forever, whether they belong to the armed forces, police or other security agencies.”

Electronic Media Club Chairman Nadeem Khan said that the nation would never forget the sacrifices of martyrs, and martyrdom is a rank bestowed upon the fortunate ones.

Later, prayers were offered for the safety and progress of the country.

## Smuggling bid foiled, NCP items recovered

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police have foiled a smuggling attempt and seized non-custom paid (NCP) items worth over Rs 23.6 million during the checking of several vehicles here in the limits of Daraban police stations.

According to the Police spokesman, a police team of Daraban police station led by SDPO Daraban Circle Malik Aneesul Hassan along with SHO Atta Ullah Khan inspected several vehicles.

During checking, the police recovered NCP items including 15 rolls of cloth, 33 tyres of different sizes, 20 sacks of plastic bags, 70 sacks of China Salt, eight Iranian blankets,

eight blankets with bed-sheets, six rolls of plastic pipe, 12 sacks of Iranian sandal, three sacks of dry milk, five cartons of cosmetic items, one sack of tea and two cartons of veterinary medicines.

The estimated worth of the recovered goods was around Rs 23.6 million which was later handed over to the customs authorities for further legal action.

**Couple killed in motorcycle-trailor collision in DI Khan**

A couple died when the motorcycle they were riding on was collided with a tractor-trolley here on Chashma road last night.

According to Rescue 1122, the accident occurred near Segri-Bangla on

Chashma road when a motorcycle was collided with a tractor-trolley which was wrongly parked in the center of road. There was no reflective tape on the trolley which caused the accident in the darkness.

After receiving information about the incident, the rescue team reached the site and shifted the bodies to Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital paharpur where the deceased were identified as Muhammad Zulfikar, son of Muhammad Zareef, a resident of Pipplan area of Mianwali district, and his wife.

The deceased couple was reportedly coming to Dera Ismail Khan to inquire about the health of the woman's ailing father.

## Minister emphasizes trainings for teachers

HYDERABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhhi has emphasized the importance of training for teachers at domestically and internationally to promote quality education in the country. He highlighted the need for well-prepared educators to play an effective role in shaping a better future for children.

He made these remarks while addressing as special guest at the “Latif Night” program held at Public School Hyderabad here on Saturday night. The federal minister invited the students of the School for a one-week recreational visit to Islamabad. He also proposed training opportunities for the school's teachers in Islamabad and pledged to provide 5,000 books of the National Book Foundation for the school.

Sindhhi praised the outstanding performance of

students during the Latif Night program, expressing his hope that such programs would continue in the future. He stressed the need for organizing programs that celebrate Sufi poets' contributions in schools and colleges across the country, as he added, it has been observed that such programs were gradually being marginalized from our priorities.

Regarding the status of the School, he acknowledged that the School had been operational for 62 years and was remained the best institution for a long time but its condition was deteriorated since it was handed over to IBA.

He commended the current principal for his efforts to improve the school's condition.

Madad Ali Sindhhi pointed out that the grant of 50 million rupees allocated to the school was insufficient, as it has three campuses

and nine hostels, adding that he would discuss increasing the grant with the Sindh's representative during a conference scheduled for October 16, involving education ministers from across the country, at Islamabad. He stated that he would write to the provincial government and the Sindh education minister to request development program schemes for the school.

The minister stressed the importance of teacher training and advocated sending teachers not only within Pakistan but also abroad for professional development. He expressed the federal government's commitment to supporting teachers in this endeavor. He also invited selected teachers from the School to participate in Masters visitors training at the National Academy of Higher Education in Islamabad under a fully-funded program.

## Seminar highlights youth's crucial role in democracy

MIRPURKHAS (APP): District Election Commissioner Mirpurkhas, Khalid Hussain Lund has emphasized the pivotal role of youth in shaping the nation's future.

He was addressing at the insightful one-day seminar organized by the District Election Commission at Government Quaid Millat High School here Sunday. The seminar was aimed to underscore the significance

of voting. Khalid Hussain urged the young generation to step forward and actively engage in strengthening democracy. He emphasized that the voter registration phase was currently underway in preparation for the 2024 general elections.

He called upon the citizens to ensure their names on the voter list, enabling them to exercise their valuable right to vote on

Election Day. By participating in the electoral process and selecting their representatives, the citizens can contribute to the formation of a robust and vibrant democracy, he added.

Khalid Hussain concluded by emphasizing that citizens' votes can amplify their communities' legitimate concerns, making their voices heard in the highest echelons of government.

## Sanitation drive reviewed

SARGODHA (APP): Commissioner Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti expressed dissatisfaction with the progress of the “Ab Gaon Chamkeinge” programme and directed assistant commissioners to take the ownership of the drive or face action.

He made these remarks while chairing a meeting regarding the “Ab Gaon Chamkein Ge” at his office here on Sunday.

The commissioner also directed to make village committees active, complete the recruitment process of watchmen and sanitary workers and send the report of the activities carried out in each village to his office.

He also directed to install boards on the streets besides the entrances of every village as well as to numbering the houses.

He also issued orders to speed up the anti-encroachment operation in villages and said that he himself would visit villages and meet people.

The meeting was attended by deputy commissioners of all four districts, ADCR Mianwali Osama Hameed and AD LG Babar Shehzad Ranjha besides assistant commissioners of the four districts.





## Mid-term test for Scholz’s coalition at German state polls

FRANKFURT (AFP/APP): Germans vote in two key state polls on Sunday in a test for Chancellor Olaf Scholz’s fractious coalition halfway through its term, while the resurgent far right may get another boost.

Almost 14 million people are eligible to cast ballots on Sunday in southern Bavaria, the country’s biggest state, and western Hesse, with a surge in immigration and economic woes among key topics.

With the voter base making up almost one in five of Germany’s electorate, and both states qualifying as economic heavyweights among the country’s 16 regions, the polls are seen as a crucial indicator of the population’s mood.

After forming a three-party coalition two years ago, Scholz soon had to contend with Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing energy crisis, which plunged Germany into recession. Adding to its problems, the chancellor’s coalition -- comprising his centre-left SPD, the Greens and the pro-business FDP -- has been consumed by bitter infighting on issues ranging from climate laws to spending cuts. "The parties that form the federal government are in a bad starting position here," Arndt Leininger, a political expert from the Chemnitz University of Technology, told AFP.

"In both states, all three parties are currently below their results in the



last regional elections."

Not helping the cause of the SPD and its coalition partners, both states are conservative strongholds, with Hesse ruled for 24 years by the main opposition CDU and Bavaria since 1957 by the CSU, headed by Markus Soeder. Meanwhile the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) is forecast to make gains after a recent surge in poll ratings at the national level and a string of local election triumphs.

While the AfD is not expected to enter government in either state -- its strongholds are in eastern Germany -- further progress would ring alarm bells anew about the party’s growing popularity.

The AfD is traditionally an anti-immigration party but has also focused on attacking the coalition’s climate policies, driven by the Greens, which have proven unpopular in some quarters. Critics say they could unduly burden households.

## Toxic storms blamed on climate change cloud Tajikistan

DUSHANBE (AFP/APP): The air was dry and warm and the skies over Dushanbe were grey without a hint of sun during another recent toxic sand storm that enveloped the capital of Tajikistan.

Storms like this, which experts say are being caused by climate change, are becoming increasingly frequent across Central Asia, harming its inhabitants. The imposing mountains around Dushanbe were barely visible through the haze and hulks of apartment blocks under construction stood like ghostly apparitions. Tajikistan was ranked one of the top 10 most polluted countries in the world in the 2022 IQAir air quality index.

"I can't stop coughing. I'm fed up with this dust choking me," Munira Khushkadamova, a teacher, said during a visit to the Sofia clinic in Dushanbe. For the last two years,

the 43-year-old has been suffering from respiratory failure -- a diagnosis given to her from her doctor Faical Sakhray.

"In the last few years I have been getting more and more patients with cardiovascular diseases," he told AFP, blaming fine particles from the storms.

"The biggest ones enter the organism and stay in the upper respiratory tract but the finer ones go into the lower respiratory tract, then the lungs, the heart and other organs," he said.

The United Nations estimates that 80 percent of the Tajik population is exposed to the highest concentrations of fine particles, known as PM2.5.

Sakhray said people should drink plenty of water and wear a mask for protection. But the number of people wearing a mask in the streets of Dushanbe is minimal. Despite having "difficul-

ty breathing and headaches", Nigora Yusupova said she would not wear a mask because it "makes breathing harder".

These types of storms used to be rare but they now start in spring and continue into the autumn in large parts of Central Asia.

"In the 1990s, there were two or three sand and dust storms per year in Tajikistan. Now there can be up to 35," said Zebuniso Muminzoda, head of the Tajik branch of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia.

"Because of climate change, longer dry seasons lead to sand and dust storms by drying out the ground and stronger winds then pick up this dry soil," she said. The storms often start out in the dried-out stretches of the Aral Sea in Uzbekistan but also in the Kazakh steppes and in neighbouring Afghanistan. Muminzoda pointed to a

"human factor", saying forestry, bad irrigation and year-round livestock farming were all contributing to "degrading the soil".

It is a vicious circle for a poor, mainly rural country like Tajikistan, where the toxic storms also have a negative effect on farming and soil fertility.

The sand and dust also falls on the region's many glaciers -- a crucial source of water in the region and "speeds up their melting," Muminzoda said.

While there are often tensions between Central Asian countries, they are attempting common efforts to tackle environmental questions like water management and nuclear waste disposal. But the storm threat in Tajikistan is still under-estimated "as natural catastrophe", according to the Regional Environmental Centre, which operates in all five countries in the region.

## Across China: Desert tourist attractions fuel travel enthusiasm in NW China

Y I N C H U A N (Xinhua/APP): The desert scenery of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region proved a hit with visitors over the eight-day long Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day holiday break, reflecting the success of the region's investment into tourism and environmental protection.

"This is my first time seeing a desert, and it is more splendid and interesting than I imagined," said a tourist surnamed Zhang, who made her maiden trip from east China's Zhejiang Province to Ningxia.

Zhang and her son quenched their thirst for adventure with camel rides and sledding across the sand dunes in Yinchuan City, while the unique sight of water and sand blending at Shahu (Sand Lake) scenic area in Shizuishan City gave them food for thought. "I had heard the saying

'You haven't truly visited Ningxia until you've seen its deserts.' Although there were lots of tourists and long queues during the holiday, we enjoyed our tours a lot," said Zhang.

The picturesque scenery and popular tourist attractions, however, were once unimaginable.

Ningxia covers an area of just 66,400 square km yet its surrounding deserts, the Tengger, Mu Us, and Ulan Buh, meant it suffered from the most severe desertification in China.

Over the years, with the help of the "straw checkerboard barrier" approach, successive generations have worked to stabilize the shifting sands, creating favorable conditions for the tourism development.

Today, the region boasts a plethora of scenic spots, including the Shapotou National Reserve and the Shahu scenic area, both of which are designated as a

5A scenic sites, the top level. To welcome enthusiastic tourists during the long holiday, various desert tourist attractions in Ningxia launched diverse activities, allowing tourists from all over the country to truly experience the joy of desert tourism.

The Shahu scenic area integrated cultural and recreational activities with the natural scenery, with offerings including an exotic circus, night market, and star-gazing camp.

"We have also added many sunshades and other service facilities to provide tourists with a safe, convenient, and comfortable environment during the holiday," said Wang Xiaoting, deputy general manager of Ningxia Sand Lakes Tourism Co., Ltd.

The Shapotou National Reserve offered free admission to special groups like those aged 60 and above, medical workers and mili-

tary personnel or ex-servicemen, and waived parking fees.

As night falls, the Tengger Desert sheds its daytime heat, and the starry sky transforms the desert scenery. In Zhongwei City, where Shapotou National Reserve is located, high-end vacation products, such as star-gazing hotels and lodges along the Yellow River, capitalize on this unique natural blessing.

The booming desert travel rush has helped revive tourism in Ningxia.

During the period, Ningxia received nearly 4.9 million domestic tourists, generating tourism revenue of 4.09 billion yuan (about 560 million U.S. dollars), an increase of 18.82 percent and 35.1 percent respectively, compared to the same period in 2019, according to the regional culture and tourism department.

## Two dead, two missing after avalanche hits Tibet’s Mt Shishapangma

BEIJING (AFP/APP): An American mountaineer and her Nepali guide were killed in an avalanche on Mount Shishapangma in Tibet, southwest China, tour companies told AFP on Sunday, with two still missing and one seriously injured. Mount Shishapangma, one of the highest mountains in the world, peaks at 8,027 metres (26,335 feet) above sea level and is entirely located within Chinese territory.

The accident occurred Saturday afternoon "at an altitude of between 7,600 and 8,000 meters", China's state news agency Xinhua said, citing the

Tibet Sports Bureau, which confirmed the toll. Mingma David Sherpa of Elite Exped, which was handling the expedition, told AFP that Anna Gutu, an American mountaineer, had been killed. "We have received reports that Anna and her guide were hit by the avalanche yesterday, their bodies have been recovered," he said.

"There are other climbers missing as well and rescue efforts are underway," he said.

Those efforts were complicated by the fact that "helicopters cannot be used" on the mountain due to Chinese restrictions, he added. Tashi Sherpa of Seven Summit Treks iden-

tified the missing as American climber Gina Marie Rzuicidlo and her guide Tenjin "Lama" Sherpa.

"Two avalanches hit the mountain yesterday, impacting several climbers. Some were injured and two, American climber (Gina Marie Rzuicidlo) and our guide Tenjin, are missing," he said.

"Search efforts are underway."

Tenjin became the toast of the mountaineering community this year after setting the record for the fastest summit of all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre (26,000-feet) mountains alongside Norway's

Kristin Harila.

The pair finished the feat in 92 days when they reached the peak of Pakistan's K2 in July.

A statement posted on Harila's Instagram said she was headed to Nepal to "help in any way she can". "Our thoughts and prayers are with Lama and his family," it added.

The two women on Shishapangma were in a race to become the first American woman to summit all 14 peaks, according to Nepali newspaper The Himalayan Times.

All mountaineering activities have been suspended on Mount S h i s h a p a n g m a , Xinhua said.

## Erdogan to open modern Turkish state’s first new church

ISTANBUL (AFP/APP): President Recep Tayyip Erdogan planned Sunday to inaugurate the first church built with government backing in overwhelmingly Muslim Turkey's 100-year history as a post-Ottoman state.

The Mor Ephrem Syriac Orthodox Church's opening marks an important cultural and political moment for both Turkey and its powerful leader.

Erdogan drew widespread condemnation during his two-decade rule for converting ancient churches into mosques and making Islamic conservatism into a leading social force. He has always countered that he was simply restoring the rights of pious Muslims in the staunchly secular republic founded by field marshal Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1923.

Erdogan laid the first stone for the church's construction for Istanbul's 17,000-strong Assyrian Christians in 2019.

"This is the first newly built church to open its doors since the founding of the Turkish Republic," Istanbul Syriac Kadim Foundation

president Sait Susin told AFP.

"We are happy."

Assyrian Christianity traces its history to communities that lived in the first century AD in a region stretching from southeastern Turkey to Syria and Iraq. Its main church moved from the Turkish city of Mardin to Damascus in 1932.

Susin separately told the Anadolu state news agency that some small churches had quietly opened in Turkey in the past 100 years.

But they did so "without official permission. It is the first time that a church has been officially built. This gives us great pride," Susin said. Erdogan drew international indignation for converting Istanbul's iconic Hagia Sophia -- once the world's largest cathedral -- from a museum into a mosque in 2020. The United Nations cultural body UNESCO expressed "grave concern" at the time.

Erdogan brushed the criticism aside and did exactly the same thing to Istanbul's Byzantine-era Chora Church later that same year.

Greece called that conversion "yet another provocation against religious persons everywhere".

Erdogan came under particularly strong attacks at home for unveiling a new mosque in 2021 on Taksim Square -- a central Istanbul gathering point built around a monument celebrating Ataturk's foundation of the secular Turkish state.

The new Istanbul church can accommodate 750 worshippers and offer Erdogan a chance to prove his critics wrong.

Erdogan wavers in his speeches between robustly defending pious Muslims and embracing Turkey's numerous communities.

He told supporters on the eve of the first round of May's presidential election that he had written a "love letter" to Turkey.

"We have penned a love letter for every individual of our nation, without any distinction of origin or religion," he told the crowd.

He ended that day by leading Muslim prayers at the Hagia Sophia mosque. Erdogan edged out his secular rival in a runoff election two weeks later.

## DR Congo leader files bid for re-election amid crowded race

KINSHASA (AFP/APP): DR Congo's leader Felix Tshisekedi has submitted his candidacy for a second term in office, joining a crowded list of presidential hopefuls including opposition heavyweights and a Nobel Peace Prize winner.

The turbulent central African nation, a vast and impoverished country of about 100 million people, is due to hold parliamentary and presidential votes on December 20.

Tshisekedi, who came to power after an election in 2018, officially submitted his candidacy for a second five-year term in office in the capital Kinshasa on Saturday. He thereby joins over a dozen opposition candidates, including political heavyweights and senior members of the previous administration, but the opposition is far from unified.

Given the fractured opposition, the 60-year-old president is thought to stand a strong chance of winning again. "He's in a good position," said Congolese political scientist Christian Moleka.

"He's the incumbent, he has the resources of the state, people still believe in him and he's managed to build strategic alliances," he added. The divided political opposition would need to unite around a single candidate to stand a chance of beating Tshisekedi, according to Moleka.

But that possibility appears slim. Several opposition figures who have something prove have thrown their hats in the ring. Moise Katumbi, a business magnate and former governor of then-Katanga province is amongst those running. He had been barred from contesting the 2018 vote.

Fellow candidate Martin Fayulu says he won the popular vote in 2018 and that Tshisekedi took the presidency illegitimately.

Nobel-Prize winner Denis Mukwege's entry into the race has complicated matters further. The surgical gynaecologist and winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, for his work with sexual assault victims, announced his candidacy on October 2.

He has "moral authority," said a diplomat in Kinshasa, who declined to be named. Still, Mukwege is also little known outside of his native eastern DRC, and is viewed negatively in some quarters as a Western-backed candidate.

announced a £1.5 billion (\$1.8 billion) plan to tackle NHS waiting lists which have ballooned due to the impact of the strikes on top of a huge pandemic backlog. The plan, which Starmer outlined in an interview with the Sunday Mirror, would create an estimated 2.2 million NHS appointments a year.

