

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday arrived here after completing his two-day official visit to Uzbekistan. During his visit, the prime minister attended the 16th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) and held bilateral meetings with the leadership of Uzbekistan and other participating leaders.

@thefrontierpost

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

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Police have conducted search operations in Waris Khan, Saddar Barooni, Airport and adjoining areas and arrested six suspects here on Thursday. According to a police spokesman, Rawalpindi district police, women police and other law enforcement agencies under the supervision of senior police officers participated in the search operations.

# PM stresses reforms, actions to realize ECO objective for economic, peace dividends

TASHKENT (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday, reiterating Pakistan's commitment to the ECO Vision 2025, called for collective efforts and accelerated reforms to achieve the Organisation's objectives and region's trade potential for bringing "colossal" economic and peace dividends.

"Let us make ECO an organisation, not just of words, but actions, not just commitments but implementation. It is crucial for us to work collectively and diligently to realise the goals and objectives of the Organisation... Our region, if well connected, can bring colossal economic and peace dividends for our people," the prime minister said addressing the 16th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO).

The prime minister's address encompassed an array of issues, including the ECO's existing trade and true potential, the humanitarian situation in Gaza, Indian atrocities in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Islamophobia as well as the ECO's projects of regional connectivity.

He said being blessed with natural resources, geographical linkages and cultural heritage, the ECO region had been unable to exploit its true trade potential as it had just two percent share in global trade and eight percent in intraregional trade.

He said in 2022, the

trade within the ECO region was recorded at \$39 billion against \$577 billion with the world and the intraregion exports also stood at \$46 billion.

He said the ECO Vision 2025, which was adopted by the 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad had called for increasing regional trade, strengthening connectivity, operationalising major transport corridors and seeking energy security.

Calling for deliberations to expand share in the global and intra-region trade, he emphasised reducing barriers, developing infrastructure, and formulating environment-friendly and sustainable policies, besides reducing poverty.

Prime Minister Kakar supported the ECO's corridor-based approach like Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI), Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI), Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran (KTI) and others, and said the integrated transport projects would help promote trade and connectivity.

Mentioning the revival of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad rail project, the prime minister said Pakistan was upgrading its rail infrastructure to speed up the flow of goods. He also called for opening more border points within the ECO region to enhance connectivity and trade.

He said the connectivity projects would also facilitate the private sector, and widen the scope of business and investment.

The prime minister told

the regional leaders that Pakistan had established a one-window platform of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) bringing together all trade-related organisations under one umbrella. The government had identified and focused on five areas of investment, including agriculture, defence production, IT (information technology), energy and mining.

Highlighting the significance of Afghanistan in regional connectivity and execution of regional projects like CASA-1000, Trans Afghan Railway and TAPI, he said Pakistan was working closely with the ECO countries to achieve the shared goal of peaceful and interconnected Afghanistan.

Coming to the humanitarian situation in Gaza, Prime Minister Kakar said the incessant and lethal Israeli bombardment on Gaza was a deplorable act calling for international condemnation.

He said the situation needed to be addressed as per the resolutions of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and urged the ECO countries to push for a ceasefire and support the call for the provision of humanitarian aid, besides rallying efforts to hold Israel to account.

"With the elimination of children, I recall in the history when Pharaoh, on the advent of the Moses' birth, killed children. And now,

unfortunately, the people who claim to be the followers of Moses, are following the path of Pharaoh," he remarked.

Reiterating Pakistan's strong condemnation, the prime minister called for rallying behind and encouraging to have a humanitarian corridor to help out the suffering Palestinian people.

PM Kakar also apprised the regional leaders of the unabated Indian atrocities in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, and emphasised the ECO countries to support Kashmiris in achieving their right of self-determination.

The prime minister also touched upon the issues of intolerance, violence and xenophobia, and called upon the ECO members and international community to work for building legal deterrence against Islamophobia while maintaining mutual respect, and harmony and co-existence.

Prime Minister Kakar thanked Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, also the chair of the 16th Summit, for warm hospitality and ECO Secretary Ambassador Khusrav NOZIRI for his role in strengthening the Organisation.

He said as Pakistan would be holding the office of ECO secretary general next year, he expressed the hope that the member countries would extend their support to the country to help achieve the ECO objectives.



Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent.

## Kakar, Aliyev discuss bilateral, regional matters

TASHKENT (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held a meeting with President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, on Thursday, wherein they discussed bilateral cooperation and regional issues, including the humanitarian situation in Gaza and Indian atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 16th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization being held here. The two leaders reviewed the progress in bilateral relations, especially in the domains of trade, defense, and energy.

Prime Minister Kakar welcomed the announcement of direct flight operations by Azerbaijan Airline (AZAL) to

Pakistan, terming it a positive development in people-to-people exchanges and advancing two-way business and tourism.

Prime Minister Kakar and President Aliyev discussed common challenges, including Islamophobia and climate change, and the critical role of ECO to promote regional cooperation and collective prosperity.

The global and regional developments, including the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza and persistent Indian atrocities in IIOJK, were also discussed.

Prime Minister Kakar reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, especially with respect to Karabagh.

## Gaza governing structure undecided

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: As Israel continues bounding Gaza and conducting ground operations, it has not yet been decided how Gaza will be governed in future. But one thing is clear that it will certainly not be anything like before October 7, when Hamas attacked Israel from Gaza.

In reply to a question about the future setup in Gaza, John Kirby, the US National Security Spokesperson said that "we are talking about it" and that "Palestinians are cable of running Gaza."

While referring to the more than a million Gazans who are being internally displaced, moving from the North to the South, John Kirby said that the US won't support permanent displacements. John Kirby also acknowledged that Hezbollah did fire a few rockets from the Lebanon side but no damage was caused and that the US does not see the war in Middle East being expanded.

John Kirby acknowledged that short pauses in the bombing by Israel are good so that humanitarian aid can pass by and those



who want to leave Gaza can also leave.

It has been made very clear by both the United States and Israel that there will be no cease fire by Israel, no matter how many civilians are being killed. The US does regret the killing of "each civilian" in Gaza by Israel but "regret" is the only word which can be heard by US administration, under President Joe Biden.

In reply to a question, John Kirby said that China has given loans at very high interest rates to those countries which wanted to be part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

## Fierce street-by-street combat rages in Gaza City

GAZA STRIP (AFP/APP): Israeli troops and Hamas were locked in heavy, close quarters fighting in Gaza City on Thursday, including a 10-hour battle that Israel said toppled one of the Palestinian fighters' "strongholds".

Hamas fighters armed with rocket-propelled grenade launchers and assault rifles were clashing with Israeli soldiers backed by armoured vehicles in the ruins of the besieged territory's north. Broken palm trees, mangled road signs and twisted lampposts marked the remains of what was once north Gaza's main arterial route, an AFP journalist said while embedded with Israeli troops on a controlled visit.

Israeli flags were flying over buildings at beach resorts in northern Gaza and there was little sign of any human presence amid the destruction as hundreds of thousands have fled a dire humanitarian situation. The utter devastation is the result of over a month of war sparked by the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel.

The Israeli military said its forces secured a Hamas "military stronghold" in western Jabalia area in the past day, adding the troops had "finished securing the compound after 10 hours of combat". The battle raged above and below ground, it said, exposing some of Hamas's extensive network of tunnel and subterranean bases.

Israel said dozens of fighters were killed, while adding the overall death toll for Israel's troops in the ground offensive had risen to 34. The intense combat and the densely populated coastal territory being effectively sealed off have led to increasingly dire conditions for civilians. French President Emmanuel Macron urged nations to "work towards a ceasefire" between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, as he opened a conference in Paris on aid to the Palestinian territory. Israel won't attend the meeting, which aims to mobilise the main players involved in the humanitarian response in the Gaza Strip.

Tom Potokar, chief surgeon at the International Committee of the Red Cross, described the scene at the European hospital in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza as "catastrophic".



HYDERABAD: Eighty Indian fishermen going to Lahore after released from Karachi Prison.

## 80 Indian fishermen released

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan has released 80 Indian fishermen imprisoned in Karachi's Malir Jail as a gesture of goodwill.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the fishermen were taken to Cantt Station, Karachi, under tight security, where they will be sent to Lahore. All the travel expenses of the Indian fishermen are borne by the Edhi Foundation.

Saad Edhi, the son of Faisal Edhi, the head of Edhi Foundation, has told the media that the Edhi Foundation has given money, clothes and necessary equipment to the Indian fishermen.

Regarding the release, the Indian fishermen said that they were very happy as they were returning to their country after many years and missing their families and children.

The Indian fishermen said that they were treated well in Pakistan.

## Zardari pays tribute to Allama Iqbal

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Asif Ali Zardari paid glowing tribute to the national poet, Allama Muhammad Iqbal on his birth anniversary.

In his message on 'Iqbal Day', he said that the national poet gave consciousness to the Muslims of the subcontinent through his poetry.

"Iqbal was a democratic figure whose poetry is a philosophical journey that needs to be understood who, through his poetry, exposed those who tried to spread mischief under the guise of religion."

"The interpretation of Allama Iqbal's dreams is to accept the rule of the people," President of PPP Asif Ali Zardari said.

## Nation urged to follow Iqbal's teachings

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar have paid rich tribute to Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal on his 146th birth anniversary.

In their separate messages, they said Dr. Allama Iqbal was the great benefactor of the Muslims of sub-continent, who envisioned the idea of a separate homeland for them and later his dream was translated into reality.

President Dr. Arif Alvi in his message said Iqbal was a great thinker who imbibed in Muslims the spirit of unity, through his writings and poetry.

He said in order to make Pakistan a prosperous nation, we need to follow Allama Iqbal's teachings on Islam and his philosophy of "Khudi" that believes in the promotion of self-respect

and human dignity.

In his message on Iqbal Day, the Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar said Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal awakened the consciousness of the Muslims of the subcontinent about their basic rights which created a spirit of unity among the Muslims.

The Prime Minister said Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi is a unique transformation for humanity to achieve success in this world and hereafter.

He said Iqbal dreamed of a Pakistan a country of peace, political tolerance and brotherhood.

The Prime Minister urged the youth to play a key role in the service and development of the country with positive and progressive thinking as envisioned by Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said Allama Iqbal's philosophy and thought is a beacon of light for the humanity. In his message on the occasion of 146th birth anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, he said the national poet taught the young generation to create their own world instead of depending on others by giving a passionate message of 'Khudi'.

He said Iqbal made a practical effort to awaken the Muslims from their slumber for their true identity. He said the solution to the multifaceted challenges we face today lies in the universal teachings of Iqbal. The Information Minister said the youth can truly serve Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah by adopting Iqbal's thought.

## CM: KP govt achieved another milestone towards e-governance

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has achieved another milestone towards e-governance by introducing paperless file work system titled KP Digital Workspace in administrative departments of the province. Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan formally launched the newly introduced system at a ceremony held here at Chief Minister's House.

With this launch, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has become the first province in the country to go towards digitalization in the government departments. Besides Caretaker Cabinet Members, Additional Chief Secretary P&D, administrative secretaries of concerned departments, representatives of Partner Organizations, Project Team Members and government officials attended the ceremony. Briefing the participants about newly introduced e-governance system, it was informed that initially, "Digital Workspace" is being executed in four different administrative departments including Finance, Higher Education, Science

& Information Technology and Sports whereas after two months period, it would be extended to rest of the departments in a phased manner. It was further informed that the initiative will enhance efficiency, ensure transparency and improve service delivery in government departments.

Moreover, the initiative is expected to lead to substantial cost savings on stationary and reduce environmental impact by cutting paper usage. The caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan while addressing the ceremony termed "The KP Digital Workspace" as a testament to government's commitment to modernize governance system and enhance efficiency in public service delivery.

"KP Digital Workspace, is no doubt a milestone achievement in the implementation of the E-Governance System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" he remarked and congratulated the Department of Science and Information Technology, the KP Information Technology Board, and all other stakeholders for their dedicated efforts in realizing this pivotal initiative.

He also extended heartfelt gratitude to the World Bank for its invaluable support in promoting information and communication technology in the Province.

He said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has prioritized the advancement of Information Technology and the IT industry since its inception adding that through unwavering dedication and diligence at various administrative levels, the introduction of paperless governance reforms is aimed at streamlining and enhancing the capacities of the Provincial departments.

He hoped that the initiative would result in heightened transparency and efficiency, leading to increased productivity and a reduction in resource wastage, enabling governance to reach its full potential.

He maintained that the initiative represented a significant stride towards digital governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and stood as a pioneering effort in the public sector across Pakistan.

"Under this project, a document workflow management system has been developed for government

departments, promising substantial time and resource savings" he said and added that the provincial government, through the KP Information Technology Board has also taken the lead in establishing Special Technology Zones, exemplified by the Digital City in Haripur.

He continued that this unique zone is poised to play a pivotal role in economic stability and creation of employment opportunities.

Azam Khan remarked that in alignment with market demands, the provincial government is diligently equipping the youth with IT and technical skills, and added that special emphasis is being placed on the promotion of science, technology, and modern trends in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Chief Minister remarked that initiatives such as Digital Arms Licenses, E-Stamping, Citizen Facilitation Centers, and IT Parks will serve as the backbone of KP's economy, attracting foreign investments and paving the way for a knowledge-based economy, ultimately contributing to poverty reduction, job creation, and self-reliance.



[illegible]



# PHC to initiate proceeding against DG NHCD on 22nd

**Humayun Khan**

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprised of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Shakeel Ahmad ordered Director General (DG) National Commissioner for Human Development (NCHD) Mirza Nasir-u-Din Mahsud Ahmad to appear before court on 22nd November for framing charges under Contempt of Court (COC).

The counsel Khalid Rehman advocate, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Sana Ullah appeared on behalf of Federation and Abdul Shakoor Paracha advocate appeared before court on behalf of respondents 2-4.

The judgment stated that on 04 October PHC has allowed time to decide the outstanding legal fee of petitioner namely Atif Ali Khan advocate on request of Abdul Shakoor Paracha advocate, however, he came up with objections over the judgement of this court on the grounds that High Court cannot take upon itself the role of an executing court.

Despite, repeated directions of this court to implement the judgment of PHC and the reluctance, on the part of the respondents, amounts to contumaciously not honoring the judgement of this Court. Therefore, DG NHCD Mirza Nasir-u-Din Mahsud Ahmad shall appear in person before the court on 22nd November in order to initiate contempt of court proceedings against him for willfully not implementing the orders of PHC.



PESHAWAR: VC SBBWU Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed (TI) presenting a shield to Caretaker Minister for Women Empowerment and Development Irshad Qaisar during closing ceremony of Dosti Peshawar Women's Literature Festival.

## Dosti Women Literature Festival concluded

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The concluding ceremony of Dosti Peshawar Women Literature Festival that held here was attended by large number of students, authors, literature lovers and people from cross section of society.

Dr. Zarmina Baloch, Dr. Toheeda Begum from Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar (SBBWUP) and Sadaf Waheed welcomed the guests. The introduction to Dosti Peshawar Women Literature Festival was given by Irfan of Dosti Welfare Foundation, said a press release.

An important feature of the day was Iqbal Day celebration in Catering Hall SBBWUP wherein several authors and poetesses paid tribute to the poetry of the Allama Iqbal for his philosophy and vision that impacted Muslims living in subcontinent.

The Chief Guest Justice Irshad Qaisar pleased to see women from literary field coming out from different parts of the country and participating in the festival. She also welcomed any assistance required by women in this field.

The guest of honor of the event Dr. Syed Hussain Shahhed Suhawardi paid a tribute to empowered women and said that our religion is supportive towards women and grants them rights in every aspect of life.

A documentary video about the festival was displayed to the guests and audience, which portrayed all the events of the festival. Impact of storytelling was depicted in a form of an act by the students of SBBWUP Department of English.

A success story was told Fareeda Sultana, where she shared her experiences and life journey. Program lead Dr Hamida Bibi wrapped up the event by stating that she along with her dedicated team together made this festival successful.

A documentary video about the festival was displayed to the guests and audience. Beenish Asmatullah shared her perspectives with the guests about the impact of storytelling.

Shields and awards were distributed among the young women belonged to under privileged areas for their struggle in exceptional circumstances.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Zubair Ali talking to minority delegation during a meeting.

## Workshop held for orientation of media

PESHAWAR (APP): Blue Veins, a local organization working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa organized a training workshop for media personnel focusing tobacco control and significant role of media in highlighting the impacts of Newer Tobacco & Nicotine Products.

This workshop was held as part of a broader initiative to equip media professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to understand and report on public health issues related to tobacco use, said a press release issued here Thursday.

The training workshop provided a platform for journalists and media representatives to delve into the core concepts of tobacco control. It aimed to enhance their understanding of how tobacco use is perceived within the community, notably how this perception is often shaped by advertising and promotional activities.

Workshop examined the evolving landscape of tobacco products, including emerging nicotine and tobacco products, and discussed evidence-based strategies for effective tobacco control.

It highlighted that aggressive marketing of newer products is exploiting legal loopholes, going unchecked and leading to increased nicotine dependence among citizens, particularly the youth.

The lack of stringent regulations has allowed unchecked promotion, causing a surge in youth addiction rates. The organization called upon media professionals to urgently address this gap through public awareness and advocate for stronger legal frameworks to safeguard public health against the rising tide of nicotine dependency.

Participants were taken through the paces of responsible reporting and were given the tools to critically analyze the role of both print and electronic media in influencing public attitudes towards tobacco use. The sessions emphasized the media's power in shaping public discourse and how it can be leveraged to foster informed policymaking, particularly in the context of newer nicotine and tobacco products.

"Media professionals have the unique ability to sway public opinion and set the agenda for critical discourse," said Dr. Waseem Janjua of SDPI who was the lead of training workshop.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan addressing launching ceremony of KP Digital Workshop.

## CS highlights significance of Iqbal vision

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary has underlined the need to seek guidance from Allama Iqbal's thoughts, saying that it is our collective responsibility of all to play their role in building the nation and the country following vision of great visionary.

In a message on the birth anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the Chief Secretary said that dreamer of Pakistan, through his poetry ignited in Muslims the hope of an independent state. His poetry highlighted the unique identity of Muslims and provided guidance to them in every walk of life, he added.

He further said that Allama Muhammad Iqbal was a great philosopher, intellectual and poet a great leader of the Muslims of the subcontinent whose poetry, ideology, and philosophy are a beacon for Muslim Ummah, especially our young generation.

The Chief Secretary paid rich tribute to the national poet and reiterated his commitment that Pakistan would be transformed into a great Islamic welfare state as per the vision of our forefathers.

**IKD, PAUS launch PJU**

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Institute of Kidney Diseases (IKD), Hayatabad Medical Complex (MTI-HMC) in collaboration with Pakistan Association of Urological Surgeons (PAUS) has started the publication of Pakistan Journal of Urology (PJU) - which is the first ever journal of its kind in the country.

The PJU is a biannual publication. Its editor-in-chief is internationally acclaimed urologist Prof Dr Liaquat Ali, while the team of editors, writers and other staff is comprised of seasoned urologists from all over Pakistan.

The journal covers most of the urological problems of Pakistan by researching and analyzing multiple topics of larger public interest. The first issue includes five original articles, one review article and two cases reports.

The Editor-in-Chief, PJU, Prof Dr Liaquat Ali while talking to this correspondent told, "Pakistan Journal of Urology is a dream come true both for IKD and PAUS. It is a very good addition to the field of medical science in Pakistan that will be proved very helpful for budding urologists to understand complex urological issues."

He further stated that it was hoped that soon the PJU will be recognized by PMDC, HEC and other national and international accrediting bodies to produce and promote quality research in the area of urology.

## Iqbal Day celebrated in KP with zeal, fervor

PESHAWAR (APP): Like other parts of the country, birth anniversary of great national poet philosopher and visionary Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal was celebrated on Thursday with national zeal and fervor in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In provincial capital the day dawned with special prayers in mosques for the progress and prosperity of the country and eternal peace of Allama Muhammad Iqbal who awaken Muslims to join struggle for a separate homeland.

Special programs and function were held in schools, colleges and universities to mark the day and highlight contributions of Allama Iqbal for the liberation of Muslims living in subcontinent.

Programs were also aired to inform youngsters about vision and philosophy of Dr. Allama Iqbal who through his poetry gathered Muslims under a single platform leading to creation of a separate homeland for Muslims.

All public and private sector schools and colleges across KP were directed to arrange special programs in connection with Iqbal Day.

He said that great Muslim reformer and educationist Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, religious leaders Shah Waliullah, Mujaddad Alif Sani, and legendary poet philosopher Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal came forward for help and guidance of the Muslims and infused new spirit among them to regain their past glory.

"Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi, or selfhood, has not only changed the mindset of the Muslim youth but has also helped them believe in their own abilities and strength imperative to achieve their ultimate goal of Pakistan," he said.

He said the significance of Khudi in an individual was a source of strength through which we could bring ourselves closest to the ultimate goal. He said Dr Muhammad Iqbal had faced criticism mostly from religious people on the concept of self, or khudi, but he didn't stop himself from sharing his thoughts with the people of the subcontinent, which later helped him achieve Pakistan.

The Poet of the East had presented his philosophy in a very unique and creative way by using high poetic imaginations, but his words cannot be understood by everyone because he was an ocean of knowledge.

In such a grim situation,

## Leader discuss challenges in educ sector with minister

PESHAWAR: A notable tribal and religious elder, hailing from Waziristan, Maulana Naik Muhammad, called on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Dr. Aamer Abdullah here in Civil Secretariat at Peshawar and discussed with him matters related the ongoing development initiatives in the merged districts, with a focus on addressing the challenges faced by the local population.

