

Pak Navy SSG join drills
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Special Service Group SSG(N) participated in bilateral Special Operations Forces (SO-F) Exercise 'AYYILDIZ 2023' with Turkish Su Alt Taarruz (SAT) at Istanbul, Turkey. The aim of the exercise was to strengthen military relationships, improve coordination & interoperability and exchange of professional expertise in Special Operations Forces (SOF) domain.



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KUWAIT CITY: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Kuwait Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah shaking hands with Chief of Army Staff General Syed Aism Munir, while Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar also present.

IHC acquits Nawaz in Avenfield reference

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a major relief for the former prime minister, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) Wednesday acquitted Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif in the Avenfield Apartments reference case. The court also dismissed the plea filed by the National Accountability Bureau in the Flagship reference against the PML-N supremo after the accountability watchdog withdrew it.

An IHC division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict on Nawaz's plea to overturn his conviction in the graft case. Recently, the high court also acquitted PML-N Vice-President Maryam Nawaz and her husband Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Safdar in the Avenfield reference, nullifying the conviction handed to them in 2018 by an accountability court.

On July 6, 2018, the trial court sentenced Nawaz to 10 years in jail upon conviction along with a £8 million fine (approximately Rs1.3 billion), in the Avenfield corruption reference for owning assets beyond known sources of income and an additional year for not cooperating with NAB, both of them to be served concurrently. Maryam was sentenced to seven years in prison with a fine of £2 million, and one year for non-cooperation with the bureau, while her husband was handed down two-year rigorous imprisonment.

Talking to journalists outside the court after his major legal victory, Nawaz — a three-time prime minister eyeing his fourth term in next year's general elections — said: "I had left it up to Allah. In Al-Azizia [Steel Mills corruption reference] also, I've also left my matters up to Allah."

PML-N leader Azam Nazeer Tarar said that NAB had failed to present evidence against Nawaz in the Avenfield reference. He said NAB was given ample time to prove corruption allegations and establish that Nawaz and his daughter were involved in corruption but the anti-corruption watchdog failed to present substantial evidence against the PML-N leaders.

"Nawaz Sharif stands vindicated and acquitted for lack of evidence," he added. When the hearing began, Nawaz's lawyer Amjad Pervaz told the court that the co-accused in the case — Maryam and Capt (ret'd) Safdar — were acquitted earlier this year. "The allegations levelled against them included aiding the crime. Islamabad High Court's acquittal of the co-accused is final," the lawyer said, as he then read out several sections of the NAB Ordinance.

Justice Aurangzeb added that in his view, the court had acquitted the co-accused under the same NAB Ordinance sections. "In the decision to suspend the sentence, we relied on several decisions of the Supreme Court. The decision to suspend the sentence gave the impression that the appeal was accepted." In response, Nawaz's lawyer asked the court whether his client had to mention the price of the assets when they were bought when he disclosed his assets to the relevant authorities.

"NAB had to present a comparison of income and asset value. After that, it had to be determined out whether the value of the assets is more than the income or not. Without this comparative assessment, making more assets than income is not a crime." The lawyer mentioned that there were cases in which the value of the assets was known but not the income, noting that in such cases, the court declared that the case could not be made because the income was not known.

At this, IHC CJ Farooq said the properties that Pervaz's lawyer had acquired were at separate times. The lawyer said he could provide the dates of the purchase of these properties. "These properties were brought in between 1993-1996. These properties have no link to appellant."

He noted that the prosecution had not linked Nawaz to the properties in its reference. Justice Aurangzeb asked the lawyer what was the first thing that the prosecution should prove when making its case. Pervaz responded that the prosecution would first have to prove that the accused is an officeholder — and he listed two more things.

US charges Indian man in alleged assassination plot

NEW YORK (BBC): The US says it foiled an alleged plot to assassinate an American citizen in New York who advocated for a Sikh separatist state. Nikhil Gupta, an Indian national, was charged on Wednesday. He was directed by an Indian government employee, according to the indictment.

He has been charged with murder-for-hire over the plot, which prosecutors said was orchestrated from India. The alleged target was not named in the court documents. The Indian government earlier said it had started an investigation of security concerns aired by the US in relation to the plot. After the indictment was unsealed, it reiterated its intention and said relevant departments were already examining the issue.

The White House said it had raised the alleged plot with the Indian government at the most senior levels. It added that Indian officials responded with "surprise and concern". According to the indictment, Mr Gupta was involved in international narcotics and weapons trafficking before he was allegedly recruited by an Indian government official in May to pursue the assassination of the target. It alleges Mr Gupta was directed by the official to contact an associate in the US about potential assassination plans. Mr Gupta, it says, had intended to meet a hitman who could murder his target in New York City.

Instead, court documents say, the source introduced him to an undercover law enforcement officer who said he would assassinate the target for \$100,000 (£79,000). Mr Gupta paid \$15,000 upfront via an associate on 9 June, the indictment alleges. Authorities in the Czech Republic arrested Mr Gupta on 30 June shortly after US prosecutors released an initial indictment against him. They are still detaining him at the US's request, according to court documents.

Although the target of the alleged assassination plot was not named in the documents, American authorities emphasised that he was a US leader in a Sikh separatist group. Sikhs are a religious minority that make up about 2% of India's population. Some groups have long called for a separate homeland for Sikhs. The Indian government has often reacted sharply to demands by Sikh separatists in Western countries for Khalistan, or a separate homeland.

S Arabia extends \$3b deposit term for 1 year

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a major development for the struggling economy, Saudi Arabia has extended the term of its \$3 billion deposit with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) for another year.

"The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has extended the term for the deposit of USD 3 billion maturing on 05 December 2023 for another one year," the SBP announced in a statement on Wednesday.

The extension of the term of the deposit is a continuation of the support provided by the kingdom to Pakistan, which will help to maintain the foreign currency reserves of Pakistan and contribute to the economic growth of the country, the statement added. "The \$3 billion rollover is an important move in securing \$25 billion in gross financing needs estimated by Pakistan for FY-24," former adviser to the Ministry of Finance Khaqan Najeeb told media.

He said the extension in the deposit term would help solidify the ongoing IMF programme as the IMF was seeking confirmation from

lenders and friendly countries of their commitments to Pakistan. Moreover, the analyst said the rollover will pave the way for the IMF Executive Board's approval for the second loan tranche of \$700 million. The \$3 billion deposit agreement was initially signed through the SFD with the SBP in 2021 and rolled over subsequently in 2022, after the issuance of the "royal directives that reflect the continuation of the close relationship between the two brotherly countries".

Pakistan's economy is in dire straits with its foreign reserves depleting quickly amid less inflows from overseas investors. Analysts also see the Pakistani rupee falling to 350 by the end of 2024 as the local unit is set to end this year as the worst-performing currency. The country was on the brink of default last year, but it was averted after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a short-term bailout with strict conditions — pushing the inflation up as Pakistan underwent several structural reforms, which saw an increase in gas, energy, and petrol prices.

The foreign exchange reserves held by the central bank dropped by \$217 million to \$7.180 billion in the

week ending November 17, the SBP said, noting that commercial banks' reserves had also fallen to \$5.122 billion — bringing the country's overall reserves to \$12.302 billion. The SBP attributed the drop in reserves to debt repayment in its weekly statement. Pakistan faces a challenging external financing situation, as it has to repay about \$5 billion in external debt in the remaining months of the current fiscal year.

However, the expected financing from the IMF, bilateral, and other multilateral partners should support the nation's foreign exchange reserves. Pakistan expects to secure a tranche of \$700 million from the IMF's existing loan programme after completing a first review. The IMF's executive board is expected to approve the staff-level agreement with Pakistan for the first review of the \$3 billion stand-by arrangement early next month.

It is projected that Pakistan will get approximately \$1.2 billion in financing from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank before the end of the year. The government also expects more inflows from friendly nations to support the country's economy.

PM, Kuwait's Crown Prince reiterate to deepen bilateral ties

KUWAIT (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah met on Wednesday and agreed to further deepen the bilateral relationship in diverse fields.

The prime minister reaffirmed the importance Pakistan attached to its relationship with Kuwait and reiterated the desire to further expand bilateral cooperation in diverse fields, the PM Office's Media Wing said. PM Kakar underscored the resolve to forge deeper economic engagement between Pakistan and Kuwait including trade, energy, information technology, labour, mineral and investments.

He expressed satisfaction over the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora. He appreciated the measures undertaken by Kuwait for the recruitment of Pakistani manpower in the fields of health, security and infrastructure. The Crown Prince of Kuwait reciprocated the sentiments of the Prime Minister and reiterated the desire of Kuwaiti leadership to further deepen and broaden bilateral relations with Pakistan. Caretaker Prime Minister is on a two-day official visit to Kuwait with the primary objective of signing of Memorandum of Understanding in multiple areas, geared to transform the six-decade long bilateral relations into mutually beneficial economic ties.

Pakistan PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Interior of Kuwait Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al Sabah underlined the importance of historical brotherly relations between the two countries.

During a meeting, they reaffirmed the desire to strengthen the fraternal ties by transforming them into a mutually rewarding economic partnership. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI (M) was also present during the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The two leaders also witnessed the signing of seven agreements concluded to attract multi-billion dollar investment from the State of Kuwait in various sectors of Pakistan including food security/agriculture, hydel power, water sup-

plies (safe drinking water and supporting mining activities), establishment of mining fund to support mineral industry, Technology Zones Development and Mangrove Preservation.

In addition, three MoUs in the fields of culture & art, environment & sustainable development were also signed. The leaders expressed great satisfaction at the trajectory of relations, agreed to remain in close contact, and take swift steps in further strengthening and deepening Pakistan-Kuwait relations.

The Pakistan prime minister termed these agreements with Kuwait another milestone in the achievements which the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) platform was bringing to the country. The prime minister also prayed for the good health of Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of the State of Kuwait.

PM arrives in Dubai to attend COP-28: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar arrived in Dubai, United Arab Emirates to attend the 28th United Nations Conference of Parties (COP-28). Minister for Justice of the United Arab Emirates Abdullah Sultan bin Awad Al Nuaimi, Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi and the Pakistani diplomatic staff welcomed the prime minister at Dubai's Al-Maktoum airport, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Caretaker Prime Minister Kakar will head the Pakistani delegation at the 28th Conference of Parties (COP-28), besides he will also attend the World Climate Action Summit on December 01-02.

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, Caretaker Finance Minister Dr Shamshad Akhtar, Caretaker Minister for Climate Change Ahmed Irfan Aslam and Caretaker Energy Minister Muhammad Ali will also participate in COP-28. The COP28 summit is being held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, which officially begins on Thursday (November 30) and runs through December 12. COP "Conference of the Parties" refers to signatories of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, an agreement which was signed by over 150 governments in 1992.

Imran picks Gohar for PTI's top spot

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Chairman Imran Khan has officially nominated Barrister Gohar Khan as his preferred candidate for the pivotal position of chairman in the upcoming PTI intra-party election. This announcement underscores the party's commitment to a democratic process within its structure.

Barrister Gohar Khan, hailing from the Buner district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, brings a wealth of legal expertise to the table, being a distinguished lawyer of the Supreme Court. His academic background includes an LLB from the University of Wolverhampton, UK, and an LLM from Washington Civil of Law, USA, highlighting a global perspective in his legal education.

Islamabad court throws out Imran's plea: A local court in Islamabad on Wednesday dismissed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's plea seeking acquittal in a case registered against him for threatening a female judge.

The district and sessions court judge Mureed Abbas, while announcing a reserved verdict on the plea, said: "The PTI chairman does not deserve acquittal" in the case. The verdict was reserved upon completion of the arguments from all parties in the case.

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FBR committed to eliminate tax evasion in sugar industry

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Monitoring teams from Field formations of FBR have been deputed on sugar mills across the country. Sugar is one of the notified products on which monitoring or tracking of production, sales, clearances, stocks or any other related activity is implemented.

Affixation of tax stamps is mandatory on each and every bag of sugar produced or supplied violation of which is a punishable offence under section 33(23) of the Act and liable to confiscation of products.

Furthermore, the defaulters upon conviction can also face imprisonment upto 03 years. Any effort at evasion of sales tax on sugar shall be dealt with iron hands and Mill owners will be prosecuted for the offence.

Wafaqi Mohtasib takes notice

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has taken a serious notice of the persistent complaints received from the general public pointing out mismanagement and neglect being faced by them in the Polyclinic Hospital, Islamabad. The issues highlighted by the complainants include the non-functioning of the MRI Machine, shortage of anaesthesia medicines, untrained hospital staff, sharing of beds by patients, scarce availability of medicines, delay in verification process of medical bills, and absence of basic facilities for the patients.

The Federal Ombudsman's Inspection Team constituted under the Senior Advisor Mr. Ahmad Farooq will visit the Polyclinic Hospital today (Thursday). It will interact with the patients and the Hospital Administration to ascertain the state of affairs in the Hospital causing a host of grievances to the patients and their attendants.