Starmer, 61, will be looking to come out of the event in Liverpool with the party's poll lead intact, even strengthened, after last week's Conservative party conference was overshadowed by infighting and the downgrading of a high-speed rail project.

He described Labour's huge victory in a by-election in Scotland as a "big step in the right direction" towards becoming the biggest party in parliament, which would see him become prime minister.

"We're the party of change in Britain. We're the party of change right across the whole country," Starmer said Friday, a clear reference to UK Prime

he added.

The divided political opposition would need to unite around a single candidate to stand a chance of beating Tshisekedi, according to Moleka.

But that possibility appears slim. Several opposition figures who have something prove have thrown their hats in the ring. Moise Katumbi, a business magnate and former governor of then-Katanga province is amongst those running. He had been barred from contesting the 2018 vote.

Fellow candidate Martin Fayulu says he won the popular vote in 2018 and that Tshisekedi took the presidency illegitimately.

Nobel-Prize winner Denis Mukwege's entry into the race has complicated matters further. The surgical gynaecologist and winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, for his work with sexual assault victims, announced his candidacy on October 2.

He has "moral authority," said a diplomat in Kinshasa, who declined to be named. Still, Mukwege is also little known outside of his native eastern DRC, and is viewed negatively in some quarters as a Western-backed candidate.

announced a £1.5 billion (\$1.8 billion) plan to tackle NHS waiting lists which have ballooned due to the impact of the strikes on top of a huge pandemic backlog. The plan, which Starmer outlined in an interview with the Sunday Mirror, would create an estimated 2.2 million NHS appointments a year.

Starmer, 61, will be looking to come out of the event in Liverpool with the party's poll lead intact, even strengthened, after last week's Conservative party conference was overshadowed by infighting and the downgrading of a high-speed rail project.

He described Labour's huge victory in a by-election in Scotland as a "big step in the right direction" towards becoming the biggest party in parliament, which would see him become prime minister.

"We're the party of change in Britain. We're the party of change right across the whole country," Starmer said Friday, a clear reference to UK Prime

Announcing his presidential bid this month, Mukwege told supporters that "unity of all forces" is needed to change the DRC.

Mukwege is open to forming alliances, said Moleka, the political scientist, noting that it remains to seen whether other opposition figures are of a similar mind.

Several analysts argue that should one unifying opposition candidate emerge, the move will likely arrive late in the election campaign.

The reason for this, according to Moleka, is because that would avoid the government going into "aggressive mode" to defeat the candidate -- by fair means or foul.

Opposition candidates have in recent months decried what they term a narrowing of the 'democratic space' in the DRC.

Opposition politician Cherubin Okenda, a member of Katumbi's party, was assassinated in Kinshasa in July, for example, under circumstances that remain unclear.

A leading Congolese journalist has also been imprisoned on charges of disseminating false information about the murder. On top of this, most

opposition parties are convinced the elections will be fraudulent.

Moleka said the "electoral process is built on a high level of mistrust" which could lead to disputed results.

The possibility of instability is "explosive," he added, given the backdrop of insecurity in the DRC's east.

Armed groups plague much of the mineral-rich east of the country, a legacy of regional wars that flared during the 1990s and 2000s.

One such group, the M23, has captured swathes of territory since launching an offensive in late 2021, and edged close to the eastern city of Goma.

Two former prime ministers who served under ex-Congolese president Joseph Kabila are also running: Augustin Matata and Adolphe Muzito.

Another candidate is Noel Tshiani, who ran unsuccessfully in 2018.

He has championed a proposed law that would limit high political office in the DRC to citizens born to two Congolese parents.

Controversially, this would rule out Moise Katumbi, whose father was Italian.

## Sensing power, UK poll favourites Labour holds annual conference

LONDON (AFP/APP): The leader of Britain's Labour main opposition on Sunday warned the party not to become "giddy" as it eyes a return to power after more than a decade out of office.

Keir Starmer's words of caution came as the party gathered for its annual conference, ahead of a general election expected next year.

The party, which has enjoyed double digit poll leads for months, has also been buoyed by a big local election win in Scotland on Thursday. "It is not going to be giddy, it is not going to be 'job done'," Starmer told The Observer weekly.

"So you won't get razzmatazz. You won't see mistakes that have been made in the past by opposition parties," he said. Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government has been battling stubbornly high inflation, a cost of living crisis and strikes across the economy including the state-run National Health Service.

Kicking off the four-day conference, Starmer announced a £1.5 billion (\$1.8 billion) plan to tackle NHS waiting lists which have ballooned due to the impact of the strikes on top of a huge pandemic backlog. The plan, which Starmer outlined in an interview with the Sunday Mirror, would create an estimated 2.2 million NHS appointments a year.

Starmer, 61, will be looking to come out of the event in Liverpool with the party's poll lead intact, even strengthened, after last week's Conservative party conference was overshadowed by infighting and the downgrading of a high-speed rail project.

He described Labour's huge victory in a by-election in Scotland as a "big step in the right direction" towards becoming the biggest party in parliament, which would see him become prime minister.

"We're the party of change in Britain. We're the party of change right across the whole country," Starmer said Friday, a clear reference to UK Prime

announced a £1.5 billion (\$1.8 billion) plan to tackle NHS waiting lists which have ballooned due to the impact of the strikes on top of a huge pandemic backlog. The plan, which Starmer outlined in an interview with the Sunday Mirror, would create an estimated 2.2 million NHS appointments a year.

Starmer, 61, will be looking to come out of the event in Liverpool with the party's poll lead intact, even strengthened, after last week's Conservative party conference was overshadowed by infighting and the downgrading of a high-speed rail project.

He described Labour's huge victory in a by-election in Scotland as a "big step in the right direction" towards becoming the biggest party in parliament, which would see him become prime minister.

"We're the party of change in Britain. We're the party of change right across the whole country," Starmer said Friday, a clear reference to UK Prime

Minister Rishi Sunak's claim that only the Tories offer change -- despite being in power for 13 years. Labour last held the keys to 10 Downing Street in 2010, when Gordon Brown was prime minister, and is readying itself to govern again following a general election that must be held by January 2025 at the latest.

The last nationwide vote in 2019 saw Labour suffer its worst election defeat since 1935 under far-left leader Jeremy Corbyn. But after the landslide loss to the Tories, then led by Boris Johnson, Starmer has pulled the party back to the centre ground. He hailed as "seismic" Thursday's win over the Scottish National Party in the Rutherglen and Hamilton West seat, south-east of Glasgow, with a 20 percent vote swing.

Labour needs to win back a sizeable chunk of the 40 seats it lost in Scotland in 2015 if it is to have a chance of ousting Sunak's Conservative government. Recent surveys have showed

Labour's poll lead narrowing after Sunak announced populist policies that attempt to put clear water between the increasingly right-wing Conservatives and their opponents. A constituency-by-constituency survey by the Observer, however, predicted a landslide victory for Labour unless Sunak is able to close the gap.

The analysis, commissioned by the 38 Degrees campaign group and carried out by the Survation polling company, surveyed more than 11,000 voters shortly before the Conservative Party conference. Starmer, a former chief state prosecutor, is regularly accused of being too cautious and failing to spell out exactly what he stands for. He has ruled out a number of things, including scrapping university tuition fees and taking Britain back into the European Union.

Starmer has also backed away from tax increases and scaled down Labour's green energy plan, allowing Conservatives to accuse him of flip-flopping on several issues.

## Seventh suspect in Ecuador candidate murder dies in prison

Guayaquil (AFP/APP): A seventh Colombian prisoner accused in the August assassination of Ecuadoran presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio has died behind bars, authorities in Quito said Saturday, as top security officials were sacked.

Ecuador's prison authority said in a statement that the Colombian who died in the capital's El Inca prison -- like the six killed Friday in a prison in port city

Guayaquil -- was "linked" to the murder of presidential candidate and anti-corruption crusader Villavicencio.

President Guillermo Lasso on Saturday announced a "reorganization" of the country's police leadership, with the force's general commander, investigations chief and prisons director removed from their posts. Lasso's office also said it will file a criminal complaint against the direc-

tor of the Guayaquil prison, where the prisoners were said to have died amid "disturbances." "He has already been detained... to give his version before the prosecutor's office," the presidency said. Authorities have not provided details on the inmate deaths, nor explained how the Quito prison failed to provide extra protection for the seventh suspect following Friday's killings.

The assassination of

Villavicencio, a centrist who had been polling in second place, rocked Ecuador days ahead of the August 20 national elections in which corruption and the country's declining security situation were major themes. Six Colombians with long criminal records were arrested shortly after, while one was killed at the scene of the crime. Authorities arrested seven others days later.



The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI  
Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at  
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,  
Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 415-3704551

## Palestine cause and renewed intifada

A full-scale war erupted in occupied Palestine when hundreds of Palestinian fighters entered Israel by land, sea and air using paragliders after a barrage of rockets was fired into Southern Israel from the Palestinian enclave. The Israeli military has also entered Gaza and fierce fighting continued between Hamas fighters and Israeli troops over the past two days. The Israeli air force has carried out retaliatory attacks against Palestinian government installations and residential areas resulting in 198 martyrs and 1620 injuries. According to reports, over 200 Israelis had been killed while dozens were injured during the ongoing battle between long-held occupiers and Palestinian freedom fighters.

The Palestine issue has been a burning topic of discussion in prime-time talk shows and scholarly debates in recent days after news surfaced about a potential Saudi-Israel deal for the normalization of their bilateral relations. A major breakthrough in Middle Eastern politics would entirely change the security and geostrategic environment in the Middle East and North African region. In fact, Israel and its Western ally, the United States practically pushed the Palestinians to the wall by containing them in an open prison under strict surveillance of Israeli Intelligence and unceasing incursion, and raid and search operations of the Israeli military in the West Bank and Gaza. Amid such a level of high-handedness with Palestinians, Tel Aviv tactfully isolated Palestinian authority through its diplomatic offensive for improved ties with neighbouring Arab states. After the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan, the sole Jewish state is preparing to forge bonds with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the most influential and leading Arab nation in the Muslim world. The success of the Israeli mission would truly be a stab in the heart of Palestine cause and will ultimately lead to the final burial of the dispute.

As the civilized world including the United Nations, the US, the EU and Arab states have abandoned the Palestinians by putting the Palestine issue on the back burner, the Palestinian Muslims have lost hope in their neighbours, friends and the so-called advocates of human rights and democracy. The recent offensive launched by the Palestinian armed groups is seemingly an effort to sensitize the world about the frustration of the Palestinian people and the urgency for the resolution of the long-standing dispute in the world. Historically, the Israeli state has blatantly pursued its hegemonic agenda over the past decades and expanded its boundaries far beyond its geographical limits in 1948 through the illegal annexure of the famous Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai desert along with grabbing millions of acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank, and Gaza.

Realistically, continued injustice and suppression have caused grave frustration in Palestinian people who have now burst into violence and unimaginable resistance against Israeli occupation. The Palestine issue is the foremost longstanding dispute on the agenda of the UN Security Council (UNSC), which has not been resolved over the past seven and a half decades due to persistent non-cooperation of the Jewish state and its allies at the UN Security Council and outside the multilateral global forum. Israel and the United States aim at disarming and depriving Palestinians of all civil, political and diplomatic rights using geographical containment, diplomatic isolation and political harassment so Palestinians won't achieve their right to self-determination any time in the future and the long-held Palestine dispute dies its death. Bereaved Palestinians have once again initiated another Intifada, to sensitize the world about their unrealized rights that have been ceased by the occupier state over the past several decades. The government and People of Pakistan have vigorously supported Palestinians' right to self-determination, while the global community including the UN and Gulf states must review their policy on the Palestine dispute. The current upsurge in violence is a sort of protest by Palestinian people. If the global community fails to uphold its obligations regarding peace in the Middle East, the situation could turn worse and would be disastrous for all parties.

## Women empowerment

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick and UK's Labour Party Shadow Minister, Afzal Khan have recently agreed to work together in adopting sustained policy initiatives for Pakistani women empowerment in the economic sector and fiscal growth. Both sides agreed to launch skill development programs for Pakistani women along with provision of funds in order to enable them to make their livelihood alongside their male colleagues for a better and prosperous future in this country.

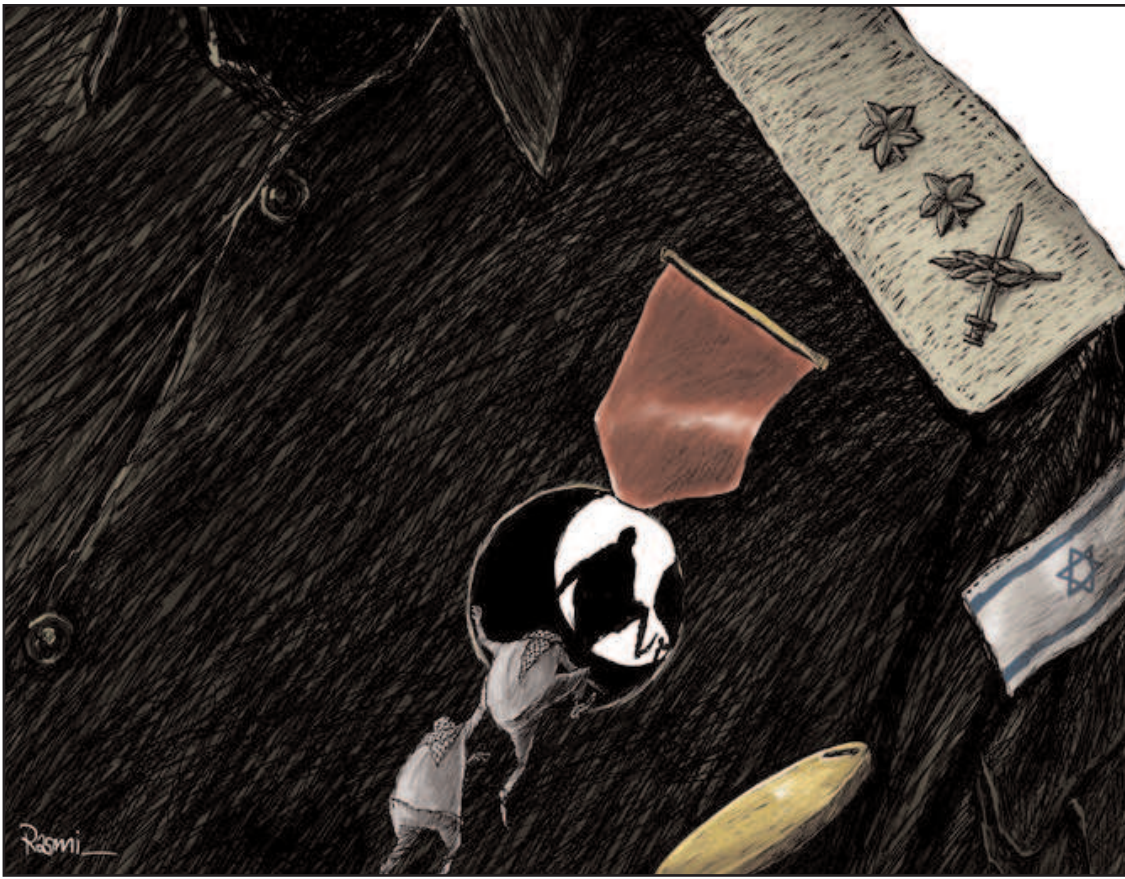
Historically, Pakistan women are a weak segment of our society and seriously lags behind in all walks of life ranging from girls' education, social development, jobs share and economic independence that seriously undermined the government's efforts for women empowerment and their inclusion in the social and economic sector of the Country. Although, urban women are living comparatively better life and have access to education, better healthcare and employment opportunities, while women are living in dire conditions in rural areas particularly in Sindh, Balochistan, Southern Punjab and Erstwhile FATA, Azad Kashmir and far-flung area in Gilgit Baltistan region. Although the government of Pakistan is striving hard to bring Pakistani women on par with their male colleagues, budgetary constraints and rulers' priorities have always remained a setback to women development and empowerment in our society. The Global Gender Gap Index Report 2022, has ranked Pakistan at 145 out of 156 countries in terms of women's participation in economic activities, at 135 for women's education, at 143 women's health and survival and at 95 for women political empowerment in this modern age.

Similarly, women face discrimination in job opportunities along with facing harassment and intimidation at work places which seriously restrict women inclusion in economic activities.

The government of Pakistan is well aware of the women's problems and mostly a female minister had been appointed for women and girls affairs and for that purpose. The government has reserved women seats in the national and provincial assemblies and local governments along with establishment of Ladies Police station, family courts and dedicated girls schools, colleges and women Universities to provide a conducive environment for them. The UK -Pakistan teamwork could boost Pakistan's efforts for women empowerment and growth. Such endeavors must be expanded to avenues including girls education, women health, maternity and women inclusion in the civic system in the country, so the Pakistani women could live a better life in the future.

### Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



## The hurricane of bigotry is an existential threat for the UK

Yossi Mekelberg

No one could accuse Britain's Home Secretary Suella Braverman of shying away from some bruising political bouts. But what, how and who she picks on is disturbing and mainly reflects her distorted view of Britain's diverse and inclusive society — powered by her unquenchable thirst for political power.

For her, it is not necessarily the case that the sky is the limit, but 10 Downing Street is most definitely her goal and if achieving it entails sowing the seeds of discord and damaging the delicate fabric of a multicultural society, it is a price worth paying.

Her latest assaults on immigration and diversity included recent speeches — delivered, unsurprisingly, at the conservative American Enterprise Institute in Washington, followed by another horror show at the recent Conservative Party Conference in Manchester — in which she argued that multiculturalism “has failed because it allowed people to come to our society and live parallel lives in it,” and warned against an imaginary “hurricane” of immigrants.

Call me naive but, of all people, it is Braverman who should have been the poster child for immigration, integration and, hence, multiculturalism. After all, she is the daughter of immigrants, who in her early 30s was elected as a member of Parliament and has risen, quickly, through the ranks to a senior Cabinet position under a prime minister, Rishi Sunak, whose parents were not born in the UK but settled very successfully here.

What can explain the eagerness of Braverman and Sunak to decry people just like themselves, in that respect? Is it some sort of self-hatred? Are they ashamed of their backgrounds?