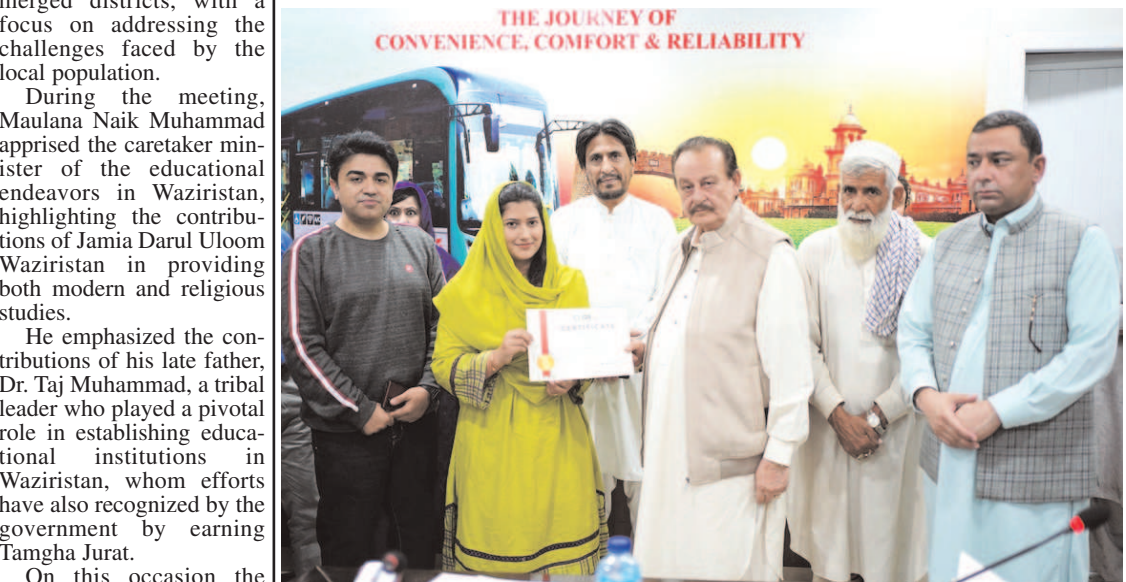
During the meeting, Maulana Naik Muhammad apprised the caretaker minister of the educational endeavors in Waziristan, highlighting the contributions of Jamia Darul Uloom Waziristan in providing both modern and religious studies.

He emphasized the contributions of his late father, Dr. Taj Muhammad, a tribal leader who played a pivotal role in establishing educational institutions in Waziristan, whom efforts have also recognized by the government by earning Tamgha Jurat.

On this occasion the minister commended Maulana Naik Muhammad's commitment for their efforts in education imparting in tribal areas and expressed appreciation for his contributions. The minister pledged that he will take possible steps for the solarization of their educational institute wherein an MOU had inked in past period.

Meanwhile, a delegation from the international aid program "SEED," led by Dr. Umar Mukhtar, met with the caretaker minister and discussed matters of mutual interests, particularly focusing on encouraging investment in various sectors in the province. On this occasion matters regarding technical assistance for enhancing the efficiency of Industries Department sub-sectors and support for investment promotion were also came under consideration.

Key officials, including Secretary Industries Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, MD



PESHAWAR: Special Assistant Zafarullah Khan Umerzai giving best performance certificate to a female employee.

## Iqbal's Khudi inspired Muslims of subcontinent to achieve Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Being the root of all existence and living with dignity, Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi (self) has inspired the Muslims of the subcontinent to achieve a separate state in the subcontinent where they could live with prosperity and practice religious obligations with complete freedom. After the debacle of the 1857 war, the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent were subjected to different forms of discrimination and inhuman treatment by the colonial masters, who considered them rivals after snatching powers from the Mughals that ruled the subcontinent for nearly 800 years.

The Muslims were deprived of all kinds of rights and liberties, including education, employment, social, economic, and independence, in that era of discrimination. "The colonial rulers had mostly tilted towards Hindus compared to Muslims and empowered Hindus, especially in education, employment, economic, and political services, in a bid to prolong their rule and keep Muslims backward," said Professor Dr Muhammad Naushad Khan, former Chairman Pakistan Studies Department, Islamia College Peshawar, while talking to APP.

In such a grim situation, he said that great Muslim reformer and educationist Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, religious leaders Shah Waliullah, Mujaddad Alif Sani, and legendary poet philosopher Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal came forward for help and guidance of the Muslims and infused new spirit among them to regain their past glory.

"Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi, or selfhood, has not only changed the mindset of the Muslim youth but has also helped them believe in their own abilities and strength imperative to achieve their ultimate goal of Pakistan," he said.

He said the significance of Khudi in an individual was a source of strength through which we could bring ourselves closest to the ultimate goal. He said Dr Muhammad Iqbal had faced criticism mostly from religious people on the concept of self, or khudi, but he didn't stop himself from sharing his thoughts with the people of the subcontinent, which later helped him achieve Pakistan.

The Poet of the East had presented his philosophy in a very unique and creative way by using high poetic imaginations, but his words cannot be understood by everyone because he was an ocean of knowledge.

He said Dr Iqbal has comprehensively explained selfhood's significance in his book Asrar-i-Khudi (Secrets of Self) and said the aim of life for a person should be self-realization, believing in their own abilities and self-knowledge.

The architect of two-nation theory has often used Shaheen (the eagle) as a source of strength to motivate youth of all ages, irrespective of borders and geography.

It was his inspired teachings and the Allahabad address of 1930 that united the Muslims of the subcontinent at Lahore on March 23, 1940, where the historic Pakistan's resolution was passed, and after its seven years of adoption, Pakistan came into being on the world map on August 14, 1947.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, in a message on 'Iqbal Day', said, "The poetry, ideology, values, and new thinking of the national poet have inspired several generations, and his Khudi teachings were a beacon of light for people and the country's development and prosperity."

He said that Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal had taught youth about living with dignity and exploring opportunities for themselves, besides being informed about the sacrifices of our forefathers and the identity of Muslims.

He said Dr Iqbal's teaching revolved mainly around peace, brotherhood, unity, political tolerance, and mutual coexistence.

The governor said that unity was a key element in putting Pakistan on the road to progress and development and achieving success in all fields of life.

He said working with unity and the right direction was the guarantee of our success in this world.

Meanwhile, Iqbal Day was celebrated with national enthusiasm in KP on Thursday. The day dawned with special prayers in mosques for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

Political, cultural, and literary organizations organized special programs and highlighted the miraculous services of Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal for Pakistan. Walks and rallies were held in all districts of KP, where debate competitions in educational institutions were organized. The speakers highlighted the life and services of the national poet and said that the history of Urdu and Persian literature as well as the Pakistan Movement would be incomplete without mentioning Dr Muhammad Iqbal's universal poetry.



PESHAWAR: A view of rain in provincial capital.





## In brief

### 3 held in attempt to murder cases F.P. Report

D I KHAN: The district police on Thursday apprehended three accused involved in two separate attempted murder cases. According to police, acting on the directives of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani and under the supervision of SP Saddar Circle Umar Hayat Khan, a meticulous operation was conducted in the Pharpur area. Led by SDPO Pharpur Circle Khashif Sattar and Station House Officer (SHO) Fahim Abbas, the police party successfully apprehended three individuals who were nominated in the attempted murder cases. During the search operation, the police also recovered a repeater rifle with five cartridges from the possession of the arrested suspects. The swift and effective operation by the district police demonstrates their unwavering commitment to maintaining law and order in the region. The apprehension of these accused will undoubtedly deter further criminal activities and ensure the safety and security of the community.

### 20-acre rice crop set on fire

TANGWANI (INP): Bundles of the paddy crop, grown over 20-acre of land, were reduced to ashes after they were set on fire by unidentified persons in Muhammad Ali Bahlkani, a suburban village of Tangwani in district Kashmir in Sindh, reported on Thursday. The bundles had been placed in the outhouse of a farmer named Sarwar Bahalkani. Despite having been informed, the fire brigade staff did not reach site of the incident, allowing the blaze to consume the crop. Dispelling the impression that he had enmity with anyone, the farmer appealed to the IGP Sindh, DIG Larkana and SSP Kashmir to take notice of the incident and provide him justice.

### Dense smog grips city

B A H A W A L P U R (INP): Dense and heavy smog has gripped Bahawalpur city and entire region Thursday, causing difficulties for people. The smog has engulfed the whole Bahawalpur region for the last few days. It has disrupted routine traffic and forced people to remain indoors. The district management has also urged people avoid coming out of home without necessary work. People were asked must wear face mask and glasses when they come out of home. The local Met Office has forecast that the region might continue receiving more smog if it did not receive rain.

### Junkie shoots dead four

KOT MITHAN (INP): A drug addict shot dead four of his family members in Kot Mithan town of Rajanpur District on Thursday. Ice drug addict Ahmad Sher targeted his family members with a rifle after a quarrel in Ghullapur area in precincts of Mudh Ranjha police station. He shot dead his 45-year-old cousin Muhammad Faisal Umar, 35-year-old Urfa wife of Faisal Umar, 65-year-old aunt Maqsooda Bibi and another cousin Sarfraz Ahmad Harral and fled away from the scene. Another relative was also injured in the firing. The police have launched investigation after taking the bodies into custody. Later, the police shifted the bodies and the injured to a hospital.

# Research-based education vital for societal progress

## F.P. Report

MULTAN: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman underscored the paramount importance of research-based education and training as the cornerstone for societal advancement and prosperity.

The Governor expressed these remarks in an insightful third convocation at the Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University (MNSUA), here on Thursday. Addressing the students, he highlighted the transformative power of individual capacity building, stressing its positive impact on families, the nation, and humanity.

The event witnessed the conferral of numerous accolades, including gold medals and 2038 degrees bestowed upon graduates. Balighur Rehman passionately advocated for a holistic approach to education, urging the fusion of training and academic pursuits to propel students forward.

He highlighted the significance of respecting oth-

ers, polite discourse, need for investment in human resources, and the importance of research in today's world. He wished the students to critically assess the accuracy of information on social media before accepting it. He urged students to discourage the spread of hatred.

Baligh stressed the students to check measures for the promotion of education and health. Funds for higher education were raised from 2013 to 2018. Corruption is cancer and the students must examine the report of Amnesty International. The students must engage in well-reasoned debates by upholding respect and dignity.

He also championed the commercialization of research and the promotion of a knowledge-based economy. Punjab Governor also inaugurated a sports complex costing Rs 250 million to promote healthy activities. Besides this, he also inaugurated the wheat sowing campaign in the varsity. His initiatives align

with the mission to develop the institution into a world-class university.

Vice Chancellor Dr Asif Ali expressed gratitude for the collaborative efforts of the Punjab Government, the Higher Education Commission, and philanthropists in the university's development. Asif remarked that varsity teachers play an important role in the provision of quality education to students. He shared ambition 15-year ambitious plan to elevate university standards at the international level. The varsity is heading towards a knowledge-based economy, he added.

The occasion was graced by prominent personalities, including academic leaders, government officials, and distinguished guests, marking a significant step towards educational and agricultural advancement in the region. On this occasion, Vice Chancellors of different universities of the region, officers from south Punjab secretariat and a good number of students were also present.

# Smart lockdown tactics to be utilize for smog control

## F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Sundas Irshad has said that smart lockdown would be imposed from November 10 to November 12 in the district Hafizabad on the directions of the Punjab government while all government and private educational institutions, offices, shopping malls, markets, restaurants, parks, cinemas and gymnasiums would be closed during the lockdown whoever, that shops which are exempted from lockdown including medical stores, hospitals, petrol pumps, vegetables, fruits, milk shops and bakeries

will be allowed to open.

While addressing the meeting of traders and officers of different departments, DC said that concerned field officers would be ensured implementation on directions of the Punjab government in the district and strict action would be taken against those who would violate the lockdown.

DC directed the officers that punitive action also be taken against burning of residues of crops, smoke emitting vehicles, industrial units and bricks kilns. She also directed the representatives of traders to close their shops and business centres during the lockdown.

Meanwhile, under the supervision of Deputy Director Colleges Hafizabad Professor Muhammad Azhar, awareness walks and seminars in the colleges of the district to persuade stunted for adopting preventive measures to avoid diseases spread by the virtue of smog.

A walk was also arranged led by Deputy Director Agriculture Hafizabad Muhammad Yousaf and a separate seminar was also held to create awareness among people about damage of smog and to implement on preventive measures.

# FC organizes free medical camp

## F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Frontier Corps (FC) North, in partnership with the NGO Transparent Hands, organized a one-day free medical camp in Torkham, District Khyber.

The event aimed to provide essential healthcare services to the local community and raise awareness about health and hygiene. A team of 20 medical professionals, including civilian doctors, dedicated their

time to offer free medical consultations, distribute medicines, conduct laboratory tests, and provide screenings for hepatitis B and C, serum uric acid, cholesterol levels, and gynecological ultrasound.

A total of 635 patients benefited from these services, with 242 males and 393 females receiving free medical care. Patients requiring immediate treatment were referred to the District Headquarters Hospital in Landi Kotal, ensuring that

critical cases were addressed promptly. The event also served as an opportunity to educate the local community on personal hygiene, disease prevention, and general health awareness.

This initiative received significant appreciation from the local residents, who recognized the valuable contribution of Frontier Corps North in extending healthcare facilities in the Khyber district.

# 96 kg hashish recovered

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Excise Mardan Region on Thursday foiled a bid of narcotics smuggling and recovered heavy quantity of hashish from a car on

motorway.

According to spokesperson for excise, 96 kilogram hashish was recovered from Islamabad bound car on motorway. The contraband was hidden in secret compart-

ments of the car.

Excise police also arrested two smugglers who were residents of Faisalabad.

Case has been registered and investigation is underway.



HYDERABAD: Families enjoying at bank of Indus River.

## Ceremony to mark Iqbal Day held F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: District Administration Lower Dir in collaboration with District Youth Department here Thursday arranged a ceremony in Government High School Kholgai to mark Iqbal Day. The ceremony was chaired by Deputy Commissioner, Muhammad Fawad and attended by teachers, students, area elders and members of civil society.

Children staged tableaux and sing songs to mark the day and highlight the vision of Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal who awoken Muslims of subcontinent that paved the way of creation for separate homeland. Speakers highlighted different aspects of Allama Iqbal philosophy and vision stressing youngsters to follow his vision for achieving success and achieving past glory. Speaking on the occasion, Youth Officer Malik Tariq stressed youngsters to study philosophy of Dr. Allama Iqbal to find their own destiny and make way in the world.

## Four people shot dead in Sargodha

SARGODHA (INP): At least four people including two women were gunned down over domestic issues here at Ghalla purr under the jurisdiction of Midh Ranjha police station on Thursday.

Police said that Ahmed Shair (40) r/o Midh Ranjha had a domestic dispute with his close relatives including Faisal (30), Urfah (25), Maqsooda (60) and Sarfraz (44) over some family issues. On the day of incident, he killed all the four after opening firing at them.

On getting information, Regional Police Officer Sargodha Region (RPO) Sharuk Kamal Siddiqui, District Police Officer (DPO) Muhammad Faisal Kamran along with Investigation team and police reached the spot and shifted the bodies to hospital for autopsy and necessary legal formalities.

# Importance of students' councils stressed

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: In order to develop leadership skills in students, the establishment of student council at the school level is an important need of the hour. So that in the future these students can play their role in the development of the country by using their leadership skills.

These views were expressed by Mardan City Mayor Himayatullah Mayar and Mardan Education Board Chairman Farid Ahmed Khattak while addressing the swearing-in ceremony and prize distribution ceremony of the Students Council at The City School Mardan Campus. Apart from students, parents also participated in large numbers in

the ceremony.

On this occasion, the Principal of The City School Madam Rahat Bano said that along with curricular activities, extracurricular activities develop self-confidence in the students. She said that in this modern era, it is important to equip students with modern technology and master it. But at the same time parents have a responsibility to keep a check and balance on their children.

Madam Rahat Banu said that character building of children is also important along with education. The position holders students attributed their success to the hard work of parents and teachers and said that Allah does not waste anyone's hard work. If you

want to achieve success, you have to work hard for it. The students hailed such extracurricular activities in schools and said that such activities should be organized in the future as well.

The parents expressed their views and said that such activities create self-confidence in the students. This removes the fear of students from performing in front of people. The chief guest of the event, Mardan City Mayor, administered the oath to the newly elected members of the Student Council. Chairman of Mardan Education Board Farid Ahmed Khattak and Mayor Mardan distributed prizes to the students who secured prominent positions in the annual matriculation examinations.

# Iqbal's poetry, a guarantee of hope, bright future

FAISALABAD (INP): The speakers at a seminar said that Allama Iqbal's poetry is a guarantee of hope, struggle and bright future. Iqbal's poetry lit the candle of freedom within the dead minds of the nation which not only guided the Muslims of the subcontinent but the subjugated nations of the world also got guidance.

They were addressing at a seminar organized in connection with 'Iqbal Day' at Nazria Pakistan hall under the aegis of Nazria Pakistan Forum on Thursday. Mian Abdul Waheed presided over the ceremony while Regional

Director Allama Iqbal Open University Faisalabad Dr. Bashir Ahmed Samim, Deputy Director Social Welfare Amina Alam, Maulana Muhammad Riaz Khari, Haji Muhammad Abid and others highlighted various aspects of Allama Muhammad Iqbal's life.

A large number of students and important personalities of the civil society also participated in the event. They said that great philosopher was always anxious about the slavery of the nation and throughout the life, he struggled for getting freedom of the Muslims from

British. They said that Allama Iqbal's poems are a practical interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. Unity of the Muslim Ummah, love with the Prophet (PBUH), and brotherhood are the true spirit of his poetry. Degradation and ignorance can be removed only by attaining the knowledge, so it is necessary for every individual to follow Islamic teachings, perform prayers, study the Holy Qur'an in depth and have the spirit of sacrifice for one another, they said. Later, books were distributed among participants.

# Several people fined over profiteering, stubble burning

SARGODHA (INP): The district administration imposed fine to several shopkeepers as well as farmers for stubble burning here at Jawhrian on Thursday.

According to the

spokesperson, Assistant Commissioner Shah Purr Anum Baber checked several bazaars across the city and imposed fine amounting to Rs 40000 to several shopkeepers for not selling the commodities against

control rates. She also imposed fine of Rs 80,000 to several farmers on stubble burning. The AC said on the occasion that the crackdown against the violators would continue on daily basis.

# Armageddon: The final frontier

## Khawaja Wajih-u-Din

**W**AKE up the civilized world. The arrogant, Zionist and apartheid state of Israel, having false pride, has even refused visas to the UN. It has challenged the UN Secretary General. Unfortunately, the united nations has repeatedly failed to play its role as an effective organization which can implement its resolutions Or play any efficacious role in any dispute. People in the streets perceive it as a tool for achieving there nefarious designs at the hands of the high and mighty countries.

45 abstentions and 14 against in the voting of the general assembly on cease-fire or humanitarian pause on Gaza clearly shows as who is on which side. With Israelis atrocities continuing unabated and the UN doing nothing except lip service, shows the world stance divided on this major human catastrophe. The very existence of UN is at stake. The sooner they realize it better it would be for the world.

Without prejudice to the above but in addition thereto it is added that in the 70 years of occupation by Zionist forces the

world has seen unending Palestinian genocide. 5,100,000 Palestinians have been killed since 1948. Palestinian victims of the racist Zionist Palestinian Genocide - 2 million dead since 1936, 0.1 million from violence, 1.9 million from war, expulsion and occupation-derived deprivation; 7 million refugees; 4.1 million Occupied Palestinians deprived of all the human rights listed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 6 million Palestinians forbidden to even live in the homeland continuously inhabited by their forbears to the very dawn of agrarian civilization; 0.9 million Palestinian children confined without charge or trial to what the Catholic Church and many others have described as Israel's Gaza Concentration Camp for the asserted "crime" of being Indigenous Palestinians living in a tiny, remorselessly Zionist-bombed patch of Palestine.

Despite large scale protests of the people around the globe Israel is refusing to budge and continuously slaughtering men women and children even toddlers in Gaza and West Bank etc. The world has seen many wars since the second world war. In majority of the cases Muslims have been lynched,

killed and mutilated all over the world. Most of the Muslim countries unfortunately are silent spectators. The civilized people in the world have not forgotten the Afghan wars, Iran Iraq war, invasion and destruction of Iraq and Libya (on false pretext), killing of Muslims in almost every part of the world including Bosnia, Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar and Muslims in Chechnya, to quote a few.

Creation and dismantling of ISIS by you know who, and it's disastrous results for the Muslims are also fresh in people's minds. We are still witnessing the Ukraine Russia war, where the west is trying to teach a lesson to Russia. The world does not care about killings slaughtering, mutilation and inhumane treatment in Indian occupied of Kashmir at the hands of India, where mental and physical torture, physical and sexual abuse of innocent Kashmiri women is a routine. Most importantly the conflict in around Syria is of Great significance considering the historical perspective and it's likely role to be played in the future in final triumph of Islam.

The point to ponder is where are we heading. As the things

are the advent of ad-Dajjal is a foregone conclusion. Ad-Dajjal, or Dajjal, is an evil figure in Islamic eschatology who will pretend to be the promised Messiah and later claim to be God appearing before the Day of judgment. Dajjal is mentioned in sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Like in Christianity, the Dajjal is said to emerge out in the east, The Dajjal is often compared to the Antichrist in Christian tradition.

According to Jews he is considered to be a hero and they would side with the evil figure.

Corresponding to the advent of the evil figure is Armageddon or a final battle between the forces of good and evil. The Malhama Al-Kubra is prophesied by the Holy prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon him) to be the most brutal battle in human history. The Malhama Al-Kubra is detailed in multiple Hadith narrations with varying details. However, the basic narrative framework of the cycle of prophecies in Islamic eschatology is that this battle is said to occur after the Muslims and Christian Romans victoriously fight alongside each other against a common enemy. It corresponds to the battle of Armageddon in Christian

eschatology. It is stated to occur soon before the emergence of the Dajjal.

It is a firm conviction of any believer that Armageddon is bound to happen. A war in which 99 out of every 100 combatants will be killed. A war which shall bring about so much destruction that has no comparison in the human history, with the Muslims to be victorious at the end. It is only a question of time.

From the perspective of the other side, Alan Hart, in his book "Zionism the Real Enemy of Jews" (Volume One), are not only Zionists but also born-again American Christians who are variously described as conservative, evangelical, and fundamental Christians. He said "They pray and, in political alliance with Zionism's own zealots, work for it to come to pass. They are convinced it will because, they say, such an end game is in accordance with the God's plan." This determination of happening of Armageddon and considering it to be their religious belief is not only shaping the American people lives but also affecting American foreign policy. It is because of this belief that America, the torch bearer of human rights, is not

moved over the plight of the Muslims in general and the Palestinian people in particular. She seems determined to veto every resolution in favor of Palestinian people calling for a cease fire, despite protests all over the world including Jews.

The Zionists consider these conservative Christians as one of their best allies. Benjamin Netanyahu as reported by The Jerusalem Post on 7th April, 2008, stated "Israel has no better friends in the world than Christian Zionists. This is a friendship of the heart, a friendship of common roots, and a friendship of common civilization".

The current scenario of Gaza and the inhumane stand of Israel and its allies clearly shows that they are bent upon their policy of playing out the events of Armageddon from their point of view. The events succeeding the second world war would bear testimony to the fact that the world is moving slowly and gradually to Armageddon. It is also a fact that it would be between justice and injustice, right and wrong. The lines are being clearly demarcated.