It has been pointed out by the complainants that despite the availability of the MRI Machine in the Hospital, the facility was being denied to the people. The staff usually gives long dates for conducting ultra-sound and other medical tests. Thalassaemia patients were not being attended to properly by the hospital staff. Patients are required to wait for long hours to consult the Doctors who normally arrive late which causes immense discomfort in the absence of proper seating arrangements or the waiting areas for the patients.

The Wafaqi Mohtasib's Inspection team will formulate its recommendations for addressing the public grievances after meeting with the Administration of the Polyclinic Hospital and submit its report to the Wafaqi Mohtasib within one week.

Search, combing operation conducted against illegal foreigners

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Islamabad Capital Police Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted a search and combing operation against illegal foreigners at Sumbal police station jurisdiction, a public relations officer said Wednesday. He said that, following the special directives of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city, to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad citizens.

Following these directives, a search and combing operation was conducted in different areas of Sumbal police stations jurisdiction by CTD and local police teams under the supervision of DSP CTD. During the search and combing operation 70 houses and 100 individuals were thoroughly checked. ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the purpose of the search and combing operations was to heighten the security in the Federal Capital. All zonal officers were directed to continue these operations in their respective areas. Citizens are also requested to cooperate with police during the checking.

MQM-P, PML-N discuss electoral alliance, seat adjustment

KARACHI (NNI): Muttahida Quami Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) have held another round of talks on electoral alliance and seat adjustment ahead of the general elections 2024.

The fresh round of talks was held at PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal's residence.

The session was attended by MQM-P's central leaders Dr Farooq Sattar, Mustafa Kamal, Syed Aminul Haque, PML-N's Ahsan Iqbal, Zahid Hamid, Bashir Memon and Khawaja Saad Rafique. Both sides mulled over different options for political alliance, seat adjustment and others.

They also held consultations on ongoing talks with other political parties regarding the seat adjustment besides discussing the election campaign, rallies in Sindh and forming a grand alliance.

MQM-P leaders presented a charter of constitutional amendments to the Local Government (LG) Act.

Speaking to media persons, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Ahsan Iqbal said on Wednesday that his party had expressed unwavering support for the Muttahida Quami Movement Pakistan (MQM-P).

Flanked by MQM-P leader Dr Farooq Sattar, the former planning minister said: "A robust local government system is a priority for the PML-N in the country. When it comes to the country's future and addressing public concerns, there's no platform more effective than local government".

"The acceptance of constitutional amendments will go through the parliamentary process, according to Ahsan Iqbal. The constitutional amendments will grant constitutional protection to local governments, ensuring their continuity, regardless of provincial authorities," Iqbal said. He stated, "The goal is to secure the existence of local governments under constitutional provisions, similar to national and provincial assemblies." Iqbal made it clear that the discussions with the MQM-P had also revolved around the forthcoming general elections. "Both parties commit to working together to make principled decisions for issue resolution. The PML-N and MQM-P will cooperate with each other in the elections," he said.

Advocate Ishrat Siddiqui win Sindh High Court election

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Advocate Ishrat Siddiqui, member of the managing committee, won the Sindh High Court election with a huge majority, All Pakistan Ethihad Media Council General Secretary Sindh Usman Shah and General Secretary Karachi Mohsin Ansari congratulated herself on her success.

Advocate Ishrat Siddiqui won the Sindh High Court elections with a good margin for the position of member of the managing committee.

Congratulating Ishrat Siddiqui on her success at the Sindh High Court, a cake was cut and sweets were also distributed among the lawyers community. General Secretary Sindh Usman Shah while

congratulating Ishrat Siddiqui said that Ishrat Siddiqui was a brave woman and the way she works with determination and sincerity towards her profession earned her great success as member of the Managing Committee Sindh High Court Bar.

Thanking Usman Shah, Ishrat said that the way lawyers community supported and voted for her, she was grateful to Almighty and the lawyers community. She further said that she would try her best to fulfill her responsibilities as member of the managing committee of the Sindh High Court Bar and would never disappoint the lawyers community which had contributed votes for her success.



Save the Children, UNFPA committed to strengthen resilience, reproductive health integration in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Save the Children in close collaboration with UNFPA has organized a 3-day Consultative Workshop on Strengthening Resilience and Reproductive Health Integration in Punjab. The Opening Session was held in Lahore with key stakeholders to deliberate and devise strategies for improving resilience and reproductive health programs in the province.

This initiative is in line with Government of Pakistan's commitment to FP2030 with its national objectives, a news release said issued here on Wednesday. The event featured discussions on current scenarios in disasters and emergencies, the importance of Minimum Services Packages (MISP), and the establishment of a Resilience Reference Group in Punjab. The opening session was attended by DG Health Services Punjab, Dr. Ilyas Gondal and representatives from leading government

departments, UN, NGOs and INGOS. Save the Children Pakistan works towards enhancing national and sub-national capacities in resilience programming, emergency preparedness, and response to ensure the availability of life-saving interventions during humanitarian situations, including reproductive health services and gender-based violence (GBV) response and recovery.

Chief Guest of the Opening Ceremony, DG Health Services Punjab, Dr. Muhammad Ilyas Gondal while giving his remarks said: "I am honored to have been part of the consultations to help address the critical issues of resilience and reproductive health integration in Punjab. Such initiatives play a vital role in ensuring the well-being of communities and vulnerable populations during disasters and emergencies."



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi addressing to media during Palestine Solidarity Seminar at Jamia Manzoorul Islamia Cantt.

KEMU celebrates 13th convocation with governor's praise

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rahman, while speaking at the 13th convocation of the King Edward Medical University (KEMU) here on Wednesday, commended the significant role the university played in advancing the medical education in the country. Presiding over the event, he acknowledged the dedication of parents and teachers in the success of over 418 graduating students, with 319 earning MBBS degrees and 99 achieving post-graduate, MPhil, and diploma honors.

A notable aspect highlighted by the governor was the award of more than 23 medals to outstanding post-graduates and MBBS students. Encouraging continuous improvement, he invoked the example of Hazrat Khadija (R.A) and emphasized the importance of excellence in all aspects of life.

Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Professor Dr. Javed Akram,

a guest of honor, urged fresh graduates to dream big and emphasised the significance of a doctor's success lying in the prayers of their patients. He expressed pride in being associated with the institution and stressed the need for balance in life.

Dr. Javed Akram emphasised the focus on quality research in Punjab's medical institutions, aligning with the vision of Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi to enhance health facilities. He congratulated the graduates and their parents on their success.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Mahmood Ayaz, in his address, highlighted King Edward Medical University's historical significance in South Asia, maintaining its position as a top merit university. He advised graduates to make serving humanity their life goal and emphasised the importance of combining knowledge with good morals.

Dr. Ayaz announced the establishment of the International Medical College at its new campus at

Muridke-Narowal Road, and encouraged alumni contributions. Oaths of service were administered by Registrar Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi to fresh graduates and Prof. Ahsan Nauman to post-graduates.

Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman and Dr. Javed Akram distributed gold medals and degrees among outstanding students, including a cheque of two lakh rupees to Dr. Hayeqa Fatima, who secured the first position in all subjects. The ceremony was attended by former vice chancellors, retired professors, heads of institutions, and students.

In conclusion, Vice Chancellor Dr. Mahmood Ayaz presented a commemorative shield to the chief guest Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman. The convocation was attended by Vice Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Medical University Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ijaz Hussain, faculty members, and fresh graduates with their parents.

115 new cases of dengue reported on Wednesday

LAHORE (APP): The Dengue outbreak is still active in Punjab, with 115 new cases reported, here on Wednesday. According to the latest Health Department data, a total of 14,053 confirmed Dengue cases have been reported across 36 districts in Punjab this year.

Lahore takes the lead with a staggering 6,375 cases, Rawalpindi with 2,619, Gujranwala with 1,479, Multan with 1,354, and Faisalabad with 818 cases. The situation continues, with Lahore reporting an additional 68 new dengue cases, Rawalpindi with 4, Gujranwala with 15, Multan with 9, Faisalabad with 7, Sheikhupura with 4, and Okara with 2 new cases. Meanwhile, Kasur, Narowal, Sargodha, Khanawal, Dera Ghazi Khan, and Jhang each reported 1 case of dengue within 24 hours.

NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF MINOR MINERALS LEASE OF DISTRICT MARDAN

The District Auction Committee of District Mardan invites applications from registered contractors of Minor Minerals for participation in auction and grant of Minor Mineral leases for one year of District Mardan under provision of Section-80 sub Section (3) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Mineral Act 2017 for mining on the basis of "As is where is" in the office of Deputy Commissioner Mardan on **21/12/2023 at 11:00 am**, in case of non-auction due to any reason, next date of auction will be **22/12/2023 at 11:00 am**. Details are given below: -

S.No	Name of area with acreage	Reserve Price	Call deposit
1	113.00 acres near village Chota Marati District Mardan	Rs.10,000,000/-	Rs.2,500,000/-
2	228.00 acres near village Sur Pul District Mardan	Rs.800,000/-	Rs.200,000/-
3	96.67 acres near village Gumbat District Mardan	Rs.12,760,000/-	Rs.3,190,000/-

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Only those persons or firms registered with Directorate General Mines & Minerals Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as Minor Minerals Contractors can participate in auction. Interested parties can register themselves in the Directorate General Mines & Minerals Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Peshawar as well as in regional offices.
- The registered parties/individuals shall submit application form at the cost of **Rs.10200/-** (Ten thousand & Two Hundred Only) non-refundable on any working day at least three (03) days before the auction. Last date for submission of application form is **15/12/2023**.
- Blacklisted/ Defaulter persons or those persons who are not registered with Directorate General Mines and Minerals are not allowed to participate in the auction.
- The interested parties can visit and check the advertised areas before auction. The sketches of the areas are available for the interested parties in the office of the undersigned.
- Call deposit shall be deposited under account No. **0066-2008140092** and application fee under account **No. 0066-2008208215** in any branch of Bank of Khyber.
- The registered applicants/parties shall also submit attested copies of CNIC, income tax registration certificate (NTN) and partnership deed/article & memorandum of association along with evidence of paid up capital (if applicant is partnership firm/ company).
- The successful bidder shall deposit 1/4th of the total bid money as security within three days from the date of auction, otherwise, call deposit shall be forfeited in favour of the Government and the bid of second highest bidder shall be considered as highest bid, subject to condition that the difference between the first and the second highest bids is not less than 10 percent of the highest bid.
- The successful bidder shall demarcate his leased area within fifteen days from the issuance of Allotment Letter on his own expenses.
- The successful bidder shall be bound to pay Excise duty to Commissionerate of Mines or its approved excise duty collection contractor on government notified rates.
- The successful bidder before issuance of allotment letter shall be bound to deposit withholding tax under Rule-236-A of IT02011 with Income Tax Department and Professional Tax as per rules to the Excise & Taxation Dept. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The successful bidder will be bound to pay surface rent to the land owner under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Mineral Act 2017/Amended 2019.
- The successful bidder shall be responsible to work in leased area strictly in accordance with the provisions of Mines & Mineral Act, 2017.
- The successful bidder shall be bound to use only verified challans for transportation of minor minerals duly verified by the concerned Assistant Director. Transportation without a verified transit challan shall be considered as un-authorized transportation and action under section-56 of the ibid Act shall be initiated against the lessee as well as other offenders.
- The successful bid will comply with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Minerals Act 2017/Amended Act 2019 and Rules thereof.
- The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any bid with cogent reason.
- Other information in this regards can be obtained from the office of undersigned during office time i.e. 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM on any working day.

Assistant Director (Tech)
Mineral Development Mardan

INF(P)
2887/2023

GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
COMMUNICATION & WORKS DEPARTMENT
NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING
(Single Stage Two Envelope E-Bidding System)

The Executive Engineer (Mega Projects) Division-I Peshawar, C&W Department invites sealed Bids from the eligible firms / contractors registered in relevant code: in accordance with KPRA procurement Rules 2014 and registered with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority, established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance act, 2013 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No. XXI of 2013) and who have renewed their registration for the year 2023-24 and also registered with Pakistan Engineering Council in the relevant code for the year 2023-24, visible on Website of PEC, on Single Stage Two Envelop procedure for the following work.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Required category of PEC	2% Earnest Money i/c Stamp Duty	Period of completion	Last date of submission of Technical & Financial Bids and time	Date of opening of Technical Bid	Date of opening of Financial Bid
1.	200188-F/S & Establishment of Residences for P&D Staff at Hayatabad Peshawar. i- (Package — I)	C- 2 and above with relevant codes of PEC	10,845,000	As per work order	27/12/2023 At 12:00 PM	27/12/2023 At 12:30 PM	After approval of Technical Evaluation.
	ii- (Package — II)	C-2 and above with relevant codes of PEC	10,766,000	As per work order	27/12/2023 At 12:00 PM	27/12/2023 At 12:30 PM	After approval of Technical Evaluation.