Claiming that “uncontrolled immigration, inadequate integration and a misguided dogma of multiculturalism have proven a toxic combination for Europe over the last few decades,” as Braverman did, is not only far from the truth but also an affront to many millions of people who were not born in the UK, or anywhere else in Europe, and have become constructive citizens of their respective countries.

It is customary to point out that many migrants were, or have become, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, lawyers, successful musicians and renowned athletes, the kind of people that politicians love to rub shoulders with. But what about all those from ethnic minorities who are doing the menial, low-paid jobs that are necessary for the health of our economy?

Braverman might not think that they are as integrated as she is, since they were not able to attend a private school and then graduate from Cambridge University, as she did. But someone should tell her, and her like-minded Tory supporters, that in return for all their crucial contributions to British society immigrants deserve thanks, not vilification.

Conservative politicians who oppose immigration

are unashamedly using the “dog whistle” tactic in an attempt to deflect attention from their government's many shortcomings on so many other issues. This is a despicable tactic. There is no cheaper trick, especially as nationalism is on the rise, than to blame newcomers for what is going wrong in our societies with

culture that only now is being “threatened” by incomers, and in particular incomers with black or brown skin.

It is common to refer to tolerance, respect, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and even a strong sense of fair play as being traditional British values. But it is those who

**Conservative politicians who oppose immigration are unashamedly using the “dog whistle” tactic in an attempt to deflect attention from their government's many shortcomings on so many other issues. This is a despicable tactic. There is no cheaper trick, especially as nationalism is on the rise, than to blame newcomers for what is going wrong in our societies without a shred of evidence that supports the argument. When Braverman speaks about immigrants “not embracing British values,” living “parallel lives” to the rest of the country, not learning English, and “not taking part in British life,” she does not see the need to define those values and explain what exactly “British life” is. Instead, she prefers to pretend that Britain has always been some kind of unitary monoculture that only now is being “threatened” by incomers, and in particular incomers with black or brown skin. It is common to refer to tolerance, respect, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and even a strong sense of fair play as being traditional British values. But it is those who constantly malign migrants before they arrive, during their efforts to settle in the country, and even after they become citizens, who need to take a good look in the mirror and ask themselves whether it is they, rather than the migrants, who are failing to adhere to those values. One of Braverman's grievances with migrants is that they might have little or no command of the English language. Few would dispute the importance of knowledge of the language for the purposes of social integration. Yet instead of being hostile to migrants, among them asylum seekers who have been less fortunate than herself in acquiring a perfect command of English, she could, as a senior member of the Cabinet, call for the government to facilitate more affordable language courses for every newcomer, and even classes on citizenship and British history.**

out a shred of evidence that supports the argument.

When Braverman speaks about immigrants “not embracing British values,” living “parallel lives” to the rest of the country, not learning English, and “not taking part in British life,” she does not see the need to define those values and explain what exactly “British life” is. Instead, she prefers to pretend that Britain has always been some kind of unitary mono-

constantly malign migrants before they arrive, during their efforts to settle in the country, and even after they become citizens, who need to take a good look in the mirror and ask themselves whether it is they, rather than the migrants, who are failing to adhere to those values.

One of Braverman's grievances with migrants is that they might have little or no command of the English language. Few

would dispute the importance of knowledge of the language for the purposes of social integration. Yet instead of being hostile to migrants, among them asylum seekers who have been less fortunate than herself in acquiring a perfect command of English, she could, as a senior member of the Cabinet, call for the government to facilitate more affordable language courses for every newcomer, and even classes on citizenship and British history.

Disturbingly, however, there is something deeper, something racist, in these innuendos from Braverman and her supporters that suggest that because of who they are and where they came from, immigrants will never be able to internalize British or even European values.

This argument reveals a complete lack of awareness that for centuries, European nations were ruled by authoritarian regimes and extreme ideologies, ravaged by wars, and colonized large parts of the world by means of war, terror and atrocities.

And all of this was done by white people at a time when immigration was insignificant in terms of numbers. It is only since the end of the Second World War that Europe has begun to rebuild itself around the Kantian idea of perpetual peace, through the gradual formation of the EU — the very project that Braverman's party was so keen to abandon in such a rush.

The Conservative Party Conference is over, the home secretary has had her round of applause from her dyed-in-the-wool supporters and the right-wing client media. For the rest of us, it is back to our multicultural lives, which include recognition of the immense contribution of migrants to innovation, creativity and the economic growth of the UK over many decades, not to mention opening a window on new and enriching perspectives from around the globe.

Not all parts of this Union are equally diverse. But among those in the UK who have seen those benefits mentioned above, their human experience has been enriched. There are, without doubt, considerable challenges, too. Such problems as there might be are exacerbated by those who opportunistically conflate the crisis in the immigration system with what they claim are failures of multiculturalism, claims that alienate more than 10 million of the people who permanently reside in the UK but were not born here.

But happily, most of us celebrate the diversity of, and within, this country, while ensuring that those who do not appear, speak or act in ways that comply with whatever Braverman thinks is “truly” British feel welcome and supported in their efforts to integrate; and by doing so benefit themselves and everyone else.

In the words of former American First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt: “Pit race against race, religion against religion, prejudice against prejudice. Divide and conquer. We must not let that happen here.”

## What is behind the US and Russia nuclear system tests?

Dr. Theodore Karasik

Authorities in the US and Russia carried out tests of their respective national emergency alert systems this week. Why now, you might ask? Has there been any evolution in their emergency response procedures that is salient to current strategic dynamics?

Tensions between them are certainly rising quickly, which means it is important to test the effectiveness of systems that can alert the public to emergency situations, including potential nuclear threats, especially as arms control treaties seem to be falling apart.

In January, the science and security board of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists set the Doomsday Clock, a symbolic measure of the threats and challenges facing humanity, to 90 seconds to midnight, the closest to calamity the world has ever been judged to be. It had been set at 100 seconds to midnight since 2020.

The Doomsday Clock was introduced in 1947, in the wake of the Manhattan Project and the use of nuclear weapons at the end of the Second World War. The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists is the organization that updates the clock, if required, in January each year, moving it closer to or further from midnight as it deems appropriate.

It said in January that the decision to move the clock closer to midnight this year was largely, though not exclusively, the result of growing threats resulting from the war in Ukraine, which began with the Russian invasion of the country in February 2022.

In the US, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission, conducted nationwide tests of the country's Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alert System on Wednesday. They took place at approximately 2:20 p.m. Eastern Standard Time across the whole of the country, including Hawaii and Alaska.

Such a test of FEMA's alert systems is nothing new; there have been six previous tests. However, the latest one came as nuclear politics continue to heat up.

The emergency alert messaging technology was ostensibly being tested to check new rules and procedures developed as a result of previous nationwide tests. The non-wireless aspect of the test involved an alert sent to radios and television stations.

The wireless test message was sent directly to all consumer cell phones and appeared in English or Spanish depending on the language settings of the device receiving it. It was the third nationwide test of the system but only the second sent to all compatible cellular devices.

Reports of some devices buzzing for as long as 30 minutes after receiving the message were common. On other systems, there was intermittent beeping.

Ultimately the aim of the test was to identify potential weaknesses in the systems.

The test was a success, authorities said, and the updates to the systems for keeping Americans informed of imminent threats work properly. It is assumed that measures have also been put in place to counter any attempted cyberattacks that might target the system.

At the same time authorities in the US were testing their Emergency Alert System, their counterparts in Russia were doing the same. The Russian drill included the testing of sirens and practice of using radiation suits in a few cities. The

technology being tested was clearly much less advanced than the American systems.

The Russian population is educated in a different way about nuclear testing and the survivability during nuclear warfare than their American counterparts. Russia's test therefore had high political and strategic value for Russian President Vladimir Putin, who spoke publicly the following day about possible plans to resume the testing of nuclear weapons.

Any resumption of nuclear tests by Russia, the US, or both would be profoundly destabilizing at a time when tensions between the countries are higher than they have been at any time since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

Putin said Russia's nuclear doctrine does not need updating but he was not yet ready to definitively state whether or not the country needs to resume nuclear tests. He did say that Russia should consider revoking its ratification of the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, noting that the US, which also signed it, has yet to ratify it. Hours after Putin's comments, Russia's top lawmaker, Vyacheslav Volodin, said the nation's parliament will consider revoking the ratification of the treaty.

These developments signal that Russia does indeed plan to resume nuclear tests, or is seriously considering doing so. Established arms control measures are continuing to disintegrate before our eyes as the confrontation between Russia and the West escalates.

Meanwhile, the US is also planning to resume nuclear tests, although it will stop short of actually detonating a device. Scientists charged with ensuring the aging US stockpile of nuclear warheads still work say the weapons are “good to go.” However, experts have not been able to physically test their effectiveness and reliability since US authorities introduced an underground-testing ban in 1992.

But US sentiment could be shifting as Russia moves closer toward the possible resumption of nuclear testing.

A \$1.8 billion project known as “Scorpius” could make it possible, as early as 2027, to move far beyond the current realm of theoretical computer modeling of nuclear explosions and provide a much more sophisticated way to accurately test nuclear weapons without the need for any detonations.

For the next four years, however, the US will continue to rely on maintenance checks and emergency drills, rather than detonating nuclear weapons, thereby maintaining the moral high ground over Russia should Moscow follow through on the threat to resume test detonations.

Meanwhile, all this nuclear activity by the US and Russia, in whatever forms it might take, will lead to more tests of emergency alert and response systems. We have therefore entered a new nuclear era of possible tests and maybe even use.

And, of course, there are other countries that are not constrained at all by nuclear test bans, including North Korea.

The trend of the past 30 years or so away from the threat of nuclear war now seems to be reversing, and the tests of emergency alert systems this week are very visible symptoms of a much larger problem, as countries rethink their views on nuclear weapons.

Europe might be the next place to schedule tests of emergency alert systems in the coming months as authorities there ponder possible policy adjustments.



# Why Rishi Sunak looks like a ‘tail-end’ prime minister

Andrew Hammond

The late Roy Jenkins, a former president of the European Commission and UK Cabinet minister, famously coined the phrase “tail-end Charlies” to describe beleaguered prime ministers who come into office toward the end of a long period of rule by their parties.

The members of this tail-end prime ministerial club often represent the bookend to one political era before the start of a new one. Notable members of the club include: Alec Douglas-Home, the Conservative premier from 1963 to 1964 who gave way to Labour PM Harold Wilson; Jim Callaghan, the Labour premier between 1976 and 1979 who was followed into office by Conservative leader Margaret Thatcher; and John Major, the Conservative PM from 1990 to 1997 who was replaced in 10 Downing Street by New Labour’s Tony Blair.

Douglas-Home’s defeat in 1964 marked the end, following a series of scandals, of 13 years of Conservative rule. The Tories enjoyed 18 years in power before losing to Labour in 1997 in the aftermath of the 1992 Black Wednesday financial crisis. And before Thatcher’s victory in 1979, Labour had been in power for much of the previous 15 until Callaghan lost power in the wake of major economic challenges.

In the eyes of many modern Conservatives, these historical examples of long-time ruling parties losing power are too close for comfort to the situation their party currently finds itself in, given that it has been in government since regaining power, under the leadership of David Cameron, from Labour in 2010.

That victory now seems to many to be a political

eternity ago, as the party has gone through a further four prime ministers in the 13 years since then: Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Liz Truss, and Rishi Sunak.

Despite the wide diversity of tail-end premiers in terms of backgrounds, beliefs and leadership styles, a common pattern is that, whatever their various talents, they ultimately proved unable to halt the flow of the political tide against them. After many

*In the eyes of many modern Conservatives, these historical examples of long-time ruling parties losing power are too close for comfort to the situation their party currently finds itself in, given that it has been in government since regaining power, under the leadership of David Cameron, from Labour in 2010. That victory now seems to many to be a political eternity ago, as the party has gone through a further four prime ministers in the 13 years since then: Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Liz Truss, and Rishi Sunak. Despite the wide diversity of tail-end premiers in terms of backgrounds, beliefs and leadership styles, a common pattern is that, whatever their various talents, they ultimately proved unable to halt the flow of the political tide against them.*

years in office, the growing momentum toward the opposition party eventually proved insurmountable.

This political dynamic appears to be playing out once again in the UK, and the Conservative Party Conference last week was only the latest sign of this.

The event, in Manchester, was widely viewed as a significant setback for the party in general, and Sunak in particular, with the vexed issue of the future of the extremely costly High Speed 2 railway line dominating the debate in recent days. The prime minister announced on Wednesday that he was canceling a key section of the project in

northern England.

Sunak’s week was troubled in other respects. Former PM Truss, for example, advocated tax cuts during the conference, with the fact that arch-Brexiteer Nigel Farage was also in attendance at her rally stirring up additional controversy.

About 60 Conservative MPs have joined Truss’ Growth Group, a caucus in the House of Commons,

held is Jan. 28, 2025. With this huge political decision pending, Sunak might be getting conflicting advice. Some people could be telling him his interests will be best served by waiting until the last possible moment to hold the ballot. Others might advise calling the election earlier on the grounds that the economic and political context might be even worse, not better, in late 2024. In general, tail-end prime ministers tend to postpone elections for as

long as possible in the hope that something will eventually turn up to improve their chances of winning. Douglas-Home and Major called ballots very close to the last possible legal date available to them, in 1964 and 1997 respectively.

Similarly, Callaghan stalled until he lost a vote of confidence in the Commons. While nothing is set in stone as yet, there are nevertheless striking parallels to be drawn between the Sunak administration and others that ultimately allowed the opposition to seize power. As last week’s party conference in Manchester showed, the Conservatives remain

that could potentially imperil the government’s majority in the chamber if she tries to lead a rebellion against him, perhaps over elements of the Autumn Statement on the economy that is due in November. With the government currently under siege, therefore, it appears the prime minister might well delay the next general election for as long as possible. On Tuesday, he said a national ballot is “not what the country wants” right now, suggesting that the election might not take place until the second half of next year, or possibly even early 2025. The deadline by which it must be

After almost a decade and a half of Conservative rule, and no fewer than five prime ministers to boot, his premiership would therefore serve as a bookend ahead of the new political era that appears to be on the horizon.

# US should align its Syria policy with Turkiye’s interests

Sinem Cengiz

There is a new phase in the Syria crisis, which has been a point of contention in Turkish-American relations since the civil war began in 2011. Although Ankara and Washington shared a common goal of ousting the Assad regime, they diverged in their visions and the policies they have implemented throughout the conflict. This has led them to cooperate with different groups in accordance with their own security interests.

The breaking point in relations happened when the US administration started to cooperate in the fight against Daesh with the People’s Protection Units, or YPG, which Turkiye views as the Syrian branch of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party, the PKK. It also insisted on continuing its partnership despite Turkiye’s grievances. However, last Sunday’s suicide bomb attack in Ankara, the first by the PKK inside Turkiye since 2016, appears to have influenced the balances in Syria, the US-YPG partnership, and Turkish-Syrian normalization talks.

Turkiye said the two attackers who carried out the bombing in front of government buildings in Ankara had come from Syria, and that all Kurdish

militant facilities in Syria and Iraq were therefore now legitimate military targets. Significantly, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan warned “third parties” to stay away from the targeted areas, which was a clear message to the US forces working with the YPG in Syria.

It was evident from Fidan’s statement that Turkiye intended to respond to this attack militarily. The minister met Syrian opposition leaders on Tuesday, which indicated preparation for this. Turkiye has been a significant military and political ally of the Syrian opposition groups who control the last rebel-held bastion in the country, in northwest Syria near the Turkish border.

Ankara’s response to the bombing came initially with airstrikes on Kurdish targets in Iraq, followed by further strikes on Thursday on the Kurdish-held zone of northeast Syria, during which for the first time the US showed down a Turkish drone.

All this came about shortly after Damascus repeated its demand for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from northern Syria as a condition for normalizing relations. Turkiye, despite its readiness to resume normalization talks

with Syria, refuses to withdraw from areas under its control in northern Syria. Ankara is skeptical over the ability of the Syrian army to protect the borders, knowing that the YPG works with Assad’s forces in some areas, while claiming official status under the regime. Russia, meanwhile, wants a return to the Adana Agreement, signed in 1998, which allows Turkish forces to penetrate 5 km into Syrian territory when faced with threats. But Turkiye now insists on a distance of 30 km. Iran is pushing for the withdrawal of Turkish forces. So far, however, Turkiye’s partners in the Astana process, namely Russia and Iran, which have both used the Kurdish card against Turkiye in the past, have failed to convince the Syrian regime or address Turkiye’s security concerns.

However, Turkiye’s primary interlocutor in Syria is not Russia, Iran or the Syrian regime, but Washington. The US has conflicting interests with Turkiye when it comes to Syria. Ankara views the YPG, which dominates the Washington-allied Syrian Democratic Forces, as a national security threat, while the US sees the SDF

as a key partner in the fight against Daesh and does not categorize it as a terrorist group, although it does acknowledge the PKK as such. It is crystal clear that if US special forces pulled out of Syria the SDF would be unable to sustain itself. It is also evident that, since 2014, the YPG’s ambitions are beyond fighting Daesh or protecting the territory it controls. Rather, it aims to achieve security and political control over northern Syria and a key role in shaping the political future of the country.

However, Washington’s unwillingness to pursue a concrete plan that addresses Turkish concerns is the primary reason Ankara is approaching this matter from a hard power perspective.

Furthermore, US consistency in this policy is pushing Turkiye to collaborate with Russia and Iran and, more importantly, to approach Damascus for normalization. In this new phase in Syria, the US should find ways to converge its policies with Turkiye’s security interests, rather than alienating Turkiye while Iran and Russia increase their sphere of influence.

hugely divided, intellectually exhausted after so long in power without renewal, and beset by scandals.

So while the Labour Party, which won an important by-election in Scotland on Thursday to boost its spirits, can take nothing for granted, it will be a huge ask for Sunak to persuade UK voters to give the Conservatives an unprecedented fifth-straight term in 2024 or 2025, which would potentially give the party an incredible two decades in power. This is especially true given the current cost-of-living crisis in the UK as a result of high inflation and elevated interest rates, and with tax as a proportion of gross domestic product at around its highest level since the mid-20th century.

In this context, it is little wonder the party conference sometimes felt like a “warm-up act” for a coming, post-election Conservative leadership contest. For instance, Home Secretary Suella Braverman delivered a controversial speech about immigration on Tuesday in which she warned of “a hurricane of migrants.” It was aimed squarely at right-wing party activists rather than the nation as a whole, with a view toward boosting her chances in the next Conservative leadership race.