*The writer is former Registrar Peshawar High Court.*





## Egyptian nationals trying to leave Gaza stuck at Rafah

GAZA STRIP: It was a long-awaited family reunion. In October, Reem Rasmi travelled from her home in Egypt to the Gaza Strip to visit her sister's family after five years. Her nephew was getting married, and it was time to celebrate.

A month later, the 55-year-old is stuck in the besieged enclave, displaced by the war that broke out on October 7 and that has prevented her from being able to return to her husband and children back in Egypt. For Rasmi, an Egyptian national, the dilemma is doubled: Even if she does manage to cross over at the Rafah border, she will need to leave her sister's family behind, amid unrelenting bombing from Israel. "I was supposed to leave on October 10, and I'm still waiting," she said. "I have never experienced war like this before, with explosions everywhere. I can't even describe the level of terror we're in."

Rasmi and her sister's family were forced to flee from the sister's home in the al-Zaytoon neighbourhood east of Gaza City to another relative's house in the southern city of Khan Younis because of the bombardment. She said her husband and children are constantly asking her about whether she has heard anything from Rafah border officials on when she can cross. She has no firm answer for them.

"My children are consumed by fear and anxiety, and I cannot reassure them and tell them I'm fine because they watch the news on TV," she said. "The images show the horror and displacement of people in this war. Sometimes even I cannot comprehend what is hap-

pening." The Rafah crossing is the only exit point for Palestinians and foreign nationals. It has been repeatedly bombed by Israel and is completely shut to those who wish to enter Gaza from the Egyptian side.

Egypt has said that it would help secure the evacuation of about 7,000 foreigners and dual nationals from the Gaza Strip. On November 1, the border crossing for exiting was finally opened after several weeks, but only for the evacuation of foreigners and dual nationals, and the coordinated transfer of dozens of wounded Palestinians. A daily list names those from Gaza who have been allowed to leave. The list is vetted by Israel. Hundreds of people who have flocked to the crossing over the past week have been stopped from exiting. Among them is Rasmi.

"I am living the most difficult days of my life under bombardment," she said. "Luck is not on my side." An estimated 50,000 dual nationals living in the Gaza Strip hold both Palestinian and Egyptian citizenship, according to Alaa al-Din Obeid, a member of the Egyptian community cultural centre in Gaza. "There are 8,000 Egyptian women married to Palestinians, and these mothers can pass on their citizenship directly to their children but not to their husbands," Obeid said, speaking from Rafah.

Palestinians with an Egyptian grandmother can also gain Egyptian citizenship through court orders, he added. Obeid said that before the war, the Egyptian community cultural centre was in the process of gathering infor-

mation for an updated census. "This is why it's hard to know exactly how many Egyptian Palestinian dual nationals managed to leave through Rafah," he said, saying that the number is estimated at 300.

On the Palestinian side of the Rafah crossing, some Palestinian Egyptians are questioning whether Egyptian authorities are doing enough to help them leave. Khalida Hassan said she and her four children have been waiting at the crossing since it opened more than a week ago. "We saw death with our own eyes," the 45-year-old said. "Every day we hand over our passports and our bags get taken and we wait to cross to the Egyptian side, but they keep closing the border and return our bags and documents."

"We all hold foreign passports so there should not be a difference between having an Egyptian or US passport," she added. Hassan, who has lived in Gaza all her life, said her house was bombed and she was forced to flee south, where there is no water or electricity. "When will I leave Gaza? Are they waiting for me and my children to die here? We all have the right to leave the crossing," she said.

Those who have managed to cross the border have mixed emotions. Mohammed Dahman, 36, holds an Egyptian passport and was finally able to leave through the Rafah crossing last week with his pregnant wife and two children. "I left my home in the Rimal neighbourhood in Gaza City which held all my memories with my family and under the bombardment fled to Khan Younis to stay with my friends," he said. — Aljazeera

### 'You're just scum': Haley swipes at Ramaswamy

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Presidential candidates Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy make no secret of their dislike for each other and their animosity came to a head at the Republican debate, with Haley muttering under her breath that her rival was "just scum."

Ramaswamy, a pugnacious entrepreneur who delights in making outrageous statements, provoked groans from the audience during a discussion on banning TikTok when he mentioned that Haley's daughter had used the Chinese short video app. "You might want to take care of your family first," he told Haley, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and a former governor of South Carolina.

"Leave my daughter out of your voice," Haley shot back, adding under her breath, "You're just scum." It was not the first time Haley, a foreign policy hawk, and Ramaswamy, an anti-interventionist on foreign conflicts, have clashed over TikTok. "Every time I hear you I feel a little bit dumber," Haley said after they crossed swords about the app during a previous encounter in September.

On social media platform X, Haley's son, Nalin Haley, said Ramaswamy's attack was "desperate," adding that his sister's TikTok account was deleted a "very very long time ago." Haley is vying with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis to become the top challenger to runaway favorite Donald Trump in the Republican nominating contest. Ramaswamy, a relative unknown at the start of the year, gained buzz earlier this year but appears to have since lost momentum.

### 'Fighting could break country apart'

YANGON: Myint Swe, appointed as Myanmar's president after the coup, has warned this month's gains by an alliance of ethnic armed groups in areas bordering China risk breaking the country apart, in the military regime's first acknowledgement of the challenge it is facing.

The Three Brotherhood Alliance, a powerful ethnic armed grouping, launched a coordinated attack on a dozen military outposts in the northern Shan state, along the country's eastern border with China on October 26, capturing the border town of Chin Shwe Haw. Updates on November 7 said the alliance continued to gain ground and had taken control of more military posts, seizing weapons and military equipment.

The military had responded by sending in fighter jets to bomb the area, it said. The offensive is the most serious test for the generals since they seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021. It has also energised the civilian People's Defence Forces that have been fighting for months, sometimes alongside ethnic armed groups, to overturn the coup with fighting reported in other parts of the country.

"If the government does not effectively manage the incidents happening in the border region, the country will be split into various parts," Myint Swe told a national defence and security council meeting in the capital, Naypyidaw, according to the state-run Global New Light of Myanmar. "It is necessary to carefully control this issue." The newspaper said coup leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing had opened the meeting, saying the military had "successfully regained control of the situation" after "dealing a significant blow to the MNDA (Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army)".

Citing Meng Aung Hlaing, the report said the MNDA had suffered a "large number of casualties". The MNDA is one of several groups within the alliance, which also includes the Ta'Ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Arakan Army (AA). The members of the alliance said they had mounted the offensive to eradicate "oppressive military dictatorship" as well as to put an end to the booming business of cyber-scramming. — Aljazeera



GAZA: Palestinians crowd together as they wait for food distribution in Rafah.

## Analysis-Argentina election puts China, Brazil ties in the spotlight

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters): Argentina could see a resetting of some global ties depending on the result of its run-off presidential election later this month - although the value of trade with partners like China and Brazil may outweigh any short-term political posturing.

While Economy Minister Sergio Massa, a pragmatist in the ruling left-leaning coalition, has signaled policy continuity, radical libertarian candidate Javier Milei has sharply lambasted China, Brazil, the pope, South America's Mercosur trade bloc and the China-led BRICS group. Massa and Milei will compete in a Nov. 19 head-to-head that looks likely to be a tight race, with angry voters deeply divided amid inflation running at nearly 140%, two-fifths of the population in poverty, sky-high interest rates and capital controls hurting the economy.

The vote could impact the global positioning of Argentina, South America's No. 2 economy, which is a major grains exporter as well as a lithium and shale producer. But years of volatility have made some international investors wary and it is the top debtor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Gustavo Martinez Pandiani, current Argentine ambassador to Switzerland and Massa's likely foreign minister, said a future Massa government would seek to improve the country's global partnerships.

"While some promise to cut ties with Brazil or China, we want more markets and more trading partners, not less," he said. Milei has said he "won't make deals with communists"

in China or Brazil, though he does back private trade. He has described climate change as a "lie of socialism" and said Argentine Pope Francis is "on the side of bloody dictatorships."

Diana Mondino, Milei's likely foreign minister, said some of his statements had been blown out of context, and that in fact he would look "to reinsert Argentina into the world." "Not only is there not a problem with Brazil, but we hope to be able to trade as much as possible with Brazil," said Mondino, adding that with China - a key trade partner, creditor and investor - Milei would simply stop opaque state-to-state deals.

That could include the country's \$18 billion currency swap line with China, which has helped cash-strapped Argentina pay back its IMF debt. China is also a big investor in local lithium projects, hydro and nuclear. "What we are not going to do are secret contracts. Argentina, this government, in the last 20 years, has had multiple secret negotiations," she said. "That is not normal and it is what we have said we are not going to do."

A current senior Foreign Ministry source, from the same Peronist coalition as Massa, predicted that Argentina's ties with Brazil and China would continue regardless of who won the election. "Relations with China are going to go as they have until now with either of the two candidates. The intense trade that exists with them cannot be dissolved," the person said, asking not to be identified.

"The same thing would happen

with Brazil: bad personal relations do not affect trade." Massa and Milei have also clashed on Mercosur, the regional trade bloc led by Argentina and Brazil that has faced internal tension from other members who say it is not an effective trade mechanism for negotiating global deals.

The Peronists want to strengthen the bloc, while Milei has threatened to pull Argentina out of it. Pandiani said member countries needed to "modernize Mercosur to make it more efficient," and added that a Massa government would consider if their "main platform" for global trade. "Argentina has a very promising future, because it has what the world demands: proteins; traditional, green and transition energy; critical minerals such as lithium and copper; rare earths and qualified human resources," he said.

The current government has also pushed to have Argentina in the China-backed BRICS group of developing countries, which also includes India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa. Argentina was invited to join the group in August. Milei opposes joining. "The BRICS are not a trading bloc. As of now it's not clear why we would want to have membership in this group," said Mondino. The BRICS are a relatively loosely-formed group with diverse political and geographical positions. Pandiani disagreed. "Rejecting entry into BRICS is nonsense; we believe that Argentina should always sit at the negotiating tables where important issues for our future are discussed," he said.

## 1,000 USAID employees sign letter backing Israel-Gaza ceasefire

WASHINGTON: Hundreds of staffers at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have signed a letter calling for an "immediate ceasefire" in Gaza, as a growing number of government employees voice dissent against US support for Israel's military offensive there. The letter, which started circulating last week, reached 1,000 signatures, representing officials from across USAID's departments and overseas missions.

"While we appreciate and acknowledge efforts by USAID to call for an urgent humanitarian response in Gaza and understand that the Agency is working tirelessly to make this happen, we must remember that humanitarian assistance efforts and life-saving aid are largely rendered moot in situations of escalating and indiscriminate bombing and violence," the letter said. USAID is responsible for overseeing the US's foreign development and humanitarian aid across the world.

In the letter, first revealed by Foreign Policy magazine and The Washington Post on November 3, the employees

decry the "numerous violations of international law" and the mounting civilian death toll in Gaza. "We believe that further catastrophic loss of human life can only be avoided if the United States Government calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of Israeli hostages, and the restoration of water, food, fuel, and electricity to the people of Gaza by the State of Israel," it reads.

"In the longer term, we call on the United States Government to join the international community and human rights organizations in holding all parties, including the State of Israel, to international law, which includes ending Israel's illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories and settlements on occupied land." In a statement to Al Jazeera shared on condition of anonymity, one of the USAID staffers who authored the letter voiced particular dismay at Washington's decision to veto a UN Security Council resolution last month calling for a humanitarian pause to the fighting.

The staff member also stressed that humanitarian aid to Gaza without stopping the war is not enough. "Many humanitarian officials from many different conflict zones agree that aid cannot be a Band-Aid to a problem that requires a political solution. The people of Gaza need aid, but first they need the bombs to stop," the staffer said.

"Many USAID officials, particularly those in Middle East missions and bureaus, are tired of trying to programme foreign aid and humanitarian assistance in response to political and foreign policy errors and war crimes that the US [government] is supporting." The war started on October 7 after the Palestinian group Hamas launched an attack on Israel, killing over 1,400 people and taking more than 200 captives.

Israel retaliated with a relentless bombing campaign that has killed more than 10,000 people in Gaza. Settler violence against Palestinians has also soared in the West Bank amid a security crackdown by Israeli forces. In addition to its bombing campaign in Gaza, the Israeli government has severely restricted the entry of food, water and fuel

over the past month. Defence Minister Yoav Gallant promised to impose a "complete siege" on the territory, saying that his country is "fighting against human animals".

Although the humanitarian situation in Gaza is deteriorating, US President Joe Biden has rejected calls for a ceasefire while expressing "unwavering" support for Israel. The White House has repeatedly said that it is not drawing any "red lines" that might limit the Israeli military operation. Rights groups and the UN, however, have urged Israel to stop the bombing, which has struck hospitals, refugee camps, churches, mosques and schools sheltering civilians.

Last week, UN experts warned that the Palestinian people are at a "grave risk of genocide", underscoring that Israel's allies "bear responsibility and must act now to prevent its disastrous course of action". The UN's Genocide Convention defines genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group", including killings and measures to prevent births. — Aljazeera

## Ankara slams EU report on Turkey's membership bid

ANKARA: Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has slammed the European Commission's annual report assessing its long-stalled bid to join the European Union, saying it was unjust and biased. The report, published by the EU's executive arm, accused Ankara of "serious backsliding" on democratic standards, the rule of law, human rights and judicial independence.

"We categorically reject unfounded claims and unjust criticisms, particularly on the political criteria and the Chapter on Judiciary and Fundamental Rights," the Turkish ministry said in a statement on Thursday. The Commission also said Turkey did not comply with the principles of the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms in its counterterrorism operations.

"The government has a legitimate right and a responsibility to fight terrorism, but it is essential that it does so in full compliance with the principles of the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms," the report said. The Turkish ministry said the allegations were unfair and highlighted "the insincerity of EU's approach and a clear double-standard", adding that fundamental rights issues were contentious even among EU member states.

The Commission's report is meant to update Turkey's progress towards meeting standards for EU membership and could strain ties that are already troubled over immigration and, more recently, the war between Israel and the Hamas armed group in Gaza. Since Israel started bombarding the Gaza Strip on October 7, Turkey's

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused Israel of "behaving like a war criminal" and blamed the West for being the "main culprit behind the massacre unfolding".

Turkey began talks to join the EU in 2005, but that bid has long been frozen due to rights concerns and foreign policy rifts. The EU has grown frustrated by Turkey's stance on issues such as Syria, Cyprus, and Libya as well as its competing territorial claims with Greece to islands in the Aegean Sea. On September 13, the European Parliament adopted a report by the European Commission stating Turkey's EU accession process "cannot be resumed" without a "drastic change of course" by Ankara. Erdogan responded that Ankara could "part ways with the EU" if necessary. — Aljazeera

## Ethiopian troops force armed group out of holy site

LALIBELA: The Ethiopian army on Thursday regained control of Lalibela, a UNESCO World Heritage site, following a pullout by a regional armed group whose fighters had overrun much of the historic town a day earlier. Fierce fighting broke out with Fano fighters taking control of much of Lalibela and pushing the army back to a base on the town's outskirts.

But the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) regained control on Thursday, residents said. "Until early morning, Fano controlled most of the town. When we woke up, Fano were finishing leaving the town," a resident told AFP news agency by phone on condition of anonymity. "I can see ENDF deployed in the streets."

Other details about the attack remain unclear as media access to the region is severely restricted and government officials are yet to comment on the matter. Government spokesperson Legesse

Tulu had disputed the reports of violence, telling Reuters news agency that the city and its surroundings were peaceful.

The Amhara region in northern Ethiopia has witnessed regular fighting throughout the year, raising concerns among residents and Amharas in the diaspora about the safety of Lalibela's rock-hewn churches dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries. The town is a pilgrimage destination for Orthodox Christians. Lidetu Ayalew, an Amhara politician based in the United States who grew up near Lalibela, said he feared the churches could be harmed. "The churches risk being struck and destroyed due to careless firing of heavy weapons," he said in a statement.

Designated a World Heritage site by the United Nations in 1978, Lalibela's 11 medieval cave churches were carved out of monolithic blocks to form a "New Jerusalem", after Muslim conquests halted

Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Ethiopian soldiers fired heavy weapons 11 times from locations near the churches, a deacon said, sending damaging shockwaves through one of the subterranean places of worship. "The vibrations are affecting the churches," the deacon said, requesting anonymity for fears of reprisals.

Although Fano fought alongside federal troops in the two-year conflict in neighbouring Tigray, tensions have been rising since April, when the federal government announced it was dismantling regional forces across Ethiopia. The move triggered protests by Amhara nationalists who said the move would weaken their region. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government imposed a six-month state of emergency in early August after fighting erupted in Amhara, raising concerns about Ethiopia's stability just months after a peace deal ended the brutal Tigray war.



**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 1-800-5905747

## The dilemma of level playing field

**T**HE Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) has recently presented a 24-point Charter of Demands (CoD) to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) asking the watchdog to ensure free, fair and transparent general elections and provide a level playing field to the PTI so that the party can freely run its campaign in the run-up to the Feb 8 polls. According to the details, a three-member team of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf met with the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) shared its concerns about the elections and pointed out obstacles to the party's election campaign. The PTI team asked for allotment of the bat as the party's electoral symbol and informed the ECP that PTI was not being allowed to hold public gatherings, rallies and corner meetings on private premises. The Team further pointed out that either their requests for holding public meetings were unduly delayed or even flatly refused. The party faces challenges and even not being allowed to print its flags and banners. During the meeting, the PTI team also demanded the release and recovery of allegedly kidnapped and arrested PTI workers/ leaders and requested the issuance of a notification by the ECP to enable a 'fair and just' electoral process.

There are wide-ranging apprehensions and a panorama of a level playing field from across the political spectrum ahead of crucial elections in the country. Interestingly, the complaint from the Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is somehow justified because the party remained in the opposition and had a clash with the government and state institutions over the past almost one and a half years. The cabal of the former ruling coalition partners including the PML-N, the PPP, the MQM Pakistan, and the Awami National Party are also complaining about segregation/discrimination and demanding a level playing field from the ECP and the interim setup, which they installed through mutual consensus a few months back.

Historically, a level playing field in the electoral process is crucial for ensuring fairness, transparency, and the integrity of democratic elections. Hence, the provision of an equal opportunity to all political parties and candidates to compete for votes, regardless of their resources or political influence is of utmost importance. It sets a healthy electoral environment and promotes a more inclusive and representative democracy, along with building voters' confidence in the democratic institutions, electoral system, and election regulating body in the country. Anyhow, impartiality and provision of a level playing field for all stakeholders become more essential in the modern age, where nothing can be hidden from the eyes of vibrant media and hybrid social media.

As for the PTI, the party has some genuine concerns regarding the forthcoming polls and alleged backtracking ahead of nationwide elections in the country. Political engineering instead of prosecution and indictment of the PTI leaders in the aftermath of the May 9 riots is an important factor that has changed the entire political landscape in the country. The newly formed Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) has become a reality that's not only made a deep cut in the PTI's vote bank but significantly reduced the public support and effectiveness of the party, once claimed to be the largest political group in the country. Similarly, the May 9 riots and PTI's resolute clash/tussle with the national institutions together with the Pakistan Army, the ECP and a selected view of the judiciary has seriously berated the group among the intelligentsia and educated segment of the society.

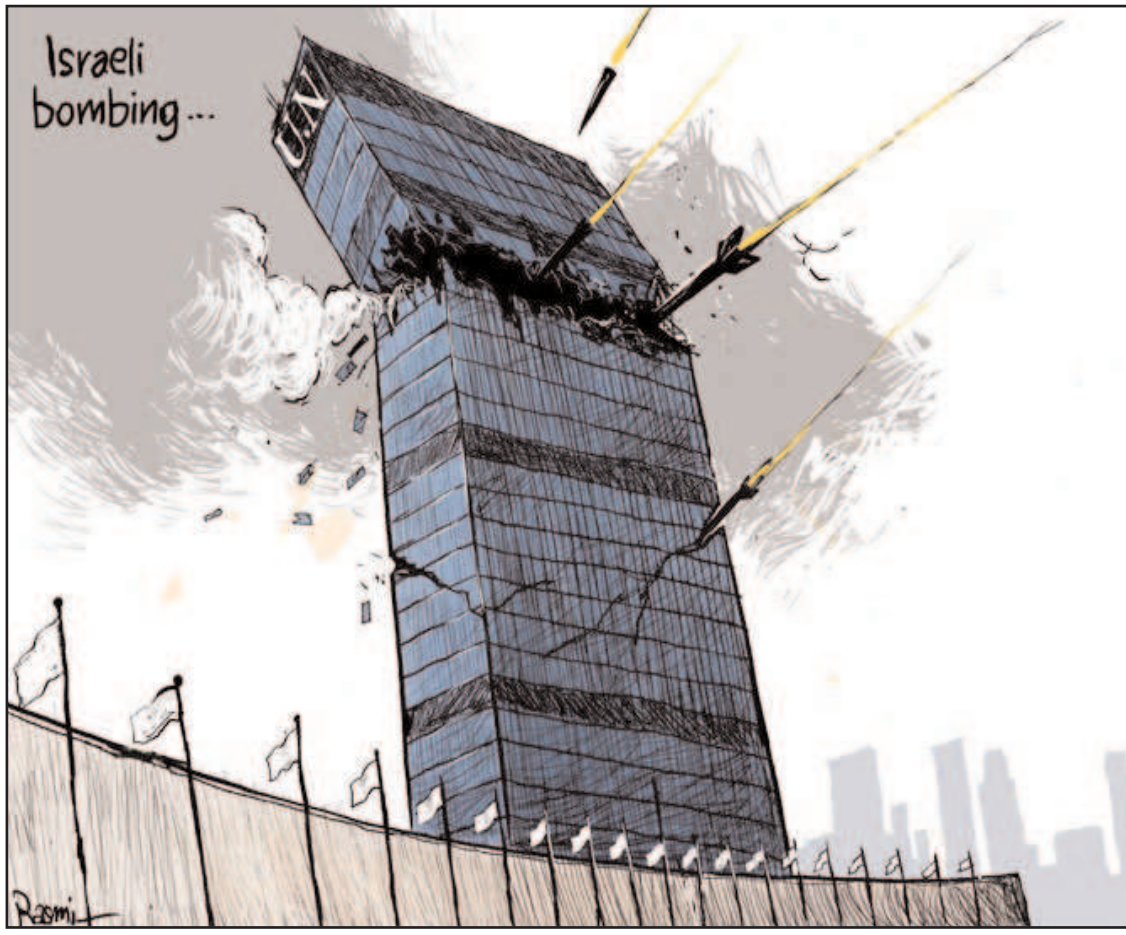
The PTI has categorically lodged its complaint at the competent forum and the ECP has a constitutional role in providing a level playing field to all contesting political groups including the PTI, the MQM and other regional/ethnic groups, so each party and every candidate launch its election campaign in a free, fair and conducive environment. Whilst, the PTI should not use this opportunity to settle its political and legal issues relating to the May 9 riots, Toshkhana cases etc in the garb of a level playing field before or in the post-election era. At the same time, the ECP must use all possible resources to ensure a level playing field and equal rights and opportunities for all stakeholders, as it is essential for upholding the core principles of democracy, equality, fairness, and representation, in the electoral process. Which is a top priority of a long-held turmoil-hit and politically destabilized nation.