1. Bid documents containing instruction to Bidders advertisement for Notice Inviting Bids and required forms to be filled by the bidders can be downloaded from the official website of C&W Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (www.cwd.gkp.pk).

2. All interested eligible bidders shall deposit their CDR in the name of procuring entity prior to the closing date of bid submission.

3. Bidding shall be done on "Above/Below" system on BOQ/Engineers Estimate. Based on the MRS applicable.

4. The financial bid opening date will be intimated to all concerned after finalization of Technical Evaluation by the procurement committee.

5. The bid should be submitted through courier and 2% Security sealed in envelop of the Engineer Estimated in the shape of Call Deposit (Original) before closing date and time.

6. As per KPRA Notification No.SRO(14)/Vol:1-24/2021-22/6058-71 dated 10th May, 2022 regarding Bid Security & Additional Bid Security clear instructions have been given in the said Notification of KPRA and the clauses shall be implemented on this bid that:

7. Call Deposit of Schedule Banks shall be acceptable and no Bank Cheque or pay order shall be acceptable.

8. A copy of Technical Proposal in the required format is mandatory and to be uploaded as part of E-Bidding before submitting Financial Bids.

9. Tender form fee (non-refundable) @0.03% on tender cost in shape of Call Deposit should be accompanied with financial bid.

10. An affidavit on Judicial Stamp Paper should be submitted to the affect that 2% Call Deposit has been attached in the Financial Bid.

11. Joint Venture will not be allowed.

12. A complete set of bid documents / criteria should be obtained by an interested eligible bidder on submission of a written application, from the office of M/S PEPAC Pvt. Ltd. consultants, on any working day / hours on or before **26.12.2023** on payment of **Rs.5000/- (non-refundable)** otherwise his bid will not be entertained.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
(MEGA PROJECTS) DIVISION-1, C&W DEPTT: PESHAWAR.
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INF(P)2910/23



Minister emphasize unique occasions for eco-tourism

PESHAWAR (APP): The Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Banafsheh Khah and KP Minister for Information, Culture and Tourism, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel held extensive deliberations here on Wednesday.

The meeting underscored the profound historical, cultural, and religious bonds between the people of Iran and the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The meeting emphasized the pivotal role of people-to-people connections, promoting cultural exchange, and unlocking the tourism potential inherent in the rich tapestry of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and Iranian cities.

Both dignitaries emphasized the importance of mutual festivals celebrating shared culture, heritage, food, and traditions. Discussions also delved into avenues for enhancing trade, aiming to fortify economic ties between Iran and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A central focus of the meeting was the exploration of measures to facilitate travel between Iranian cities and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, utilizing road, sea, and air routes. This included discussions on air flights connecting Iranian cities with Islamabad or Peshawar to

cater to tourists and businesspersons from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Minister of Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highlighted the need for joint celebrations and festivities, emphasizing the unique opportunities for religious and eco-tourism in both regions.

Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah expressed gratitude for the warm reception, acknowledging the historical bonds uniting the two regions. He highlighted the untapped potential for attracting Iranian tourists to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Minister Feroze reciprocated the sentiments, emphasizing the shared

commitment to strengthening diplomatic, cultural and economic ties.

In the meeting, Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah extended an invitation to Minister Information Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to participate in an upcoming exhibition in Iran, an invitation that was graciously accepted.

In the meeting both discussed the Palestine issue. Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah said that the role of Pakistan is of particular importance for strengthening the voice of Palestinian people. He said Pakistan has been playing an exemplary role in this connection.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah addressing during inaugural ceremony of solar system and renovation work of Press Club.

Minister directs resources' utilization

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Technical Education, Industries and Commerce, Dr. Aamer Abdullah has directed that the available resources of technical education department should be utilized for the provision of skilled development and professional training being imparting to the youth of Newly Merged District under Accelerated Skilled Development program and a formal MoU should be made with the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority in this regard.

The caretaker minister also directed to include olive grafting and other relevant necessary training courses for the areas of Orakzai, Bajaur and Waziristan in the said special program while complete data of the trained and employed skilled workers under this program should

be provided.

He gave this directive on Wednesday during a briefing given to him regarding the Accelerated Skilled Development Program, a special project launched by the Department of Industries, Commerce and Technical Education department for the merged districts.

Project Director Khalid Usman Wazir and Coordinator Tufail provided details regarding the aims and objectives of this important project.

The minister was informed that under the project, essential training courses related to the core sectors of mining, textile, manufacturing and construction, tourism, livestock and agriculture, engineering, IT and telecom are being provided as per the market requirements.

He was informed that in the first phase of the same program, training of 302 male and female skilled workers of the area has

been completed, while 445 people are enrolled in second batch.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister directed that under the program, MoU should be made with TEVTA to use the Institute of Technical Education Department in Hayatabad for gem and gemological course, while such courses for which the infrastructure and teaching facilities are available in the technical education local colleges be utilized.

The caretaker minister also directed to provide fee structure details of those private institutions from which the training services are being utilizing under the programme.

He said that the data of trained skilled workers should be given to Akhowat Foundation and Bank of Khyber through Small Industries Development Board for the provision of micro economic loans so that they can start their employment.

FIA recovers Rs 862.9m currencies

PESHAWAR (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Peshawar Zone intensified crackdowns against elements involved in Hundi and illegal currency exchange business during the current year and recovered local and foreign currencies worth Rs 862.9 million.

During the current year, Peshawar Zone conducted 261 raids against illegal money exchangers, registered 282 cases and arrested 333 accused, said spokesman of FIA Peshawar Zone.

The arrested accused were involved in currency exchange without license.

During the raids, FIA Peshawar zone recovered 126,930 US dollars and other currencies worth more than 63.7 million rupees.

More than 762.8 million Pakistani rupees were also recovered.

The official said that support of law enforcement agencies was also obtained for the arrest of the accused.



PESHAWAR: Consul General of Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Banafsheh Khah meeting with Caretaker Minister Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel.

PDMA prepares winter contingency plan

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) under the guidance of Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday formulated the Winter Contingency Plan for 2023-24 in order to cope with various natural hazards which the province may face during the winter season.

The plan encompasses strategies to manage hazards such as extreme low temperatures, smog, snowfall, rainfall, landslides, flash floods, and seismic activities in the mountainous north and west.

Muhammad Qaisar Khan, the Director General PDMA, stated that the Winter Contingency Plan 2023-24 was initiated in October 2023, involving key stakeholders such as the Federal Government, Provincial Line Departments, District Administration, UNDP GLOF-II, and other development partners.

Digital tools for data col-

lection were developed and shared, including information of district and sector-specific hazards, vulnerability profiles, hazard impacts, damages, compensation details, resource mapping, need assessment, and coordination efforts.

The Winter Contingency Plan 2023-24 offers a comprehensive overview of the winter hazard profiles for each district in the province. It includes details on the Composite Risk Score for every district based on various hazards and outlines corresponding risks, along with an estimation of the vulnerable population in case of emergencies.

The plan further guides districts in mapping vulnerable sites and developing contingency plans, identifying roles and responsibilities of various departments to ensure a coordinated response to unfavorable scenarios. The province faces several winter hazards. Each hazard presents unique challenges, such as disruptions

in daily life, road closures, building collapses, landslides, and shortages of supplies commodities.

The document outlines resources, estimated case-loads, and the clear roles and responsibilities of different departments for managing emergency situations during the winter season.

The primary objective of the Winter Contingency Plan 2023-24 is to achieve a unified response aimed at minimizing the impacts of various winter hazards on the population. Qaisar emphasized that the contingency planning for major hazards facilitates the initiation of mitigation measures and ensures a coordinated response to minimize loss of life and property during disasters.

The Winter Contingency Plan 2023-24 is a stakeholder-inclusive exercise that evaluates existing plans, resources, and hazards, providing a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the impacts of winter hazards in the upcoming season.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Zubair Ali addressing traders during open katchery at Gurr Mandi.

Caretaker Minister inaugurates helplines for social change

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Minister for Finance, Excise Taxation, and Narcotics Control Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ahmed Rasul Bangash officially launched the integration of Bolo Helpline and Police Helpline, establishing a joint helpline aimed at promoting social change here on Wednesday.

The ceremony, attended by key officials including Secretary Zakat, Usher, Social Welfare, and Women Development Dr. Aneela Mahfuz Durrani, Miss Anila Naz, AIG Gender Equality Police, Asif Shirazi (Country Director Islamic Relief Pakistan)

Independent Consultant Muhammad Haseeb Khan Salarzai, and United Nations representative, marked the formal merger of the two helplines.

During the event, Caretaker Minister Ahmed Rasul Bangash, participated as a special guest, inaugurated the joint helpline by dialling the toll-free number.

He highlighted the significance of this initiative, stating that the integration is a crucial step in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government with cooperation of Islamic relief Pakistan toward fostering social change.

The unified helpline, combining Bolo Helpline (080022227/1097) and Police Helpline 15, is expected to facilitate the reporting of complaints to the relevant authorities, contributing to a positive societal transformation.

Minister Bangash emphasized that the joint helpline would play a pivotal role in addressing gender discrimination and safeguarding the rights of various segments of society, particularly women and individuals with disabilities.

He expressed the government's commitment to protecting these rights

through a collaborative approach, offering legal assistance, information, and counselling to women in need.

The initiative, supported by the Department of Social Welfare and Islamic Relief Pakistan, aims to combat social injustice, deprivation, and gender-based violence.

In his closing remarks, the caretaker minister extended special thanks to Islamic Relief Pakistan for their support in realizing this important initiative, emphasizing the collaborative efforts to create a helpline that serves the broader interests of society.

Results of MDCAT announced

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Medical University (KMU) announced the results of the re-conducted test for admissions to medical colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Six candidates secured the top position with 192 marks, while the overall success rate in the test was 75%.

According to KMU on Wednesday, eleven candidates have scored over 190 marks, while 402 candidates have secured marks between 180 and 189. Additionally, 2,982 candidates scored between 170 and 179 marks.

Out of the total 46,000 candidates, 34,000 participated in the re-conducted test, while 11,300 were absent. The previous MDCAT test was canceled due to a Bluetooth cheating scandal, and the responsibility for conducting the re-test was transferred from the Educational Testing and Evaluation Agency (ETA) to KMU.

KMU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Zia Ul Haq congratulated the successful candidates and expressed his gratitude to the university staff, provincial government, and law enforcement agencies for ensuring the fair and transparent conduct of the test.

He also urged the candidates to continue working hard and contribute positively to the healthcare sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Mainly cold weather predicted

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday predicted that mainly cold and partly cloudy weather is expected in most districts of the province.

However, it said scattered rain-wind/thunderstorm (with snowfall over the hills) is likely to occur over Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur and Bajaur districts.

Isolated rain-wind/thunderstorm is also likely to occur over Kurram, Khyber, Peshawar, Charsadda, Mohmand, Mardan, Swabi, Karak and Kohat districts.

It said that foggy conditions are expected over Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Peshawar, Swabi and D.I. Khan districts, as well as, over Motorway (M1)/Highways in late night & morning hours.

Open katchery held to address issues of climate change, wildlife

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Caretaker Minister for Forests and Wildlife, Asif Rafiq here Wednesday attended an open katchery that was convened to invite suggestions and address public complaints relating to wildlife and effects of climate change.

The open katchery was also attended by Secretary Wildlife and Climate Change, Nazir Hussain Shah, Chief Conservator Forests, District Forest Officers and representatives of Environmental Protection Agency.

Caretaker minister listened to problems and concerns of people and pondered over the suggestions to address issues.

He said that open katchery was arranged to provide people a chances to convey



their problems and issues to concerned authorities.

He said that climate change is a hovering challenge for the world that can be tackled by collective efforts.

He said that provincial

government is trying to take concrete and result oriented steps to combat climate change.

He directed indiscriminate action against timber mafia, pollute creating vehicles, brick kilns and

illegal logging to control climate change.

He said that conservation of our natural resources is our collective responsibility as they directly impact climate and environment.

Financial empowerment of poor people cornerstone of BISP, sasy Dr Amjad

PESHAWAR (INP): Chairman, Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib here Wednesday said that financial empowerment of poor segments of the society at their doorsteps was a cornerstone of the BISP program.

Talking to beneficiaries during his visit to BISP Office at Acheni Peshawar, Dr Amjad Saqib said the government was committed to provide financial relief and assistance to deserving and needy people in order to bring them under social and economic safety net.

He said doors of BISP offices were opened for assistance and help of poor segments of society and all available resources were being utilized to provide relief to them.

Dr Amjad directed BISP employees to approach their work with empathy, kindness and ensure the provision of financial support to needy women in a dignified manner. On this occasion, the Chairman BISP interacted with needy women, listened to their problems and directed the staff to resolve their complaints as early as possible.

He said that every act of kindness was a form of charity and serving the less fortunate was not merely a job but a noble cause. Dr Amjad directed the employees to maintain a high standard of cleanliness and efficiency in their operations.