Taking all of this together, Sunak therefore does appear destined to join the “tail-ender Charlies” club, as winning an unprecedented fifth-straight term is a goal that appears too difficult for him and his party to achieve.

After almost a decade and a half of Conservative rule, and no fewer than five prime ministers to boot, his premiership would therefore serve as a bookend ahead of the new political era that appears to be on the horizon.

The conventional reading of US policies suggests that there has never been a predictable and consistent American policy in the region when it comes to addressing the concerns of its allies. America’s partnership with the SDF is not based on norms or principles, nor does it seek to bring peace to the region or Syria. There has always been an expectation in Ankara that the US would someday abandon the SDF in favor of the Syrian opposition. Turkiye has repeatedly proposed viable options for cooperation with the US in Syria.

However, Washington’s unwillingness to pursue a concrete plan that addresses Turkish concerns is the primary reason Ankara is approaching this matter from a hard power perspective.

Furthermore, US consistency in this policy is pushing Turkiye to collaborate with Russia and Iran and, more importantly, to approach Damascus for normalization. In this new phase in Syria, the US should find ways to converge its policies with Turkiye’s security interests, rather than alienating Turkiye while Iran and Russia increase their sphere of influence.

# Hamas has crossed the Rubicon. What now?

Faisal J. Abbas

The massive escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict sends so many messages at the same time. The first thing one has to note is that a Hamas attack on this scale could only have been possible after months of planning. In fact, this is exactly the kind of “explosion” warned of as a consequence of continued occupation and deprivation of Palestinian rights. Those claiming that the attack was unprovoked are wrong — this is precisely the reaction that deliberate and systematic intimidation by the current Israeli government garners when insult is added to injury.

Does this justify the killing and kidnapping of civilians? Absolutely not, and this is true regardless of who the villains or victims are.

So, what happens now? Well, given recent history, the outcome is pretty predictable: Israel will say it has the right to defend itself, declare a full-scale war and inflict the maximum pain possible in retaliation. Hamas will declare the outcome — no matter what it is — a victory. Many Palestinians will celebrate the unprecedented early success portrayed in images of Israelis fleeing and soldiers being detained. Shortly after, the same Palestinians will suffer the devastating consequences at the hands, tanks and aircraft of the Israeli army. After that, Arab countries — namely the GCC — will come to the rescue and help rebuild Gaza.

Will this escalation change anything in the balance of power? Well, given the number of captured soldiers, it does provide Hamas with a few more bargaining chips. It also boosts the morale of the group’s followers since this is the first time such an operation has been so widely shared on social media. However, it is unlikely to change the reality on the ground, as Hamas simply does not have the means to sustain a standoff against the world’s 18th-strongest army, which has just been pledged full support by the US.

So, could this be a strategic move by Hamas aimed to tell the international community that “we alone decide for Palestine?” That is a possibility. At the end of the day, while it is true that the Palestinian Authority is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PA’s influence has always been limited compared with that of Hamas. It is the unfortunate reality that in the failed states of this part of the world, illegitimate, armed representatives, such as Hamas, Hezbollah in Lebanon or the Houthis in Yemen, will always have the upper hand. Meanwhile, the PA has no choice but to support Hamas in order to avoid further internal Palestinian friction. As a result, it will only be perceived as even weaker globally.

However, here are the cons of Hamas’s most recent adventure: It gives Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a way out of his internal political turmoil at a rare moment when even members of his own Israeli military were opposing him. Now, it is a full-scale war to protect Israel and

ahead, and, sadly, it is the average Palestinian who will eventually pay the price.

What effect will the latest events have on prospects for a wider regional peace proposal? The short answer remains: Time will tell. However, in my opinion, it is time for the world to double down.

*Will this escalation change anything in the balance of power? Well, given the number of captured soldiers, it does provide Hamas with a few more bargaining chips. It also boosts the morale of the group’s followers since this is the first time such an operation has been so widely shared on social media. However, it is unlikely to change the reality on the ground, as Hamas simply does not have the means to sustain a standoff against the world’s 18th-strongest army, which has just been pledged full support by the US. So, could this be a strategic move by Hamas aimed to tell the international community that “we alone decide for Palestine?” That is a possibility. At the end of the day, while it is true that the Palestinian Authority is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PA’s influence has always been limited compared with that of Hamas. It is the unfortunate reality that in the failed states of this part of the world, illegitimate, armed representatives, such as Hamas, Hezbollah in Lebanon or the Houthis in Yemen, will always have the upper hand. Meanwhile, the PA has no choice but to support Hamas in order to avoid further internal Palestinian friction. As a result, it will only be perceived as even weaker globally. However, here are the cons of Hamas’s most recent adventure: It gives Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a way out of his internal political turmoil at a rare moment when even members of his own Israeli military were opposing him. Now, it is a full-scale war to protect Israel and rescue kidnapped soldiers and civilians, so it is a case of “all hands on deck.” It also further empowers his right-wing coalition at a time when the world has been trying to convince them to back down and tempt them with peace proposals. Will Hamas emerge stronger or weaker after this? Well, this time they have crossed the Rubicon, and Israel has already signaled that the gloves are off. Given the level of escalation, even opponents of Netanyahu’s right-wing government in the US and Europe will be reluctant to call for restraint. In other words, Hamas must brace itself for tough times ahead, and, sadly, it is the average Palestinian who will eventually pay the price.*

As the statement by the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs clearly indicated, the international community must act now to activate a credible peace plan that enables a two-state solution, which is the best means to protect civilians. Easier said than done? Perhaps, but at least Saudi Arabia can say it tried its best, and has been for decades.

# Indo-Saudi maritime cooperation vital in Indian Ocean

Talmiz Ahmad

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman undertook a state visit to India on Sept. 11, the day after the successful conclusion of the G20 summit in New Delhi. The visit affirmed the close ties between the two countries, which have been personally spearheaded since 2016 by the crown prince and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During the crown prince’s visit, the first meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council, headed by the two leaders, reviewed with satisfaction the state of bilateral political and economic relations. Not surprisingly, their joint statement noted the recent progress in naval cooperation and prioritized maritime security as being of crucial interest to the two countries.

India is the premier

Indian Ocean nation in terms of economic size, political weight and geostrategic location. It has the same concerns as other littoral nations, namely, piracy, terrorism, human, drugs and arms trafficking, and disaster management. In recent years, India’s security concerns have increased exponentially due to what it sees as an expanding Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean through Beijing’s economic engagements, construction of ports, the setting up of a naval base at Djibouti and the increasing deployment of its navy. New Delhi views the maritime segment of the Belt and Road Initiative as an integral part of this enterprise.

For the US and its allies, the Indo-Pacific is the principal area of security concern due to China’s aggressive assertions of its inter-

ests in the Pacific Ocean, which challenge America’s interests. To confront China, Washington has shaped the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, known as the Quad, which is a coalition of the US, Japan, Australia and India. From 2017 to 2020, the principal focus of the Quad was on security matters.

However, a course correction was effected at the in-person summit in Washington in September 2021. The security element in the Quad was diluted and was replaced by a focus on cooperation in areas of long-term interest, such as the COVID-19 vaccine initiative, a cybersecurity initiative, a clean hydrogen partnership and a semiconductor supply chain initiative. This was perhaps done at India’s behest to play down the Quad as a security grouping directed at China while

the confrontation at the Sino-Indian border from 2020 was persisting.

While India has security concerns relating to China due to tensions at their undemarcated 3,800-km border and China’s expanding footprint in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, its interests lie in minimizing the sources of friction with its northern neighbor. So, membership of a security alignment that is overtly directed at China does not serve India’s interests.

More importantly, in terms of its strategic concerns, India prioritizes the Indian Ocean over the Indo-Pacific. The former is crucial for its energy, trade, investment and logistical connectivity interests and as the home of its 8 million-strong expatriate community.

These interests compel India to prioritize regional stability and the security of the sea lanes, including the chokepoints of the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab Al-Mandab Strait and the Suez Canal.

But India has traditionally had no interest in joining formal security alliances; instead, it cherishes strategic autonomy and seeks a multipolar world order with itself as one of the major poles. This approach is shared widely among the Indian Ocean littoral states, with most nations having shown no interest in joining a US-led security cabal against China. Almost all the states in the Middle East support the emergence of a multipolar global order in which each of them exercises strategic autonomy and pursues

their own interests and concerns.

They espouse multi-alignment, in which states form overlapping relationships with several major states, particularly middle powers. This pursuit of multialignment has led to “minilaterals,” which have been defined by the Observer Research Foundation’s Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan as “informal, more targeted, interest-based groupings (that work) on contentious issues that are difficult to resolve in larger forums.”

India has been a major actor in this regard. While its membership of the Quad has received the most attention, New Delhi is also an active member of such diverse groupings as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. It is also a partner in minilaterals in the Indo-Pacific, such as

the Australia-Japan-India trilateral that, in April 2021, launched the “Supply Chain Resilience Initiative” and the India-Australia-Indonesia trilateral that focuses on development assistance programs and maritime security issues. In the Middle East, India is part of the I2U2 that also includes the US, Israel and the UAE and which promotes economic cooperation among its members.

As the region’s principal energy, trade and finance center and having long coastlines on the Gulf and the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia shares India’s concerns relating to maritime security, even as it asserts strategic autonomy in its foreign engagements. This has helped promote defense ties between India and Saudi Arabia, which have progressed dramatically since the memorandum of

understanding on defense cooperation was signed in 2014. There have been regular exchanges of visits by service chiefs, dialogue on defense issues, expanded training programs and joint naval exercises — the Al-Mohed Al-Hindi exercises in Gulf waters in August 2021 and May 2023 promoted interoperability between the two navies.

It is against this background that the latest Indo-Saudi joint statement highlighted the shared concerns of the two countries in “the security and safety of waterways and freedom of navigation” in the Arabian Sea, the Gulf, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. This strategically important maritime space needs deeper bilateral maritime cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia and possibly a new regional minilateral to be promoted by them.





## Revival of economy: Govt urged to consult private sector

ISLAMABAD (INP): Key business leader including President, Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajran Pakistan and President Pakistan Business Forum Islamabad, Muhammad Kashif

Chaudhry along with a delegation of Presidents of various market associations visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and assured that he would work with ICCI for resolving the key issues of the business community.

Addressing the delegation, ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that ICCI being the apex trade body of the federal capital is working actively for the progress and development of the business community and cooperation of Markazi Anjuman-e-Tijaran and market associations would further strengthen its hands to achieve common goals of the welfare of business community more effectively.

He said that the unity among traders and common stand of their issues would send a strong voice to the government to promote ease of doing business in the country.

He lauded the services of Kashif Chaudhry for the trading community and said that his cooperation with ICCI would help address of issues and facilitate the business community in business development.

Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Kashif Chaudhry said that the traders and industrialists are facing multiple problems, which can be resolved with unity by working under the umbrella of ICCI.

He said that we are working for the respect and dignity of the business community and the government should protect our constitutional rights.

He stressed that the government should get input of

the business community for decision making and policy making.

The President, Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajran Pakistan and President Pakistan Business Forum Islamabad demanded one window operation to promote business and investment, fair taxes and their collection with a friendly approach.

He said that with unity, we can make Islamabad a role model city in the country by making it a hub of industrial, educational, IT and health friendly activities. He stressed that CDA should focus on better development of markets and improve city infrastructure.

Faad Waheed Senior Vice President ICCI and Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI also stressed for close cooperation among the trade bodies to advocate for a conducive business environment in the country.

Zafar Bakhtawari former

President ICCI & Secretary General UBG, Raja Hassan Akhtar President Blue Area, Iftikhar Shehzada & Malik Arif F-8 Markaz, Ali Asghar Khan President Lehrar Road, Shahbaz Qadri President Ghori Town, Khurram Shakeel President Society Islamabad, Jahangir Abbasi President Nanbai Association, Attique Janjua President I-9 Islamabad, Malik Rizwan Chairman All Furniture Makers Association, Malik Imran Secretary General Islamabad Hotel Association, Haroon Kiani Tiger Group Blue Area, Shabbir Ansari G-9 Markaz, Shakeel Mirza former President Islamabad Estate Agents, Saeed Khokhar, Nasir Chaudhry, Abbas Hashmi, Babar Chaudhry and others also spoke on the occasion and called for unity among traders to resolve issues and promote the welfare of the business community.



LAHORE: Customers buying birds from a roadside vendor at Bird Market.

## Transparency Int'l Pakistan releases report

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Transparency International Pakistan has been monitoring the implementation of Proactive Disclosure provisions in the context of federal and provincial RTI laws. In this regard, TI Pakistan has published case studies of Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act 2016, The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013 and The Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013. The current study on Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017 finds that the official websites of various important ministries and the departments of the Federal Government disclose only little information. The selected ministries and departments have been studied in the context of 9 clauses of Section 5 of Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017.

The Second generation RTI laws are distinguished from the First generation RTI laws in number of ways including provision of Proactive Disclosure information to the citizens of Pakistan mainly through the websites of public departments, however, there are important gaps when it comes to overall implementation of proactive disclosure provisions among the departments and the ministries of the federal government, which needs improvement, the report highlights. Various departments are failing to ensure compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Provision as required under Section 5 of Right of Access to Information Act

2017.

The report notes that Pakistan has been monitoring the implementation of Proactive Disclosure provisions in the context of federal and provincial RTI laws. In this regard, TI Pakistan has published case studies of Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act 2016, The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013 and The Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013. The current study on Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017 finds that the official websites of various important ministries and the departments of the Federal Government disclose only little information. The selected ministries and departments have been studied in the context of 9 clauses of Section 5 of Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017.

Out of 40 ministries and departments, only 15% have uploaded 50% of the required information on their websites. Three departments (Karachi Port Trust, Gwadar Port Authority and Ministry of States and Frontier Regions) have

uploaded less than 10% of the required information under Section 5 of Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017. Only 19% of the departments have uploaded the detailed budget and expenditures details on their websites.

Speaking on the report, Justice (R) M. Shaiq Usman, Board of Trustee Transparency International Pakistan said that TI Pakistan works extensively to ensure that the most robust laws are enacted in Pakistan and continuously advocates for stronger implementation of the same. Right of Access to Information is a backbone of democracy. Pakistan has come a long way in ensuring that effective Access to Information laws are enacted at the federal and provincial levels. It is hoped that the ministries and the federal government departments will use the findings of this research to ensure effective implementation of proactive disclosure as per the Federal Right of Access to Information Act 2017.

The report highlights that the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, National Highway Authority (NHA), and Capital Development

Authority (CDA) compliance stands at 58%, Ministry of Privatization, and Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) are more than 50% compliant with which is 56% and 50% respectively, whereas the Ministry of Climate Change is leading on the compliance of Proactive Disclosure Provision at 64%.

The report also sheds light on the overall compliance with individual clauses of section 5 which is as follows: 62% compliance with clause 'b' which requires "Statutes, statutory rules, regulations, bye-laws, orders and notifications, etc. applicable to the public body disclosing the date of their respective commencement or effect", 18% compliance with clause 'f' which requires publishing information pertaining to "A description of its decision-making processes as defined in the Federal Government's Secretariat Instructions, 2004 and any instructions for the time being in force for public to provide input into or be consulted about decisions", and 35% compliance with clause 'h' which requires the 'methods whereby information in the possession or control of the public body.

## Gas theft crackdown: SNGPL disconnect 91 connections, imposed fine

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 91 connections while imposing fine of Rs.5 million and 234 under billing cases processed.

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected 11 connections on illegal use of gas and another five on use of compressor and 1 FIR has been launched against gas thieves.

In Bahawalpur, the regional team disconnected seven connections on use of compressor while another and 05 under billing cases processed.

The company disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas while another three connections on the use of compressor, 15 under billing cases have

been processed in Multan. The regional team imposed fine of Rs 0.086M against gas pilferers.

In Sheikhupura, five connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas and amount booked of Rs3.445 against gas theft and Under Billing by the region.

In Peshawar and Karak, the company disconnected 17 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal connections. The regional team also launched 2FIRs against gas thieves.

In Rawalpindi the regional team disconnected seven gas connections on direct and illegal use of gas and 02 under billing cases have been processed.

SNGPL's team in Mardan 01 connection was disconnected on illegal use of gas. The team also booked an amount of Rs 0.42M against gas theft.

In Sialkot, the company

disconnected 01 connection on use of compressor, 02 on illegal use of gas while another 105 booked against Under billing cases.

The regional team in Gujranwala 03 meters was disconnected on illegal use of gas and amount of Rs 0.468M have been booked against gas theft and under billing cases.

In Gujrat, 02 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas.

The company disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas in Islamabad.

In Sahiwal, 11 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas while another 67 under billing cases have been booked.

The regional team in Faisalabad 37 under billing cases processed and 04 disconnected on illegal use of gas. Fine of Rs.0.72M was also imposed against gas pilferers.

## Uncontrollable inflation continued in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): The garlic hits all time high in the vegetable market and is being sold on Rs. 1400 per kg as the uncontrollable inflation continued in both vegetables and fruits markets while the attempt of district administration official of fixing the rates of various food items miserably failed.

The prices of Onion 155, tomato 90, kachalu 150, green chili 130 and capsicum will reach 250 rupees per kg. The garlic jumped to Rs. 1400, Lemon 150, Potato 130, Cauliflower 110, Bhandi 120, Tenda 150 and Karela 100 per kg are being sold in the vegetable market.

In fruits, mango 290, peach 280, apple 320, pomegranate 320, pear 210 and banana 160 rupees per dozen are being sold. The price of live chicken per kg has started to decrease.

The price of live chicken in the market has increased to Rs. 365 per kg.

## Businessmen role crucial for economic uplift

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The presidential candidate for the FPCCI elections Muhammad Ali Sheikh has said that the role of business community is vital for the economic uplift and stability of the country, as the businessmen are the backbone of the economy and a leading contributor to the economic progress and prosperity of the country.

In a statement issued here today, the FPCCI former Vice President and GCCCI ex-Senior Vice President observed that the strengthening of the country's economy and promotion of trade and industry has been the motto and priority of the Businessmen Panel, who has nominated him as the FPCCI's upcoming election 2024 presidential candidate. He said that the present caretaker government has steered the country's economy out of

the crisis by making sincere efforts. He said that he would utilize his best abilities to bring closer the various besides to promote trade and industry. He said that the country's economy was showing the signs of stability which bodes well for the development and prosperity of the country.