## Outright Institutional Failure

The KP Provincial Apex Committee has recently decided to continue crackdown/actions against the illegal spectrum more effectively and systematically and the concerned provincial/federal entities were directed to ensure well-coordinated actions to this end. During the third meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee, the forum took stock of the progress on the implementation of its decisions taken in the last session concerning curbing the illegal spectrum including smuggling, extortion, use of illegal SIMS and weapons, Hawala/Hundi, fake documentation, Narcotics and NCP vehicles etc. in the province. Historically, the state of Pakistan has backtracked facing a serious setback due to the non-deliverance and bad conduct of its institutions that primarily failed to grasp their primary role and task in the past decades. Ranging from police, the FIA, anti-corruption Establishment, NAB, the Judiciary, Pakistan Railway, Pakistan Post, the PIA, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, banking, agriculture, energy, textile, trade and IT sectors. Each and every aspect of our national life fundamentally witnessed extreme degradation, economic losses and collapse. Historically, the previous as well as the incumbent rulers never held accountable and prosecuted the relevant institutions and their top brass for failure instead Pakistani leaders established new institutions and formed committees and commissions to satisfy the national needs temporarily. It is a matter of the near past that apex committees were formed in the centre and provinces to tackle the issue of terrorism in the aftermath of the APS tragedy. But leaders as well as the institutions took that as time pass activity and did not implement the 19 points National Action Plan (NAP) in true letter and spirit. Hence, new apex committees have been formed to repeat the same worn-out strategies and failed policies instead of taking stringent institutional reforms, and accountability of the high-ups who only enjoyed luxurious lives but did not fulfill obligations attached to their prerogatives. Besides tackling the current situation, the committees must dig out the circumstances that led to the revival of terrorism, together with the institutional failures in detecting and responding to those fiascos. If our District and Divisional institutions had performed their responsibility in the past year, no such situation would ever have existed in the country. The leaders must set such rules, deadlines and trends that strengthen national institutions enabling them effectively perform their functions and tackle the challenges mechanically at the early stage 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.



# One day, the war between Israel and Hamas will be over

Eспен Barth Eide

**O**NE day, the war between Israel and Hamas will come to an end. And when that happens, Israelis and Palestinians will need to re-engage in the essential question of what could constitute a peaceful settlement between them. But with each passing day of bombing, blockade, rocket attacks and hostages not released, it becomes more and more difficult to resume the process towards a two-state solution.

The war has reminded us that there is no viable alternative to a peace process and a two-state solution. The international community cannot continue to look the other way. We cannot allow another 30 years of occupation, war and unresolved conflict. At the time of writing, one month has passed since the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7. A total of 1,400 Israelis were murdered. Over 230 people were taken hostage.

The air raid sirens continue to blare due to continued rocket attacks, and Israelis across the country are deeply worried about their loved ones. But the same is true of Palestinians. The people of Gaza are living with the sound and devastation of Israeli bombing raids night and day. Over 9,000 Palestinians have been killed, nearly half of them children. The death toll is rising every day. For one month, the people of Gaza have faced severe shortages of essential supplies such as food, water, fuel and medicines.

Even if hundreds have been allowed to exit through the Rafah crossing to Egypt, several thousand foreign nationals, including 250 Norwegians, are still waiting to leave Gaza. Roughly half the buildings in Gaza have been damaged or reduced to rubble. People who had very little to start with have lost everything. People who were already refugees have once again been forced to flee. Hamas's attack on October 7 was a flagrant violation of international

law. We have been clear in stating that Hamas should be considered a terrorist organisation. Israel has the right to self-defence against the horrible attacks committed by Hamas.

At the same time, international law establishes clear limits for what is permitted in warfare. All parties to conflict must comply with international humanitarian law. The parties must take active steps to distinguish between military targets and the civilian population to the extent possible. In addition, the harm caused to civilians or civilian infrastructure must not be excessive in relation to the military advantage anticipated. The warfare in Gaza has by far exceeded these limitations. It is explicitly prohibited to carry out attacks on hospitals, healthcare personnel and civilian infrastructure, and to set up blockades preventing access to life-saving humanitarian relief for civilians in need. International humanitarian law applies just as fully to Hamas: It is prohibited to kill civilians or take them hostage. Nor is it permitted to fire rockets indiscriminately into Israeli territory, or to use civilians as a human shield.

Furthermore, using schools, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure as a base for launching military attacks on Israel is unacceptable. All such actions would further exacerbate the risk to an already vulnerable civilian population. The most urgent priority is to secure a break in the war in order to alleviate human suffering and help those who are affected. The situation in Gaza is desperate. The scale of destruction is enormous.

A child is dying every 15 minutes. Norway has a broad network in and outside the Middle East and we are making full use of these contacts now. On October 27, Norway was one of 120 UN member states that voted in favour of a UN General Assembly resolution calling for a

humanitarian truce and demanding the unhindered provision of essential aid to civilians in Gaza. The international community is expressing its concern about the people in Gaza and their right to life and health. This sends a clear message to all parties of the need to respect international law, protect the civilian population and allow humanitarian aid into Gaza.

We must ensure that humanitarian aid actually reaches people inside Gaza. This is a matter of urgency. UN resolutions alone will not feed the hungry. Some aid has been allowed in over the past week, but it is only a drop in the ocean of what is needed. In Gaza, there is a huge, acute need for fuel, medicines, water and food.

Norway has increased its humanitarian support to the UN and humanitarian organisations by 200 million Norwegian kroner (\$18m). We have also urged other countries to increase their humanitarian support to the people of Gaza and to maintain their support for the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. If the authorities in the West Bank collapse, there will be no one for Israel to negotiate with when the day comes when it is possible to resume peace negotiations. We are doing all we can to get Norwegian and other foreign citizens out of Gaza. The situation for everyone who is in Gaza is becoming increasingly difficult to cope with. We welcome the progress that has been made over the last days enabling some foreign nationals to leave Gaza. We are working hard to ensure that Norwegian citizens and other foreigners can leave Gaza in the coming days. A Norwegian emergency response team deployed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in place in Cairo and stands ready to help those who come out of Gaza.

Norway has a duty to speak up about the fact that the military actions against Gaza have gone too far. We do so as a friend to Israel, fully cognisant of the shock imposed on Israeli society by the terror of October 7. The international community cannot simply look the other way. We cannot and will not accept the enormous suffering and devastation we are now seeing in Gaza. We are in the midst of a deep crisis: for Gaza, for Israel, for Palestine, for the Middle East and the international community as a whole. Our message to Hamas is that they must halt their rocket attacks on Israel. They must release the hostages immediately and unconditionally, and they must never use civilians as a human shield. When the war is over, Israel will need to live side by side with the Palestinians and the Arab countries. The risk of the conflict spreading and of further escalation is growing with every day that passes. Violence by the Israeli security forces and settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank has increased dramatically. There are daily clashes between Israel and Lebanon. In many countries across the world, we are seeing that what started as peaceful protests in support of the people of Gaza are leading to further animosity. We can never tolerate a situation where members of the Jewish community in Norway fear for their safety because of the situation in the Middle East.

The 2.3 million inhabitants of Gaza are holding their breath, hoping that their families will survive and that they will still have a roof over their heads after the next night's bombing raids. In Israel, hundreds of families are fearful for their kidnapped family members and are praying for their safe return. This situation cannot continue. That is why we are appealing to the Israeli government and the Palestinians to find another way. To stop the violence. To ensure humanitarian access. To release the hostages. And to resume the negotiations on a two-state solution.

Aljazeera

# The farce of post-Gaza Pax Americana in ME

Marwan Bishara

**A**MERICA'S Middle East diplomacy and Israel's war on Gaza are two sides of the same coin. Washington's efforts to shield Israel as it carries out war crimes in Palestine have implicated it in yet another war that threatens to engulf the whole region. Since the Israeli army embarked on its bloody assault on Gaza a month ago, the Biden administration has dispatched its foremost naval strike force, including two aircraft carriers, to the Middle East in order to put its detractors on notice and its allies at ease. It has also sent its top diplomat to do Israel's bidding in Arab capitals and to buy time for its military to "finish the job" in Gaza.

In meetings with Arab officials, Secretary of State Antony Blinken has deflected all criticism of Israel's war conduct, which has been killing hundreds of Palestinians and injuring thousands each day. He has parroted false official Israeli statements and rejected any discussion of a ceasefire, lending unconditional US support to Israel's all-out war on Palestine. But as Israel has intensified its bombings of hospitals, schools, mosques and residential buildings, and pushed forward with its land invasion of the densely populated strip, the Biden administration has switched emphasis from talking about the war to talking about future peace. In his third visit to the region, last week, Blinken failed to contain the fallout from the war on Gaza or defuse the anger and disappointment in Arab capitals. Arab ministers he met with condemned Israel's war crimes, expressing outrage at the skyrocketing death toll, which has surpassed 10,000 people. Blinken tried to take the focus away from the war. He tried to convince Arab leaders to stop talking about a ceasefire and start talking about the desired "lasting peace" that follows. But his fanciful promise of peace fell on deaf ears in the Arab capitals, as they refuse to discuss the "day after", at least in public, before the US agrees to call for an immediate ceasefire. Blinken enjoyed a better reception at the Palestinian Authority's (PA) headquarters in Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank. PA President Mahmoud Abbas welcomed US overtures, agreeing to take over Gaza in the context of a comprehensive post-war peace settlement.

This is truly mind-boggling, both in terms of its cynicism and gullibility. The cynicism is derived from the PA's collusion with the US-backed genocidal war on Gaza, where some 2.3 million Palestinians are struggling to survive a crippling blockade and heavy bombardment by Israel. Although the PA has condemned Israeli war crimes in Gaza and spearheaded Arab diplomatic efforts at the United Nations, it has also cracked down on all forms of Palestinian protest against the war. Worse still, as Israel has intensified its military incursions into the occupied West Bank, including the city of Ramallah, arresting thousands, the PA leadership has remained quiet. And as violent Jewish settlers have escalated their attacks on Palestinian villagers, Abbas has been eerily indifferent. Abbas's gullibility lies in his blind belief that the Biden administration, which is complicit in the genocide in Gaza, is able and willing to deliver just peace for the Palestinians. If only he could keep the West Bank calm a bit longer, as Israel decimates Gaza - he reckons - he soon could rule over Hamas-free Gaza.

What a farce! The mere idea of the PA getting back into Gaza on the back of Israeli fighter jets and tanks razing it to the ground is so obviously foolish. Abbas & co must be delusional to think that Israel is spending blood and treasure in order to hand over both the West Bank and Gaza to their incompetent regime. In fact, the Israeli government is making no secret of its plans to maintain overall control of the strip, indefinitely. If they truly believe that a post-war, victorious Israel will help them establish an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, I've got a bridge in China to sell them. Why on earth would President Joe Biden spend any political capital, no less in an election year, on establishing an independent Palestinian state? If his administration cannot lean on Israel to accept a two-day or even a two-hour humanitarian pause, whether to save lives or save face, how in hell would it convince the Israeli government and society to accept a two-state solution?

In reality, America will be hard-pressed to find a single Israeli party, let alone a major one, ready to end the illegal settlements and withdraw from the occupied territories in return for peace with the Palestinians. The fascists and fanatics that make up the unity Israeli government and hold the absolute majority of parliament today are thinking of new ways to expel the Palestinians, not to reward them with a state of their own. The best case scenario, under the current circumstances, would see America pressure Israel to accept a half-state on half of the West Bank administered by the PA, in return for full Arab normalisation and a zillion more dollars in US aid. On the eve of the US invasion of Iraq some 20 years ago, President George W Bush also proposed a "vision of a two-state solution" and devised, along with the Europeans, an international roadmap to achieve that objective "day after" the war. And the result? More of the same bloody occupation, illegal settlement and siege, in addition to the forever wars that have wreaked havoc in the region.

In truth, thanks to America's unconditional support, there is no Israeli peace partner to engage with, today or the "day after". None. Nada. No Israeli de Gaulle to end the occupation, and no Israeli de Klerk to end its racist system of apartheid. Only with popular resistance and the direct involvement of the international community as a whole can Israel be forced - as France and South Africa were - to give up its racist colonial project.

ership has remained quiet. And as violent Jewish settlers have escalated their attacks on Palestinian villagers, Abbas has been eerily indifferent. Abbas's gullibility lies in his blind belief that the Biden administration, which is complicit in the genocide in Gaza, is able and willing to deliver just peace for the Palestinians. If only he could keep the West Bank calm a bit longer, as Israel decimates Gaza - he reckons - he soon could rule over Hamas-free Gaza.

What a farce! The mere idea of the PA getting back into Gaza on the back of Israeli fighter jets and tanks razing it to the ground is so obviously foolish. Abbas & co must be delusional to think that Israel is spending blood and treasure in order to hand over both the West Bank and Gaza to their incompetent regime. In fact, the Israeli government is making no secret of its plans to maintain overall control of the strip, indefinitely. If they truly believe that a post-war, victorious Israel will help them establish an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, I've got a bridge in China to sell them. Why on earth would President Joe Biden spend any political capital, no less in an election year, on establishing an independent Palestinian state? If his administration cannot lean on Israel to accept a two-day or even a two-hour humanitarian pause, whether to save lives or save face, how in hell would it convince the Israeli government and society to accept a two-state solution?

In reality, America will be hard-pressed to find a single Israeli party, let alone a major one, ready to end the illegal settlements and withdraw from the occupied territories in return for peace with the Palestinians. The fascists and fanatics that make up the unity Israeli government and hold the absolute majority of parliament today are thinking of new ways to expel the Palestinians, not to reward them with a state of their own. The best case scenario, under the current circumstances, would see America pressure Israel to accept a half-state on half of the West Bank administered by the PA, in return for full Arab normalisation and a zillion more dollars in US aid. On the eve of the US invasion of Iraq some 20 years ago, President George W Bush also proposed a "vision of a two-state solution" and devised, along with the Europeans, an international roadmap to achieve that objective "day after" the war. And the result? More of the same bloody occupation, illegal settlement and siege, in addition to the forever wars that have wreaked havoc in the region.

In truth, thanks to America's unconditional support, there is no Israeli peace partner to engage with, today or the "day after". None. Nada. No Israeli de Gaulle to end the occupation, and no Israeli de Klerk to end its racist system of apartheid. Only with popular resistance and the direct involvement of the international community as a whole can Israel be forced - as France and South Africa were - to give up its racist colonial project.

# Gaza: Are there any winners?

Faisal J. Abbas

partners in their unwavering commitment to killing any prospect of peace.

In fact, Netanyahu - who could be described as the Francis Underwood of Israeli politics - has not only survived this far but has become his country's longest-serving prime minister by deploying one simple tactic: avoiding any serious engagement with resolving the Palestinian issue, and doing anything possible to undermine a solution for it. This has unbelievably included going as low as empowering his sworn enemy Hamas in Gaza, and undermining the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, where Hamas doesn't exist.

But don't just take my word for it. "For years, Netanyahu propped up Hamas. Now it's blown up in our faces," read a head-

line in The Times of Israel. Worse, as recently as 2019 Netanyahu reportedly said: "Those who want to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas." However, even a serial survivor like Francis Underwood eventually runs out of luck: everything collapses like a house of cards when you upset 80 percent of your voters, members of your own Cabinet, and the 121 countries who opposed Israel at the UN last month, albeit in a non-binding vote - all that plus still outstanding corruption charges that mean when Netanyahu leaves office his next destination may well be a prison cell.

Hamas, on the other hand, has a different equation. Even if Israel succeeds in its impossible

mission of killing all the group's estimated 40,000 fighters, or expelling them and their leaders from Gaza (while completely disregarding legal, humanitarian and political consequences) they will have "killed only the combatants but not the cause" - as Queen Rania of Jordan told Becky Anderson in her CNN interview. So, are there any winners? Well, apart from extremists finding justification in the current events to attack mosques and synagogues; there is a hopeful argument that the intensity, severe casualties and ugliness of this war - and its already global ramifications - will now force the international community to accept that no more patch-up solutions are possible. The only way to ensure this doesn't happen again is finally to have a just and fair peace that gives Palestinians land,

freedom and hope. As argued here before, now is the time to double down on peacemaking efforts, and this starts with ending the illegal occupation - a hard ask given that the only country with genuine influence over Israel has vetoed even a ceasefire.

Indeed, as if we did not know this before, when the current US government shamelessly supports an occupying power that has killed more than 10,000 Palestinians in Gaza, many of them children, it no longer holds the moral high ground to preach to others about not doing enough to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In the end, no one put it better than UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres when he said: "The nightmare in Gaza is more than a humanitarian crisis. It is a crisis of humanity."

Arab News



# Time for humanity and empathy, not antisemitism and Islamophobia

EVERY time that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalates, there is a side effect - a very disturbing and worrying one - of the conflict spilling over and manifesting itself in deplorable acts of antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe and North America, including physical attacks, threats, intimidation or hate speech, vandalism and discrimination. It takes place in the streets, on public transport, at universities and schools, and in the hideout provided by social media.

With fears of the war in Gaza further escalating, it is the task of all community leaders to stand together and show unity in deploring all forms of these ugly phenomena, especially in these difficult times. Expressing care and empathy for the suffering of everyone caught up in this conflict will serve our communities more than acts of hate that could tear up societies and will do nothing for those in the eye of the storm.

The Israeli-Palestinian issue, which can derail good community relations at the best of times, is turning venomous to the extent that the sheer number of flashpoints is testing and challenging multicultural societies. As people are exposed to the gory images of extreme violence and brutality, especially on social media, which are either disseminated uncensored or deliberately edited to achieve a greater impact, our societies are becoming increasingly polarized because people feel the need - indeed, are encouraged - to take sides, and to an extent that legitimizes and encourages extreme views and behavior. Tragically, much of what we see, read and hear engenders a lack of understanding and awareness of the other, meaning that people cannot even see the humanity of the other.

Understandably, events such as the Gaza war are bound to divide opinions; however, it is also the case that, when disagreements become entrenched, they threaten society's cohesion to the point of destruction. In reaction to this most recent war in the Middle East, people are falling back on what they see as their primary identity, which brings to the surface biases and prejudices against other religious and ethnic groups that are, in normal times, hidden beneath a thin veneer of apparently harmonious coexistence.

The level of hate and fear we are witnessing in the streets shows a failure of our capability to withstand such aftershocks from external events. Instead of supporting and encouraging both Israelis and Palestinians to end their conflict, we end up importing that conflict into our daily lives, which is no help at all. Shock, sorrow and distress, first at Hamas' murderous assault on Israel and then at the wholesale killings of thousands of Palestinian civilians in Gaza by the Israel Defense Forces in its war against Hamas, are natural human reactions. But why should these horrendous events taking place thousands of miles away result in acts of antisemitism and Islamophobia by citizens turning their anger against each other? It defies logic and is inexcusable. The rise of such incidents in the UK since Oct. 7 is frightening and threatens to leave entire communities helpless and disenfranchised. The Community Security Trust, which gathers reports of antisemitism across the UK, recorded at least 893 incidents between Oct. 7 and Oct. 31. This is the highest total recorded in a 25-day period. Similarly, Tell Mama, which collates incidents of Islamophobia, recorded 515 anti-

Muslim incidents, a sixfold increase on the same period last year.

In the UK, where multiculturalism is a source of pride, instead of a show of unity in the face of the horrors that are being inflicted on innocent civilians from both sides, the entire discourse is becoming tribal, while friendships and good neighborly relations are damaged, hopelessly not beyond repair. Incidents such as a youth screaming obscenities at an ultra-Orthodox Jew on the London Underground and showing him images of Israelis kidnapped by Hamas, taunting him with "see what we did to you," or somebody shouting "Hamas terrorist" at a Muslim woman in the street, are examples of hate speech that should be dealt with by the law enforcement bodies. However, these incidents also reflect where we have gone wrong by not bothering to educate citizens from an early age to encourage respectful and thoughtful debate and disagreement, rather than being at each other's throats. As always, it is a minority that is involved in actual racist attacks, but it happens in a permissive environment that sees the "other" as a legitimate target for verbal and even physical abuse. At a time like this, when we should rally together in seeing the humanity in everyone and express our sympathy and empathy for all those who are being put through probably the worst form of human suffering imaginable in Israel and Palestine, there are those who regrettably and irresponsibly thrive on division and discord. Protesting the bombardment of Gaza is legitimate, but those who pin images of paragliders to their jackets are doing nothing less than endorsing Hamas' atrocities of Oct. 7. And those who daubed Jewish schools in north London with red paint are the per-

petrators of a hate crime, as are those who targeted the Central Oxford Mosque and Islamic Cultural Society and those who called a London bus driver a "terrorist" and "Hamas."

All this is made worse by less-than-thoughtful and uninformed politicians, who are making irresponsible statements for either ideological or party political reasons. Suggesting that carrying the Palestinian flag is illegal or offensive is factually wrong, aggravates intercommunal relations and makes many people, especially in the Muslim community, feel like they are being silenced. Hamas is proscribed in the UK as a terrorist group and supporting it is different from supporting the Palestinians' cause for self-determination. However, the slogan popular with many pro-Palestinian protesters, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," is open to a range of interpretations, from one that suggests a democratic state for all to one that calls for the annihilation of Israel. Although not illegal, it upsets many. It is a tragic irony that, in times of war and bloodshed, many of those who are not necessarily directly affected tend to oversimplify very complex issues and turn them into a cultural war; and, by doing so, they scar and scare their own societies. We would all do better to resort to our humanity and values as our compass and stand together first and foremost as caring for all human beings and the sanctity of all lives equally. This would be of greater help to all sides involved in what is yet another tragic chapter in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than communities fighting each other abroad. After all, it is sometimes easy to hate, but it takes real bravery to extend the hand of reconciliation, especially in these darkest of days.

# Working together to build a modern Global South

THE world today is confronted with unprecedented and accelerated changes. An important feature of the changes is that the collective rise of developing countries is gaining momentum. The rise of developing countries as a whole is based on and reinforced by their collective modernization.