The Chairman BISP urged beneficiaries to concentrate on the education of their children and provide them vocational skills so that they could significantly contribute to the country's development process.

He said small loans for businesses would help enable poor people to improve their lifestyle and contribute to the society's prosperity.

Earlier, he visited different sections including the registration desk and beneficiaries' services centre at the office and addressed the beneficiaries. He listened to their problems and issued spot orders for its resolutions.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Director General BISP, Zohra Aslam briefed the BISP Chairman about working of the BISP operations, services and facilities being provided to beneficiaries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Car dealers holds meeting



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi, extended an invitation to the delegation of the All Pakistan Car Dealers to his office, facilitating in-depth discussions on the current challenges faced by dealers.

Subsequently, he promptly contacted the Excise DG Islamabad and escorted the delegation to his office.

Fortunately, after attentive consideration and discourse on all the issues, DG Excise affirmed the resolution of the problems.

The Car Dealers

Association delegation expressed gratitude to DG Excise and extended special thanks to the Deputy Chairman of the Senate for allocating precious time despite his hectic schedule.

The delegation included Senior Vice Chairman of KP, Fatah Khan, General Secretary of KP, Mazhar Ullah Khan, Vice President of Peshawar, Munir Khan, General Secretary Sadiq Shah, and the General Secretary of Peshawar Traders Chamber, Dr. Anas Rashid.

In conclusion, the Deputy Chairman of the Senate hosted a Lunch for the delegation.



In brief

Two female students died

OKARA (PPI): At least two female students died while eight others were injured when an over speeding trailer collided with the school van in the Renala Khurd area located in Okara, police said on Wednesday. The tragic collision between a trailer and a school van took place near the Shergarh bypass of Renala Khurd National Highway of Okara District in which two female students lost their lives while eight others including the driver sustained injuries. In a statement, the rescue officials stated that the over-speeding trailer rammed into the van carrying students, resulting in the death of two students. Meanwhile, the rescue officials and Motorway police are transporting the injured students to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital for the necessary medical attention. The local police took the trailer into custody, however, the trailer driver managed to escape from the scene. Earlier to this, At least fifteen people sustained injuries in a van-truck collision on Makli bypass in Thatta. As per details, the police officials stated that the pilgrims were on their way back after paying a visit to the holy tomb. The police officials said that the accident occurred as a result of over-speeding and all the injured are from Karachi.

Teenager dies, man injured

CHINIOT (INP): A teenager died while another person injured when an over speeding dumper knocked down a motorcycle, rescue sources said on Wednesday. According to details, a reckless driven dumper hit a motorcycle carrying two people near Jhang-Sargodha Bypass in Chiniot. A 13-year-old boy died in the accident while other bike rider was seriously injured. Dumper driver fled the scene. The rescue personnel shifted the body and injured to local hospital. The police impounded the dumper, bike and after registering a case into the incident started an investigation.

Farewell dinner arranged

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Shaukat Ali Yousafzai of Mardan Division emphasized the importance of job transfers in government service, stating that officers who approach their duties with a commitment to serving humanity leave a lasting impact. Captain (Retd) Abdul Rehman, lauded as an asset to the Civil Service, received praise for his zealous and responsible performance as the Deputy Commissioner of Mardan. The Commissioner expressed these sentiments during a farewell dinner organized in honor of outgoing officers, including Capt. Retd. Abdul Rahman, Deputy Commissioner Swabi Gohar Ali, and ADC Engineer Shahzeb. Attended by transferred officers, DIG Mardan Muhammad Sulaiman, A d d i t i o n a l Commissioner Naeem Akhtar, and other senior officials, the dinner served as a platform to recognize the contributions of the departing officers. Shaukat Ali Yousafzai commended the administrative dedication of officers like Capt. Retd. Abdul Rehman, Gohar Ali, and Shahzeb, emphasizing the duty of public servants to uphold justice and serve humanity. Capt. Retd. Abdul Rehman, reflecting on his time in Mardan, expressed gratitude for the support and guidance received from former Commissioners Abdul Jabbar Shah, Yusuf Rahim, and current Commissioner Shaukat Ali Yousafzai.



HYDERABAD: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (R) Maqbool Baqir visits Qadam Gah Moula Ali.

19 venues approved for political gatherings

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Commissioner of Bannu Division, Pervaiz Sabat Khel has approved the selection of suitable locations for political gatherings and processions in light of the prescribed code of conduct for the upcoming elections.

According to a notification issued here, seven venues have been approved in Bannu district and six places each at Lakki Marwat and North Waziristan districts. The venues selected in Bannu district include Mandan Park, Mira Khel cricket Stadium, Township Park, Dami Pul Ground, Government Degree College Bakkakhel, Committee Playground and Rocha Madrasa.

Those venues which have been approved at Lakki Marwat district are Ragistan Ground, Chawani

Ground Landiwa, school Ground Hospital Road Serai Naurang, Colony Ground Tajori, Pezu Ground in front of High School, Parrao Ground Ghazni Khel, Shadi Khel Ground and Masti Khel Ground in front of Tehsil Complex. At North Waziristan district six approved venues are Airstrip Ground Razmak, Azizkhel Ground Burakhel, Paryat Ground Dosli, Gardai Raghazai Dosli, Football Ground near bus terminal Miran Shah and Football Ground near Darpakhel.

The commissioner said that it would be ensured that rules and regulations were implemented in letter and spirit to conduct fair and transparent elections. He said as per the code of conduct, each party would submit its schedule of political activities every fifteen days or a month to the dis-

trict administration, enabling them to continue their political activities in a peaceful manner.

Similarly, he added it was mandatory for political parties to submit a formal request-undertaking to the relevant Deputy Commissioner for the organization of small and large gatherings at designated locations during elections and a reply to the request would be provided within nine days. In case of denial of permission, political candidates had the right to appeal before the Commissioner of Bannu Division. The decision would be made within three working days. He added that unnecessary use of loudspeakers and inappropriate language for opponents in gatherings and processions would be strictly prohibited and it would be monitored by investigative agencies.

Safdar confirm minus Imran polls

F.P. Report

BUNER: The PML (N) leader captain Safdar has confirmed the general elections would be held well in time and all of the political parties would be included but minus Imran Khan.

This he told media persons during visit to the under progress Karakar Tunnel on Tuesday. He argued that state could not be run without elected parliament and elaborated that elections a must and to be held as per scheduled. He repeated those were involved in 9 May incidents would be excluded from general elections and directly named Imran Khan would be minus. He was sure that Nawaz Sharif would be next PM and the country would be right tracked towards economic stability progress prosperity and peace.

He visited to Hujra Ahmadyar in Jowar the Hujra of party district general secretary Advocate Shah Bakht Rawan Khan in Elai Kalay and district president Haji Salar Khan in Rega Kalay. It's pertinent to mention here that the Pakistan Muslim League Youth leader renowned political and social activist Abdur Rehman Farooqi was the person behind Safdar's visit to Buner.

Protest against electricity load shedding held

F.P. Report

SHAHDADKOT: Last day, Jai Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM) protested against the incompetence of Sepco WAPDA administration against loadshedding of electricity in different areas of Naseerabad Tehsil of Qamber Shahdadkot district.

A dharna was held till the protestors were carrying banners and placards on which the slogans of WAPDA's injustices were written. Addressing the protestors on this occasion, Comrade Dildar Ali Eri, Asad Ali, Shehzado and other workers said that WAPDA The officials said that the electricity transformers from different areas of the tehsil have been artificially disabled, due to which the citizens have suffered various punishments due to non-restoration of electricity, while the businesses running on electricity have been affected, costing the traders lakhs of rupees on a daily basis.

KP Governor for preparing youth to meet challenges

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Wednesday said that we should prepare our children to meet challenges of current century and divert their attention towards research and modern fields of education.

Addressing a dinner hosted by Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Lower Dir, Governor stressed upon youngster to improve their capabilities and meet the requirements of current world. The dinner was also attended by former caretaker minister, Fazal Elahi, Provincial Chairman, Federation of Pakistan Chamber, Qaisar Khan, President Malakand Chamber, Shoaib Khan,

President Haripur chamber, Tayab Swati, presidents of Bajaur and Chitral Chambers besides members of FPCCI executive body.

He said that world nations have achieved success by following long term policies while our people are more attracted towards short term benefits despite that our country has been richly endowed by countless precious resources and reserves adding that sixty percent of our natural resources remained unused due to lack of policies and vision.

Governor said that we should work to change mindset of young generation and help them to enter new fields of technology and science. He said that

government has established eighteen industrial zones in the province and adopted a multi-pronged strategy to promote trade and commerce.

He said that we must support our institutions and work in a dedicated way to achieve success and prosperity. Recalling accomplishment of government, he said that Chitral University has been started with an estimated cost of Rs. 1.7 billion while university has been approved for Vaari.

Governor said that we have to shun differences and work in cohesion for the better future of next generations. He also distributed shields and gifts among leading businessmen and traders of the area.

Mayar emphasizes women's dignity and rights

Anees Takar

MARDAN: City Mayor Himayat Ullah Mayar, an advocate for women's rights, has expressed that women are the adornment and dignity of any human society, and safeguarding all their rights and privileges is a collective responsibility.

He shared these thoughts during a sixteen-day activism event against violence on women organized by Saiban Development Organization's Muhammad Arif and Nighat Seema informed the City Mayor about the formidable challenges faced by women in Mardan. They emphasized the need for immediate actions to overcome these challenges, urging women counselors to play a role in resolving women's issues. They also called for collaborative efforts from the local government and other stakeholders to develop new policies at the district level for the social and economic well-being of women.

Mayor Himayat Ullah Mayar assured the delegation that he would not hesitate to make sacrifices to play a positive role in resolving women's issues. He emphasized that over

half of the country's population comprises women, holding a significant position in every aspect. He stressed that until we walk together with our women, the dream of national progress cannot be realized.

Mayar acknowledged the crucial role Pakistani women play in various fields, stating that their contribution is not only essential to the economy but also comparable to the backbone of the nation. He highlighted the reality that due to economic inequality, women are dependent on men in all aspects of life.

Mayar urged every conscientious and aware individual in society to play their part in ensuring the protection of women's rights and autonomy, especially economic independence. He stressed that empowering women socially and economically is the key to ensuring their rights and building a prosperous society. In conclusion, Mayar asserted that safeguarding women's rights, particularly their economic autonomy, requires the active participation of every informed and empathetic member of society.

Police raid leads to arrest of 12 armed intruders threatening residents: In a swift operation, Thana Sarho Shah police apprehended 12 individuals who forcefully entered a residential property, wielding weapons and issuing severe threats to the occupants, including children.

The arrested suspects were found in possession

of a significant arsenal, including 1 Kalashnikov, 1 Kalakov, 1 Reffer, 7 pistols, and numerous cartridges. Additionally, the police seized vehicles suspected to be involved in the intrusion. According to the complainant, Muhammad Ibrahim, who filed a report at Thana Sarho Shah, several members of the apprehended group forcibly entered his residence, threatening him and his children at gunpoint.

Taking immediate action, District Police Chief Najib Rahman issued strict orders to deal firmly with the elements involved in the intrusion and to make arrests. Acting swiftly under the supervision of SP Khalid Khan, DSP Ashiq Hussain, and SHO Riaz Khan, the police successfully apprehended 12 suspects named Syed Rahman, Rabnawaz, Shahzad, Ramzan, Naeem Jan, Kareemullah, Imran, Muhammad Hashem, Shafiqur Rahman, Nauman, Fazal Rabi, and Afzal Saqin, all residents of Charsadda.

The seized weaponry included 1 Kalashnikov, 1 Kalakov, 1 Reffer, 7 pistols, and hundreds of various cartridges. The police also impounded vehicles believed to have been used during the incident. Further investigations are underway to gather more information from the arrested individuals. The police assure the public that stringent actions will be taken to ensure the safety and security of the community.

Robbers kill five people in Rahim Yar Khan

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): Armed robbers gunned down five people engaged in cutting the sugarcane crop in tehsil Sadigabad of Rahim Yar Khan on Wednesday, police said.

According to details, armed men of Kosh and Shar gangs attacked people busy in grazing the sugar-

cane crop.

As a result of firing of robbers, four people were killed on the spot and others sustained injured. A girl present on rooftop in neighbourhood was also killed in firing.

Getting the information of attack, heavy contingent of police reached the scene and after cordoning off the

area launched operation for the attackers.

In police operation, two robbers were also killed while their accomplices managed to flee from the scene. The bodies and injured were shifted to hospital and police after registering a case into the incident started investigations.

KPPLA announces support to AWKUM employees protesters

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Professor Hayat Shah, President of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Professors and Lecturers Association (KPPLA), Mardan Division, declared support for the ongoing protests by employees of Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan (AWKUM).