He pointed out the problems faced by the business community along with suggestions for their solution. He appreciated the role being played by the private sector, particularly the FPCCI, in the country's economic development. He said at present, tough economic conditions called for taking difficult decisions but the government should have been committed to improve the economy.

He also stressed the need for technical education's close linkage with the industry. He said the government should give great importance to the business

community and continue to support them by resolving their problems on top priority.

Muhammad Ali Sheikh said that the concerns of people associated with the SMEs should be conveyed to the concerned circles. He said that the government should be aware of the problems of the business community and all possible resources be utilized to solve them. He said that it is the responsibility of the government to provide conducive environment for businesses.

On this occasion, he expressed his gratitude to the businessmen for their felicitation and said that with a view to ensuring trade facilitation in the region the problems regarding removal of trade barriers including acceptance of standard certificate, limitations of infrastructure in the land ports, should be removed.

Mashal Zada

Introduction Hawala, known as "Hundi" in Pakistan, is an informal and traditional money transfer system that has deep-rooted historical and cultural significance in the country. While it serves as an essential financial lifeline for many Pakistanis, its operation outside formal financial regulations has significant implications for the country's economy. This article explores the effects of Hundi on Pakistan's economy, examining both its positive and negative impacts.

Understanding Hawala (Hundi) Hawala, often referred to as Hundi in Pakistan, is an informal system of transferring money across borders or domestically. It operates on trust and personal connections, making it an essential tool for remittances, trade, and financial transactions. Unlike formal

banking systems, Hawala relies on a network of agents who facilitate transactions without any physical movement of money across borders. Instead, the value is settled through a ledger system or mutual agreement, typically with a minimal paper trail.

Understanding Hawala (Hundi) Hawala, often referred to as Hundi in Pakistan, is an informal system of transferring money across borders or domestically. It operates on trust and personal connections, making it an essential tool for remittances, trade, and financial transactions. Unlike formal banking systems, Hawala relies on a network of agents who facilitate transactions without any physical movement of money across borders. Instead, the value is settled through a ledger system or mutual agreement, typically with a minimal paper trail.

Financial Inclusion:

Hawala provides access to financial services for segments of the population who are underserved by traditional banking systems. Many Pakistanis in rural or remote areas rely on Hawala agents for their financial needs, allowing them to participate in economic activities that would otherwise be inaccessible.

Facilitating Trade: Hawala also plays a crucial role in facilitating cross-border trade, especially with neighboring countries like Afghanistan and Iran. Informal traders often rely on this system to settle payments and conduct business efficiently, which is essential for Pakistan's economy.

Negative Effects on Pakistan's Economy Lack of Regulation: One of the most significant drawbacks of the Hawala system is its lack of formal regulation. Operating outside the purview of financial authorities makes it susceptible to money laundering,

terrorist financing, and other illegal activities. This poses a considerable risk to the integrity of Pakistan's financial system.

Loss of Tax Revenue: The informal nature of Hawala transactions often results in tax evasion, depriving the government of much-needed revenue. As a consequence, the government struggles to finance essential services, infrastructure development, and poverty alleviation programs.

Weakening of Formal Banking Sector: The prevalence of Hawala can undermine the formal banking sector by diverting deposits and transactions away from regulated financial institutions. This can hinder the growth and stability of the formal banking system, which is essential for a robust economy.

Risk to National Security: Unregulated financial transactions through Hawala can pose a

significant threat to national security. Illicit funds may flow through this system to support criminal activities and terrorism, further destabilizing the country.

Conclusion Hawala, or Hundi, has both positive and negative effects on Pakistan's economy. While it serves as a lifeline for many Pakistanis by facilitating remittances and promoting financial inclusion, its unregulated nature poses substantial risks to the country. To harness the benefits of Hawala while mitigating its negative impacts, Pakistan should consider implementing a regulatory framework that balances the need for financial inclusivity with the imperative of maintaining financial integrity and security. Striking this balance is essential for Pakistan's economic growth and stability in the long run.

(The writer is a student of BS Economics, University of Peshawar)

## Govt needs to reduce POL prices amid rupee gain, low global rates

KARACHI (INP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry' Businessmen Panel (BMP) has called on the government to make a substantive reduction in petroleum products following a huge cut in the global oil market by almost \$9 per barrel and an immense recovery of the rupee to ease inflation to 27% in Oct, which has been hovering at around 31%.

Former president FPCCI and Chairman Businessmen Panel, Mian Anjum Nisar observed that the Pakistani rupee appreciated 2.7% to Rs283/dollar compared with the previous fortnight's average of Rs292/ a dollar. In the same way, the price of petrol plummeted by 15% to \$84.3 per barrel in the international market compared

with last fortnight's average of \$99.3. The international price of high-speed diesel dipped by 10% to \$110.6 per barrel compared with last fortnight's average of \$122.3.

Quoting a research report, he said that the price of Arab Light crude, which Pakistan imports from the Middle East, fell by 9.1%, or \$8.9 per barrel, to \$88.68 by October 5 compared to the average price of \$97.58 for the September 18-29 period.

Incorporating the drop alongside rupee appreciation and assuming the international prices and currency remain at the same level for the next 10 days, the local petrol and diesel prices should go down by Rs40 per litre and Rs20 per litre, respectively, in the next fortnightly price

revision effective from October 16, 2023.

Mian Anjum estimated that exchange rate adjustments in the last fortnightly prices of petrol and diesel were Rs11.9 and negative Rs2.8 per litre, respectively.

Even assuming the same currency adjustment for motor spirit/ petrol and nil adjustment for HSD in the upcoming fortnightly prices, the MS and HSD prices should be dropped by Rs29 and Rs20 per litre, respectively.

Moreover, Russia has surprisingly lifted the ban on export of diesel, which will create a supply glut for the premium product. This may spark a price war in the international market and benefit oil importing countries like Pakistan.

The caretaker government has already reduced

petrol price by Rs8 to Rs323.38 per litre with effect from October 1, 2023. It cut diesel price by Rs11 to Rs318.18 per litre.

The BMP Chairman said that Pakistan heavily relies on imported fuels to meet domestic demand.

Estimates suggest that it meets around 70% of energy needs through imports while the remaining 30% is met through local field production.

The share of energy, including gas, stood at around 26% (\$2.17 billion) in total imports of \$8.23 billion in the first two months of current fiscal year.

Pakistan's demand for petroleum products hit a 44-month low at 1.06 million tons in September 2023 in the wake of a significant surge in prices over

the past couple of months.

Besides, the availability of smuggled diesel, economic slowdown and a sharp drop in car sales also caused the decrease in demand.

Anjum Nisar said that the illicit activities such as the black market and smuggling of Dollars in key sectors are draining Pakistan's economy of a staggering \$23 billion per year.

These clandestine operations, encompassing black market currency trade, oil smuggling, gold smuggling, and import controls, have detrimental effects on Pakistan's economic stability. They distort exchange rates, leading to currency devaluation, which, in turn, can fuel inflation as imported goods become costlier. Moreover, such activities undermine the efficacy of

monetary policies and erode confidence in the financial system.

In recent years, Pakistan has experienced significant fluctuations in its exchange rates, intensifying its economic challenges.

A robust crackdown on these illicit activities has somewhat stabilized the interbank rate at Rs282.62 per dollar. He underscored that a steadfast commitment to eradicating smuggling in key sectors is essential for Pakistan's economic recovery.

The most important part is governance, if governance is improved, it will lead to an overall improvement in financial and economic environment and bring stability to our financial markets and help economic and financial growth of the country.

The BMP Chairman stressed the need for advanced surveillance techniques and technologies to secure Pakistan's physical borders and crossing points.

We have a long border sharing with Iran and Afghanistan and then sea border with gulf countries. The smuggling of physical dollars and oil must be effectively controlled to prevent the outflow of foreign currencies.

According to the report, Pakistan loses around \$150 million per month on account of dollar smuggling, culminating in an alarming annual figure of around \$2 billion per year.

Similarly, Anjum Nisar suggested that smuggled Iranian oil now commands a significant share estimated at over 30% of

Pakistan's diesel market. Around 10 million litre of diesel and two million litre of petrol are smuggled every day into Pakistan from Iran. This smuggled diesel eventually cost government over \$1 billion annually.

Gold smuggling poses another challenge. The report revealed that, out of the significant gold market value of Rs2.2 trillion, only 1.32% or Rs29 billion is officially declared to tax authorities.

This stark underreporting results from an annual smuggling of approximately 80 tons of gold into the country out of the total annual consumption of 160 tons. With regularization, this market could contribute a minimum of \$500 million annually to government revenues.





In brief

Warner beats Tendulkar

CHENNAI (AFP): Australia opener David Warner on Sunday smashed Sachin Tendulkar's record for the fastest to reach 1,000 World Cup runs during the clash against India. Warner achieved the landmark in 19 innings in Chennai to better Tendulkar and former South Africa skipper AB de Villiers — both of whom got the runs in 20 outings. The left-handed Warner smashed Hardik Pandya for a boundary to take the record after Australia elected to bat first as the cricket powerhouses opened their 2023 campaigns. Tendulkar, an Indian batting great who retired from the game in 2013, has the highest runs — 2,278 — in the 50-over showpiece event. Warner, 36, has scored over 6,000 runs in 151 ODIs and remains Australia's key to getting their sixth World Cup crown in what may be his last appearance in the tournament.

Sri Lanka fined match fee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sri Lanka have been fined 10 percent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against South Africa in Match 4 of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup on October 7, 2023. Javagal Srinath of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanction after Dasun Shanaka's side was ruled to be 2 over(s) short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration, said a press release. In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offenses, players are fined 5 percent of their match fees for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time. Dasun Shanaka pleaded guilty to the offense and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing. On-field umpires Richard Illingworth and Shahid Saikat, third umpire Michael Gough, and fourth umpire Alex Wharf leveled the charge.

Messi and Miami eliminated

MIAMI (Agencies): Lionel Messi and Inter Miami were eliminated from contention for Major League Soccer's playoffs after a 1-0 defeat at home to FC Cincinnati on Saturday. Messi returned from injury as a substitute in the 55th minute but Cincinnati, who have earned top seed in the playoffs, grabbed the win with a goal from Alvaro Barreal. With other results going against Miami, Messi's side were left next to bottom of the Eastern Conference, seven points off the last playoff spot with just two games remaining. Messi had played just 37 minutes for his club since September 3, having returned with an injury from international duty with Argentina last month. Without him Miami struggled, paying the price for their successful run to the Leagues Cup title in August when Messi lit up the tournament and collected his first trophy since joining the club in July. Saturday's loss was the second straight for Miami following their 4-1 crushing at Chicago on Wednesday and Gerardo "Tata" Martino's team have won just once in their last six MLS games. Messi had played in the only win in that stretch, coming off in the first half of their 4-0 win over bottom club Toronto.

World Cup 2023  
Virat Kohli gets India out of trouble and inspires 6-wicket win

CHENNAI (AP): Virat Kohli inspired India's recovery from 2-3 in its reply to Australia's below-par 199 all out to secure a six-wicket win for the host nation in its opening match at the Cricket World Cup on Sunday.

Kohli hit 85 off 116 balls, including six fours, and delivered a calmly constructed fourth-wicket stand of 165 with KL Rahul (97 not out) as India reached 201-4 with 52 balls to spare in front of a passionate home crowd at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

Australia had taken three wickets in the first two overs to leave India in a perilous position before Kohli and Rahul came to the rescue in a meeting of two of the tournament favorites. After winning the toss, Australia — a five-time world champion — slumped after being 74-1 in the 17th over. Steve Smith was the top scorer with 46.

Rahul top-scored in the game with his 115-ball knock including eight fours and two sixes. Even so, for much of the innings, he played second fiddle to Kohli, who soaked up the Australian pressure after India's top-order collapse.

This was after Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav had shared five wickets to wreck the Australian innings. On a spin-friendly surface, Jadeja finished with 3-28 in 10 overs, while Yadav picked up 2-42, as the duo negated Australia's advantage of batting first. Mitchell Marsh (0) edged Jasprit Bumrah to slip in the third over, with Kohli holding a diving catch.

David Warner and Steve Smith stabilized the innings with a 69-run partnership for the second wicket. Warner scored 41 runs and hit six fours, but offered a return catch to Yadav just when he looked set for a big innings. India's spin strategy had an impact with the introduction of Ravichandran Ashwin (1-34) in the eighth over choking the scoring rate.

Smith added another 36 runs with Marnus Labuschagne, before an armball from Jadeja cleaned up his off-stump in the 28th over. Smith, stunned at the delivery, hit five fours in his 71-ball innings.

His dismissal opened the floodgates for India. Two overs later, Jadeja had Labuschagne caught behind and then trapped Alex Carey (0) two balls later. Australia collapsed from 110-2 to 119-5. Glenn Maxwell (15) and Cameron Green (8) batted sedately to stem the flow of wickets, adding 21 runs off 37 balls for the sixth wicket. There was more to come from the Indian spinners, though. Yadav returned to bowl Maxwell in the 36th over. Three balls later, Green was caught off Ashwin as Australia crashed again, this time to 140-7.

The Australian tail stuck around to add vital runs with the last three wickets adding 59 runs. Mitchell Starc scored 28 off 35 balls, with two fours and a six. Pat Cummins made 15 off 24. Adam Zampa gave them company while facing 20 balls. Even so, Indian pacers finished up the job to restrict Australia to a total well below par for this wicket. Chasing 200 for victory, the hosts got off to a horrendous start.

Swiatek beats Samsonova to win China Open



BEIJING (AFP): Iga Swiatek delivered a dominant performance to win the China Open on Sunday, crowning a resurgent run of form with a straight-sets win over Liudmila Samsonova in Beijing.

The world number two triumphed 6-2, 6-2 to take the first China Open women's title since 2019, after Beijing lifted its isolationist zero-Covid policy.

The victory capped a strong showing for four-time Grand Slam champion Swiatek, who was deposed as the world's top-ranked player by Aryna Sabalenka last month.

The 22-year-old broke Samsonova's serve in the sixth game and sealed the

opening set when the unseeded Russian slammed a forehand into the net.

Swiatek looked assured throughout and quickly notched another break in set two when her error-prone opponent fired another forehand wide.

And when Samsonova sent an ill-advised drop-shot into the net to hand her the victory, the Pole doubled over with emotion before a delighted crowd.

Swiatek was the favourite to win the final after handing US Open champion Coco Gauff her first defeat in 17 matches in the final four on Saturday.

Sabalenka had been knocked out in the quarter-finals by fifth-ranked Elena

Rybakina, who was in turn dumped out by Samsonova in the other semi-final.

Ranked 22nd, Samsonova had racked up a string of impressive victories against higher-ranked players but the result of Sunday's final rarely looked in doubt.

The match brought to a close the first China Open in four years, after Beijing lifted onerous travel restrictions that formed part of a longtime policy to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

It was also the first time the women's tournament had taken place since the international governing body announced the end of an embargo imposed on China following sexual assault allegations by former player Peng Shuai.

The Women's Tennis Association had withdrawn from the country after Peng accused a top Communist Party official of forcing her into sex, but the overlap with Beijing's zero-Covid strategy meant its ban was largely symbolic.

The men's tournament wrapped up on Wednesday when Italy's Jannik Sinner beat world number three Daniil Medvedev to take the trophy.

Liverpool held by Brighton, Newcastle drop points at West Ham



LONDON (AFP): Liverpool missed the chance to go second in the Premier League as the Reds were pegged back in a pulsating 2-2 draw at Brighton on Sunday, while Newcastle were also held 2-2 by West Ham. Manchester City can go back to the top of the table later when they travel to Arsenal in a clash between last season's top two.

A point leaves Liverpool three points behind leaders Tottenham and after their justified fury in losing to Spurs last weekend when a goal was wrongly ruled out by a VAR error, Jurgen Klopp's men will feel aggrieved at another refereeing decision. Pascal Gross somehow avoided a red card when pulling down Dominik Szoboszlai for a penalty that led to Liverpool's second goal just before half-time. The visitors had been given the run around by Brighton in the opening half hour.

Alexis Mac Allister

struggled on his return to the Amex Stadium and was one of the culprits for the opening goal.

The Argentine was caught in possession by Simon Adingra, who then caught Alisson Becker out of position by taking his shot early from outside the box. After a bright start to the season, Brighton have now won just once in six games as the rigours of European football have told on Roberto De Zerbi's men.

The Seagulls' daring approach has won plenty of plaudits but Liverpool pounced on their weaknesses to turn the game on its head five minutes before the break. Twice Brighton were punished for giving the ball away inside their own half as Harvey Elliot selfishly allowed Darwin Nunez's pass to find Mohamed Salah to slot home the equaliser.

Liverpool's high press then won the penalty as Szoboszlai dispossessed Gross and was pulled down

by the German midfielder. Salah confidently dispatched the spot-kick, but Liverpool will ask questions about why they were not up against 10 men for the rest of the game.

Ryan Gravenberch was introduced at half-time to stiffen the Liverpool midfield and should have made it 3-1 when he hit the bar with the goal gaping after more good work from Szoboszlai. That miss proved costly as Lewis Dunk levelled 12 minutes from time and Brighton should have taken all three points when Joao Pedro blazed a glorious chance over late on.

Newcastle's hangover Fresh from thrashing Paris Saint-Germain 4-1 in the Champions League, Newcastle suffered a first-half hangover at the London Stadium. Tomas Soucek tapped West Ham into an eighth minute lead after brilliant play by Lucas Paqueta and Emerson down the left.

Newcastle were lucky not to then have Bruno Guimaraes sent off for a second bookable offence. The Magpies turned the game around in a five-minute spell around the hour mark thanks to Alexander Isak's

The Swede produced a cool finish when a free-kick into the box broke his way before taping home Kieran Trippier's inviting volleyed cross across goal.



CHENNAI: Virat Kohli and KL Rahul brought up their fifty stand in the 16th over.

Prankster sparks World Cup security fear at India, Australia World Cup game

CHENNAI (Agencies): A pitch invader breached heavy security and fencing to break onto the field at the Cricket World Cup game between India and Australia on Sunday, getting to within touching distance of players including superstar Virat Kohli.

British YouTube prankster Daniel Jarvis stunned the crowd of around 30,000 at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium when he appeared wearing a blue India team shirt with "Jarvo 69" written on the back.