Thus an in-depth discussion on the modernization of the Global South is urgently needed, not only in response to the call of developing countries for peace, development and progress, but also to meet the aspirations of the people of all countries for modernization and human advancement. First, the Global South is where the hope lies today. The term "Global South" has first and foremost a "south" dimension. However, the "South" in the Global South is not a geographical term but a byword for emerging markets and developing countries. It is an identity and representative of a community of countries with similar historical experiences, political pursuits and development goals.

The term also has a "global" dimension. It symbolizes a prominent worldwide trend of the collective rise of developing countries, and reflects their strong wish for solidarity and self-reliance. The countries of the Global South once suffered from aggression, colonization, suppression and plunder. It is through years of struggle and hard work, along with the evolving changes in this century, that the Global South has gradually become an important force driving the reforms in the world order and seeking political independence, national rejuvenation and international justice. The Global South is a leading champion of a new type of globalization. Unilateralism, protectionism and populism are rearing their ugly heads today. Attempts to build "small yards with high fences" to "decouple" from other economies, sever industry and supply chains and stoke bloc confrontation are rampant. Globalization has suffered major setbacks, and we have to make critical choices to avoid being pushed back and forced to sail upstream. At this crucial moment, the countries of the Global South have chosen to confront difficulties head on. They have embraced globalization in an unprecedented manner, and launched mechanisms to improve globalization by enriching its content and extending its outreach, and endeavored to make the rules of globalization more reasonable and conditions more favorable. Thanks to these efforts, a new type of globalization that involves more diversified players and is more open, inclusive and beneficial for all is taking shape. Globalization has indeed been tinted with the Global South hues.

The Global South is the source of strength for global multi-polarity. Since the end of the Cold War, the trend of global multi-polarity has evolved amid twists and turns. Along with the unfolding of profound changes across the global economic and political landscape and the collective rise of developing countries, the Global South has got an important opportunity to play a greater role on the world stage. According to statistics, the land area of the Global South countries accounts for more than 70 percent of the world's total, and its combined population and contribution to global economic growth over the past 20 years account for 80 percent of the world's total. Hence, it is fair to say that the Global South has already become the most dynamic force promoting multi-polarity in terms of its size, vitality, growth potential and contribution. In fact, the collective rise of the Global South is reshaping the global political landscape. The Global South is a key force promoting greater democracy in international relations. Over the years, the voice of the Global South has been muted on the world stage and the reasonable concerns of developing coun-

Liu Jianchao

tries have not been addressed. The few traditional powers that have dominated the right to set the international agenda and rules have always put their own interests first. Their hegemonic, domineering and bullying practices have disturbed the normal international order and undermined international justice and fairness. Under the new circumstances, more and more Global South countries have realized the ideological and institutional yoke of imperialism and colonialism. And they are more determined than ever to seek strategic autonomy, practice true multilateralism, and promote greater democracy in international relations. By doing so, the countries of the Global South have gained a greater say on the international stage and added new impetus to the reform of the global governance system.

Second, working together to advance modernization is what the Global South must do to achieve greater collective strength through unity. Realizing modernization is a shared pursuit of all countries of the Global South. To build a better world, the Global South must work together to pursue and realize modernization. Their aim should be to build a strong and modern Global South, so as to propel the progress of civilization and develop a human community with a shared future. The Global South must work together to prove wrong the saying, "the weak get weaker". The modernization process of different countries is different. As the countries of the Global South were once exploited, plundered and suppressed by imperialists and colonizers, and started to develop their economy relatively late with a weak foundation, they are the latecomers to the global modernization process. In an international system that is neither fair nor reasonable, the North-South divide continues to widen, which proves true more than ever the Matthew Effect that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The countries of the Global South find it more complicated and difficult to achieve modernization. The Global South's goals cannot be achieved if each country acts on its own. Working together is the right way forward. United under the banner of the Global South, we should strengthen strategic communication and policy alignment, remove barriers, and share resources, technology and experiences to build a modern Global South market. More important, we should leave no one behind and help all the countries of the Global South catch up with the process of world modernization. The Global South must take measures to break the myth that modernization equals westernization. For a long time, people believed westernization is modernization. In fact, modernization is not a single answer question. Different historical conditions lead to different choices of paths to modernization. The modernization of the West started with the expansion of capitalism and reached its peak with the help of colonialism, large-scale exploitation of other countries and the use of power politics. It is an unjust path and by no means a viable choice for the Global South.

To realize modernization, the countries of the Global South must find a path that best suits their respective national conditions and is line with the trend of the times. Besides, they should share their useful experiences, rise up to challenges together, and support each other's exploration of paths in the pursuit of modernization, so that the Global South and the wider world have more options to achieve modernization. The Global South should also undertake the responsibility of championing the just cause. The Global South wants to realize modernization not to oppose, exclude and/or replace any country from the modernization process but to advance the well-being of the entire human

community. On the one hand, we should strengthen the Global South's synergy to defend our legitimate rights and interests by tightening the important mechanisms such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the G77+China. On the other hand, we must stay away from zero-sum games and Cold War mentality and, instead, strengthen the North-South dialogue and cooperation with a cool mind. There is also a need to build an open world economy and create an enabling environment for inclusive development that benefits all. Only by doing so, can we find the path to a new type of modernization that rises above the differences in cultures, social systems and ideologies, and create a new eco-system featuring harmonious coexistence and joint governance in order to realize win-win results.

Third, China is ready to contribute the country's strength to advancing modernization for the Global South. While addressing the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August, President Xi Jinping asserted that China is a member of the Global South. China and most countries of the Global South share similar historical experiences and journeys of struggle. And all of them emerged from the fight against colonialism, hegemony and power politics. China has always supported the reasonable concerns of Global South countries, defended their legitimate rights and interests, shared with them development opportunities and outcomes, and helped them to achieve independent growth. China is rooted in the Global South; it cares about the Global South. It has always stood in solidarity with other countries of the Global South through thick and thin, and has been an advocate for and an important player in South-South cooperation. At the same time, China is an explorer and practitioner on the journey toward modernization. The past 100 years traversed by the CPC to seek national rejuvenation is also an exploration of a path to modernization. Thanks to the unremitting efforts of previous generations, we have found that path and attest that the countries of the Global South also have the right and the ability to achieve modernization. China will never forget its roots and will remain a member of the big family of developing countries and the Global South. No matter how the international situation evolves, China will always be committed to the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness to develop relations with its neighbors, follow the principles of sincerity, real results, affinity, and good faith to develop relations with African countries, and adhere to the principles of equality, mutual benefit and common development to develop relations with Latin American countries. We will stand shoulder to shoulder with developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and explore the paths to modernization which best suit the national conditions of the countries of the Global South.

Going forward, China wishes to work with the other countries of the Global South to press ahead with high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, implement the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative to build a modern Global South and a community of the Global South with a shared future, so as to lay a solid foundation for the modernization of the world and build a human community with a shared future. We believe the modernization of the Global South will become an unstoppable trend in the near future. A stable, united, strong and prosperous Global South will no longer be a forlorn dream, and humanity will eventually enjoy progress, lasting peace and sustained development.

The China Daily

# Turkiye no longer the enviable country of 100 years ago

TURKIYE last week celebrated the first centenary of the proclamation of its republic. The dismemberment of the Middle Eastern territories of the Ottoman Empire started in 1916 with the declaration of independence by Sharif Hussein of Makkah, the ruler of Hijaz. Other Middle Eastern Ottoman territories soon became independent one after the other. Syria and Lebanon were placed under the French mandate and Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine under the British mandate. Transjordan was previously part of Ottoman Syria. In 1921, it became the Emirate of Transjordan and, in 1946, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Yemen maintained its relations with the Ottoman state until as late as the end of the First World War.

After the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the victorious countries of the First World War took control of more than two-thirds of the Ottoman territories. As a reaction to this unfair partition, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk launched a war of independence and recaptured the most critical parts of present-day Turkiye. He negotiated with the victors of the First World War the Treaty of Lausanne and traced the borders of today's Turkiye. The independence of many countries in the Middle East was also recognized by the same treaty.

The war of independence launched by Ataturk led to the creation of a new and dynamic state that implemented sweeping reforms. These included the introduction of a secular regime for Turkiye and the adoption of a civil code inspired by the Swiss Civil

Code and a penal code inspired by the Italian Penal Code.

Another important step was the emancipation of women. Turkish women obtained the right to vote in 1932, which is to say before France (1944), Italy (1945), Belgium (1948), Greece (1952) and Switzerland (1971). A peasant Turkish woman was, in 1935, elected as a member of parliament, together with 18 other female members.

Immediately after Turkiye's war of independence, Ataturk took the initiative to stabilize the security situation in the region. He made very active contributions to the signing of the Balkan Pact in 1934. This pact was signed as a caution against Bulgaria's revanchist policy. Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, who was Turkiye's main opponent during the war of independence, proposed the nomination of Ataturk for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1934.

Regarding peace in the Middle East, Ataturk took a very active part in the signing of the Treaty of Saadabad in Tehran in 1937. This pact was designed to contribute to stability in the Middle East.

In the field of Turkiye's domestic policy, there were attempts to introduce multiparty democracy as early as the 1930s, but it did not hold. It was eventually achieved in 1945. In the years leading up to the Second World War, Ataturk capitalized on the precarious atmosphere and was able to set the stage for the signing in Montreux, Switzerland, of an international convention to regulate transit through the Turkish Straits. These straits are the only outlets for all Black Sea countries, including Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and

Georgia, as well as Russia's outlet to the "warm seas."

The 1936 Montreux Convention gives Turkiye the right to refuse the passage of warships in times of war or if Ankara perceives an imminent threat of war. This renewable convention was initially signed for a period of 20 years. Thanks to the convention, Turkiye has been able to maintain neutrality among the potential users of the Turkish Straits. The balance between the interests of riparian and non-riparian countries is so delicately determined that, despite almost 90 years of application, no state party has so far notified of its termination. There are also limitations on the tonnage and duration of stay of any warships of non-riparian countries. During the Russian-Georgian conflict of 2008, the US wanted to send a hospital ship to the Black Sea, but it was refused by Turkiye on the grounds that its tonnage exceeded the authorized limit.

After the Second World War, when the trans-Atlantic community and Eastern Europe were becoming two rival blocs, Turkiye decided to join NATO. It also joined the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In the field of economic integration, Turkiye has not been able to fulfill the economic and political criteria of the EU and, as a result, it has been kept waiting at the doorstep for more than 60 years. Whether it will ever join the EU is still uncertain.

Turkiye's name is frequently omitted when Europe-wide cooperation is being discussed. As time went by, Turkiye remained behind the European - and universal - standards in the fields of democracy

and fundamental rights and freedoms. Some major members of the EU, such as Germany and France, believe that Turkiye fails to qualify for membership of the bloc. There were some Balkan countries for which the eligibility criteria was below that of Turkiye, but the EU finds it too big a country to digest.

The most important achievement in Turkiye after the Kemalist reforms was the EU standards. Now that the present government attaches less importance to universal values, Turkiye may lag further behind. However, there is a strong trend in public opinion to embrace universal values. An anti-Western feeling has always existed in the Turkish public opinion. The present government persistently supported the Muslim Brotherhood ideology. This caused sizable damage to Turkiye's image in the international arena.

Both Turkiye and the EU have made mistakes in their approaches. In a period when Turkiye could play a useful role within the Euro-Atlantic framework, Turkish-American relations also went astray again for various reasons. The dismemberment of the Soviet Union led to the independence of several countries that speak Turkic languages, namely Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. Turkiye is now making efforts to bring them together, despite disagreements among them. The rule of law at one stage became Turkiye's pride, but with the politicization of the judiciary there are signs of decline in this field. Therefore, the shining star of the 1920s is no longer the enviable country that used to attract the attention of many developing nations.

# The financial addiction that is slowly killing Britain's economy

SHARE buybacks - the practice of reducing a company's share capital by buying the stock in the market and then cancelling it - has always divided investment opinion. On the plus side, they are theoretically more tax efficient than dividends, since the seller pays capital gains tax on the distribution rather than income tax, which is what dividends are subject to. They should also be earnings accretive, in that they reduce the number of shares in issue.

But there is another reason executives find buybacks preferable to dividends. They are much easier to cancel without anyone really noticing compared to the annual dividend payment, where any cut tends to be regarded as a manifestation of management failure. Anecdotally, moreover, buyback activity tends to be at its greatest when share prices are at their peak, not as it should be when prices are down in the dumps. As such, they can be a classic top-of-the-market signal, more so a case of irrational exuberance than efficient use of capital. As often as not, companies waste capital by overpaying for their shares, disadvantaging the shareholders left behind. Management confidence that the shares are cheaper than they should be is frequently misplaced. The manipulation of earnings per share via buybacks becomes an even more con-

tentious issue when incentive schemes are directly related to earnings performance. And finally, money spent buying back shares is money not reinvested in the underlying business, and can therefore be seen as part of Britain's underinvestment problem.

All these negative considerations should worry us, since right now, buyback activity in the UK market is close to record levels. According to collations by Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell, share buyback programmes in the UK market this year have already reached £46.6bn. With some 30 trading statements still to come from FTSE 100 companies over the next couple of weeks, the total for the year is likely to come close to last year's record of £58.2bn, and may even exceed it. This may of course be largely yesterday's story. Much higher interest rates make share buybacks more expensive to finance, so you'd expect the numbers to fall quite significantly next year.

As I say, managements are on the whole keener to protect the dividend than the buyback programme. But there is also a wider reason to worry. Over the past 30 years, there has been a remarkable shift in share ownership for UK companies, with international ownership of the FTSE 100 increasing

Jeremy Warner

from around 12pc to 56pc. UK Pension Fund and Insurance Company ownership has meanwhile fallen from 52pc to just 4pc. Even retail and unit trust ownership has plummeted. The upshot is that the bulk of the money from UK buybacks and dividends goes overseas these days, rather than being recycled back into the domestic economy.

As such, the explosive growth of buybacks can reasonably be seen as at least some part of Britain's shamefully low overall level of business investment. Capital that is notionally available for investment within the company, or alternatively through dividends in the wider economy, is instead being syphoned off and invested elsewhere by overseas shareholders.

British companies have in other words become a kind of wasting asset, with their lifeblood being slowly sucked out of the UK economy. Gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) - a measure of both public and private investment - in the UK is already one of the lowest in the OECD. Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt have made it their mission to improve on that position, even if slashing the Government's capital spending budget scarcely helps them achieve it. Even so, there is some evidence to suggest that

The Telegraph



# ICCI proposes highest civil award for Indonesian envoy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Business Community proposed to give the highest civil award of Pakistan to the Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam M. Tugio for extraordinary services in strengthening the bilateral economic, trade, political and diplomatic relations between both the countries.

Addressing the farewell dinner in his honour hosted by the ICCI's President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawri, the Indonesian Ambassador said Indonesia and Pakistan have huge potential to increase their economy and the role of business communities of both sides was significant in this regard.

He said there are many potential sectors including tourism, trade, technology, energy and agriculture through which the two countries can expand their relations and by finding new economic sectors for increasing bilateral ties.

He said: "Indonesia and Pakistan are connected by historical religious ties and we have to transfer this legacy to our next generation for which both nations

are responsible."

Ambassador Tugio said that the best memories of his life are associated with Pakistan. This country is extremely hospitable and it is unparalleled in its natural beauty.

The Indonesian envoy said that his experiences as the ambassador to Pakistan were very wonderful. The business community here has a lot of potential, and it is hoped that the leadership of Pakistan's business community, especially the ICCI will play an unparalleled role in increasing the economic and trade relations between Indonesia and Pakistan.

He said that there are strong possibilities of Pakistan-Indonesia direct flights being operational and by finalizing it soon, direct air connectivity will be established between the two countries.

The Indonesian ambassador said that the free trade agreement between Pakistan and Indonesia will be finalized soon after which mutual trade between the two countries will increase further.

He said that he had done a lot of work to increase the mutual relations and more



PESHAWAR: Shopkeeper busy in frying fish for customers at Qissa Khawani Bazaar.

## Tokyo stocks close higher

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks closed higher on Thursday supported by rallies in some high-tech shares on Wall Street and a relatively cheaper yen against the dollar.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index ended up 1.49 percent, or 479.98 points, at 32,646.46, while the broader Topix index added 1.26 percent, or 29.17 points, to 2,335.12.

"Continuing appetite for US high-tech shares (overnight in New York) and the yen's decline against the dollar to around 151 yen at one point prompted purchases in shares of export-oriented companies," Iwai Cosmo Securities said.

The dollar fetched 150.85 yen in late Asian trade, easing from around 151.15 yen in Tokyo morning hours, and against 151.00 yen on Wednesday in New York.

Among major shares in Tokyo, chip-making equipment manufacturer Tokyo Electron rose 2.75 percent to 21.845 yen, and minicar giant Suzuki jumped 3.46 percent to 6,426 yen.

Honda rose 2.86 percent to 1,654 yen. After the closing bell, Honda said it has revised up its full-year sales and profit forecasts thanks to brisk sales in its mainstay North American markets and a cheaper yen.

Nissan jumped 3.87 percent to 635.5 yen ahead of its second-quarter earnings report. Hitachi added 1.75 percent to 9,784 yen. Uniqlo operator Fast Retailing climbed 2.87 percent to 35,820 yen.

# Pakistan participates in CIIE with largest effort ever: Pak CG

BEIJING (APP): As many as 19 Pakistani exhibitors are participating in the ongoing 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE) being held from November 5 to 10 in Shanghai, which has made a remarkable mark by showcasing Pakistan's largest effort ever.

The expo, which has been held annually in Shanghai since 2018, is a major platform for promoting international trade and cooperation. "Pakistan's active participation in this prestigious event highlights its commitment to strengthening economic ties with China, Pakistan's second largest export destination, and exploring new avenues of collaboration," highlighted Hussain Haider, Consul General in Shanghai.

One of the key highlights of Pakistan's participation in the 6th CIIE is its focus on promoting its diverse range of export products. From leathers and surgical instruments to agricultural goods and handicrafts, Pakistan has showcased its rich cultural heritage and economic potential.

Pakistan's pavilions, adorned with vibrant displays and innovative products, have attracted the

attention of exhibitors and visitors alike, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday.

Recognizing the significance of CIIE, the Pakistani Ministry of Commerce has extended its full support to the participating businesses. Various incentives, including financial subsidies and facilitation services, have been provided to ensure a successful exhibition experience.

This proactive approach by the government was widely appreciated by the Pakistani exhibitors and further enhanced Pakistan's image as an attractive investment destination.

CIIE is one of the biggest signs of the opening-up of the Chinese economy. It is encouraging that China's "dual circulation" development model provides more space for international high-quality imports, Haider said.

Pakistan's exports to China in September have surged by an impressive 100.5% compared to the corresponding month during the previous financial year, which bodes well. The CG said the country needs to sustain its exports to China and take advantage of the opening up of the Chinese economy and the

free trade agreement that offers a lot of concessions.

Since the beginning of this year, the two countries have signed protocols on export of boiled beef, dried chillies and dairy products from Pakistan to China, achieved access to fresh cherries from Pakistan to China and reached an agreement on export of animal skins from Pakistan to China.

The Pakistani Ministry of Commerce is assisting more Pakistani companies to meet the import requirements of the General Administration of Customs of China for the aforementioned categories and expanding the export of more quality products such as surgical instruments and sports equipment.

The Consul General also highlighted the importance of trade exhibitions and fairs as platforms for promoting Pakistani products in China.

He urged Pakistani exporters to participate in such events to showcase their products and establish direct contacts with potential Chinese buyers as these interactions provide an opportunity for both sides to explore potential collaborations, joint ventures and partnerships.

# Pakistan furniture industry received encouraging response from buyers

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) delegation received an encouraging response from foreign buyers and investors at the Canton Fair, China.

The event served as a remarkable platform for showcasing the excellence of Pakistan's furniture industry to the global market, PFC CEO Mian Kashif Ashfaq said while chairing

its Board of Directors meeting Thursday, according to a news release.

He said several foreign buyers and investors expressed keen interest in exploring joint ventures and collaboration opportunities within the Pakistani furniture sector.

"Their positive feedback highlights the outstanding craftsmanship, innovative designs, and quality of our

products, making a significant impression on the international business community," he added.

He said the enthusiastic response "reaffirms our position in the global market and showcases the potential for fruitful partnerships with famous international counterparts".

It was also a testament to the "dedication and expertise of our skilled wood-

workers, reflecting the hard work that has gone into establishing Pakistan as a reputable hub for furniture manufacturing", he added.

Mian Kashif he said, "We must capitalize on this momentum, fostering mutually beneficial relationships and driving the growth of our industry, besides elevating the standards of Pakistan's furniture sector on the global stage."

# WB-Punjab govt collaboration to bring prosperity for farmers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Shahzad Ali Malik Thursday said the World Bank's collaboration with the Punjab Government in the agriculture sector would usher an era of prosperity for farmers through bumper crops.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers, he said the World Bank had reaffirmed its commitment for a sustainable agricultural revolution in Punjab through a "game-changing collaboration with the

Punjab Government", according to a news release.

The PHHSA chairman said a delegation from the World Bank's Review Mission recently visited Multan, marking a significant milestone in the "Revolutionary Plan for Sustainable Agricultural Development" in the province.

He said according to official sources, the primary objective of the visit was to inspect the modern drip and solar systems strategically deployed

throughout the region. In the five-year project, out of its total cost of Rs 68 billion, the World Bank was offering Rs 45 billion.

Shahzad Ali Malik Sitar-I-Mintiaz said the project would have "a profound impact on the agricultural landscape in the region".

"It is also poised to mitigate the effects of climate change, ushering in modern irrigation systems, creating an attractive environment for private sector investments, and facilitating the growth of profitable agriculture. Remarkably, over

1.3 million rural farmer families will directly benefit from this project," he added.

## Gold rates fall by Rs.2,400 to Rs.211,800 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.2,400 and was sold at Rs.211,800 on Saturday compared to its sale at Rs.214,200 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.2,058 to Rs.181,584 from Rs.183,642 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.166,452 from Rs.168,338, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram Silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,580 and 2,211.93 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$20 to \$1,968 from \$1,988, the Association reported.

## Most Asian markets see fresh gains

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Most Asian stocks crept back up Thursday after another positive day on Wall Street, with focus on upcoming speeches by Federal Reserve officials, while oil edged back after a second successive plunge fuelled by demand doubts.

Last week's hint by the US central bank at an end to its interest rate-hiking cycle, followed by data showing a softer labour market, has provided traders with some much-needed confidence as a tough year draws to a close, with some even talking of a cut in the new year.

However, after a healthy run-up across global markets, some have run out of steam as the possibility of more tightening casts a shadow owing to stubbornly high inflation. Comments from Fed decision-makers ramming home their determination to slay prices have also kept the euphoria in check, with many keeping their options open for another rate hike if needed.