The protest initiated by the All Employees Association at AWKUM has been ongoing for an extended period, shedding light on critical issues that demand immediate resolution. KPPLA stands firmly in support of the genuine demands presented by the University Union, particularly concerning contentious demotions of employees involved in illegal exchanges and promotions in the Timergara campus.

Reports of the termination of employees and the appointment of new politically affiliated individuals by the Vice-Chancellor (VC) have raised concerns. The prolonged protest has notably disrupted the university's functioning,

causing visible disturbances in academic activities that are impacting students and the wider community at AWKUM.

The College Professors and Lecturers criticize the university administration, especially the VC, for not taking prompt action to address these delicate issues. They demand an immediate 35% increase in salaries for employees and the provision of the Dearness Relief Allowance (DRA).

Furthermore, despite the deadline of November 30th, the university administration's unsuccessful attempt to vacate the building of Mardan College and the subsequent shortage of classes present additional challenges for the students of the affected college.

The KPPLA urges the esteemed VC and university administration to engage in immediate dialogue and expedite efforts to address the raised concerns by the Employee Union. They stress the need for swift resolution of the

complaints raised by the union to restore normalcy and maintain a conducive environment at Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan.

Boycott from PTI workers convention of PTI MPA baseless: Engr. Adil Nawaz, Secretary Information of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Peshawar Region, emphasized that the party is currently facing both internal and external challenges. He clarified that there are no disputes between Sher Afzal Marwat and former Provincial Minister Atif Khan.

Atif Khan has not called for any boycott of workers or representatives from the convention; rather, the convention was held according to his directives. Atif Khan has issued instructions at every tehsil level in the Peshawar region, and voice messages endorsing these directives are recorded.

Engr. Adil Nawaz further stated that baseless allegations and misunderstandings could further harm the party. He urged all misunder-

standings to be resolved within the party, emphasizing the need to address these concerns internally. Speaking to the media, he shared Atif Khan's thoughts, stating that congratulatory messages were extended to everyone for the successful conventions held in every tehsil of the Peshawar region.

Engr. Adil Nawaz highlighted Atif Khan's pivotal role in the success of past and upcoming conventions, emphasizing that Atif Khan's leadership has played and will continue to play a crucial role in the success of conventions in Mardan and Charsadda. Atif Khan's circle, including his personal secretary and district cabinet, independently oversaw all arrangements and will continue to do so in the future.

All workers from Atif Khan's circle were present at the convention venue in every tehsil of the Peshawar region, adhering to Atif Khan's clear instructions. Atif Khan's directives highlight the importance of holding conven-

tions in every tehsil of the Peshawar region.

In conclusion, Engr. Adil Nawaz conveyed that Atif Khan's unwavering commitment to the party's success is evident, and his directives are being followed diligently at every level in the Peshawar region. The participation and dedication of workers in the conventions showcase the party's unity and strength in the face of challenges.

MoU between Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan & Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry: The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan to promote the business and industry. President Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zahir Shah and Station Manager Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan Aftab Ahmad signed the MoU.

A special event was held in which large number of business community participated. Addressing the event, President of Mardan Chamber Zahir Shah said that the purpose of the MoU is to solve the problems of the business industry through the platform of radio. He said that the chamber and radio are trying to involve the youth in business and through this platform we can attract the students.

Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan Station Manager Aftab Ahmad said radio is playing a vital role in the development of society. Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan bridging the gap between public and government. On this occasion, Aftab Momand, Liaquat Ali, Amjad Ali, Haji Iqbal, Gul Syed, Farooq, Saeed Khan, Nadeem Chamber Secretary General Shakeel Khan, Deputy General Secretary Fazal Haq, Pakhtunkhwa Radio Mardan Engineer Ijaz ul Haq and Junaid Yousafzai were also present.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Planning Abdul Saboor called on Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki.



Disease could kill more in Gaza than bombs: WHO



GAZA: More people could die from disease than from bombings in the Gaza Strip if the health and sanitation systems are not repaired, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said. Critical infrastructure in the besieged territory has been crippled by fuel and supply shortages and targeted attacks on hospitals and United Nations facilities since Israel launched strikes on Gaza on October 7.

"Eventually we will see more people dying from disease than from bombardment if we are not able to put back together this health system," said Margaret Harris, a spokesperson for the WHO, speaking at a briefing in Geneva. She described the collapse of al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza as a "tragedy" and voiced concern about the detention of some of its medical staff by Israeli forces who took over the complex earlier this month.

She also repeated concerns about a rise in outbreaks of infectious diseases in Gaza, particularly diarrhoeal diseases. Citing a United Nations report on the living conditions of displaced residents in northern Gaza, she said: "[There are] no medicines, no vaccination activities, no access to safe water and hygiene and no food." All key sanitation services have ceased operating in Gaza, which raises the prospect of an enormous surge of gastrointestinal and infectious diseases among the local populations - including cholera.

For Gaza's 2.3 million residents, half of whom are children, finding drinkable water has become close to impossible. The WHO has recorded more than 44,000 cases of diarrhoea and 70,000 acute respiratory infections, but real numbers may be significantly higher. The UN health agency said it was extremely concerned that rains and floods during the approach-

ing winter season will make an already dire situation even worse. James Elder, a spokesperson from the UN children's agency in Gaza, told reporters by video link that hospitals were full of children with war wounds and gastroenteritis from drinking dirty water. "They don't have access to safe water and it's crippling them," he said. If nothing changes, "there will be more and more people falling sick and the risk of major outbreaks will increase dramatically". Richard Brennan, the regional emergency director for the Eastern Mediterranean region at WHO, told Al Jazeera earlier this month. Despite the temporary truce agreement between Israel and Hamas, which was extended by two days just as it was set to expire, the Hamas-run Ministry of Health said no fuel had arrived for generators at hospitals in the territory's north. UN official Tor Wennesland warned the humanitarian situation "remains catastrophic". It "requires the urgent entry of additional aid and supplies in a smooth, predictable, and continuous manner to alleviate the unbearable suffering of Palestinians in Gaza," the UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process said.

Gaza City Mayor Yahya al-Siraj said that without fuel, the territory could not pump clean water or clear waste accumulating in the streets, warning of a potential public health "catastrophe". Clean-up was under way at al-Shifa, which is Gaza's largest hospital. "We hope it can soon resume its activities," said Gaza health ministry spokesman Mahmud Hammad. Israeli bombardment has killed more than 14,800 Palestinians, including 6,150 children and more than 4,000 women, according to health authorities in the enclave. — Aljazeera

Baltic foreign ministers pull out of OSCE summit

BRUSSELS: The foreign ministers of three Baltic states have announced that they will boycott a meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was invited to the event. In a statement, the officials from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania said that a decision to invite Lavrov to attend the summit in Skopje risked legitimising Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"We deeply regret the decision enabling the personal participation of Russian Foreign Minister S. Lavrov at the 30th Session of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Skopje," the statement reads. "It will only provide Russia with yet another propaganda opportunity." Separately, Oleh Nikolenko, spokesman for the Ukrainian foreign ministry, wrote in a statement on Facebook that the Ukrainian delegation would not take part in the meeting.

Nikolenko said Russia had abused the rules of con-

sensus in the organisation, resorted to "blackmail and open threats" and had also been holding three Ukrainian OSCE representatives in prison for 500 days. "In such conditions, the presence of a Russian delegation ... at minister-level for the first time since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine will only deepen the crisis into which Russia has driven the OSCE," he said. There was no immediate comment from the Russian foreign ministry. The move comes as Ukraine's Western allies sought to rally more support for Kyiv, as fighting continues with no clear end in sight. Speaking before a gathering of NATO foreign ministers in Brussels, NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg urged members to "stay the course" in their support for Ukraine, as both the United States and European Union struggle to agree on further military aid. The OSCE, a 57-member organisation first started during the Cold War with the goal of lowering tensions between East and West, has a rotating presi-

dency currently held by North Macedonia, whose foreign minister invited Lavrov to the summit that is set to begin on Thursday. Lavrov said that he would attend, in what would be his first trip to a NATO member since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Speaking to reporters at NATO headquarters, North Macedonia's Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani defended the decision and argued that the OSCE should be seen as a neutral forum. "Lavrov is not coming to Skopje, in a way. Lavrov is coming to the OSCE just as he went to [the] UN in New York a few months ago," Osmani said. "I won't be meeting him as the foreign minister of North Macedonia, but as the OSCE chairman in office." However, Osmani also took a firm stance on Ukraine, saying that he would tell Lavrov that "we have turned [the] OSCE into a platform for political and legal accountability of the Russian Federation for its deeds in Ukraine, and we will continue to do so". — Aljazeera

Sierra Leone attacks were a failed coup bid

FREE TOWN: A series of attacks on military barracks and prisons in Sierra Leone over the weekend was a failed coup attempt, according to police and government officials in the West African country. Information Minister Chernor Bah said that 13 military officers and one civilian have been arrested following the incident.

"The incident was a failed attempted coup. The intention was to illegally subvert and overthrow a democratically elected government," Bah said. "The attempt failed, and plenty of the leaders are either in police custody or on the run. We will try to capture them and bring them to the full force of the laws of Sierra Leone." The inspec-

tor general of police said the attempted coup "failed in the early hours of the 26th of November".

William Fayia Sellu told reporters that "a group of people" had tried to illegally "unseat" the government with force. Police have published photographs of 32 men and two women it said were being sought in connection with the unrest. They include serving and retired soldiers and police, as well as some civilians. Government authorities have said at least 20 people were killed in the attacks and about 2,200 people also escaped from prisons that were attacked. In televised remarks, the country's President Julius Maada Bio said that "most of the leaders" of the attack had been

arrested, and that the government would continue to pursue the rest. Those killed include 13 soldiers, three assailants, a police officer, a civilian and someone working in private security, according to authorities. Eight people were also seriously injured. Tensions remain in Freetown, where checkpoints have sprung up and schools and banks remain closed, while a curfew is in place from dusk until dawn.

Frictions in the West African nation have been building since a contested election in June, with President Bio winning reelection amid concerns about the transparency of the election from European Union observers and United States officials. — Aljazeera

Japan space agency hit with cyberattack

TOKYO (Reuters): Japan's space agency was hit with a cyberattack but the information the hackers accessed did not include anything important for rocket and satellite operations, a spokesperson said on Wednesday. "There was a possibility of unauthorised access by exploiting the vulnerability of network equipment," the spokesperson at Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said, declining to elaborate on details such as when the attack took place.

The space agency learned of the possibility of the unauthorised access after receiving information from an external organisation and conducting an internal investigation, the spokesperson said, declining to identify the organisation's name. The investigation is ongoing, the spokesperson said. Japanese media reported Wednesday that the cyber-attack occurred during the summer and the police became aware of the attack and notified JAXA this autumn. The Yomiuri newspaper first reported the incident.

Iran adds a sophisticated warship to its Sea fleet

TEHRAN (AP): Iran's navy added a destroyer capable of launching cruise missiles to its Caspian Sea fleet, state media reported. The 1,400-ton Deilaman destroyer, named for a town in northern Iran, is 95 meters (312 feet) long and 11 meters (36 feet) wide and is able to launch torpedoes while traveling at 30 knots (56 kph, 35 mph), the state-owned IRNA news agency said.

Deilaman can detect more than 100 targets, including vessels, drones, helicopters, submarines and aircraft, simultaneously, the report said. During a ceremony marking the inauguration of Deilaman, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Hossein Bagheri, chief of the Armed Forces General Staff, telling the Caspian a "sea of peace and friendship" and said Iran's naval power there will serve "peace, security of commercial fleets, confronting terrorists and probable incidents in the future." This is the sixth warship Iran has commissioned in the Caspian Sea, the largest inland body of water in the world, shared by Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran. Iran's warships have made occasional visits to Russian and Azerbaijani naval bases in the sea in recent years, but Iran has also criticized Azerbaijan for its close military ties with Israel, which Iran sees as its archenemy. While Russia is the biggest naval power in the Caspian, Iran has tried to have a naval presence in the sea since the late 1960s, and has been adding to its strength since the 1990s. Iran also has three naval bases on the shores of the sea.

Eleven people killed in accident

JOHANNESBURG (AFP): Eleven workers at a South African platinum mine have been killed and 75 others injured after a lift bringing the workers back to the surface dropped about 200 metres (656 feet), according to the mine's operator. Impala Platinum said the "serious accident" happened in the late afternoon at its mine in Rustenburg, northwest of Johannesburg, as employees were leaving one of the shafts at the end of their shift.

"Our hearts are heavy for the lives lost and the individuals affected by this devastating accident," Impala Platinum's (Implats) CEO, Nico Muller, said in a statement. "We are deeply shocked and saddened by the loss of our colleagues and are in the process of ensuring all next of kin have been contacted". The company said 75 workers were injured and were transferred to local hospitals and admitted for treatment.

Implats spokesman Johan Theron told the AFP news agency some were severely injured, most suffered from ankle and leg fractures, and others walked out with minor scratches.