Kohli appeared to speak with Jarvis before security escorted him away.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) said they will consider "if additional security measures are required to prevent it happening again".

"The individual concerned has been banned from attending any further games at the event and the matter is in the hand of the Indian authorities."

Jarvis has become a serial pitch invader, making it onto the field three times during England's home Test series against India in 2021. He was charged with aggravated trespass after colliding with England player Jonny Bairstow at the Oval. "How has Jarvo managed to get a visa when not a single Pakistani journalist has one?" asked Wisden cricket journalist Ben Gardner on social media on Sunday.

Pakistan media and fans have been frustrated in their attempts to get to India for the World Cup due to visa delays.

Afridi become brand ambassador of Superfix League Season 2

DUBAI (INP): Shahid Afridi is a well known cricketer of Pakistan everyone is a fan of Boom Boom Afridi's brilliant all-round performance. Shahid Afridi has a lot of fans in UAE like all over the world for whom the happy news is that he is coming to Dubai soon as he has been appointed as the brand ambassador for Superfix International Tape Ball League Season 2.

Chairman Superfix Naveed Ahmed has made Shahid Afridi the brand ambassador of Superfix International Tape Ball League season two in Karachi. Chairman Superfix Naveed Ahmed met Shahid Afridi in Karachi and briefed him about Superfix International Tape Ball Cricket League. Shahid Khan Afridi praised such an event in tap ball.

Naveed Ahmed said that apart from UAE, he has taken many steps to promote cricket in Pakistan as well and we have an organized team which is providing its services from the platform of Superfix. Shahid Khan Afridi who is a big name in cricket, signing with us as a brand ambassador is a great achievement for us and God willing this event will be a history making event, he added.

The Superfix Championship will start on December 1st at Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Mickey Arthur has inside knowledge of 'dangerous' Sri Lanka

HYDERABAD (AFP): Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur admits he knows Sri Lanka's "strengths and weaknesses" inside out having spent two years at the helm of his Asian rivals.

Former champions Pakistan and Sri Lanka clash at the World Cup in Hyderabad on Tuesday, allowing Arthur the opportunity to renew his acquaintance with players he helped develop as coach between December 2019 to November 2021.

"Yeah, I know their strengths and weaknesses so we will have plans put in place for all of them," Arthur told AFP.

"They are a dangerous side so we will have to be at our best to beat them."

Pakistan defeated the Netherlands in a nervy performance by 81 runs in Hyderabad on Friday to open their World Cup campaign.

They overcame a top order failure, recovering from 38-3 before posting a challenging 286 with half centuries from Saud Shakeel

and Mohammad Rizwan.

They then bowled out the Netherlands for 205 in 41 overs. "I enjoyed the first win even though it wasn't a great performance," admitted Arthur.

"But we did enough to win and when the game was on the line we had players standing up."

Pakistan are likely to keep the same line-up for Tuesday's match, handing a lifeline to out of form opener Fakhar Zaman who scored just 12 against the Netherlands.

"I am not worried about his form, he is a good player and is just one innings away from a big score," said Arthur of the only Pakistan batsman to have made a double century in ODI cricket.

Undone by South Africa's record-shattering 428-5 in their opening game on Saturday in New Delhi before losing by 102 runs, 1996 champions Sri Lanka will take confidence from their battling reply.

Sri Lanka will also be buoyed by their two wicket win against Pakistan last month that propelled them to the Asia Cup final in Colombo. Skipper Dasun Shanaka admitted his side has been hampered by the loss of three frontline bowlers.

Dushmantha Chameera and Wandindu Hasaranga were ruled out of the tournament completely through injury while Maheesh Theekshana remains with the squad but sidelined with a hamstring injury.

"It was tough to manage things without three key bowlers, but that is part of the game," said Shanaka after the South Africa match. "I am happy with the positive intent we showed with the bat and the first ten overs with the ball were good too."

Kusal Mendis hit a whirlwind 42-ball 76, with eight glorious sixes, while Charith Asalanka (79) and Shanaka (68) frustrated the South African attack before Sri Lanka were dismissed for 326 in 44.5 overs.

Williamson to miss 2nd game of World Cup

HYDERABAD (AFP): New Zealand captain Kane Williamson will miss Monday's World Cup clash against the Netherlands but is expected to return to the team later in the week, said coach Gary Stead on Sunday. Williamson is still recovering after six months out with a knee injury although he did feature in the World Cup warm-up series last week.

He sat out New Zealand's nine-wicket rout of champions England in the tournament opener on Thursday and will watch from the sidelines again in Hyderabad on Monday.

However, Stead said Williamson is expected to play in the third game of the tournament against Bangladesh in Chennai on Friday. "He is progressing really well but his fielding needs to be higher and needs trust in his body," said Stead. "We're confident he will be ready for the third game to start his tournament."

Williamson is the current squad's top scorer in ODIs with more than 6,500 runs and 13 centuries. Stead said veteran fast bowler Tim Southee, who also missed the victory over England, is available for selection after recovering from a dislocated thumb.

Meanwhile, New Zealand all-rounder Glenn Phillips Sunday stressed that the Black Caps must keep their feet on the ground after the convincing win over England.

Runners-up in the last two World Cups, New Zealand upstaged England in Ahmedabad, riding on brilliant centuries from Devon Conway and Rachin Ravindra.

"We enjoyed the first win but obviously with the tournament having such a quick turnaround, we try not get too high when we win and not get too low

when we lose," said Phillips. Phillips said New Zealand will not take the Netherlands lightly despite the Dutch being the only second-tier Associate team at the 10-nation event.

"We approach every game the same way every time, every team is strong in their own right, especially on any given day," said the all-rounder.

"The Netherlands have a lot of strong players, and we're going to have to still put our best foot forward, as I'm sure they will."

Phillips praised the skill sets of the Netherlands' players.

"Obviously, they've beaten quite a few good opponents to be able to qualify for the tournament in the first place. So, they're a team definitely not to be taken lightly."

Phillips hailed Conway and Ravindra for their undefeated centuries in Ahmedabad, 152 and 123 respectively.

"They were absolutely brilliant," said Phillips of the two left-handers who shared an unbroken 273-run stand for the second wicket to overhaul England's 283-run target with 82 balls to spare.

"I guess from a team perspective it's really nice to know that those two boys are in some serious form and that's a good feeling," Phillips denied he was surprised at Ravindra's stunning man of the match performance. "Oh, no. I wasn't surprised at all," said Phillips of the 23-year-old batsman.

"Obviously, I've played a lot of cricket with him back home and he actually plays a very aggressive brand of one-day cricket." He added: "Being up at the top of the order, he likes to play with a lot of flair. He plays that square drive incredibly well, which with the new ball is an absolute asset."



Biles wins beam gold for 22nd world gymnastics title

ANTWERP (AFP): US superstar Simone Biles continued her winning return from a two-year break by claiming a 22nd world title with gold on the balance beam at the world gymnastics championships on Sunday.

Biles, 26, followed her gold in the team and all-around events during the week, as she sealed the beam title for a fourth time with a dazzling routine which earned her 14,800 points.

China's Zhou Yaqin, 17, scored 14,700 to take silver with Brazil's Rebeca Andrade, who beat Biles to gold in the vault on Saturday when the American fell, claiming bronze with 14,300. In a high-level final, Biles performed her acrobatics without moving a millimetre on the apparatus.

The title was decided by a tiny margin, as teenager Zhou also impressed. Gold only escaped the Chinese gymnast because she took a step back at her exit of the beam and was penalised a tenth of a point.

For Biles it was a 29th world medal. The Texan could add another later on Sunday when she competes in the floor routine on the final day of competition in Antwerp. Biles has made an impressive return to competition two years after her "twisties", a temporary mental block whereby gymnasts lose their sense of where they are in the air, ended her Tokyo Olympics.

She then stopped training completely and only returned to competition last August in the United States.





## In brief

### Crackdown against professional beggars

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police have initiated a massive crackdown against professional beggars and their handlers in the city to curb this menace, a public relations officer said. He said that, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, ordered the all zonal DPO's to take action against professional beggars and their handlers in their respective areas adding that cases should be registered against them. He reiterated that the parents who send their children with these criminals will also face action according to the law, adding that criminals in the guise of begging were found involved in different criminal activities. During the ongoing crackdown, the Islamabad Capital Police various police station teams arrested 49 professional baggers during last week and registered cases against them under the beggar act. Citizens are also urged to discourage these professional beggars and give their charity to the needy people and are also requested to inform police about any suspicious activity through Pucar-15 and join hands with police to curb this menace from the city.

### Eight outlaws arrested

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police apprehended eight outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered weapons with ammunition from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directives, the Kirpa police team arrested an accused namely Mohsin and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. The Lohi Bher police team arrested an accused namely Ali Nadeem and recovered one 9mm pistol with ammunition from his possession. The Nilore police team arrested an accused namely Rashid Ali involved in illegally gas refilling. Moreover, the Shahzad Town police team arrested an accused namely Sulman Khan involved in illegally gas refilling.

### Criminal gangs members held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police Industrial-Area and Shalimar police teams arrested two wanted members of the snatcher and thief gang involved in numerous snatching and theft activities and recovered snatched mobile phones, cash, valuables and weapons from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directions, the industrial-Area police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending a wanted member of a snatcher gang involved in numerous snatching activities in various areas of the Industrial Area police station jurisdiction.

# World powers need to play role in Kashmir, Palestine dispute: Mushaal

RAWALPINDI (INP): Advisor to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights, Mushaal Hussein Mullick on Sunday said that global powers need to play imperative role in resolving the long-standing Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and Palestine dispute.

While speaking at the annual event of Darbar Mohra Sharif here, she stated that the ongoing crisis in Palestine, particularly the tensions with Israel, reflected the same adversities Kashmir faces under Indian subjugation. Mushaal Mullick pointed out that the Indian government was involved in promoting extremism and terrorism in occupied Kashmir, Israel was similarly involved in serious human rights violations in Palestine. Just like in occupied Kashmir, Muslims in Palestine were



subjected to harsh treatment, mosques were being desecrated and violence was being inflicted upon the innocent people.

India has unleashed a new wave of grave human rights violations in Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

However, the unyielding resilience of the Kashmiris is often viewed as a divine blessing from Allah.

The SAPM on HRs highlighted the role of Peer

Mohra Sharif in propagating the message of peace and love with Kashmir. She underlined that Islam teaches its followers to treat each other with brotherhood, empathy, altruism, sacrifice and love.

Mohra Sharif has significantly served Islam and humanity by teaching the value of setting aside personal desires to establish a connection with God.

Drawing from Islamic history, it is evident that the religion was among the pioneers in granting rights to women, encompassing property, divorce, and even business rights. This progressive stance is epitomized by Hazrat Khadijah's business acumen, which underscores the immense power women can wield. Bibi Fatima's life is not just a tale of struggles but also serves as a beacon of inspiration for women globally.

## Adoption of health levy bill on tobacco products vital

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Health Activists have urgently appealed to the government to take prompt action in safeguarding the health and well-being of our nation's children through the immediate introduction of a health levy on tobacco products.

In press release shared by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), in light of the alarming increase in tobacco-related health concerns among children and adolescents, health activists underscored the critical importance of implementing a health levy. Such a measure not only serves to curtail the use of these harmful products but also provides essential funding for initiatives aimed at enhancing child health.

Malik Imran Ahmed, Country Head of the Campaign for Tobacco Free

Kids, emphasized the severe health risks posed to our children and adolescents by tobacco use. He emphasized that the introduction of a health levy on tobacco products has a well-documented track record of reducing youth smoking rates and deterring tobacco consumption.

The time has come for our government to take resolute steps to protect the health and rights of our youngest citizens. Dr. Ziauddin Islam, former Technical Head of the Tobacco Control Cell at the Ministry of Health, drew attention to the widely recognized detrimental consequences of tobacco use on the overall health of our population.

He stressed the urgency of prioritizing the health and well-being of our children by implementing a health levy on tobacco

products. The generated revenue can be channeled into comprehensive tobacco control programs, further fortifying our endeavors to mitigate tobacco-related illnesses and safeguard our youth.

Khalil Ahmed, Program Manager at SPARC, emphasized that children represent the most vulnerable segment of our society, and their health and well-being must be accorded the highest priority.

Implementing a health levy on tobacco products is not only a strategic measure to reduce tobacco consumption among our youth but also a means to generate funding for programs that will ensure a healthier future for our children. We fervently call upon the government to take this vital step to protect the rights and well-being of our nation's youth.

## PRs 28 pc nonfunctional locomotives disrupting entire operations: official

ISLAMABAD (INP): Out of total 461, around 28 percent of Diesel-Electric Locomotives (DEL) of Pakistan Railways are non-functional creating disruption in appropriate functioning of entire operations of the department.

An official of Ministry of Pakistan Railway said on Sunday that Pakistan Railways has 332 locomotives in running condition out of a total of 461, while 129 (28 percent) diesel-electric locomotives were non-functional.

Of 129 locomotives, around 41 were under normal overhauling schedules and maintenance. The locomotives will be rolled out after routine schedule maintenance turn by turn, the official said.

He said that 11 locomotives met with an accident on various dates and locations and fabrication work and procurement of spares were under process for these locomotives. The official said that around 69 DPU class diesel-electric locomotives were held up for repair and need major modification while eight locomotives were temporarily deleted and under condemnation process due to overage.

To a question, he said that Pakistan Railways was planning to procure as many as 25 diesel-electric locomotives for various shunting points across the country which would help to replace outdated locomotives that were to be scrapped very soon. The project for the

procurement and manufacturing of 25 shunting locomotives would be implemented in three years at an estimated cost of Rs. 14 billion, he added.

Currently, he said that only 51 locomotives were being operated for this service against the 98 shunting points at various railway stations across the country. Additionally, most of the old locomotives would be discarded due to high maintenance costs.

He said the project was aimed at procuring and manufacturing 25 shunting diesel-electric locomotives of 2000-2200 horsepower HP to replace the overage and uneconomical locomotives.

The official said the old locomotives consumed excessive fuel and in most cases, high horsepower locomotives were under-utilized during shunting operations.

He said that the addition of new locomotives would enhance the capacity of Pakistan Railways by removing the bottlenecks during the shunting of heavy-load freight trains and the placement of freight loads at departure yards in Karachi, Lahore and other places.

"The role of specially designed shunting locomotives was considered the backbone of train formation and train rake replacement at the platform as well as the removal of train rakes from the platform to the washing line and sick lines," he added.

## CDA planning to initiate residential scheme for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is planning to launch a new state-of-the-art residential scheme only for overseas Pakistanis at Mauza Kuri in the federal capital.

"The new scheme, sprawled across 14,000 kanal of land along Kuri Road, adjacent to Park Road, will be reserved exclusively for overseas Pakistanis," an official in the CDA told APP on Sunday.

The official said that the plots within the scheme would be marketed and sold to overseas Pakistanis in US dollars, contributing to the country's foreign exchange reserves.

He said that in the initial phase, the CDA has given the go-ahead to the relevant authorities for the appointment of a design consultant as per the decision made during a meeting chaired by CDA Chairman, Captain (r) Anwar ul Haque.

The official said the designated consultant would be responsible for overseeing the scheme's execution and conducting various essential studies, including those related to environmental impact, traffic management, and hydrology.

Furthermore, he said the consultant would develop the design for infrastructure, road development, ensuring that all modern amenities are seamlessly integrated into the scheme.

## Campaign for registration of house servants and tenants data

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Following the special orders of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police "Knock the Door" campaign for the registration of employees and tenants is in full swing, a public relations officer said. He said that, during this campaign various teams of Islamabad Capital Police are going to the streets and door-to-door to ensure the registration of tenants and domestic workers as well as to inquire about the problems faced by the citizens.

In this regard, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has registered a data of 147 house servants of 450 houses from Sumbal Police Station jurisdiction.

The purpose of this campaign is to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the federal capital adding that the registration of tenants and domestic workers could not only keep a close watch on miscreants but also prevent the elements involved in any kind of suspicious activity. He said citizens are also requested that they can ask for the identity of a person if someone dressed in civil clothes comes to their house in order to collect the data.

## 33 absconders and proclaimed offenders held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police have arrested 33 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crime during the last week, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, special tasks were assigned to all seniors' police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes. Following these directions, the Islamabad Capital Police Aabpara, Industrial Area, Sihala, Golra, Ramna, Tarnol, Noon, Lohi Bher, Karachi Company, Aabpara, Secretariat, Kohsar, Shams Colony and Sabzi Mandi police stations teams have arrested 33 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crime during the last week.

The official said the old locomotives consumed excessive fuel and in most cases, high horsepower locomotives were under-utilized during shunting operations.

## AIOU to hold Int'l moot on Islamic Finance

ISLAMABAD (APP): A three-day international conference on Islamic finance will be held at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) from November 1 to 3, 2023. According to the AIOU, national and international Islamic scholars will present their papers on the consequences of interest systems. Renowned economists will shed light on the topic of Islamic banking.

# Pakistan faces unpredictable events caused by climatic condition: NDMA

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik HI(M) has said that Pakistan was facing changing climatic condition and frequent recurrence of unpredictable and extreme events. In his message on "National Resilience Day", he said that we commemorate the occasion with a mission and commitment to advance national preparedness by improving and increasing the nation's resilience to natural and human induced threats.

Lt Gen Inam Haider said that to meet disasters caused by climatic challenges, NDMA was proactively working at reducing the vulnerability to disasters, and also providing coping mechanisms and framework for effective disaster management. The disaster management system in Pakistan has traveled a long way in the recent time with formulation of National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and National Disaster Management Plan but still we have to go very far by implementing these policies and plan in their true letter and spirit, he added.

He said, "We have also made considerable progress in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development processes, which will no doubt lead to greater national resilience against potential disasters. Our expedition for resilience is consistent and we need to make our utmost efforts to realize the ideals."

The chairman NDMA said that the Disaster Management System in Pakistan was currently undergoing a transformation, shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach. This represents a significant change in how we collectively address unexpected crises. In the past, the primary focus was on responding to

emergencies after they had already occurred, often resulting in substantial loss of life and property. However, due to advancements in technology and a deeper understanding of natural disasters, Pakistan is now moving towards taking proactive measures, he maintained. He said, "This transformation involves the establishment of a modern National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The disaster NEOC is now capacitated to create common operating picture enabled by multiple satellite feeds, softwares, Artificial intelligence tools that is expected to strengthen digital risk assessment, early warning systems, and preparedness strategies."