Earlier this week, Minneapolis Fed chief Neel Kashkari insisted on seeing more data before deciding whether more work was needed, while Chicago boss Austan Goolsbee played his cards close to his chest, saying only that inflation was "the number-one thing".

Thursday sees Fed Chair Jerome Powell appear on a panel to talk about monetary policy challenges, while Atlanta chief Raphael Bostic and his Richmond counterpart Tom Barkin are due to speak elsewhere.

"The market is currently digesting the influx of comments from Federal Reserve officials, and the strength of recent gains may eventually be tested if there are stronger indications, particularly from... moderates, that Fed members want to put the 2024 rate cut genie back in the bottle," said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management.

That, he added, "could potentially dampen investor enthusiasm into year-end".

"Of course, it all comes down to the data, and if we maintain that not-too-hot or not-too-cool environment, stocks could gradually increase." Hopes that rates have peaked and could come down next year provided support to US stocks, as did another drop in 10-year Treasury yields, while the VIX index -- or so-called fear gauge -- fell to its lowest level since September.

The S&P 500 chalked up an eighth successive gain, the best streak since November 2021, while the Nasdaq was also higher, though the Dow edged slightly lower. Asian markets largely followed suit, with Tokyo, Sydney, Seoul, Singapore, Wellington, Mumbai, Taipei, Jakarta and Manila all in the green but Bangkok fell. Shanghai was marginally higher and Hong Kong dipped as data showed China slipped back into deflation last month, reinforcing the need for more economic support.

# Sony raises annual forecast despite Hollywood strikes

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Japanese electronics titan Sony lifted its full-year net profit and sales forecasts on Thursday, citing strength in the company's gaming, music and image-sensor sectors.

But the firm admitted it faced headwinds and some observers said there were concerns about the hit to the bottom line caused by Hollywood strikes and underwhelming PlayStation 5 sales.

Sony said it saw net profit hitting 880 billion yen (\$5.8 billion) in the year to March 2024, up from the previous projection of 860 billion yen. Annual sales were seen at 12.4 trillion yen, compared with a previous estimate of 12.2 trillion yen.

"Sales are expected to be higher than the August forecast mainly due to higher-than-expected sales in the Game & Network Services, Music and Imaging & Sensing Solutions segments," Sony said in a financial statement.

A weaker yen helped boost the gaming and music sectors, with the latter also buoyed by "an increase in revenues from streaming services", it said.

Gaming has consistently been one of Sony's main driving forces, with the firm aiming to sell 25 million units of its new PlayStation 5.

While partially offset by an expected decrease in demand among automotive

and industrial infrastructures, sales in the image-sensor sector were projected to be robust thanks to favourable foreign exchange rates, the firm said.

Still, Sony's net profit for July-September sank 29 percent from a year earlier to 200 billion yen. For the six months to September, net profit dropped 23 percent year-on-year to 417 billion yen. Going forward, Sony pins its hopes partly on the profitability of image sensors.

While the sluggish smartphone market is squeezing profits, "we believe the improvement will progress slowly", Sony CEO Hiroki Totoki told a news conference after the results were released.

"There is no change to our view that the trend toward larger... mobile sensors will drive the overall growth of the image sensor market in the mid to long term," he said.

It also wants to prioritise "increasing the market penetration" of PS5, which it once described as "on course to become (the Sony gaming unit's) most successful console yet".

Totoki said while the firm intended to maintain its PS5 sales target, it admitted it was "not something that we can attain very easily".

The firm blamed recent strikes in Hollywood for dragging down the conglomerate's movie performance.

# Meher urges approach to PKR reserves for stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis, is widely used in international trade, providing numerous benefits such as increased trade opportunities, reduced currency risk, and enhanced economic collaboration with China, one of Pakistan's significant trading partners."

He said similarly, incorporating the Russian Ruble would foster stronger economic ties with Russia, opening doors for bilateral investments, joint ventures, and strategic partnerships.

"Diversifying our currency reserves will not only mitigate the risks associated with relying heavily on a single currency but also

provide Pakistan with the flexibility to adapt to changing global economic dynamics," he remarked.

He said, "By embracing a multi-currency approach, Pakistan can enhance its economic resilience, attract foreign investments, and promote international trade, ultimately leading to sustainable economic development."

"By taking this bold step towards diversification, Pakistan can position itself as a resilient and progressive player in the global economic arena."

He pleaded to consider this proposal seriously and initiate necessary steps to explore the potential benefits of diversifying our currency reserves.

issued here.

He said, "The Chinese renminbi, being one of the world's major reserve currencies, is widely used in international trade, providing numerous benefits such as increased trade opportunities, reduced currency risk, and enhanced economic collaboration with China, one of Pakistan's significant trading partners."

He said similarly, incorporating the Russian Ruble would foster stronger economic ties with Russia, opening doors for bilateral investments, joint ventures, and strategic partnerships.

"Diversifying our currency reserves will not only mitigate the risks associated with relying heavily on a single currency but also

# China's food imports to reach \$140 bn in 2023

BEIJING (INP): China has become the largest food importer in the world, and the total amount of food imports to China is estimated to reach \$140 billion in 2023. This is as per 2023 China Food Import Report first released in 2023 China Import Food Summit. The Summit was hosted by China Chamber of Commerce of I/E of Foodstuffs, Native Produce and Animal By-Product, CEN reported on Thursday.

As a supporting activity of the ongoing 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE) since 2018, this year's China Import Food Summit is themed by "Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability".

"The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development of the food and agricultural product industry.

While ensuring food safety, we will further open the market, give play to the role of international trade, and take the diversification strategy of agricultural

product imports to meet Chinese people's growing expectation for a better life.

China will continuously optimize the food supply structure, promote high-level opening-up, deepen bilateral and multilateral economic and trade cooperation to jointly safeguard the stable and healthy development of the global food trade," said Sheng Qiuping, Member of the CPC Leadership Group of the Ministry of Commerce and Vice Minister in the summit.

Bai Lu, Deputy Director-General, Bureau of Import and Export Food Safety, General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China remarked that China Customs will keep expanding the varieties of imported food and the registered number of overseas food production enterprises.

Additionally, improving clearance efficiency with new technologies was also emphasized by Bai.

Data from 2023 China Food Import Report shows that China's food imports have been increasing steadily in recent years, and the compound annual growth rate reached 12.3% from 2013 to 2022.

### Court Notice

IN the Court of Qaisar Khan Afridi Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No.92/13. Institution 18/10/2022. Date of hearing: 25/12/2023. Bakhtawar Shah VS Shamen etc. Notice to no. 11. Hamedullah son of Mohamad Ayub resident of Shalbandi tehsel Gagra Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 2/12/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.





In brief

Meg retires to end 13-year career

LONDON (BBC): Australia captain Meg Lanning has announced her international retirement, saying she no longer has the "spark to do what needs to happen at this level". As captain, Lanning led Australia to 50-over World Cup glory in 2022 and also won four T20 World Cups and Commonwealth Games gold. She is the second-highest run-scorer in women's T20 internationals. "I feel like now I've got nothing left to achieve on the international stage," Lanning, 31, said. Lanning made her international debut in 2010 aged 18 and became the youngest Australian to make a century with her unbeaten 103 against England in a one-day international. She was part of the Australia side who won the T20 World Cup in 2012 and the 50-over title in 2013 before being appointed captain in February 2014, aged just 21. "I no longer have the spark or the motivation to do what needs to happen at this level and so for me it is time to move on," said Lanning. "I can't be half-in or half-out with anything and I guess that's where I've landed with this decision."

Jokic leads Nuggets past Warriors

LOS ANGELES (AFP/APP): Nikola Jokic scored 35 points as the Denver Nuggets defeated the Golden State Warriors 108-105 in a blockbuster showdown between the two NBA heavyweights on Wednesday. A pulsating clash featuring the last two NBA champions lived up to the billing, with the Western Conference rivals going toe-to-toe in a game that saw the lead change hands nine times. After trailing for almost the entire game at Denver's Ball Arena, the Warriors edged in front heading into the fourth quarter after outscoring Denver 31-23 in the third. But Denver recovered from a five-point deficit early in the fourth to snatch victory, clinching the win after Klay Thompson's attempted game-tying buzzer-beater drifted wide. The victory cemented Denver's place at the top of the Western Conference, with the reigning NBA champions improving to 8-1. "We don't have the pressure of being a champion, we're just trying to enjoy the moment," Jokic told ESPN. "I'm just trying to play the game the right way. And as long as we're winning I think I'm doing a good job," added Jokic, who also had 13 rebounds and five assists. Reggie Jackson backed Jokic with 20 points while Michael Porter Jr. had 17. Steph Curry's 23 points led the scoring for the Warriors, the 2022 champions who fell to 6-3 after the loss.

Samoa turn down tour

LONDON (Agencies): The Rugby Football League says it is "exploring all options" after Samoa turned down its invite for a three-match series in England next autumn. It means England currently have no international fixtures scheduled for 2024. Samoa instead intend to compete in the 2024 edition of the Pacific Shield alongside the likes of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. RFL chair Simon Johnson said the decision was "disappointing". "We can't afford to dwell on it. They have made their decision," he said. "We now owe it to Shaun Wane and the players, and to England supporters, to deliver meaningful international rugby league in 2024, and we are working with RL Commercial and [governing body] the IRL to make that happen."

# Boult all but leads New Zealand to semi-final

BENGALURU (Agencies): New Zealand all but by the most improbable of mathematical possibilities locked in their place in the World Cup semi-final with a dominant five-wicket win - with 160 balls left - against Sri Lanka in Bengaluru. The result means they move to ten points, and a net run rate (NRR) of 0.743. That essentially means Pakistan need to beat England by 287 runs, while Afghanistan need an even more fantastical 438-run win over South Africa if they are to surpass New Zealand's NRR.

If Pakistan happen to chase, this becomes even more unlikely a possibility, as they would need to chase a hypothetical target of 150 in 3.4 overs. As for Sri Lanka, the margin of the defeat to New Zealand has left them languishing at ninth position on the table, thus out of the qualification spots for the 2025 Champions Trophy. They now require one of England or Bangladesh to suffer significant-enough defeats - while Netherlands would also need to lose to India - so that their respective NRRs drop below that of Sri Lanka's.

New Zealand's win was the product of an all-round performance with bat and ball. While the threat of rain in Bengaluru ultimate-

ly proved to be a red herring, winning the toss and putting Sri Lanka in seemed to be the most prudent way to ensure both an NRR-boosting victory as well as to serve as a hedge against any rain interruptions and DLS interventions. And so it proved. Despite the loss of some late wickets, Sri Lanka's total of 171 was comfortably dealt with, as Devon Conway, Rachin Ravindra and Daryl Mitchell all pitched in with a trio of forties. On a surface that proved even better to bat on under lights, Ravindra and Conway put on 86 to break open the chase, before Mitchell's rapid 43 off just 31 balls rammed home the result. All three would fall before the finish, but the win was never in doubt.

That it was so easy in the end was down to a solid bowling effort and a hazard outwitting the bat for Sri Lanka. New Zealand spread out the wickets evenly, with Lockie Ferguson, Mitchell Santner and Ravindra picking up two apiece, though Trent Boult's 3 for 37 was what had set his side up at the top of Sri Lanka's innings - and earned him the Player-of-the-Match accolade.

Such was New Zealand's dominance that they could afford three dropped catches in the field - ones which

would even prove costly in terms of runs scored - but still canter to victory.

The first was of Kusal Perera without scoring, as Tom Latham uncharacteristically grassed a straightforward caught behind. Latham would get his shot at redemption just a ball later though, with Pathum Nissanka nicking through for an even more simple chance. Kusal Mendis would fall a few overs later, splicing a leading edge down to deep third while looking to pick one up over midwicket, with Sadeera Samarawickrama following soon after edging through to Mitchell at first slip. Both those wickets were grabbed by the excellent Boult, taking him past 50 wickets in World Cups - he would end the game with that tally on 52.

But even as wickets fell at one end, Perera functioned as a one-man army, finding boundaries all around the Chinnaswamy Stadium, and punishing New Zealand for that early drop. Two picked-up sixes over long-on off Tim Southee were the highlights of some belligerent ball striking, as he brought up his 50 off just 22 deliveries - the joint second-fastest by a Sri Lankan in ODI World Cups - and the joint-fastest in ODIs by an opener while batting first.

## Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Girls Badminton League begins

PESHAWAR (APP): Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Girls Badminton League got underway here at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda under the aegis of the Directorate of Sports Kohat University of Information Technology on Thursday.

Former International Athlete Professor Muhammad Shah, two times Gold Medalist of the South Asian Games in Javelin throw Iltaf Hussain, international qualified IAAF Level-III Coach Muhammad Wajid, who is also Director Sports and Organizing Secretary of the Championship, two international coaches Muhammad Nadeem and Hayat Ullah, Female Coach Bushra Khan, District Sports Officer Charsadda Muhammad Imran, Chief Referee Pakistan Badminton Federation Muhammad Amjad, Professor Tahir Khan of Swat, players, officials and large number of spectators were also present during the opening ceremony.

Vice Chancellor of KUST Dr. Sardar Khan in his message to the players appreciated the Prime Minister Talent Hunt Program in which boys are taking part in 12 different Games while girls are com-

peting in 10 different Games. Such an initiative carried out by the Higher Education Commission for the hunting of new talent in different Games would certainly improve the overall standard of the country at national and international level, Professor Dr. Sardar Khan said.

He assured the players that all out efforts and resources would be utilized with the guideline of the Directorate General Sports Higher Education Commission Islamabad. He also thanked Director General Sports HEC Javed Mimon for his untiring efforts in facilitating the players, both male and female in different Games.

VC Dr. Sarhad Khan said that KUST has a vital role in producing talented students and now sports is a key sector which needs more attention to motivate the students to take active part in healthy sports activities. Former International Athlete Muhammad Shah on this occasion appreciated KUST and HEC for selecting and short-listing the players through an open trials in each of the game and first they would compete at the provincial league and later form a team to represent

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the National League.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has been divided into five regions to accommodate all the districts including districts of the merged areas. Teams from five regions including Bannu/Kohat, Mardan/Buner/Mohmand, Swat/Chitral, Hazara, and Peshawar/Nowshera/Khyber are taking part.

In the opening match Hazara defeated Swat by 2-1. In the first singles Javeria of Swat recorded victory against Marwa in a thrilling three sets battle, the score was 23-21, 19-21 and 25-23. Both Javeria and Marwa played well and gave a tough time to each other with some beautiful overhead smashes, excellent service and cross court smashes were also witnessed. In the doubles Laiba and Mehraj of Hazara recorded victory against Swat's Javeria and Sana Gul in three sets battle, the score was 23-25, 21-19 and 21-18. In the second singles Mehraj defeated Sana Gul by 2-0, the score was 21-19 and 23-21 and in the second doubles Haleema and Marwa defeated Marhaba and Sheba by 2-1, the score was 21-19, 17-21 and 23-21. Thus Hazara won the match by 3-1.

## ‘VAR has got out of control’ - Man Utd lose again on chaotic night in Copenhagen

LONDON (AGENCIES): On a chaotic night in Copenhagen there were seven goals, two penalties, a "game-changing" red card, a protester on the pitch and a late winner by a 17-year-old substitute - but once more we are left talking about VAR.

In a week where video technology has made headlines because of its use in Monday's madness at Tottenham, it came to the fore to make key decisions in Denmark as Manchester United slipped to a damaging Champions League defeat. United manager Erik ten Hag felt its use to dismiss Marcus Rashford for planting his foot on the ankle of Elias Jelert "changed the game". At the time, the visitors led 2-0. "In real time it's just not a red," former United midfielder Paul Scholes told TNT Sports.

However, Robbie Savage, who was co-commentating on the game for TNT Sports, disagreed with Scholes. "That for me is a

red card," said the former Wales midfielder.

"Initially I thought he just turned, but I think that is a red card. When you see it from that other angle - he has gone to protect the ball, and by doing that he has stamped on his shin and that is 100% a red card."

Referee Donatas Rumšas would be called to the pitchside monitor twice more in the game, to award a penalty to each side for handball - both described as "soft" by Scholes' ex-United team-mate and colleague in the TNT studio, Owen Hargreaves.

With United smarting from another chastening defeat which leaves them facing a huge task to qualify for the last 16, BBC Sport picks through the chaos and controversies in the Danish capital.

Rashford red costs Man Utd in Copenhagen defeat

Best action and reaction from Man Utd's defeat by FC Copenhagen

Everything seemed to be going swimmingly for

United after arguably their most accomplished 25 minutes of the season at the start of Wednesday's game.

Rasmus Hojlund's two close-range finishes in a period of purpose and precision had the visitors in complete control.

Then, with 42 minutes on the clock, the referee was alerted to Rashford's indiscretion - the planting of his foot on Jelert's ankle in what appeared to be a mistimed attempt to shield the ball. A review and red card followed.

"I think first we played very good until the red card. The red card changed everything. Then it becomes a different game," said Ten Hag. "It is a harsh decision - he was going for the ball. The review was over, then he went up to the screen. I think the referee was not sure." Pundit Hargreaves was more forthright when asked if it was a red. "Not in a million years," he said. "Marcus is just trying to put his leg out to protect the ball."



BENGALURU: Angelo Mathews celebrates the dismissal of Kane Williamson.

### Semifinal matches of hockey, volleyball played

BAHAWALPUR (APP): South Punjab School Olympics 2023 is underway and semi final matches of hockey were played at Matiullah Hockey Stadium Bahawalpur.

The first semi-final was played between the girls teams of Bahawalpur Nawab and Rahim Yar Khan. Bahawalpur Nawab won the match by 10-0.

In the second semi-final match played between Layyah Lajpal and Bahawalpur Burag. Layyah Lajpal won the match by 3-0. The final of girls' hockey will be played between Bahawalpur Nawab and Layyah Lajpal teams.

In the semi-final match of volleyball between Bahawalpur district and Vehari district boys teams. The Bahawalpur team won the match.

In the second semi-final match, Bahawalnagar team defeated Rahim Yar Khan volleyball team. The final will be played between Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar teams.

### Wilson recalled for Euro 2024 qualifiers

LONDON (BBC): Newcastle United striker Callum Wilson has been recalled to the England squad by manager Gareth Southgate for their final two Euro 2024 qualifiers.

Wilson, 31, has scored seven Premier League goals this season, but sustained a hamstring injury as Newcastle lost at Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday.

Tottenham midfielder James Maddison and Arsenal forward Bukayo Saka are also in despite injury worries.

England play Malta on 17 November and North Macedonia on 20 November. Southgate's side have already qualified for the tournament in Germany next June and July after a 3-1 win against Italy in October. Chelsea forward Raheem Sterling, who has 82 caps and 20 goals for England, is left out of a fifth successive squad. Aston Villa striker Ollie Watkins retains his place after his first inclusion since March 2022 for the October international matches, while Jordan Henderson, who joined Saudi Arabian side Al-Ettifaq from Liverpool in July, also keeps his spot.

## Pakistan, Bangladesh women teams all set for final ODI today

DHAKA (APP): It has all come down to the third and final ODI of the three-match series between Pakistan and Bangladesh women's cricket teams. The winner of Friday's game at the Shera Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka will not only clinch the ODI series, but will also earn two vital points of the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25.

Pakistan women's team have earned 14 points from 14 matches in the Championship, while the hosts have obtained nine points from 11 matches. Pakistan won the first ODI at the Shere Bangla National Stadium on November 4 by five wickets courtesy of an all-round performance from captain Nida Dar (35 not out and three wickets) and career-best match figures of 9-2-13-4 by left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal.

In the second ODI played at the same venue on November 7, Bangladesh bounced back and won a thriller in the super over. The match was tied after Pakistan were bowled out on the penultimate ball of the match, chasing 170 to win.

The bowlers have been dominant in both ODIs, with a total of 15 wickets falling in the first ODI and 19 wickets in the second ODI. Also, three batters returned back to the hut in the super over in the second ODI. Pakistan's Sadia is leading the bowling charts with six wickets from two matches, while spinners Nida, Umm-e-Hani and Bangladesh's Nahida Akhter have taken four wickets each.

Both captains Nida and Nigar Sultana are leading the batting charts after playing crucial innings for their respective teams.

Nigar is currently at the top of the table with 67 runs, including an innings of 54 in the second ODI and she also struck a boundary on the last ball of the super over to keep the three-match series alive.

Talking to PCB Digital on the eve of the third ODI against Bangladesh, captain Nida Dar said: "The series is evenly poised and we are all up to win tomorrow's game and take the trophy home. We had made some mistakes in the previous match, but the players sat down together, they understand the importance of tomorrow's contest. This is not just about winning tomorrow's game, it is also about taking two points in the ICC Women's Championship."

"We all know about the capabilities of Bangladesh side in their own backyard and they have showed us this in the second ODI."

## Pakistan more talented squad than their place on ICC CWC table: Sir Vivian Richards

ISLAMABAD (APP): West Indies legend Sir Vivian Richards believed Pakistan was a more talented squad than their place on ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 table.

Richards, who scored 8,540 runs in 121 Test matches at an average of 50.23, said Pakistan could yet join India in the knock-out stages.

"I can't help thinking that with the talent they have, they should have already sealed their spot," ICC quoted him as saying.

Richards, who scored nearly 7,000 runs in One Day Internationals, said he has seen up close in recent years through his coaching work in the Pakistan Super League how much ability exists Pakistan squad.

"But they have made life hard for themselves - I think they are a more talented squad than their place in the table would suggest. They can beat the very best on their day so



there may be some punches left in that team, he said.

He said it was a shame for the fans in the West Indies that they have not had the opportunity to see their team in action.

"I am hoping it acts as a wake-up call as it is a competition which means so much to us. The two World Cups we won in 1975 and 1979 remain the highlights of my career," he said.

Richards, who was inducted into the ICC

Cricket Hall of Fame in 2009, said some of the pitches have been good for run-scoring in the World Cup and we have seen so many high-class performances.

"There have been the record-breaking centuries from Aiden Markram and Glenn Maxwell, Quinton de Kock has had an amazing tournament and the young man Rachin Ravindra looks an exceptional talent," he said.

## Women's FA Cup: Fund doubled to £6m in ‘positive step’ towards equal prize money



LONDON (BBC): This year's Women's FA Cup prize fund will be doubled to a total of £6m, the Football Association has announced.

The winners of the final will receive £430,000, up from

£100,000 in 2022-23, when Chelsea lifted the trophy.

In the men's FA Cup, the winners currently receive £2m.