One-star ratings and threats: How review-bombing shaping Gaza war

SAN FRANCISCO: Every morning, when the coffee shop and art space Fayes opens its doors in San Francisco's Mission District, an employee writes a message on the chalkboard perched outside. Usually, the message is funny or a plug for coffee and art. But last month, as the war in Gaza erupted, a different message appeared: "Solidarity with Gaza. From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free."

Fayes co-owner Michael McConnell was out of town at the time the message went up. But when his phone started buzzing with notifications, he knew something was wrong. One-star reviews were pouring in on popular websites like Yelp. Some complained about "dirty looks" from staff, others about bad table service. But McConnell was suspicious. Fayes does not have tables at all. And a lot of the commenters appeared to be posting from other parts of the United States, as far away as New York and Michigan.

That's when it dawned on him: Fayes was in the middle of a review-bombing. Often used to describe coordinated online efforts to bombard individuals and organisations with criticism, review-bombing can have devastating repercussions, particularly for small businesses with few resources to weather the onslaught. McConnell is the first to admit that review-bombing pales in comparison to the destruction that has happened since the start of the war on October 7. More than 14,800 Palestinians have died as well as 1,200 Israelis. But as he brews coffee after the morning rush, greeting some customers by name, McConnell reflects on his encounter with the woman who he believes sparked the online protest. "She said she wasn't aware that we would get death threats or calls from Israel and overseas, and she didn't know that we would get the Yelp reviews," McConnell said. "And I was like, 'I don't know. What did you think was going to happen?'" McConnell added that it was disorienting that the woman did not think through what her posts would do to his business or its employees. But he remains optimistic. Google and Yelp have taken action to remove the review-bombing posts, and McConnell said he had a "lovely"

conversation with someone who got in touch over Instagram to talk about the chalkboard message and its aftermath. He figures tourists might be turned off by the bad online ratings, but his regular customers will continue to rally around the coffee shop, known for its artwork and wall of rental DVDs. Melissa Ryan, a consultant focused on combatting extremism and toxicity online, said review-bombing participants are aware of the power of their words. But she believes the responsibility should lie with companies like Yelp and Google to prevent bullying and crack down on fake reviews.

"It is on the platforms to be putting more energy and resources into that and to be thinking about their policies and be enforcing them," Ryan said. "It's one thing to be complaining about wait service that doesn't exist. It's another to call someone a terrorist and make threats." Ten blocks away from Fayes, the Palestinian bakery and restaurant Reem's likewise faced protest and review-bombing when it opened its first brick-and-mortar location in the nearby city of Oakland in 2017. Co-founder Zaynah Hindi said she and chef Reem Assil envisioned their restaurant as a welcoming place, branding it with the motto, "Arab street food made with California love." But within a week of opening, the backlash began. "Google and Yelp were flooded with one-star reviews," Hindi recalled as she sat at a table inside the bakery's Mission District location. "Some were just blatantly like, 'This is a terrorist establishment. There's blood of children in their food,' stuff like that. Then there are those who tried to disguise it, like, 'I went there, and their food was terrible,' and listed products that we don't actually even serve."

Many commenters took issue with a painting inside the restaurant that depicted the Palestinian activist Rasmea Odeh, who was convicted in Israel of participating in a deadly bombing but maintains she confessed under torture. The online reactions, however, included threats against individual staff members, particularly Assil, the chef and owner, who was pregnant at the time. "Reem received very vile messages that I don't even want to repeat, but they were very violent," Hindi explained. But Hindi

credits the community with keeping the bakery open. When protesters appeared outside the store, supporters showed up and linked arms to create safe passage for Reem's workers and customers, she said. Now, with tensions over the war in Gaza high, Hindi hopes the restaurant can offer a safe space in return, particularly for Palestinians struggling with the scale of the violence. "In the last few weeks, Reem and I as Palestinians were absolutely devastated and feeling paralysed to be witnessing the genocide of our people in front of our very eyes," Hindi said. "That is just heartbreaking." She added she and her colleagues have no intention of closing their doors, no matter the backlash.

"We're not going anywhere," she said. "When other people in our community see that, they say, 'OK, Reem's spoke out on this matter, and I feel like there's space for me to do that too.'" Unfortunately, small business owners often struggle to survive protests without strong community backing, said Miriam Zouzounis, a commissioner with San Francisco's Office of Small Business. Zouzounis works as an importer for Terra Sancta Trading Company, which distributes wine and spirits from the Middle East. She has seen firsthand how online backlash can sabotage sales.

"We've had accounts that have lost business for highlighting our Palestinian wine," she said. "They're regular wine shops, and they'll do a blurb, and then an event that was going to work with them cancels. Things like that have monetary fallout, but that's pretty ubiquitous right now." Zouzounis suspects the online attacks are part of a larger effort to shift the conversation away from the conflict in Gaza. "The Palestinian community doesn't have the luxury to wallow in these 'minutiae' kind of fights," she said. "That's their strategy: to keep us distracted on all these fronts." She notes Arab Americans are increasingly recognised as a powerful voting bloc. She wants to use that sway to push local politicians, like San Francisco's city supervisors, to call for a ceasefire in Gaza. "Yes, we're under attack here, but our people in Palestine are being killed," she said. "So we need to ask for the city to take a stand on a ceasefire demand for their constituents." — Aljazeera

Brazil's Lula, man on a mission at COP28: Take rich world to task

BRASILIA (AFP): A year ago, then president-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva got a hero's welcome at the UN climate talks, telling the world "Brazil is back" in the fight against global warming. Having largely delivered on his promise to curb the destruction of the crucial Amazon rainforest, now-President Lula heads to this year's edition of the talks on a mission: sell ambitious new plans to protect the world's forests, and get rich countries to do more in the climate fight.

Since Lula, 78, took office for a third time in January, Brazil has halved deforestation in its giant share of the Amazon versus last year -- a sea change from the surge in clear-cutting that happened under Lula's far-right predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2022). Brazil believes that progress, plus its use of 89-percent clean electricity, gives it leverage heading into the COP28 talks in Dubai, which open Thursday. The Latin

American giant is going to the talks "with our heads held high," planning to "make more demands than we face," said respected Environment Minister Marina Silva. She said Brazil would push for rich nations to finally make good on their unfulfilled promises to provide climate funding for the most vulnerable countries, and to "take the foot off the accelerator of fossil fuels." Silva said Lula, who has vowed to eliminate illegal deforestation by 2030, would also propose the creation of a fund where wealthy nations pay tropical forest countries for every hectare of preserved forest land, whose carbon-absorbing capacity is a key resource against global warming. But there are also blemishes on Brazil's recent environmental record. In the Cerrado, a key tropical savanna below the Amazon, deforestation under Lula has leapt by 34 percent from the same period last year, according to

satellite monitoring. Meanwhile, the Talanoa Institute, a climate policy group, said in a recent report that Brazil is unlikely to achieve its target under the Paris climate accord to cut its CO2 emissions by 480 million tonnes by 2025. Incidentally, that is the same year Brazil is due to host the UN climate talks. Lula has also faced criticism over plans by state-run oil company Petrobras to drill for oil at the mouth of the Amazon river. Still, the veteran leftist heads to Dubai with a slate of climate initiatives. In addition to the 80-country tropical forest plan, he is set to announce a massive program to recover degraded farmland in Brazil, enabling the agricultural powerhouse to expand its total farmland from 65 million to 105 million hectares without razing any more forest. The government plans to invest around \$120 billion over a decade in the plan.

Lula's arrival at COP28

Friday will coincide with Brazil taking over the rotating presidency of the G20 -- where his government said it also planned to make climate change a central issue. Global warming is driving "severe economic and social problems," said Mauricio Lyrio, Brazil's chief negotiator at the club of the world's 20 biggest economies. Brazil, which has been hit by extreme weather ranging from torrential rains to drought this year, plans to pressure wealthy nations to invest more in combating climate change and reducing emissions, said Lyrio. "Financing is fundamental. Countries need to be spending more," he said. Brazil also plans to use its year-long G20 presidency to focus on fighting poverty and launch a "global alliance against hunger." It would be modeled on a Lula trademark -- the ambitious programs that helped lift 30 million Brazilians from poverty during his first two presidential terms (2003-2010).

Burning trash to stay warm, displaced Syrians struggle to survive winter

DAMASCUS: As winter sets in, the inhabitants of an informal camp just north of the city of Idlib are bracing themselves for the months ahead. Fateem al-Yousef watched the sky anxiously as clouds gathered and she thought about what she and her family will be facing once the rains start. "I am afraid that water will seep into the tent and that my children will get sick," she told Al Jazeera.

Fateem, 40, has been displaced since the early years of the war in Syria, which began in 2011. She left her village south of Idlib and moved from one village to another. Four years ago, she, her husband, Khaled al-Hassan, and their nine children finally settled in the Kafr Yahmul camp, where 70 families live on rented land. The memory of their first day in the camp is still fresh in her mind, Fateem said, because it was accompanied by rain. She had recently given birth, and water leaked into the family's tent. "The situation was very difficult because we were not adapted to it," Fateam said. "We felt that there was water everywhere, and we did not have heating

for our young children."

These days, displaced people in northwest Syria are burning pistachio shells, hazelnuts, olives, odd bits of firewood and charcoal as well as scraps of plastic, nylon and cardboard to stay warm because the price of diesel has soared, but even these options are expensive for camp residents. About 2.7 million people in Syria are in urgent need of aid this winter, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Syrians are facing a high cost of living, unemployment, inflation - prices have doubled since the start of 2023 - continued displacement and the ongoing effects of February's earthquakes.

A severe shortage of funding for humanitarian projects in Syria will also compound the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people in 2024, OCHA warned. Fateam said she and her family can barely make ends meet even though most of them work. Her eldest daughter, who is 15, and her 14-year-old son work as farm labourers while the younger children

collect scrap from roadsides. Her husband, 47, has no mobility in one hand but works whenever he has the opportunity. Even so, the family can't afford everything they need to make it through the winter. Most adults earn less than \$1 a day - hardly enough to provide for a family. Living close by is Wadha al-Yousef, 36, who is not directly related to Fateam but is from the same village. She, her husband, Ahmed al-Sattouf, 42, and their five children, aged one to seven, have been living in Kafr Yahmul for five years. She told Al Jazeera that her family relies on collecting scraps of cardboard, plastic and nylon from the sides of the roads during the summer to be able to keep warm in the winter but burning comes at a cost. "The hideous smell and smoke spreads throughout the camp, but people tolerate each other because they all have no other choice for heating," Wadha said. Burning plastic and nylon is damaging the family's health. Wadha said her children suffer from constant illnesses caused by the smoke, and they find them-

selves making visits to health centres and clinics throughout the winter as a result.

Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF) warned this month of the dangers of burning such waste because they give off harmful fumes, which can cause respiratory diseases and infections, especially for children and the elderly. The autumn rain clouds came a bit later than usual this year, but the cold and flooding are likely to be as bad as ever if not worse, according to forecasts. Last year, 306 refugee camps in northwestern Syria flooded during the winter. United Nations organisations report that 874 camps out of 1,525 in the region have been classified as "vulnerable" to flooding during the winter. Seventeen of them are "catastrophically" vulnerable, 240 are "extremely" vulnerable and the rest are "severely" so. The camps house about 2 million people, and at least 15,000 new tents are needed to each winter, but most of the existing tents have not been replaced for years and do not include the insulation needed to provide protection from the rain and cold. — Aljazeera

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Economic glitches and World Bank report

THE World Bank on Tuesday cautioned Pakistan against short-term measures like domestic debt restructuring and attracting one-time investment through a new civil-military initiative, without addressing the country's 'big picture issues' through reforms aimed at improving larger business climate, taxation, and human capital. According to the global lender, the creation of a new institution is no quick fix to bring investment without improving the taxation system, competitive market conditions, and state-owned entities. The World Bank senior official was of the view that the government's objective in creating the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) might be good and such steps could help once or twice, but it was no solution to Pakistan's challenges, which could only be addressed by improving the business climate, providing a level playing field and removing distortions and tax exemptions.

A few days earlier, the Frontier Post categorically suggested to the government and honourable reader community that all those special and ad-hoc measures like the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and Apex Committee on Terrorism, etc are temporary arrangements and could not be maintained in parallel to the already existing comprehensive government set up in the centre as well as in the provinces. Meanwhile, such arrangements further eroded the government system and national institutions, providing them with an exemption from necessary accountability and prosecution for failing to fulfil their primary responsibility. Recently, the government has formed a high-level powerful committee to address long-held economic issues and bring local/foreign investment into the country. Which magnificently worked in resolving serious issues relating to currency smuggling, market manipulation, mismanagement, and corruption in the Power Generating and Power Distributing companies, etc, providing temporary relief to the public. The SIFC is robustly working to mainstream domestic issues along with attracting billions of dollars in foreign investment from friendly nations to revive a dismal national economy and reinvigorate hope in the dispirited nation. The SIFC is currently working on a war footing in an emergency to fill up the investment gap and move the industry and economic activity in the country but all those actions need prudence and lawfulness while keeping the public interests supreme so no policy/ action of the government or SIFC prove to be counterproductive and disastrous for the nation at the later stage. Previously, the PML-N government in 2014-2015 signed highly controversial energy production agreements with the IPPs agreeing to billions of dollars in capacity payments that have now become a grave setback for the government at this point.