Imam Haider said that National Resilience Day prompts us to embrace best practices and implement policies and strategies aimed at fortifying our nation's resilience. He said that our policy initiatives should encompass various sectors, including the resilient and safe development of infrastructure, improved disaster preparedness, poverty alleviation, safer spatial land use planning, adherence to building codes, efficient water resource management, sound agricultural practices, and increased afforestation nationwide, including coastal areas.

He said, "Given our vulnerabilities, I urge all federal and provincial stakeholders to collaborate closely to reduce disaster risks, enhance preparedness, and establish swift response mechanisms through usage of latest technological tools. It is of utmost important that we prioritize the welfare of vulnerable segments of our society, including women, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities in all our endeavors."

## RDA taking strict action against illegal housing societies without discrimination; DG

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) is taking strict and indiscriminate action against illegal housing societies in accordance with the law, said Director General (DG) Saif Anwar Jappa here Sunday.

He informed that the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate, RDA under PDC ACT-1976 and Punjab Development Authorities Private Housing Scheme Rules was taking action against illegal housing schemes in Rawalpindi district as the owners and sponsors of unapproved

housing schemes were cheating the general public through misleading advertisements. The RDA, on the directives of the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta, had launched grand operation against all illegal housing schemes without discrimination and sealing their offices, he added.

The owners of some illegal housing schemes were giving the impression that RDA was taking action against few schemes which was false and baseless, he said adding, the authority would continue its ongoing operation against the rules violators.

According to RDA spokesman, the Authority was taking action against all illegal and unauthorized housing societies.

If any housing scheme had obtained a stay order from the court, the authority consults its legal branch and takes legal action as per law. The Authority was trying to protect the public from any kind of fraud, he said. The RDA had advised the citizens not to invest in illegal housing societies and visit RDA's official website before investment or get information about the status of the housing projects from RDA, he added.

## ‘Construction work of Dadocha Dam to be resumed soon’

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta has said that the construction work of Dadocha Dam would be resumed soon. He informed that the construction work of the Dam would be completed within the stipulated period as Punjab government was paying special attention to water supply projects.

The Commissioner said that the patriotism and sacrifices of the local population, especially the residents of Barwala including Azari Sehla, Malikpur, Azizal and Khanpur areas are commendable. "We value the sacrifices of the local population and would

make every effort to provide them with the full benefit of these sacrifices," Liaquat Ali Chhatta said.

In the light of the Supreme Court's decision and the directives of the caretaker government of Punjab, the local population would be given the prices of their land according to the current market rates, the Commissioner added.

The local residents whose property is affected by the construction of the dam would be given fair compensation, he said.

The district administration and the people should work hard on this project to provide clean water for

future generations, Liaquat Ali Chhatta said.

The Commissioner said that Dadocha Dam Located 25 km from Rawalpindi would be at 123 feet height.

After its construction, the dam would provide 35 million gallons of water per day for Rawalpindi city, which would benefit particularly the domestic consumers.

The construction of dam would provide clean water facility to the residents of Rawalpindi, Cantt and adjoining areas.

The construction of the dam would be started in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court, he added.

## Admin allocates 450 kanals land in Rakh Dhamial Cemetary for Chaklala & Rwp Cantt Boards

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta has said that 450 kanals land in Rakh Dhamial cemetery has been allocated for Chaklala and Rawalpindi Cantonment Boards. He said that the cemetery would be transformed into a model graveyard and that the administration had made important decisions regarding Rakh Dhamial cemetery. The long-standing problems of the residents of the city and Cantt board areas regarding graveyard had been properly addressed by the district administration, he said that the issue was resolved due to solid steps taken by the administration.

He stated that, out of the 1,000 kanals of land designated for the Rakh Dhamial cemetery, 450 kanals will go to Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantts and 450 kanals to the Municipal Corporation, with the remaining 100 kanals going to

the minorities. Solid steps were being taken to make Rakh Dhamial cemetery a model graveyard and construction work of the walls had been completed, he informed.

The funeral prayer area was also ready and the administration had arranged special bus and ambulance service to facilitate the residents, Liaquat Ali Chhatta said.

The Commissioner said that the graveyard charge, which was set at Rs. 5000, would not be collected from anyone who could not pay it.

The Municipal Corporation and Rawalpindi Waste Management Company would ensure cleanliness in the cemetery, he said. According to the Commissioner, it would be a great relief for the inhabitants who were having issues because there were no suitable burial grounds in the city.



70,000mt of goods transported

KABUL (Agencies): The Afghanistan Railway Authority has reported that a total of 67,908 metric tons of goods were transported via the country's railways last week. The Hairatan railway line carried 50,648 tons of goods, the Aqina railway line transported 4,329 tons, and the Turgandi railway line moved 12,931 tons. These figures represent the total amount of oil, non-oil, and other materials that were imported and exported to the country over the past week.

Baradar expresses condolences

KABUL (Agencies): Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, has extended his heartfelt condolences to the victims of the earthquake in Herat and Badghis provinces. He prays for the repose of the souls of the deceased and a speedy recovery for those injured. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar has instructed the ministries and departments of the natural disaster response organs to promptly reach the disaster site.

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

## Defense ministry sends in rescue teams to quake-hit

HERAT (Agencies): Afghanistan's defense ministry has sent in rescue teams to Herat province to help find survivors still buried in the rubble of collapsed buildings after Saturday's deadly 6.3 magnitude earthquake and the string of strong aftershocks.

Early Sunday, the full picture of the carnage began to emerge as videos posted to social media showed villages using their bare hands to dig survivors out of the rubble.

Rescue teams have now arrived in some of the worst hit areas, which include Zinda Jan district, where most of the quakes were epicentered.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the acting first deputy prime minister, said on Sunday he will visit the affected area and assess the situation.

At an emergency meeting to organize aid for the victims, officials said the worst hit area was Zinda Jan district, where more than 3,000 houses were destroyed.

Zinda Jan also had the highest casualty toll, officials said.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has also deployed emergency response teams to the area, the organization said in a

statement.

The IRC said it is closely monitoring the situation and is actively coordinating its response with multiple other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to assess the extent of the damage and provide assistance to those in need.

"The IRC's emergency response teams are mobilizing to provide immediate assistance, including medical care, and other essential services to the affected population. Our teams are working tirelessly to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals and communities receive the support they need during this difficult time," the statement read.

Salma Ben Assia, Country Director for the IRC in Afghanistan said: "Our hearts go out to the people of Herat who have been affected by this devastating earthquake. The IRC urges the international community to stand in solidarity with the people of Herat and support the ongoing relief efforts.

"We are committed to working alongside our partners and local authorities to provide immediate assistance and support to those affected. In times like these, unity and collaboration are crucial, and we are grateful for the coordina-

tion efforts with other NGOs to ensure a swift and effective response," she said.

Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders have also rushed to assist and set up five medical tents at the Herat Regional Hospital to accommodate the influx of injured patients. Hundreds of victims have already been treated at the hospital since yesterday early afternoon.

Iranian Red Crescent Society has also reportedly sent 15 volunteers of its Rapid Response team to Afghanistan following the deadly earthquake.

**Quake death toll rises to over 2,000 as magnitude of tragedy sets in**

Mohammad Janan Saiq, the spokesperson for Afghanistan's Ministry of Disaster Affairs said Sunday at around midday that so far 2,053 people have been confirmed dead in 13 villages in western Herat province after the 6.3 magnitude earthquake that hit on Saturday.

A further 1,240 people were injured, at least 1,320 houses were completely destroyed in Zinda Jan and Ghorian districts and 10 rescue teams have been sent to the worst hit areas.

Drinking water, food,

medicine, clothing, and other necessary items are being sent to the victims, Saiq said.

Other official sources have however said as many as 10,000 people were injured.

Rescue teams along with local men are working to pull out the dead and injured trapped under the rubble.

"Three villages in Herat province were completely destroyed, and hundreds of people are still trapped under the debris," Saiq said.

According to the US Geological Survey (USGS), strong earthquakes of magnitude 5.5, 5.9, and 6.2 and 6.3 jolted the western Afghanistan. Afghan provinces. The epicenter was 40 kilometers northwest of Herat city in Zinda Jan district.

On Sunday, people were using their bare hands to dig out the dead and injured. One video, shared online, shows people freeing a baby from a collapsed building. A hand is seen cradling the baby's torso as rescuers ease the child out of the ground. Rescuers said it was the baby's mother.

Abdul Wahid Rayan, a spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture,



said Sunday the death toll is higher than originally reported. Villages have been destroyed, and hundreds of civilians are buried under the debris, he said while calling for urgent help.

"Besides the 2,060 dead, 1,240 people are injured and 1,320 houses are completely destroyed," said Rayan. At least a dozen teams have been scrambled to help with rescue efforts, including from the military

and nonprofit organizations like the Red Crescent.

The United Nations migration agency has deployed four ambulances with doctors and psychosocial support counselors to the regional hospital. At least three mobile health teams are on their way to the Zinda Jan district, which is one of the worst affected areas.

Doctors Without Borders set up five medical tents at Herat Regional Hospital to

accommodate up to 80 patients. Authorities have treated more than 300 patients, according to the agency.

Irfanullah Sharafzai, a spokesman for the Afghan Red Crescent Society, said seven teams are busy with rescue efforts while other teams are arriving from eight nearby provinces.

"A temporary camp has been set up for people who have lost their houses and need shelter for now,"

Sharafzai said. "Whatever is in our capacity we will do for our poor and needy people at this difficult time."

Neighboring Pakistan said it was deeply saddened by the earthquake. "We are in contact with the Afghan authorities to get a first-hand assessment of the urgent needs of those affected by the earthquake," said the Foreign Affairs Ministry. "Pakistan will extend all possible support to the recovery effort."

## Contract for remaining work on power line signed

KABUL (TOLOnews): The remaining work on a 500 KV power line starting in Turkmenistan was signed with a domestic private company.

The acting minister of energy and water, Abdul Latif Mansour, said that this project will be finished in two years, and the need of residents and industrialists in Kabul and other provinces for electricity will be resolved with its implementation.

This project will be resumed after two years of suspension, and the contracted company is supposed to invest 75 million US dollars.

"With a domestic company's investment, they will drag a 500 KV line over 128 kilometers from Dasht Alwan to Chowk Arghandi, and from Dasht Alwan to Shabarghan; a contract has been signed with another company, which was announced a few days ago," said Abdul Latif Mansour.

"Many of the project's equipment has arrived in the area, a sizable portion of the work is advanced, and the remaining works of this project is about to start today," said Farhad Mahmoudi, the head of energy programs at the MoEW.



The private sector's investment in this project, according to Amanullah Ghalib, the former head of Breshna Sherkat, is a significant step in the direction of the nation's energy supply.

"The 500 KV project is one of the most significant infrastructure projects for Afghanistan's electricity projects, and with the implementation of this project, all of the current issues with Afghanistan's electricity that exist in the central, eastern, and southern provinces, including the capital, will be

resolved," Ghalib told TOLOnews.

According to economists, once this project is finished, the issues with the lack of energy in industrial factories in Kabul and many other provinces will be resolved.

"The industrial parks operating in Afghanistan face serious economic problems due to the lack of electricity, and with the completion of this project, most of the necessities will be met," said Qutbuddin Yaqoobi, an economist.

Turkmenistan's 500 KV line project was started in

2016 with the financial support of the Asian Development Bank, but with the reestablishment of the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, the bank's financial assistance and the work on this project were stopped.

According to the Ministry of Energy and Water, the Islamic Emirate will pay the investor company its \$75 million costs as well as any profits after finishing the remaining work on this project from Sheberghan to Dasht Alwan and from there to the Arghandi area of Kabul.

## Afghan immigrants in Iran face challenges

KABUL (TOLOnews): Afghan immigrants in Iran claim that the Iranian military has intensified the process of expelling Afghan immigrants from the country.

According to immigrants, some Iranian citizens attacked the houses of Afghan immigrants in various cities and beat some of them. "The situation of the Afghan immigrants is dire since yesterday. The people of Iran started demonstrations," said Abdullah Salangi, an Afghan immigrant.

"We are very being harassed in every way, at home, at work, in the bakery, and outside," said Mohammadullah, another Afghan immigrant.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Emirate's spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid, asked the Iranian authorities to prevent the mistreatment of Afghan immigrants in Iran. "We shared this issue with the government officials in the Islamic Republic of Iran through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Iran, and asked them to prevent riots against Afghan immigrants," Mujahid said.

In a letter to TOLOnews, the Iranian Embassy in Kabul refused these allegations, although earlier Iran's Interior Minister had informed Iranian media that illegal Afghan immigrants should return to their country.

"Deporting Afghan immigrants from Iran will cause various problems. In this regard, there is a need to plan programs to organize undocumented immigrants in Iran," said Mohammad Khan Talibi, an activist of immigrants affairs.

According to data from the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), there are presently around three million Afghans living in Iran.

## 22 years on, remembering US attack on Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLOnews): 22 years ago, an international coalition led by Washington on October 7, 2001, attacked Afghanistan.

America stated that the aim of the attack was to fight and overthrow the organizers of the 9/11 attacks on their country.

On September 11, 2001, nearly a month before the United States invasion of Afghanistan, the Al Qaeda network crashed hijacked passenger planes into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon, killing around 3,000 people and bringing the United States into Afghanistan.

"America's aggression against Afghanistan was against all international law, they waged an unjust

war on the Afghan nation and a long war was inconclusive," said Najibullah Jame, a political analyst.

"Their ultimate goal was to be able to contain global regional competitors in the region, particularly Russia and China, to a great extent," said Jawid Momand, a political analyst.

"The United States invaded Afghanistan without any justified reason, without listening to the people of Afghanistan and the government, and unfortunately the invasion lasted for 20 years," said Zabiullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Islamic Emirate.

Some political analysts said that the US presence in Afghanistan was one of the

mistakes that the former Soviet Union had made and that the two countries caused significant losses to the Afghan people for political gain.

"NATO and Russia both made the same mistake and it was not a mistake but a persecution for the people of Afghanistan who during 45 years of negative competition have done so," said Said Qaribullah Sadat, political analyst.

Finally, the 20-year presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan ended on August 31, 2021, with the withdrawal of the last US soldier in Afghanistan.

The battle cost the US \$2 trillion, and 2,460 US troops were killed and more than 21,000 others were wounded.

## Iranian economic team arrives in Kabul



KABUL (Agencies): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) has announced on X that an economic delegation from Iran, headed by Sardar Yaqub Ali Nazari, governor of Khorasan Razavi province, has arrived in Kabul and is

accompanied by more than 85 traders and investors.

The purpose of this three-day trip, which took place at the invitation of Nooruddin Azizi, acting minister MoIC, is to review investment opportunities in Afghanistan and to

strengthen trade, economic and transit cooperation between the two countries.

During this period, meetings with Islamic Emirate officials, and a B2B summit will be held between the two sides, the ministry said.

## IEA calls Palestinian resistance legitimate right to achieve freedom

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate's Foreign Ministry called the Palestinian resistance "the legitimate right of the Palestinians to achieve freedom".

This was in reference to Saturday's developments between Palestine and Israel.

Palestine's Hamas group took Israel by surprise on Saturday with the biggest attack for decades, a sudden assault by gunmen who crossed into Israeli villages, killed dozens of people and brought hostages back into the Gaza Strip.

Hamas also fired off an estimated 2,500 rockets at Israel, which was met with massive air strikes deep inside the coastal enclave by Israel.

"Our enemy will pay a price the type of which it has never known," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. "We are in a war and we will win it".

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said the assault that had begun in Gaza would spread to the West Bank and Jerusalem.

"This was the morning of defeat and humiliation upon our enemy, its soldiers and its settlers," he said. "What happened

reveals the greatness of our preparation. What happened today reveals the weakness of the enemy."

The IEA meanwhile said on X, formerly Twitter, that the Islamic Emirate supports the Palestinian people's legitimate, historical, and legal right to have an independent state in the land of the Palestinians.

The IEA's foreign ministry asked Islamic countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the international community, especially influential countries in the region, to stop the violence of the Israeli occupying forces against the innocent people of Palestine.

Hundreds of people were reportedly killed in Saturday's incursion.

Reuters reports that in southern Israel near Gaza, bodies of Israeli civilians lay strewn across a highway in Sderot, surrounded by broken glass. A woman and a man were sprawled out dead across the front seats of a car. A military vehicle drove past the bodies of another woman and a man in a pool of blood behind another car.

Israel's N12 News reported that at least 100 Israelis were killed. Israeli

security forces said there were 21 active scenes of gun battles with infiltrators, and its navy had killed dozens more Palestinians attempting to infiltrate by sea.

In Gaza, black smoke and orange flames billowed into the evening sky from a high rise tower hit by an Israeli retaliatory strike. Crowds of mourners carried the bodies of freshly killed militants through the streets, wrapped in green Hamas flags.

Gaza health officials said at least 198 Palestinians had been killed and more than 1,600 had been wounded, carried into crumbling and overcrowded hospitals with severe shortages of medical supplies and equipment.

Hamas deputy chief Saleh al-Arouri told Al Jazeera that the group was holding a big number of Israeli captives, including senior officials. He said Hamas had enough captives to make Israel free all Palestinians in its jails.

The Israeli military confirmed Israelis were being held captive in Gaza and soldiers and officers had been killed. A military spokesman said Israel could mobilize up to hun-

dreds of thousands of reservists and was also prepared for war on its northern front against Lebanon's Hezbollah group.

Hamas, which advocates Israel's destruction, said the attack was driven by what it said were Israel's escalated attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank, Jerusalem and against Palestinians in Israeli prisons.

"This is the day of the greatest battle to end the last occupation on earth," Hamas military commander Mohammad Deif said, announcing the start of the operation in a broadcast on Hamas media and calling on Palestinians everywhere to fight.

Hamas, which seized control of Gaza in 2007, has since fought four wars against Israel. But the scenes of violence inside Israel itself were unlike anything seen since the suicide bombings of the Palestinian Intafada uprising two decades ago.

That the attack came as a surprise to Israel's security forces makes it one of the worst intelligence failures in the country's history, a shock in a nation proud of its intensive infiltration and monitoring of militant groups.