Sue Campbell, the FA's director of women's football, said the funding increase was a "positive step

towards a "long-term ambition" of achieving equal prize money.

"Doubling the prize money showcases the FA's clear commitment to the future of the Women's FA Cup and will help us maintain its stature as the most prestigious domestic women's cup competition in the world," Campbell said.

"Ultimately, we want the women's competition to receive the same prize money as the men's, and this new increase is a positive step in the direction of achieving that long-term ambition."

The funding uplift comes after a 10-fold increase last year brought the total prize fund to £3m.

It will come into effect from the third round onwards, where second-tier sides enter the competition.

The 12 Women's Super League sides, including holders Chelsea, join in round four. The first round starts this weekend.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 110,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 110,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 53,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1515.79 feet and was 115.79 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 26,100 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1194.30 feet, which was 144.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 8,300 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 64,900, 40,400, 35,600 and 7,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,400 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Search operations conducted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have conducted search operations in Waris Khan, Saddar Barooni, Airport and adjoining areas and arrested six suspects here on Thursday. According to a police spokesman, Rawalpindi district police, women police and other law enforcement agencies under the supervision of senior police officers participated in the search operations. He said that Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmoond Hamdani, operations were conducted and inspected 126 houses, 72 shops, besides checking 283 persons, and collected data of 25 tenants. The spokesman said search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted under National Action Plan in different areas of the district particularly to ensure law and order.

### Gang held for supplying dead chickens

ISLAMABAD (APP): The teams of Punjab Food Authority (PFA) Attock and Patrolling Highway Police (PHP) Kotkay arrested a two-member gang supplying dead chickens and recovered 300 kg of meat. According to PFA, on a tip-off, the action was taken under the supervision of Assistant Director of Punjab Food Authority Attock, Harmain Ali and in-charge of PHP, Kotkay Check Post, SI Bilal Ahmed. Two suspects, Naz Malik and Dawood Sanam, were loading dead chickens in an empty vehicle from the loader rickshaw and were arrested on the spot. Sources said that there are several chicken sheds on Tarbela Road from where dead chickens are picked up by loader rickshaws and taken to farm houses which are sold at food points and restaurants established in various cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. All the dead chickens were destroyed in the presence of the Food Authority and the police, and according to the complaint of the Assistant Food Officer in Hazro police station registering a case under the Food Act, the accused were handed over to police. Chhachh Muhafiz Committee's Senior Vice Chairman Nisar Ali Khan, General Secretary Naseer Khan Jadoon, Social Worker Ismail Khan Ghorgushti and public social circles have appreciated this joint action of Punjab Food Act and Patrolling Police Kotke Check Post.



ISLAMABAD: First Lady Begum Samina Alvi addressing the concluding session of a consultative meeting on the Formulation of Federal and Provincial Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Strategic Action Plan.

## US CDC delegation meets Health Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Atlanta led by Dr Richard Franka, representative of Global Immunization Division called on Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan.

During meeting they discussed mutual areas of interest for cooperation in health sector.

The delegation also included Acting Country Director of CDC in Pakistan, Dr. Jude Tuma as well as Ms. Suzanne Powell from the US Embassy.

The minister was accompanied by Ifthikhar Shalwani, federal Secretary Health and Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar, Strategic Adviser IGH-CDC. Dr Nadeem Jan thanked US CDC for long-standing collaboration and technical assistance provided to the country for immunization, Polio eradication, capacity building of public

health workforce as well strengthening of public health labs in Pakistan.

The minister made mention of the contributions of CDC trained Field Epidemiologists in disease detection and response, Polio eradication as well as the recently encountered COVID-19 pandemic.

Sharing his vision and priorities of the government to protect the health of most vulnerable populations, the minister updated the delegation about initiatives being undertaken to improve essential immunization coverage across Pakistan and plan to interrupt the Polio transmission the soonest possible. "The national leadership is committed to use all its strengths and resources to contain all vaccine preventable diseases and finally confine Polio virus to the history books."

"Failure in this respect is not an option and we shall ensure it through accounta-

bility across the board," the minister said.

Dr Nadeem Jan stressed the need to adopt an integrated service delivery approach and urged the global community to extend support during the last miles toward eradication. Richard Franka, CDC delegation lead appreciated the government's commitment as well as the unprecedented support being extended to valiant frontline health workers by Pakistan's law enforcement agencies.

While appreciating the progress made, Dr Richard emphasized the need to modify strategies based on updated risk assessment and urged ongoing impact evaluations of interventions being implemented in priority zones. "The CDC truly believes in government leadership and shall remain supportive of the locally tailored strategic approaches to address challenges being faced in priority areas", Richard stated.

## Renowned playback singer Mala remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Popular playback singer of Urdu and Punjabi films Mala was remembered on her birth anniversary on Thursday. Born on November 9, 1939, in Faisalabad (then Lyalpur) her real name was Naseem Nazli. In the 1960s, Mala was a 'hit pair for singing duet film songs' with famous playback singer Ahmed Rushdi and they gave numerous hits to the Pakistan film industry. She sang many super hit songs in almost two decades of her singing career in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mala's career suffered with the arrival of Runa Laila in the Pakistani film industry. Her elder sister Shamim Nazli was a music composer. On Shamim Nazli's request, music composer, Baba Ghulam Ahmed Chishti recorded two songs for the Punjabi film Aabroo (1961) in Mala's voice.

Her first major break in films came in 1962. She changed her name to Mala and sang a simple Urdu composition, Aaya re dekho for the film Sooraj Mukhi (1962).

In 1963, Mala rendered her voice to a tragic Urdu composition, "Dil daeta hai ro ro duhai, kisi sey koi pyaar na karey" for the film Ishq Par Zor Nahin (1963).

## Master Ghulam Haider remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Renowned music composer Master Ghulam Haider was remembered on the occasion of his death anniversary on Thursday.

Born in 1908 in Hyderabad, Sindh he worked both in India and later in Pakistan after partition in 1947.

He changed the face of film songs by combining the popular Raags with the verve and rhythm of Punjabi music and also helped raise the status of film music directors. He is also known for giving a break to the well-known playback singer, Lata Mangeshkar.

A.R. Kardar had allowed him to compose music for the 1935 film, Swarg Ki Seerhi but he got his first big breakthrough with D.M. Pancholi's Punjabi film, Gul-e-Bakavali (1939) starring Noor Jehan. This was followed by the film Yamla Jat (1940).

His first big hit song came with Khazanchi in 1941. The music of the film Khazanchi (1941), in particular, the song Sawan Ke Nazare Hain sung by Shamshad Begum caused a revolution in music composition. Khazanchi's refreshingly 'free-wheeling music' not only took the audiences by storm but also made other film music directors sit up and take notice. Khandan (1942), the first film of Noor Jehan's as lead actress, was also a big hit and established him as a top film composer.

Then Ghulam Haider moved to Bombay and composed music for many films including Humayun (1945) and Majboor (1948), the first breakthrough film for Lata Mangeshkar in Hindi films. The films Shaheed (1948) and Kameez were his other big hits. After independence in 1947, he returned to Lahore and his first Pakistani film was Shahida (1949).

## PUC spearheads anti-terrorism campaign through unified 'Friday Sermons'

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the appeal of the Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) and its allied parties, Ulema and Mashaykh are set to deliver impactful Friday Sermons under the banner of Paigham-e-Pakistan.

PUC Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, along with prominent figures Allama Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Pir Naqib-ur-Rahman, Maulana Muhammad Khan Laghari, Allama Aarif Wahidi, and others, had called upon religious scholars and leaders from all schools of thought to vehemently condemn extremism and terrorism in their Friday Sermons.

Ashrafi who is also the Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Islamic Countries, urged Ulema and Mashaykh to articulate a unified message against extremism and terrorism, issuing a collective statement and presenting consensus religious decrees (Fatwas) during their Friday Sermons.

He also encouraged educating the general public about the importance and benefits of this united stance.

Expressing his commitment to societal

reform and the eradication of terrorism, he asked the religious scholars and leaders to play a substantial role from the pulpit and arch of their respective mosques. He vowed to collaborate closely with state institutions to achieve the common goal of putting an end to extremism and terrorism.

Rejecting any tolerance for terrorism within Islam, Ashrafi emphasized "Those who attack the state of Pakistan, its armed forces, security institutions, and the general public are acting against Islamic teachings and are considered enemies of the country." He asserted that the state and the Pakistan Army had the right to take action against elements posing a threat to the stability and security of the country and targeting its people and institutions.

Ashrafi said the Friday sermons, backed by this united front of religious leaders, would not only denounce terrorism but would also serve as a rallying cry for a collaborative effort between the religious community and the armed forces.

He acknowledged the sacrifices made by the brave soldiers of the Pakistan Army and national security agencies in the recent terrorist incidents.

## IIUI 12th Convocation: 147 gold medals conferred to female students

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pro-Chancellor of International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) and President of Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Dr Ahmed Salem Muhammad Al-Ameri conferred gold medals and degrees on female students in the second session of the 12th convocation of the university. On the second day, 147 gold medals were awarded to the female students by the chief guest.

During the convocation, as many as 26,992 graduates received the degrees that included 12,817 male and 14,715 female graduates. The University conferred 739 PhD degrees on male and female students, while a total of 484 students were awarded gold medals in the two-day long mega event. In his speech, Pro-Chancellor congratulated the new graduates and said by obtaining degrees, they were stepping into their practical lives.

He appreciated the initiatives of President IIUI, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi saying that the university was heading to the right direction in his leadership. He also mentioned that the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz and His Royal Highness Princess Mohammed Bin Salman give great importance to ties with Pakistan.

He also told that the Saudi Government has been keen to introduce the scholarships through a detailed program.

Being the President of Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, he said they have a close connection with IIUI and Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University is always eager to expand bilateral ties with educational institutions across the world. He hoped that the future would witness more programs and conferences with the joint ventures and exchange of delegations between IIUI and Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University.

He said depoliticization of the educational institutions is a pre-requisite for the constructive results. He urged the faculty to pro-

duce highly skilled youth inculcated with teachings of Islam. He stressed that we need to learn from the experiences of others and we must make research our top priority.

Rector IIUI Dr Samina Malik while congratulating the students said that "My warmest congratulations to our graduates on this celebratory day. Your hard work, commitment, and efforts have led you to earn your degrees".

She said that he IIUI was imparting education in hundreds of professional disciplines making it one of the best institutions in the world. She said to fulfil our mission of equipping our students with the emerging knowledge, we have revamped entire curriculum across 11 faculties and introduced the modern branches of sciences. She said that the President of the University, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi has been actively pursuing this agenda. His efforts like new organogram, decentralization, strategic planning have started yielding fruits in the shape of improvement in national and international ranking.

She said that the President of the University, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi has been actively pursuing this agenda. His efforts like new organogram, decentralization, strategic planning have started yielding fruits in the shape of improvement in national and international ranking.

## Rain lashes capital city; turns weather cold

ISLAMABAD (APP): Rain of light to moderate intensity

lashed the federal capital, like other parts of the country, on Thursday afternoon turning the weather cold and compelling most of the citizens to stay indoors. The rain-wind/thunderstorm of low to moderate intensity started around 4:00 pm in the capital city, with hailstorms at a few places, and continued with gaps. The day temperatures have dropped from two to three degrees celsius after the rain.

The rain occurred due to a westerly wave affecting the upper parts of the country which is persisting as per the synoptic situation revealed by the Pakistan

Meteorological Department (PMD) earlier.

The PMD in its advisory warned the travelers visiting northern areas to remain cautious.

The farmers of barani areas were also advised to manage the crops activities accordingly.

During the next 24 hours, rain-wind/thunderstorm with snow over mountains is likely in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir and northeast Punjab.

Isolated hailstorm may also occur during the period. Dry weather is expected in most plain areas of the country. Fog/smog is likely to occur in plain areas of Punjab during morning

hours. The rainfall recorded during the period was Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Kalam 17mm, Saidur Sharif 09, Malam Jabba 08, Chitral 06, Charat, Mirkhani, Drosh 05, Parachinar 04, Peshawar (Airport 04, City 03), Balakot 03, Kakul 02, Mirkhani, Takht Bai 01, Sindh: Rohri 07, Larkana 03, Mohenjo Daro 02, Balochistan: Barkhan 05, Quetta 02, Punjab: Rahim Yar Khan 07, Islamabad (Airport 04, Saidpur, Bokra 01) Kashmir: Muzaffarabad (Airport 03, City 02) and Garhi Dupatta 02mm.

The lowest minimum temperatures recorded were Leh -03 C, Skardu and Babusar -01 C.

## PAF pays tribute to Poet of East on his birth anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Thursday released a video based on the iconic poetic verses of the Poet of East Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal to pay tribute on his 146th birth anniversary.

"The short documentary features Shaheen (Eagle), the dynamic character of Iqbal's poetry,

with his verses focused on dignity, self-reliance, resilience and purity of soul," a PAF news release said. It said Iqbal's poetry had a 'depth of thought and reflection' and the creation of the motherland had been accomplished due to his intellect.

By terming the youth 'Shaheen', Iqbal in fact wanted to inculcate in

them the passion for action, broad vision, boldness and curiosity to achieve sublimity, which were the characteristics of the agile bird.

The PAF, in the documentary, renews the pledge that its every Shaheen is ever ready to render any sacrifice for protection of the motherland.

## SAPM Jawad meets Palestine envoy, denounces Israeli aggression

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Jawad Sohrab Malik on Thursday called upon Ambassador of the State of Palestine Ahmed Rabi'i to condemn the rising hostilities and aggression, perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against innocent civilians in Gaza.

SAPM Jawad Sohrab Malik, in the meeting, strongly denounced the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure, medical services, educational institutions and refugees camps by

the Israeli occupation, according to a press release.

He further stated that given the sheer number of people i.e., around 2.2 million and the indefinite longevity, 75 years, "Gaza is the mother of all concentration camps".

Genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against peace and humanitarian laws were being committed by Israel with impunity and no fear of repercussions, he added.

The SAPM emphasized that the international community, especially the Islamic world, must play an active role in ensuring immediate ceasefire and

opening of a humanitarian corridor for uninterrupted relief supplies to the besieged innocent civilians of Gaza.

He reaffirmed the Government of Pakistan's solidarity at the critical moment of a second Nakba against the Palestinian nation and assured unequivocal support for their right to self-determination.

Ambassador Ahmed Rabi'i extended his gratitude for the unwavering solidarity and support that the Government and the people of Pakistan had consistently shown to the people of Palestine.

## Iqbal's poetry a bright chapter in history of Urdu language

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association organized Kalam-e-Iqbal, Speech and Tableau competitions to mark Iqbal Day in a befitting manner.

Naheed Manzoor and Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed were the chief guests of the competitions, While Member DRA Rawalpindi & President APPSMA Malik Ibrar Ahmad Khan and Divisional President APPSMA Aamir participated in the ceremony as guests of honors.

Addressing the ceremony, Naheed Manzoor said that Allama Muhammad Iqbal's poetry is a bright chapter in the history of Urdu language. Allama Iqbal gave the Muslims of the subcontinent political backing through his speech. He woke up the nation from the dream of neglect and awakened the spirit to decide their destiny, she added.

Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that Allama Iqbal gave a message

of unity to the Muslim Ummah through his poetry. He is considered as a modern Sufi. His main tendency in poetry was towards Sufism and the revival of the Islamic Ummah. His philosophy is recognized all over the world. City Lyceum School won first, Rising Stars Public School second, Bright land Secondary School third and Umbreen Educational Hub won fourth position in tableaux competitions. In speech competitions, Kanwal Nazir, Hadiya Noor, Tahmi Abid and Manahil Riaz were awarded the first, second, third and fourth prizes respectively.

In the Kalam Iqbal competition, Ayesha Lathani School got the first position, Umbrian Educational Hub got the second position, AIMS School Girls got the third position and Paradise Public School got the fourth position. At the end of the competitions, shields and certificates of appreciation were distributed to the schools and children who secured positions.

## Pak is striving towards accomplishment of SDG-4: Edu Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi has said that Pakistan was striving towards the accomplishment of SDG-4 (EDU) & was working diligently to ensure that every child has access to quality education.

While presenting Pakistan's perspective at High Level Debate of 42nd UNESCO General Conference on Thursday, he said that Pakistan has actively participated in the revision process of 1974 Recommendation aimed at advancing equitable & universal education for global peace, harmony and development.

The Minister assured commitment to the preservation and promotion of the rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Pakistan.

The minister also highlighted urgent need to address climate change and noted actions aimed at safeguarding green spaces and biosphere reserves.

Madad Ali especially expressed grave concern at the situation in Gaza and regretted the double standards that were eroding the sanctity of international law and the UN Charter.

Calling for an immediate ceasefire, he reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for Palestinians.

"Today I specifically highlighted the grave humanitarian crisis in Gaza during my speech at UNESCO General Conference.

The bombing of schools & killings of thousands of Children & innocent civilians is unacceptable. Pakistan fully supports Palastanians just cause" he added.



### Turkey pledges support

KABUL (BNA): Acting Interior Minister Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani recently welcomed Turkey's new Chargé d'Affaires for Afghanistan, Jang Onal, in an introductory meeting. He expressed his hopes for success in Onal's endeavors and emphasized the deep historical ties between Afghanistan and Turkey, advocating for stronger relations between the two Muslim nations. Onal echoed these sentiments, highlighting the common values shared by both nations.

## The Frontier Post

Rabi-us-Sanni 24, 1445 — Friday, November 10, 2023

### Families call for security

KABUL (TOLOnews): Victim's families in the Dasht-e-Barchi area of Kabul asked the government to ensure their security. They said that they have witnessed several explosions in the west of Kabul in the past month. "Several explosions have taken place in PD13 im the past 10 to 20 days. This explosion is not the first and it will not be the last," a resident said. The explosion in the west of Kabul took the life of a man who was busy working to find a piece of bread for his family on the streets.

## Iran, Tajikistan reiterate call for inclusive govt

KABUL (Khaama Press): Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, in a joint press conference with Tajikistan's President Imam Ali Rahman, expressed their shared concerns about Afghanistan. Tehran and Dushanbe share common apprehensions regarding the situation in Afghanistan, Raisi stated.

Iranian media have reported that, during a meeting President Imam Ali Rahman of Tajikistan attended, Ebrahim Raisi once again emphasized the need to establish an inclusive government in Afghanistan.

According to reports from foreign media, both sides discussed bilateral

issues and the situation in Afghanistan during this meeting. It is worth mentioning that Iran and Tajikistan have emphasized that the current situation and issues related to Afghanistan are a common concern for both countries.

These remarks come as Iran and Tajikistan have consistently insisted on the establishment of an inclusive government in Afghanistan. However, the Taliban administration has repeatedly accused neighbouring countries and regional powers of interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs and has claimed that Afghanistan currently has an inclusive government.

During this meeting, the continuation and enhancement of cooperation between Tehran and Dushanbe were also emphasized, and several "new" agreements on economic, trade, transportation, cultural, scientific, educational, and sports cooperation between the two countries were signed.

This joint press conference between Ebrahim Raisi and Imam Ali Rahman takes place. At the same time, Mullah Abdul Ghani brother, the acting Minister of Economy of the Taliban administration, has also travelled to Iran and discussed many economic issues with Iranian authorities.

## US envoy supports investigations

KABUL (Khaama Press): The US Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Thomas West, expressed support for the request of the United Nations human rights reporter regarding investigations into deadly attacks in the Dasht-e-Barchi district.

West said on his social media platform X that there should be a "full investigation" into the attacks on Hazaras.

Meanwhile, Richard Bennett, the UN special rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan, said that a thorough and transparent investigation should be conducted to identify the perpetrators of the Dasht-e-Barchi attacks and hold them accountable and described these attacks as "horrific."

"Terrible reports of multiple deaths and injuries in a 3rd explosive attack on Hazaras in under a month, latest targeting a civilian bus in Dasht-e-Barchi district, Kabul. I urge a full transparent investigation to identify perpetrators and hold them accountable," Bennett said.

West shared Bennett's request on his social media account, writing, "We lament tragic loss of lives in the third attack on Hazaras in less than a month." He added, "These senseless attacks must stop, and urged a full investigation."

On Tuesday evening, at least seven people were killed and 20 others were wounded in a bomb blast on a passenger bus in Dasht-e-Barchi, west of Kabul. ISIS claimed responsibility for this attack.

In the past month, this was the third explosion in Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul. The two explosive incidents occurred in a sports club, resulting in the death of at least four people and injuries to nearly ten others.

## 500 bodies transferred from Iran

KABUL (TOLOnews): The bodies of five hundred Afghan immigrants who have been killed in Iran in the past six months have been transferred to the country through the border of Rah-e-Abrisham, officials said.

According to the local officials of Nimroz, these migrants have been killed in various incidents, especially traffic incidents on smuggling routes.

"500 bodies have been transferred to the country from Iran in the past six months. These bodies are due to so many incidents, including, random events, natural death, and guns," said Abdullah Riaz, head of Nimroz immigrants' department.

The body of 18-year-old Amir Khan, who died in a traffic accident in Iran, has been transferred to Afghanistan.

Amir Khan's relatives said that after getting engaged, he went to Iran to find work and finance his wedding.

"It has been a year that he went to Iran. He was a worker. He was busy working during the day, and in the afternoon this incident happened," said Mirza Khan, a cousin of Amir.

"We are not happy about them [Iran], they are harassing us everywhere instead of helping us," said Abdul Wali, another relative of Amir.

Meanwhile, some families of the victims said that they are facing many challenges in transporting the bodies of their relatives to the country.

"More attention should be paid to them. When an Afghan is killed in Iran, he/she does not make any difference; it is like a bird is killed. They [Iranian] should value the life of a human," Bashir, a resident of Baghlan, told TOLOnews.

"Honestly, we were being harassed next to the border," Faiz Mohammad, a resident of Parwan told TOLOnews.

This comes as, earlier officials of the Nimroz security command announced the arrest of 150 human traffickers in the past one year in the province.

## Deputy PM visits Chabahar Port in Iran



CHABAHAR PORT (Ariana News): Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, Afghanistan's Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, visited Chabahar Port in Iran on Thursday and met with port officials over the need to increase Afghanistan's exports and imports.

Baradar requested that Iran facilitate easier access to Chabahar Port, enabling Afghanistan to reach global

markets more effectively, a statement issued by his office read.

According to the statement the Iranian side assured Baradar of their commitment to providing the necessary facilities for Afghanistan at Chabahar Port and expressed their intent to boost Afghanistan's trade through the port.

The Iranian officials also highlighted the need for collaboration between tech-

nical teams from both countries, the statement said.

Connecting to Chabahar Port will grant Afghanistan access to markets in Europe, the Middle East, India, and China, thereby strengthening Afghanistan's global relationships.