Presently, global financial institutions including the World Bank Group (WBG) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are consistently highlighting the drawbacks and loopholes in the Pakistani government's policies along with the possible repercussions that might confront the country in the long run. The World Bank has urged the country to improve the taxation system, competitive market conditions, and overhauling/privatization of state-owned entities along with improving the business climate, providing a level playing field and removing distortions and tax exemptions within the financial setups. Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had also advised the government against creating a group of preferred investors and urged for above-the-board transparency and accountability, even in SIFC-led investments. In the prevailing scenario and based on past experiences, the suggestions from global financial institutions are not irrelevant and worthless. The government currently confronts two main challenges relating to the country's economy which are the preservation and consolidation of present gains and enabling the government institutions to carry forward this momentum in their respective domains along with strengthening those mechanisms to maximize the current yields.

While summarizing the entire gambit of issues in one phase, Pakistani strategists never bothered with the scholarly work and sane advice sorting extraordinary circumstances and peculiar Pakistani perspectives while implementing their vision that mostly ended up in failures and chaos, with perpetrators eluding from responsibility. It is high time that the relevant authorities set together to deliberate on the aspects highlighted by the global institutions not to protect ego but to remove shortcomings and grasp long-lasting successes for the country in the times ahead.

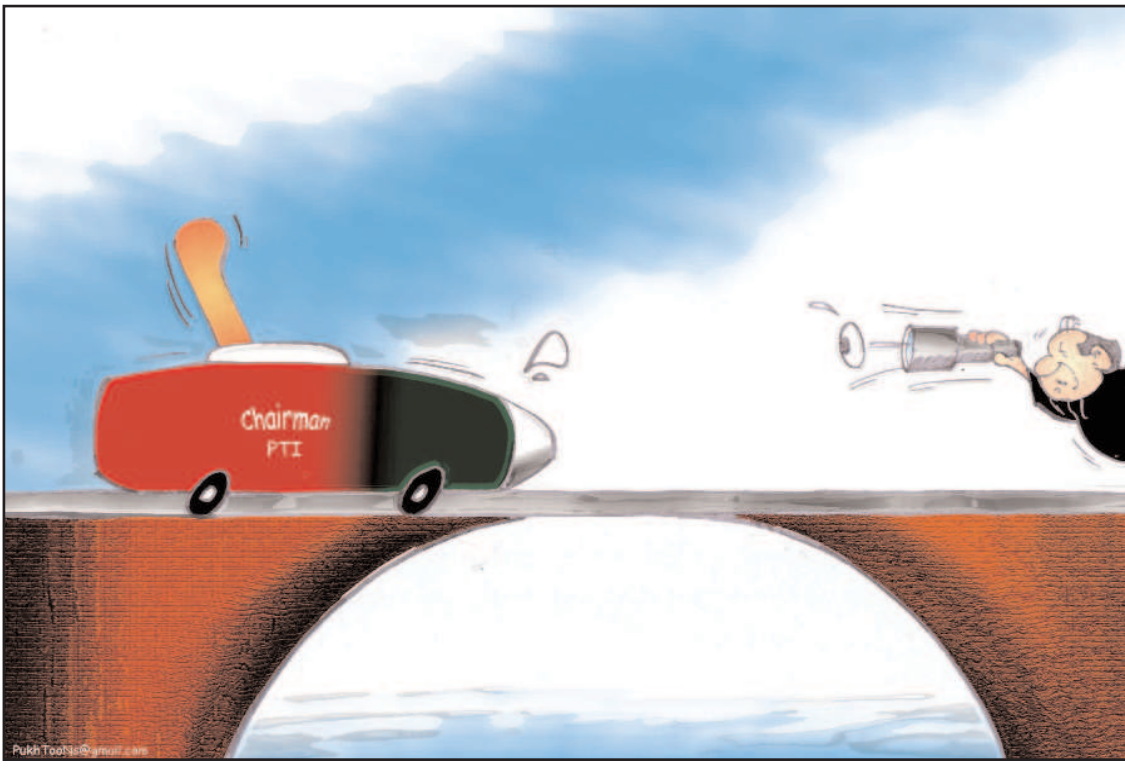
The curse of poppy cultivation

THE United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its local partners including the Afghan government are currently discussing the solutions for sustainable alternative livelihoods for former poppy farmers who relied on illicit crop cultivation in the past. The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) welcomed the meeting and endorsed that it is necessary to find an alternative to poppy cultivation in order to have a drug-free Afghanistan. According to the cleric regime, the cultivation of poppy is prohibited in Afghanistan, the time has come to prevent it, and the Islamic Emirate wants to permanently eradicate narcotics from Afghanistan. UNODC recently reported that poppy cultivation in Afghanistan has decreased by 95% this year yet the farmers are turning toward previous hobby because of worsening economic crisis, a lack of resources and unemployment.

Afghanistan has long been the world's top grower of opium, producing more than 80% of the global supply, while the unceasing Afghan conflict has been a major reason behind mass production of this poisonous crop that was a major source of income for Afghan warlords, militant groups in that nation. Over the past years under the UN patronage, the International donors poured billions of dollars on counter-narcotics drives in Afghanistan, including programmes to encourage farmers to switch to other cash crops and monetary incentives, provision of livestock and alternative livelihoods, but failed. Historically, the situation regarding poppy cultivation in Afghanistan remains a complex and evolving issue, and addressing it effectively requires comprehensive strategies that address the root causes behind poppy cultivation along with supporting sustainable economic development and governance in the region. The United Nations and the global community had invested bulk money to overcome this deadly business in the past decades but failed while the Taliban regime considered the poppy production harmful but hesitant in taking stern actions against the perpetrators. The poppy farmers once accustomed to illegal drug money are not ready for contentment and lawful farming of wheat, maize and vegetation which are the core exports of the country. Hence, such meetings of the Afghan leaders and their western partners are less likely to produce positive results until and unless the Cleric regime picks up the rod and announces stern punishments for the violators. Otherwise, the spoiled children would not tolerate their businesses and incomes.

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Watching the watchdogs

Rami G Khouri

IF you want to understand why in the past four decades the Middle East has experienced one brutal conflict after another, despite repeated United States-led efforts to "mediate" and "make peace" between the Arabs and Israel, here's a free tip for you: watch American television coverage of a moment of crisis or high drama in the region, and then compare what you saw with Arab or even European coverage of the same event.

That's exactly what I've been doing for the past few days - watching the coverage of the fragile Gaza ceasefire and the exchange of detainees between Israel and Hamas on a variety of American TV networks (mainly CNN, ABC and NBC) as well as on BBC and Al Jazeera.

Never in the half-a-century that I've been following international news have I witnessed journalism as poor, biased and shallow as that of these US television channels in the past week. In fact, what I saw was less journalism aimed at informing audiences on current affairs across the world, and more reality television carefully designed and performed to entertain them. In contrast, Al Jazeera and, to a certain extent, the BBC, clearly aspired to achieve greater balance, provide in-depth analysis, include historical context, and humanise all those affected by the conflict. Their efforts to provide quality journalism for their audiences only accentuated the shockingly poor performance of the US networks.

No wonder the American public is so poorly informed on Middle Eastern issues, and the American government keeps failing at its "peace-making" efforts and instead regularly sends military battalions and flotillas to the region. So, here is what struck me about the American television coverage of the Gaza ceasefire. Please keep in mind that this is not a scientific study, but a list of impressions and observations:

An overwhelming majority of American journalists covering the events "on the ground" were based in either Tel Aviv or Israeli West Jerusalem, and had no direct contact with Palestinians in Gaza. The dominant theme of the American coverage was the release of Israelis who were detained in Gaza (I'll refer to them and the thousands of Palestinians currently in Israeli jails both as "detainees" to avoid, for

now, the debate about who gets to be called "hostage" or "prisoner"). American TV channels made little effort to convey to their audiences Palestinian points of view and sentiments. It is understandable for Israeli television to focus squarely on the Israeli detainees, but American television should at least try to present the complete story and create space for the sentiments and perspectives of both societies.

The tremendous time and effort American hosts and correspondents committed to sharing with their audiences the powerful emotions of the families of Israeli detainees was impressive by any standard. There were repeated interviews, photo collages, video testimonies and countless emotive stories about the ordeals of the Israeli detainees and their worried families. Yet there was no similar intensity or extent of coverage of the sentiments of the Palestinian detainees and their families, who make up half of the story. Israeli detainees and their families were presented as real people, with names, ages and powerful human emotions, gripped by fear and hope, doing everything possible to save their family members detained in Gaza. We got to know them and feel their pain, which we were largely denied for the Palestinians. Anyone watching American news quickly learned the names of all the Israeli children detained in Gaza. Their stories, accompanied by photos and videos provided by their families, touched the hearts of all those who have been watching. I was particularly moved, for example, by the report on one little girl whose father brought her dog to greet her upon her return to Israel.

All in all, the US coverage of the stories of Israeli detainees in Gaza and their families represented journalism - and humanity - at its emotional and narrative best. Yet in covering perhaps the second most significant political/military event in the century-long conflict between Zionism/Israel and Arabism/Palestine (after 1947/48), one would have expected American news networks to offer their audiences facts, personalities, emotions and social realities from both sides. One-sided coverage, however technically proficient and emotionally grabbing, is not news reporting, it's cheerleading. The words US anchors, hosts and cor-

respondents used while covering these events also betrayed their biases. Israelis under the age of 16 or so were always called "children", while jailed young Palestinians from the same age group were overwhelmingly referred to as "minors". The female Israeli detainees were usually identified as "mothers" or "daughters" or "grandmothers" - and rightly so. The female Palestinian detainees, however, were mostly called just "females" or "women" - thus the audiences were not encouraged to see them as mothers, aunts, grandmothers and form emotional bonds with them.

Hamas personnel were almost universally referred to as "terrorists" - perhaps an understandable nomenclature when describing those who participated in an attack against unarmed civilians, but not a useful or adequate one to describe all members of an organisation that performs political, military and social roles in society - and represents the latest manifestation of militant political resistance against Israel and Zionism's century of aggression against and subjugation of Palestinians. In some cases, networks followed minute-by-minute Israeli detainees' journeys from Gaza to their homes in Israel - flashing back to interviews with the families and forward to the preparations to greet them. In contrast, with very few exceptions, there was no serious attempt to provide similar coverage of the journeys of the Palestinian detainees or their families - even though access to many of these families in the West Bank was possible.

Coverage of Palestinians welcoming their returning detainees was scattered and slightly formulaic, while coverage of the equivalent Israeli story was repetitive, tear-jerking and passionate. The analysts/commentators interviewed in the US by American networks provided extra layers of orientalist stereotyping of Palestinians and Arabs that offered little or no news value but pandered mainly to audiences' natural entertainment instincts, or the networks' jingoistic support of US policies in the region.

So we heard former hostage negotiators in the US explain (assume, actually) what difficulties Israelis would face in freeing their detained nationals, including "Arab street" pressures. We even heard that FBI agents were in Israel to investigate possible Palestinian crimes against American citizens -

of course, no attempt was made by the networks to question whether similar efforts were under way to investigate the many Israeli crimes against the Palestinians, including the killing of more than 14,000 people, some of whom also happen to be American citizens. The most glaring shortcoming in the American television coverage of the recent events in Israel-Palestine was the almost total lack of any historical context that would have helped audiences make sense of the October 7 attack on Israel and everything that followed. This context was needed not to justify Hamas's attack, but merely to help people understand why it happened in this century-old conflict.

Indeed, the attack on Israel cannot be fully understood and analysed without considering the half dozen other clashes between Israel and Hamas in the last 35 years since Hamas was born. Palestinians, and most of the international community, insist that the historical context of this conflict must be appreciated if the wars are to end and a route to coexistence is to be forged. Israel, on the other hand, is determined to shut down any historical analysis that could explain how a land that was 96 percent Palestinian a century ago is 80 percent Jewish Israeli now. When American television does not present any historical context, it explicitly sides with Israel on this central issue. It can do this as much as it wants in its opinion offerings, but not in news coverage. These quick observations are not a comprehensive analysis of the US television coverage of recent events in Israel-Palestine. I am aware that the US television networks have also provided a few moments of balanced coverage, during which Israelis and Palestinians were treated as equally human. Most of the coverage I saw, however, did not acknowledge the humanity of the Palestinians and instead reflected the dominant Israeli view that Palestinians are less than human and thus their suffering, emotions and aspirations could be ignored, minimised or presented superficially in media coverage.

All media organisations, including the TV networks attempting to cover this century of conflict for American audiences, should aspire to practise better journalism and avoid as much as possible presenting entertainment and propaganda in their news broadcasts.