Indus Shield-2023

PAF’s 14 nation multinational air exercise kicks off at ACE

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) in a magnificent display of international camaraderie and air-power, on Sunday inaugurated its 14 Nation Multinational Air Exercise, Indus Shield-2023, at Airpower Centre of Excellence of Pakistan Air Force. Air Officer Commanding, Central Air Command, Air Vice Marshal Tariq Mehmood Ghazi was the Chief Guest at the inauguration ceremony, a PAF news release said.

Addressing the participants of exercise, Air Officer Commanding Central Air Command emphasized on the significance of multi-national air exercises in achieving common objectives in the face of the evolving dynamics of air warfare.

He commended the efforts of the Air Power Center of Excellence on the organization of the mega exercise, which would augment the existing partnership between the key allies in addition to bolstering interoperability amongst the participating Air Forces.

He also added that the planning and execution of Exercise Indus Shield-23 underscores the vision of the esteemed, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force regarding the crucial role played by PAF in advancing technology, modernizing its capabilities and employing con-



temporary combat tactics to effectively address shared challenges of aerial defence.

Air Vice Marshal Tariq Mehmood Ghazi highlighted that the exercise would prove to be a step forward, to promote warm and brotherly relations amongst the leading air powers of the region. Exercise Indus Shield-2023 will witness participation from 14 esteemed Air Forces including Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Morocco, Uzbekistan, China, and Hungary.

The exercise not only offers a unique opportunity for participating air forces to bring their unparalleled skills and operational capabilities to the spotlight, but will also deepen mutual understanding between the participating contingents to promote interoperability. This mega exercise is a signature of excellence and professionalism which validates PAF’s aerial prowess in the region. In addition, the exercise offers an invaluable learning experience of aerial warfare employment tactics to the air and ground crew through simulation of real-time war scenarios and varied combat missions.

Two Israeli tourists and local guide shot dead in Egypt, Israel says

ALEXANDRIA (BBC): Two Israeli tourists and their Egyptian guide have been shot dead in the Egyptian city of Alexandria, the Israeli foreign ministry says.

Another Israeli was wounded in the attack on Sunday morning, which the ministry said a “local” carried out. There was no immediate confirmation from Egyptian authorities.

But the private Extra News TV channel reported that a policeman had opened fire on a group visiting an ancient Roman site known as Pompey’s Pillar. The assailant fired “at random” using his personal weapon, it cited a security source as saying, adding that he was detained at the scene. Footage of the aftermath of the attack posted on social media showed at least two people apparently dead on the ground at an archaeological site.

The Israeli foreign ministry said it was working with Egyptian authorities in order to return the Israeli citizens to Israel as soon as possible. The shooting happened a day after the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on southern Israel, sending hundreds of gunmen across the frontier from Gaza and launching thousands of rockets. At least 350 people are reported to have been killed in Israel, while another 313 people in Gaza have been killed in retaliatory Israeli air strikes.

Egypt was the first Arab country to make peace with Israel in 1979, but Israeli policies towards the Palestinians make it unpopular with many Egyptians.

In June, an Egyptian police conscript killed three Israeli soldiers near the two countries’ border. Egypt said he exchanged fire with the soldiers while chasing drug smugglers, but Israel said it was a terrorist attack.

‘JUI-F standing with Palestinian brothers in this difficult time’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman Sunday said that his political party was standing with our Palestinian brothers in this difficult time and urged the United Nations to fulfill and implement its resolutions of 1967 to settle down the conflict.

Rehman in a statement said, Palestinian freedom fighter’s attacks on Israel were a historic success, adding that they have freed their territories from Israeli occupation. “I congratulate the Palestinian people on this landmark achievement,” he said. He said that JUI-F has always stood by Palestinian and the recent incident has destroyed Israel’s defense system and their arrogance, and asked that Palestinian brothers respect human rights and not harm children, women and citizens. Palestinians should prove how Islam and Muslims protect human rights.

PML-N will form next government in Sindh, claims Zubair Umar

MATIARI (PPI): Former Sindh governor Muhammad Zubair Umar said on Sunday that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will form the next provincial government in Sindh. Addressing a workers’ convention in Matiari here, the PML-N senior leader said that Nawaz Sharif will land in Lahore on October 21 and the entire Sindh will reach Punjab’s provincial capital to welcome the PML-N supremo.

“PML-N will give tough time to Sindh in upcoming general elections and will form next government,” he said, adding that the PML-N supremo, president and other senior leadership would visit Sindh for the election campaign. “PPP has ruined Sindh in the past 15 years,” Zubair Umar said, adding that PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif can proudly claim to turn Karachi into Lahore but when Bilawal says to turn Lahore into Karachi people will take it as a joke. It is pertinent to mention here that former Pakistan PM Sharif will arrive in Pakistan on October 21.

Revival of economy first and last priority: Nawaz Sharif

LONDON (NNI): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has said that his first and last priority is the revival of Pakistan’s economy. Nawaz said this while talking to a delegation of the PML-N’s overseas leaders in London.

He was of the view that everyone would have to play their role for ensuring the stability of Pakistan in the economic field. He added that the public would conduct accountability through their power of vote. The three-time former premier said the journey to development would resume from where it had been ended. He vowed to pull Pakistan out of the crises of

economic misery, inflation and unemployment.

Nawaz also asked the overseas Pakistanis to play their role in running the industries through investment. He also stressed that those hindering the development and prosperity of the country would never be forgiven. Earlier, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif had said that his elder brother Nawaz would unveil the “agenda” for taking the country out of the economic hardships.

Shehbaz had held a meeting with representatives of the traders association in Lahore. He said, “Political stability and right economic policies can pave the way for the economic revival and the coun-

try’s prosperity.”

The former prime minister went on to say that the PML-N had always prioritised the country over politics. It was important not to repeat the mistakes that created the barriers to reviving the economy and controlling inflation., he remarked.

In response to the traders’ reservations, Shehbaz said, “We assure economic prosperity and getting rid of inflation if the nation shows their confidence in the PML-N in the general elections.”

He further said that Nawaz Sharif was not returning to seek revenge, but to restart the country’s journey of development from where it was stopped.

Toshakhana Case: IHC to hear PTI chief’s plea today

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad High Court (IHC) will hear the petition of chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan in Toshakhana case seeking suspension of the trial court verdict on Monday.

Comprising Chief Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Babar Sattar, a two-member bench of the Islamabad High Court will hear the petition with objections from the Registrar’s Office.

The PTI chief moved the petition through senior lawyer Sardar Latif Khosa under section 561-A (saving of inherent power of high court) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

“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 contentions of the learned counsel for the applicant/appellant at the bar praying for suspension of the impugned order dated 05.08.2023 and sub-sequent 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.

It added that the IHC in its August 28 verdict only suspended the sentence of the PTI chief and not the trial court order.

It urged the court to rectify the “omission of not recording the contention of the learned counsel for the petitioner with regard to the suspension” of the Toshakhana judgment of August 5.

The petition further argued that the disqualification order by the ECP was

issued in “haste” despite the conviction not attaining “finality”.

Toshakhana verdict

On August 5, the District and Sessions Court awarded three years jail term to the PTI chairman in Toshakhana criminal case. The court also imposed Rs 100,000 fine on the convicted chief of the PTI. The court also declared the former prime minister ineligible to hold public office for five years. The court in its verdict said that the accused had been found guilty of corrupt practices and handed the PTI chairman three years jail sentence.

“Imran Khan deliberately submitted fake details [of Toshakhana gifts] to the ECP and is found guilty of corrupt practices,” he stated. The court also declared the former prime minister ineligible to hold public office for five years.

2005 Earthquake

National Resilience Day observed in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (PPI): National Resilience Day was observed today [Sunday] across the country to express solidarity with the victims of 2005 earthquake. The earthquake claimed thousands of lives besides causing massive damage to infrastructure especially in Azad Kashmir and Hazara division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In their separate messages on the occasion, President Dr Arif Alvi and Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar have reaffirmed the commitment to enhance

National preparedness and strengthen resilience in the face of natural disasters.

The President in his message said we come together to show our solidarity and compassion for families who have endured the devastating effects of unprecedented natural disasters. The Caretaker Prime Minister in his message said Pakistan is moving towards a proactive approach to cope with the challenge of Climate Change.

Chairman NDMA sais in his message that we commemo-

rate this occasion with a mission and commitment to advance national preparedness by improving and increasing the nation’s resilience to natural and human induced threats. He said that Pakistan is facing changing climatic condition and frequent recurrence of unpredictable and extreme events. In order to meet these challenges, NDMA is proactively working at reducing the vulnerability to disasters, and also providing coping mechanisms and framework for effective disaster management, he added.

Dozen injured, including baby, in Russian attack on Ukraine’s Kherson

KHERSON (Reuters): A dozen people were wounded, including a 27-year-old woman and her 9-month-old baby, in a Russian attack on the southern Ukrainian region of Kherson, its governor said on Sunday.

“The Kherson region experienced another terrible night,” Governor Oleksandr Prokudin wrote on the Telegram messaging app. The woman and the infant were hospitalised with moderate wounds, he said, adding that a 33-year-old Red Cross medic was also wounded. Several houses and gas pipelines were damaged in the attack.

Over the past 24 hours, Russian forces carried out 59 attacks on Kherson, the region’s administration said on Telegram, including 19 instances of shelling of Kherson city, the region’s administrative centre. Reuters could not independently verify the reports. There was no immediate comment from Russia. Russia has frequently carried out air strikes and shelling on Ukraine since the start of its full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Ukraine says its counteroffensive in the south and east is gradually mak-

ing progress.

Both sides deny targeting civilians, but thousands of civilians in Ukraine have been killed in attacks that have hit residential areas as well as energy, defence, port, grain and other facilities.

Russia to seek return to UN rights body despite Ukraine war: Russia, which was ousted from the UN Human Rights Council after its forces invaded Ukraine, will attempt a return to the body on Tuesday -- an uncertain move that will provide a gauge of its international support. The UN General Assembly will vote that day to elect 15 new members to the Geneva-based UN body, for terms running from 2024 to 2026.

The council’s 47 members are allocated by region, and each large regional group usually pre-selects its own candidates, which the General Assembly then generally approves. But this year two groups have more candidates than available seats: Latin America (candidates from Brazil, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Peru will contest three seats), and Eastern Europe (Albania, Bulgaria and Russia will vie for two seats). Moscow’s candidacy has drawn skepticism, and

the vote will come just days after a Russian missile attack on the Ukrainian village of Groza killed more than 50 people in a scene of carnage. “We hope UN members will firmly reject (Russia’s) preposterous candidacy,” a State Department spokesperson told AFP on condition of anonymity.

“Members of Russia’s forces have committed violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ukraine,” the spokesperson added. Mariana Katzarova, a top UN expert, recently said repression inside Russia had intensified since its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, reaching levels “unprecedented in recent history.” To be elected to the rights council, a country needs 97 votes of the UN’s 193 member countries.

In April 2022, 93 countries voted to suspend Russia from the council, while 24 opposed that move. That majority vote against Russia was less lopsided than other resolutions defending the territorial integrity of Ukraine, with around 140 countries approving. But the situation with the rights council is more complex, as some countries also seen as rights offenders fear they may face the same fate.

President urges upon collaboration of all stakeholders to reduce disaster risks

ISLAMABAD (NNI): President Dr Arif Alvi has urged all federal and provincial stakeholders to collaborate closely to reduce disaster risks, enhance preparedness, and establish swift response mechanisms through usage of latest technological tools in the face of vulnerabilities.

“It is of utmost importance that we prioritize the welfare of vulnerable segments of our society including women, children, the elderly and individuals with disabilities in all our endeavours,” the president said in a message on the occasion of National Resilience Day on Sunday (Oct 8).

On the 8th October each year, he said they came together to show their solidarity and compassion for families who had endured the devastating effects of unprecedented natural disasters. The president said this day served as a solemn reminder of the catastrophic earthquake in 2005 that brought widespread destruction to Azad Jammu and Kashmir, parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and Islamabad Capital Territory.

On this occasion, he said they reaffirmed their commitment to enhance the national preparedness and strengthening of resilience in the face of disasters. “I also call upon the

international community to extend their utmost support to Pakistan in mitigating the adverse impacts of the climate change phenomenon that affects it disproportionately,” President Secretariat Press Wing in a press release quoted the president as saying. The president said they as a nation had witnessed the relentless force of nature through earthquakes, floods, cyclones, and other calamities. These events had tested their resolve, but they have also illuminated the remarkable spirit of unity, compassion, and resilience that defined them as a unified nation.

“I firmly believe that, as we have done in the past, the people of Pakistan will continue to show their generosity by assisting their fellow citizens struck by disasters through their contributions and tireless efforts,” he added.

The president said last year during Monsoon season, devastating floods had again jolted Pakistan and surpassed all previous records. It was disheartening to note that Pakistan’s contribution to climate change was minimal, yet they found themselves among its primary victims, he added.

The president said despite enduring multiple mega-scale disasters

since 2005, the people of Pakistan have consistently displayed courage, selflessness, a spirit of sacrifice, and resilience in the face of adversity.

“The designation of this day as “National Resilience Day” serves as an opportunity for introspection and underscores our commitment to better prepare for future challenges. National Resilience Day prompts us to embrace best practices and implement policies and strategies aimed at fortifying our nation’s resilience,” he added. The president said their policy initiatives should encompass various sectors, including the resilient and safe development of infrastructure, improved disaster preparedness, poverty alleviation, safer spatial land use planning, adherence to building codes, efficient water resource management, sound agricultural practices, and increased afforestation nationwide, including coastal areas.

On this occasion, the president expressed his gratitude for the invaluable support and assistance provided by the international community, civil society, and private philanthropy in bolstering our national response efforts during the recent mega flood disaster.

Biden cannot escape Trump’s shadow in border crisis

NEW YORK (Agencies): The recent surge of migrants crossing the US-Mexico border has put President Joe Biden in a difficult, politically threatening bind.

State and local Democratic leaders who should be among his closest allies heading into next year’s presidential election are harshly criticising his handling of immigration. His probable 2024 Republican opponent, Donald Trump, is sharpening his attacks on an issue that has been a central part of his political message for almost a decade. And public support for Mr Biden on the situation is souring. While voting is still more than a year away, the growing immigration crisis - whose effects are being felt thousands of miles from the US-Mexico border in part because Republican governors have been sending newly arrived migrants to Democratic-run cities - could be a daunting political drag on Mr Biden’s popularity and his re-election hopes.

The numbers paint a darkening picture. According to preliminary US Department of Homeland Security figures obtained by BBC partner CBS News, US Border Patrol apprehended approximately 210,000 undocumented migrants entering the US during the month of September. That is the highest mark of the year, and comes close to matching the record peak monthly apprehensions of late 2022.

If the Biden administration thought the crisis at the border was easing and the national spotlight was moving to other issues after govern-

ment policy changes earlier this year, the latest increase should dispel that notion. What’s more, the nature of the immigrant surge suggests there may be no end in sight. Roughly a quarter of the border apprehensions last month were citizens of Venezuela, the South American nation that has been struggling through political and economic hardship under the socialist dictatorship of Nicolas Maduro.

The Venezuelan exodus has created a hemispheric refugee crisis, with more than seven million fleeing the country - and the consequences are being increasingly felt on US soil. More than 150,000 Venezuelans have headed north toward the US, across the Darian Gap into Central America, in the past two months, according to the government of Panama. “People don’t pick up and leave their homes just for the heck of it,” Janet Napolitano, head of homeland security during the Obama administration, told the BBC. “They’re usually in desperate straits - poverty, joblessness, high crime, violence, lack of civil institutions in their countries of origin.”

On Thursday, the Biden administration announced two new steps to address the dramatic increase - and both have opened the president up to attacks from across the political spectrum. The president issued a series of environmental and planning waivers and released funds to build additional sections of wall along the US-Mexico border. He also revealed that the US would resume direct deportations of

Venezuelan citizens - a practice that had been suspended because of tense diplomatic relations between the two nations. The Texas town caught in America’s border battle

These new measures were quickly denounced as too little by immigration hard-liners and too much by left-wing immigration activists. The president’s muddled explanations - that he still believes walls don’t work and that it was money he was forced by Congress to spend - compounded the situation. The Venezuelan announcement also represents a change in attitude by the administration, after moves last month to allow approximately half a million Venezuelan refugees in the US to apply for work permits and avoid deportation for 18 months. In trying to assuage concerns that he is not doing enough to address the border surge while also keeping his liberal supporters happy, he appears to be satisfying no one - a conundrum that has played itself out repeatedly on border policy throughout the Biden presidency.

Immigration has become an intensely polarising issue, due in no small part to Mr Trump’s “build the wall” rhetoric and sometimes draconian policies during his presidency. That has greatly curtailed Mr Biden’s political flexibility in dealing with the crises. Where Barack Obama was able to increase deportations and strengthen border security during his presidency without facing damaging blowback from liberal activists, Mr Biden has no such luxury.

finding a final solution to the Palestinian-Israeli issue. In this regard, as we have always underlined, the preservation of the two-state solution perspective is very important.” He added the formation of an independent Palestinian state, in line with the borders set out in 1967, with its territorial integrity intact, and with Jerusalem as its capital was now “a necessity that cannot be delayed.”

“As justice is delayed, unfortunately the price of this is paid by Palestinians, Israelis, and our whole region,” Erdogan said. The fighting comes as Ankara was working to repair ties with Israel after years of acrimony over the status of Jerusalem and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since fighting began on Saturday, Turkey’s foreign minister Hakan Fidan has held calls with his U.S., Palestinian, Spanish, Qatari, Saudi, Iranian, Egyptian, and Jordanian counterparts to discuss the matter.

Erdogan says Turkey will ramp up diplomacy in Israeli-Palestinian conflict

ANKARA (Reuters): Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday that Turkey was determined to ramp up diplomatic efforts to achieve calm in the fighting between Israeli and Palestinian forces, but added that a two-state solution was the only way to achieve regional peace.

Turkey, which has supported Palestinians in the past, hosted members of the Islamist group Hamas which launched the attack on Israel, and backed a two-

state solution, said on Saturday it was ready to help de-escalate tensions. Speaking in Istanbul, Erdogan repeated a call for both sides to avoid steps that will exacerbate the conflict, and added that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was at the root of all problems in the Middle East. “So long as this problem is not resolved in a fair way, our region will continue to live in longing of peace,” Erdogan said.

“Lasting regional peace will only be possible by