This port holds significant economic importance for Central Asian countries, particularly landlocked Afghanistan.

Chabahar Port offers a

more efficient route being much closer than Bandar Abbas and hundreds of kilometers closer than Karachi Port, resulting in unprecedented reductions in export costs and transit times.

Situated strategically, Chabahar Port allows Afghanistan to establish new trade and transit partnerships while connecting to international markets at a lower cost and in less time.

## Fifth auction held for Panjshir emeralds, says Ministry

PANJSHIR (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum said in a statement that for the fifth time it held an auction for emeralds from Panjshir, selling 2,059 carats of emeralds extracted from Panjshir mines.

The ministry has sold 2,059 carats of emeralds extracted from Panjshir worth \$117,700 US dollars, with "transparent" bidding.

The Chamber of Commerce and Investment considers the legalization of Panjshir emerald extraction beneficial in the development of the country's economy.

The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum says that more than \$1.5 million has

been obtained in five rounds of extraction and sales of emeralds in Panjshir province.

The spokesperson of this ministry said that hundreds of residents of Panjshir province are currently working legally in the extraction of emerald mines in this province.

"So far, five tenders or auctions have been held, and in yesterday's tender, approximately 2,059 carats of extracted emeralds were sold at a price of 117,700 US dollars through open bidding," said Hamayon Afghan, the spokesman of the ministry.

At the same time, the chamber of commerce and investment, referring to the

work provided for the residents of Panjshir province, said the legal extraction of emeralds is beneficial in the growth of the country's economy.

"The fact that this process is subject to the law is a very important issue, and another issue is how we can technically extract the Panjshir emerald. This is very important," said Mohammad Yunus Momand, first deputy of the ACCI.

Some analysts, referring to the good market of precious stones, believe that the expansion of standard extraction of precious stones such as emeralds in the country's mines can bring positive changes in the development of the

country's economy.

"A mechanism should be properly arranged and the process of extraction should continue and these precious stones can have positive effects on the future of Afghanistan's economy," said Shams-Ur-Rahman Ahmadzai, an economic analyst.

Based on the statistics of the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, 1,200 emerald mines have been identified in Panjshir province, and domestic companies have been allowed to mine over 400 mines in this province.

The ministry emphasized that the process of extracting emerald mines is strictly monitored by the officials of this ministry.

## WFP 'prepares' to support 1m returning Afghan refugees

KABUL (Ariana News): The head of the World Food Program (WFP) Cindy McCain says that the organization is preparing to support one million Afghans who are expected to return to their country in the near future. According to her, the WFP has already distributed food to 60,000 Afghan returnees at the Pakistan crossings.

McCain said in a post on X, formerly twitter meanwhile that, sufficient financial resources have not been provided to support the earthquake-affected Afghans who are also dealing with a fast approaching winter, which are very cold, snowy, and windy. Temperatures in the province can drop to below zero degrees Celsius through December,



January and February.

Coupled with the earthquake-crisis, and the nationwide humanitarian crisis, hundreds of thou-

sands of Afghans are expected to return to Afghanistan from Pakistan after the neighboring country ordered over 1.5 million

unregistered refugees to leave by November 1.

So far, over 200,000 Afghans have crossed the border.

## Sirajuddin Haqqani meet returning Afghan refugees

KABUL (Ariana News): Sirajuddin Haqqani, Acting Minister of Interior Affairs, said during a trip to Nangarhar province, to meet returning refugees from Pakistan, that Islamabad's treatment of the migrants was unfair, and that he was offended by their actions.

"The whole nation and the whole system are sad for you; in other words, we are also annoyed with our neighbors; we wish they didn't have such weak morals; it wasn't suitable for them and these problems come upon all of us; and life with respect and dignity, that I like for myself, I also want for oth-

ers. "We fought in Afghanistan for honor. Today, if there is hunger and if there are problems, I am with honor," Haqqani said.

While appreciating the efforts of the various departments to establish camps and provide services to the returning refugees, he assured the migrants that the Islamic Emirate will provide more facilities for them. Haqqani said: "Today you are safe from many problems, no one will dishonor you in an illegitimate manner." He also called on other migrants to return home.

"In appearance you returned to the country with many problems, but you

were accepted in your homeland with great respect," said Haqqani.

According to Mr. Haqqani, providing services for returning migrants is one of the priorities of the Islamic Emirate.

"The leadership of the Islamic Emirate is committed to addressing all your needs within the framework of law, Islam and patriotism," said Haqqani.

He also thanked businessmen in the country for helping the returning migrants.

Also, during his visit to Nangarhar, local businessmen together with the Haqqani announced that they have given 20 million

Afghanis to help the returnees.

At the same time, a number of returnees thanked the IEA for their efforts to ease their return.

Since the beginning of the forced deportation of immigrants from Pakistan, more than 50,000 families have returned to the country through Torkham crossing, local officials said. According to them, the process of transferring migrants to their provinces of origin has also been accelerated.

A number of immigrants who have been deported from Pakistan want the government to provide them with permanent shelter.

## 80 women graduated from training workshop



KABUL (Khaama Press): At least 80 women deprived of opportunities for work and education achieved a sense of empowerment after completing a six-month handicraft training program offered by the "Shafaq" Institute in Kabul.

These women graduated on Wednesday, with officials from different government departments in Afghanistan attending the ceremony.

Yalda Shafaq Azimi, the founder of this center, aims to empower women

through vocational training. She emphasizes that more than 300 girls and women learn various professions in their workshops.

Women in Afghanistan have faced significant restrictions, including a ban on education and work, under the rule of the Taliban administration once again. These restrictions have forced many to consider home-based jobs and handicrafts such as tailoring and embroidery.

According to a report published by the United Nations Assistance Mission

in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in mid-2023, 80% of women have lost their sources of income. The report also indicates that 69% of women suffer from depression, isolation, and feelings of humiliation.

Girls and women who have completed their training at the "Shafaq" workshop have received education in tailoring, embroidery, graphics, and weaving. Meanwhile, they urged the current administration to create jobs and employment opportunities for them.

## Attack in west of Kabul sparks reactions

KABUL (TOLOnews): The attack in the Dasht-e-Barchi area of Kabul on Tuesday evening has sparked reactions.

Hamid Karzai, the former president of the country, condemned the explosion, saying that it is "a crime against humanity and against all human and Islamic principles and values".

"I condemn the explosion in a bus in Dasht-e-Barchi of Kabul city, as a result of which a number of our compatriots were martyred and injured. This terrorist act is an anti-human crime and against all human and Islamic principles and values," Karzai said on X.

"The responsibility for the security of citizens

belongs to the security institutions. A lot of effort should be made in this regard because otherwise there will be a loss of trust," said Tariq Farhadi, a political analyst.

Richard Bennett, the UN Special Rapporteur, also condemned the attack, and called for a transparent investigation with a view to identifying perpetrators and holding them accountable.

"Terrible reports of multiple deaths & and injuries in a 3rd explosive attack on Hazaras in under a month, the latest targeting a civilian bus in Dasht-e-Barchi district Kabul. I urge a full, transparent investigation with a view to identifying perpetrators and holding

them accountable," Bennet said on X.

However, the Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said that investigations have started regarding the attack.

"We are still following these criminals who committed this recent crime, both in Kabul and in the provinces. The intelligence of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the security agencies are all trying to find these criminals and punish them," Mujahid told TOLOnews.

This comes as Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack in the west of Kabul, in which seven people killed and twenty others were injured.

## Ministry opening cement factory in Herat



KABUL (BNA): Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar, held a meeting with the Governor of Herat, Mawlana Noor Ahmad Islam Jar, during his visit to the province.

The meeting, attended by all local officials of departments in Herat, highlighted the economic significance

of Herat as one of the country's economic provinces. The Governor of Herat emphasized the need for more attention from central government officials.

Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar, the acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, stated that the purpose of his visit was to inspect the mines in the

province and to inaugurate a cement project.

In addition, a committee led by the Department of Mines and Petroleum of Herat was established.

This committee, which includes seven other departments, is tasked with researching the state of the mines and the quality of their minerals.



# Zardari right to block path of Lahore's PM: Sanaullah

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Rana Sanaullah on Thursday said that Pakistan Peoples Party Co-Chairperson Asif Ali Zardari has the right to block the path of "Lahore's Prime Minister" and pave the way for a premier from Larkana.

He said that the people would decide the next prime minister and hoped that their decision would be acceptable to all of them.

Sanaullah remarks came as the scathing verbal showdown between the PPP and PML-N — two former allies in the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led coalition government — intensified since the Election Commission of

Pakistan had announced to hold elections in the country on February 8, 2024.

The romance between the two former allies ended after the PDM-led coalition government completed its term in August and both the PPP and PML-N locked horns over election-related issues.

In September, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari laid the blame for being denied a level-playing field on the PML-N. Without naming it, he took a subtle jibe at the PML-N, by saying that it is "really a weird" thing that a certain party knew the election date.

On November 6, Zardari hoped his son Bilawal would be victorious with the rise of February 8's sun next year when general elections will take place in the country.

Bilawal expressed hope that the country's next prime minister will not be from "Lahore" — the stronghold of PML-N.

Taking a jibe at PML-N supremo Nawaz who returned to the country on October 21 after ending a four-year self-imposed exile in London, Zardari on Tuesday said that he was not leaving the country as he was bound by his workers.

"What will I say to my worker when I look him in the eye," Zardari further said. He added that his party does its own politics whatever may be the politics of others.

On the other hand, in order to give the PPP a tough time in Sindh, the PML-N and MQM-P decided to contest the upcoming general elections together.

Talking to the media, the

PML-N leader said that there was no legal hurdle for Nawaz to contest the upcoming general or by-elections.

Responding to a question, the former security czar said that the PML-N supremo will hold meetings with the leadership of different political parties, including PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain soon. He maintained that Shehbaz Sharif will remain the party's president.

"We are ready to hold talks with minus May 9 PTI leadership for (the country's) economic recovery," he added.

In a rare move, the PTI has also announced the formation of a "political engagement committee" for reaching out to rival parties ahead of the upcoming polls.

## Bilawal ask party leaders, workers to brace up for upcoming polls



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has asked the party leaders and workers to brace up for the upcoming polls due on February 8.

According to the press release issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, an important meeting of Balochistan Chapter of the party was held at Bilawal House under the chairmanship of PPP Chairman. Faryal Talpur, Central President of PPP Women's Wing, was also present in the meeting along with the party chairman.

It was decided in the meeting that the public gathering in connection with party's 56th Foundation Day will be held in Quetta on November 30.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, during the meeting, said that PPP will participate fully in the general elections and will win more seats in Balochistan than before. He said that if any political party has taken practical steps to solve the problems of Balochistan, it is PPP, adding that from the 'Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan' to the original plan of China Pakistan

Economic Corridor (CPEC), the PPP has always given importance to the Balochistan region. "The results of the upcoming general elections will prove that from Hub to Quetta, the entire Balochistan is the land of Bhuttoism lovers," he added.

During the meeting, the political and organizational situation of the province was discussed between Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the leadership of the Balochistan chapter of the party, while the public-contact campaign was also discussed in the context of the upcoming gener-

al elections. The leadership of PPP Balochistan also presented the party chairman about their suggestions regarding the election campaign.

Mir Changez Khan Jamali, Rozi Khan Kakar, Sarbuland Khan Jogizai, Nawab Sanaullah Khan Zehri, General (r) Abdul Qadir Baloch, Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Ali Madad Jatak, Sardar Umar Gurgej, Ejaz Baloch, Dr. Barkat Baloch, Ghazala Gola, Iqbal Shah, Bismillah Khan Kakar, Jamal Siraj Raisani, Kishore Ahmad Jatak, Malik Nooruddin Kakar, Sardarzaada Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani, Mir Hussain Bux Banglazi, Mir Naseebullah Shahwani, Mir Riaz Ahmed Shahwani, Mir Salim Khan Khosa, Nawabzada Shoaib Zehri, Naveed Durrani, Nawab Muhammad Khan Shahwani, Sabir Baloch, Sadiq Umrani, Sardar Khair Muhammad Tareen Advocate, Sharif Khilji, Malik Zeeshan Hussain, Syed Iqbal Shah, Tahir Mehmood Khan, Hayat Khan Achakzai and others were also present.



GAZA STRIP: Palestine refugees waiting at Rafah Boarder before entering Egypt.

## Ali Nawaz, Amir Dogar arrested

MANSEHRA (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders and former MNAs Ali Nawaz Awan and Amir Dogar have been arrested in Batal area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Mansehra.

As per details, the former PTI MNAs were reportedly in residence of local party leader Razaullah Khan who was also arrested along with his cousins.

The Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab on Friday arrested PTI leader Asad Qaiser from Islamabad.

According to details, the Anti-Corruption Establishment arrested the former National Assembly Speaker for his nomination in Swabi's Gaju Khan Medical College corruption case. Sources told ARY News that Asad Qaiser was being transferred to Bani Gala police station.

The arrest comes as another setback for PTI, which is already embroiled in legal battles as its top leadership remains behind bars.

## Sanam sent on judicial remand

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist Sanam Javed has been sent to jail on a two-day judicial remand as her name was allegedly found linked to the Zaman Park case in Lahore.

According to the details, the court after hearing the arguments of both parties, sent PTI activist — Sanam Javed — to jail for two days of judicial custody.

Magistrate Shabbir Ahmed directed the authorities to present Saman Javed — who was arrested for the fifth time after the May 9 incident — before the relevant Anti-Terrorism Court after the completion of the remand period.

It is pertinent to mention here that, PTI activist Sanam Javed was re-arrested shortly after her release from Kot Lakhpat Jail as her name was allegedly found linked to the Zaman Park case in Lahore.

The First Information Report filed against her alleges her involvement in an attack on a police party.

## Italy sends hospital ship to aid Gaza

ROOM (AFP/APP): Italy is sending a hospital ship to the Middle East to aid Gaza's Palestinian population, which is expected to arrive "in a couple of days", the defence ministry told AFP on Thursday.

The navy ship "Vulcano", which is equipped with operating rooms, is carrying 30 medical staff and is heading initially to Cyprus, according to details published by the ministry. It is expected to arrive "in a couple of days, weather permitting", a defence ministry spokesman told AFP, without confirming how close the ship would get to Gaza.

Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani told a press conference in Paris on Thursday the ship would "be outside Gaza waters as quickly as possible, ready to admit and take care of injured civilians". The navy ship would be followed "in the next few days" by an army field hospital, Defence Minister Guido Crosetto said on Wednesday — efforts he said were "a concrete sign of the humanitarian aid our country is sending to the Gaza Strip".

## 80,000 illegal immigrants sent back to Afghanistan

KARACHI (INP): Balochistan's caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai on Thursday said that with 80,000 illegal Afghan immigrants sent back to Afghanistan from Balochistan so far, the process of deportation would be accelerated in coming days.

Talking to the media at the Karachi Press Club, Jan Achakzai said the terrorists were using the Afghan soil to target "our security forces and that is why we have decided to send illegal immigrants to their home countries".

He said all the six terrorists killed in the Zhob last week, were Afghan nation-

als. With the new government set-up taking charge in Afghanistan two years ago, the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan had increased.

Minister Achakzai said it was the decision of a sovereign state to repatriate all illegal immigrants, 92 percent of them were Afghan nationals, to their home countries.

To a question, he said the provincial government had got blocked some 100,000 fake Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) in two districts. Action would be taken against the officials found responsible for the issuance of fake CNICs to the illegal

immigrants, he added.

Similarly, he said, some 20,000 fake CNICs had reportedly been blocked in Sindh.

He thanked the National Database Registration Authority in helping the Balochistan government tracing the illegal immigrants and blocking their CNICs.

He said the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) was fully collaborating the provincial in tracing out the whereabouts of the illegal immigrants.

Jan Achakzai said operation against terrorists would be continue till the elimination of last one from the country.

## Israel's Gaza genocide: History to never forget world's criminal silence

JEDDAH (APP): National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar has said that history will never forget the criminal silence of the world's leading human rights leaders on the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

Addressing the International Conference on 'Women in Islam: Status and Empowerment' jointly organized by the OIC and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Jeddah on Wednesday, she said Israel's ongoing attacks in the Gaza Strip were a huge political and humanitarian disaster.

The NCSW chairperson said the Palestinian people were facing indescribable pain. More than 7,700 Palestinians had been killed and over 19,740 injured and that number was increasing. About 2,400 or 66 percent were the chil-

dren among the total dead, she added.

Nilofar said schools and hospitals were being bombed, the blockade (of the Gaza Strip) has been tightened.

She said the Israeli occupation meant enslaving the Palestinian people, with brutalities, illegal detentions, imprisonment and extrajudicial executions.

She said Israel's continuous occupation of Palestinian territories and the mistreatment of Palestinians was a question mark on the "sleeping conscience" of the powerful people of the world.

She criticized the international community for not taking adequate measures to stop the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories.

She regretted that some member countries of the United Nations tried to justify the Israeli aggres-

sion. How could the indiscriminate bombing of the entire population (of Gaza) be called a defensive operation with the vague aim of destroying Hamas, she questioned.

The Israeli bombardment in the northern part of Gaza had resulted in widespread destruction, she added.

Nilofar said the Israeli government had shown its fascist face to the whole world, but the international community had failed to provide the support needed to end the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

"The world has missed the opportunity to support the oppressed people of Palestine on the basis of humanitarian sympathy," she regretted.

She also criticized the Western countries for their continued support for Israel despite its human rights abuses.

## PUC spearheads anti-terrorism drive through unified sermons

ISLAMABAD (INP): On the appeal of the Pakistan Ulama Council (PUC) and its allied parties, Ulama and Mashaykh are set to deliver impactful Friday Sermons under the banner of Paigham-e-Pakistan.

PUC Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, along with prominent figures Allama Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Pir Naqib-ur-Rahman, Maulana Muhammad Khan Laghari, Allama Aarif Wahidi, and others, had called upon religious schol-

ars and leaders from all schools of thought to vehemently condemn extremism and terrorism in their Friday Sermons.

Ashrafi who is also the Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Islamic Countries, urged Ulama and Mashaykh to articulate a unified message against extremism and terrorism, issuing a collective statement and presenting consensus religious decrees (Fatwas) during their Friday Sermons.

He also encouraged educating the general public

about the importance and benefits of this united stance.

Expressing his commitment to societal reform and the eradication of terrorism, he asked the religious scholars and leaders to play a substantial role from the pulpit and arch of their respective mosques. He vowed to collaborate closely with state institutions to achieve the common goal of putting an end to extremism and terrorism.

Rejecting any tolerance for terrorism within Islam, Ashrafi emphasized "Those who attack the state of Pakistan, its armed forces, security institutions, and

the general public are acting against Islamic teachings and are considered enemies of the country."

He asserted that the state and the Pakistan Army had the right to take action against elements posing a threat to the stability and security of the country and targeting its people and institutions.

Ashrafi said the Friday sermons, backed by this united front of religious leaders, would not only denounce terrorism but would also serve as a rallying cry for a collaborative effort between the religious community and the armed forces.

## US forces under fire in Middle East

WASHINGTON/BAGHDAD (Reuters): A defective drone in Iraq may have helped keep America from being dragged deeper into a widening Middle East conflict.

The drone, which was launched at the Erbil air base by an Iranian-backed militia before sunrise on Oct. 26, penetrated US air defenses and crashed into the second floor of the barracks housing American troops at about 5 a.m., according to two US officials familiar with the matter.

But the device laden with explosives failed to detonate and in the end only one service member suffered a concussion from the impact, said the officials, who asked to remain anonymous to speak freely about the attack. The US had got lucky, they added, as the drone could have caused carnage had it exploded.

The incident was among at least 40 separate drone and rocket attacks that have been launched at US forces by Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria over the past three weeks in response to American support for Israel in the Gaza war, according to Pentagon

data and the two US officials.

The bombardment has only caused a few dozen minor injuries so far, with many of the rockets and one-way attack drones intercepted by US air defenses in Iraq and Syria, where a total of 3,400 American troops are based. David Schenker, a former US assistant secretary of state at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy think-tank, cautioned that while neither Iran and its allied groups nor the US appeared to want a direct confrontation, the risks were growing. The possibility of a major strike that draws America into a conflict is "a very realistic concern," he said.

"I think they are calibrating the attacks to harass rather than kill en masse US troops," he said of Iraqi and Syrian militias. "But there's a lot more they can do."

It's unclear how President Joe Biden would respond to a major attack that kills a large number of Americans. Struggling in opinion polls ahead of next year's presidential election, Biden has so far sought to limit the US role in the con-

flict mostly to ensuring military aid to Israel.

The war broke out when gunmen from Hamas - the Iranian-funded militant group that rules the Palestinian enclave of Gaza - burst into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and taking more than 240 hostages. Since then, Israel has bombarded the coastal territory relentlessly, killing more than 10,000 people, many of them children.

Iran says it had no role in Hamas' Oct. 7 raid on Israel, though it has welcomed the attack.

On Sunday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken flew to Iraq - where most of the attacks on US forces have taken place - to push Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani to crack down on the militias operating there and avert any escalation.

Yet Sudani has had little luck in persuading the militia groups from letting up their assault, or convincing their bankrollers in Iran to rein them in, according to five senior lawmakers in Sudani's governing coalition, a security adviser to the premier and a militia commander.



JEDDAH: Chairperson NCSW Nilofar Bakhtiar with participants of 3-day International Conference on "Women in Islam: Status and Empowerment".

## PTI complains of unfair playing field ahead of polls

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) complained that there is no level playing field in the upcoming elections. PTI central leader Hamid Khan said that the fact that the President has to request the caretaker Prime Minister to ensure a level playing field is a sign of helplessness. He said that the President should have given a clear order, as he is the only political, constitutional official with the authority to do so.

President Dr. Arif Alvi has written a letter to caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar expressing his concern about the allegations of PTI. He said that he is satis-

fied with the caretaker government's recent statements about providing equal rights and opportunities to all registered political parties. He also reiterated his belief that democracy is the right path for Pakistan.

The President said that he is sending the letter containing the allegations of PTI to the caretaker Prime Minister for his consideration.

He also expressed concern about the increasing incidents of forced disappearances of people with political affiliations. He said that such incidents are concerning, especially when people's political affiliations change.

He also expressed con-

cern about the prolonged detention of women political workers and repeated re-arrests after court relief.

The President said that Article 4 of the Constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to be treated according to law. Article 17 of the Constitution gives every citizen the right to join or organize a political party and Article 19 of the Constitution gives every citizen the right to a free press with freedom of expression.

He said that the caretaker Prime Minister, as the head of the government, has the responsibility to ensure that these rights are protected.