Aljaazeera

When the strategy to displace Gazans was revealed

Eyad Abu Shakra

WE have experienced a handful of days of respite from the killing machine. However, between the optimism regarding a further extension of this temporary pause and the pessimism in anticipation of a more cruel and horrific round of bloodshed, negotiators are seeking to make progress and pretenders are making pretenses. Thus, if there are any tentative conclusions to be made, they include the following.

Firstly, despite their haughty attitudes, both Israel and Hamas have lost and won points. From the Israeli perspective, its war machine was caught off guard in various places by what happened on Oct. 7. In what was perhaps an attempt to compensate for this, Israel launched a vicious war of rumors that is aimed at riling up the public and inciting a war of displacement and extermination. However, these rumors have been shown to be untrue both locally and internationally.

Also, despite the effectiveness of Israel's arms and the havoc it has wreaked on the innocent people of Gaza, it has so far been unable to achieve its declared objectives, foremost of which is the destruction of Hamas, its leaders, its doctrine and its affiliates. As for the political calculations, opinion polls regularly conducted by the Israeli newspaper Maariv indicate that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's approval rating has been declining, while his direct rival Benny Gantz is becoming increasingly popular. The latest polls (conducted on Nov. 15 and 16, with the results announced last Friday) show that 52 percent of Israeli voters now want to see Gantz head the government, compared to only 27 percent who continue to support Netanyahu. In terms of control of the Knesset and its 120 seats, the poll shows that, if elections were held today, the ruling right-wing extremist coalition led by Netanyahu and his Likud party would only win 41 seats and the opposition would win 79.

While Gantz's National Unity party would independently secure 43 seats, Likud would not win more than 18. Moreover, according to the same Maariv poll, the party of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, one of the most extreme in Israel, would fail to reach the threshold needed to ensure parliamentary representation. On the Palestinian side, a high cost has been paid for the moral and political setbacks suffered by Netanyahu and his ruling clique. While the people of Gaza are bearing the brunt of these costs, the Palestinians in the West Bank, especially in Jenin, Tulkarm and Nablus, have not been left unscathed, as armed Israeli settlers and occupation forces have killed hundreds.

More than 14,000 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip, including about 5,000 children. A large share of its inhabitants have been displaced. Large parts of Gaza's cities and refugee camps have been destroyed and it has been split between north and south. All of these developments raise concerns. Moreover, what has unfolded since Oct. 7 is much more than a

reaction and far more horrific than vengeance. Adding insult to injury, global expressions of solidarity with Israel, under the pretext of its "right to self-defense," have allowed Israeli lobbies in most Western countries to exploit the Oct. 7 operation and push for a "transfer" (i.e., the mass displacement of Palestinians). The efforts of these lobbyists resemble those we saw in 2003, when Iraq was invaded following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. At that time, President George W. Bush's American administration was aware that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime had nothing to do with the attacks. However, members of the administration, particularly the neoconservative Likudniks, drew up a plan to invade and occupy Iraq because the claim that it possessed weapons of mass destruction could be exploited to justify the occupation and regime change. This is exactly what happened.

As we all recall, the Iranian regime was the primary beneficiary of this occupation. Indeed, as soon as Baghdad fell into the hands of the American forces, Iraqi religious, political and militia leaders who had been exiled in Iran flocked back to the occupied Iraqi capital. It was not long before Paul Bremer, who headed the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, boasted of ending "centuries of Sunni rule" there. The first thing Netanyahu told his audience after Oct. 7 was that Israel's goal was to eliminate Hamas and "change the Middle East." Once the Israeli military operation in Gaza began, right-wing ministers and politicians made statements threatening to displace the residents of the Gaza Strip to Egypt - and later distributing them to countries around the world. Others hinted at displacing West Bank residents and reviving the project for an "alternative homeland" in Jordan.

At the same time, Washington insisted on the need to limit the fighting to the Gaza Strip, claiming there was no evidence of Iranian involvement in the Hamas attack. While Tehran was happy to merely voice its support, Lebanese Hezbollah launched attacks that respected the "rules of engagement" acceptable to Israel. Tehran's militias in Iraq and Yemen also "caused trouble" to reinforce Iran's rhetorical support and maintain the facade of a so-called resistance axis. Amid regional and international efforts to extend the truce, develop a formula for the future of the Gaza Strip and decide who will be in charge once Hamas is removed, leaders from Hamas and spokespersons for Tehran, including a Hezbollah official, continued to promote the narrative of "victory." The official was quoted as saying: "Israel has fallen and we are closer to dear victory than ever, thanks to the fighters; we know what is happening in Palestine, and the Israeli army has tried and failed to solve the conflict militarily." Thus, between defining victories and waiting for deals, many have been exposed.

Arab News

Can COP28 build on the surprise US-China climate deal?

Ranvir S. Nayar

group to discuss areas of cooperation ahead of the COP28 climate change summit, which gets underway in Dubai on Thursday.

The two nations also said they would support a new global target for renewable energy production and work together on curbing methane and plastic pollution. For the first time, both the US and China will outline actions and set targets for phasing down methane emissions, which is also a significant step as methane is hundreds of times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of global warming and its emissions have been rising around the world, mainly stemming from agriculture and oil and gas exploration. In this context, it is also encouraging to note that the US, China and COP28 host the UAE will jointly organize a methane and non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gases summit in

Dubai.

While significant differences remain between the US and China over the phasing out of fossil fuels and how the world must pay for it, the fact that the two have already taken their positions at the negotiating tables ahead of the Dubai summit is perhaps the best news that has come out in the run up to COP28. Indeed, the past few months have seen a string of bad news stories and alarming reports emerge on climate change and the actions taken by governments around the world to fight it and curb their emissions.

In terms of bad news, the biggest headline-grabbing development came from the UK, where Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, in a vain bid to woo Conservative voters ahead of a by-election, promised to tone down British carbon emissions targets - a move that has

come in for sound criticism not only from global environmental activists, but also several British leaders. It is, of course, a moot point now that Sunak's party has lost the by-election, but the PM has stayed firm on his decision to review and revise downward the British ambition to curb carbon emissions. The British decision stands out for its poor timing and horrible messaging: that politicians do not mind sacrificing their countries' international commitments for as minor an issue as a by-election. But the UK is far from the only country going easy on its commitments. A report released last week by the UN said that, collectively, the actions and commitments made by governments around the world are far too minimal to be effective in the battle to slow down climate change, let alone reverse global warming. The report says that the latest study by the UN's Intergovernmental

Panel on Climate Change indicates that greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut 43 percent by 2030, compared to 2019 levels. However, this downward progression has not yet begun and, as of 2022, global emissions were still rising, making the task of cutting them by 43 percent in the next seven years a real uphill, if not impossible, task.

These stern warnings will once again set the stage for another climate change summit. It remains to be seen if the little burst of positive momentum generated by the US-China agreement can create a wave of similar cooperative and responsible approaches by other industrialized economies. For the sake of the world, one can only hope that other global leaders do pay heed to the developments between Washington and Beijing when they gather in Dubai.

Nikki Haley is ready for her closeup

Nicole Hemmer

PICKING through the rubble of the 2016 election, journalists not only peered deep into the rural red counties of Trump country and the ragged remains of the Clinton campaign, but also turned inward, toward themselves. There had been so much newsprint acreage devoted to Hillary Clinton's emails and so many hours devoted to wall-to-wall coverage of Donald Trump's rallies; a wave of recriminations from readers and colleagues alike rained down on the press, which, the argument went, had badly fumbled its campaign coverage and contributed to Donald Trump's victory. It was time for a reckoning.

And yet for all the soul-searching, as we approach 2024, it's clear that not much has changed - for Trump or for the journalists who cover him. As the GOP primary debates unfold and the race heats up, we have gotten a sense of how little has been learned from 2016.

Coverage of the candidate's recent use of the word "vermin" and his unhinged Truth Social posts keep Trump center stage, reinforcing polls that show Trump's overwhelming lead against his primary competitors. Talk of policies and the stakes of another Trump presidency - which has attracted increasing attention - still take a backseat to the same horserace approach we had supposedly reckoned with so thoroughly. The stories generate a lot of heat, but not much light. And if this style of reporting dominates as the 2024 campaign moves into the general election, Americans will be unprepared for the election ahead.

That's because we have a political press that has learned to talk a lot about the endangered state of US democracy without providing voters with the stories and information they need to make sense of the 2024 elections. Voters don't just vote with the future of their form of government in mind; they vote on what they perceive to be the personality, policies, and politics of the candidates. Coverage of the Republican primaries -and of Trump's most viable primary competitor- reveals just how much the current approach obscures the bigger stakes and developments while often delivering little more than inside baseball and tenuous predictions about the campaigns.

The experience of South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is instructive. In the primary debates, which Trump has skipped, she has emerged as a candidate with a set of policy prescriptions and approaches that at times sharply diverge from Trump and the other candidates on stage. More hawkish

in foreign policy, more skeptical of anti-abortion absolutism, less interested in notions of economic populism, Haley might stand in for the George W. Bush/Paul Ryan wing of the party, presumed to be a nearly-extinct part of the Republican coalition since the rise of Trump. That view is reinforced by news that broke Tuesday: Haley has received the endorsement of Americans for Prosperity Action, a SuperPAC founded by David and Charles Koch. The New York Times, in reporting the endorsement, went all in on the campaign strategies and electoral positioning, discussing Haley's position in the polls, the SuperPAC's deep pockets and the desire to "turn the page" on the Trump era. But nowhere does it

would once have frowned upon - and has leaned hard into anti-trans rhetoric and policies. She has framed the Trump indictments as political prosecutions and sources of unnecessary drama, the latter an indication of her wariness about attacking Trump too hard. That clarifies something about Haley, who otherwise has been a kind of silly-putty figure in the race, someone upon whom Trump-wary Republicans and independents can impress their own preferences. Haley emerges as a moderate, defined by her decision to remove the Confederate flag from the state capitol after the racist massacre in Charleston in 2015, or as a budget-balancing wonk, defined by her willingness to entertain Social

What makes Haley interesting in this race is not, in fact, her position in the polls but her position in the party. She not only represents a once-dominant faction of the GOP, but also shows us how that wing of the party has accommodated to the Trump era. Haley was, after all, Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, an interesting position for someone who so sharply diverges from Trump's ostensibly non-interventionist foreign policy.

talk in depth about policy or what the Koch brothers' organization represents within the Republican coalition. The Times did mention foreign policy, noting Haley's criticism of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, advocacy for military strikes in Iran and her hawkish support for Ukraine aid.

But there's so much more to say. The Koch brothers have long represented the corporate wing of the party, pushing for policies that benefit big business and the wealthy: low taxes, low wages, open immigration, free trade, and the like. And those interests shape their support of Haley. It's information that campaign reporters did not have to look far to find. The endorsement discusses Haley's education and health care policies, and hints at her anti-union, pro-industry stances. What makes Haley interesting in this race is not, in fact, her position in the polls but her position in the party. She not only represents a once-dominant faction of the GOP, but also shows us how that wing of the party has accommodated to the Trump era. Haley was, after all, Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, an interesting position for someone who so sharply diverges from Trump's ostensibly non-interventionist foreign policy. She has adopted a harder line on immigration - something the Koch brothers

Security and Medicare cuts. Or maybe it's Haley, the standard-bearer for a more inclusive Republican Party, defined by her identities as a woman and Indian-American. But none of those fully captures the real Haley's politics or policy preferences.

Contextualizing both the endorsement and Haley's policy positions can help us see how Republicans who disagree with Trump have accommodated him without jettisoning many of their broader political commitments.

It not only tells us something about the composition of the party and its voters, but it clarifies some of the developments of the Trump era: the supposed economic populist president who instituted deep tax cuts for the wealthy, attempted (and is still attempting) to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and who met with non-union autoworkers in Detroit during the recent United Auto Workers strike. With that clarity in mind, journalists could make clear the stakes of a second Trump presidency that goes beyond the very real threats to democratic governance that it poses. There are real material consequences to a Trump presidency that would leave working-class Americans in worse shape economically. There may be a strain of Republicans interested in thinking about economic populism, but

when it comes to actual governing, the Haley wing remains in the driver's seat.

All of this requires a fundamentally different approach to election coverage. Campaign reporting has changed on the margins. Journalists sometimes push back against Trump. They use the word "lie" and even the word "fascism." But when it comes to election coverage itself, the main model is still the same, fueled by polls and predictions and palace intrigue, and decidedly less interested in policy and longer-term transformations to the parties and their voters. That's the finding of a new report from the Columbia Journalism Review, which studied the front pages of the New York Times and Washington Post in the run-up to the 2022 midterms, to see how much had changed since 2016. Their answer? Not much.

"We found that the Times and the Post shared significant overlap in their domestic politics coverage, offering little insight into policy," the report's authors wrote. "Both emphasized the horse race and campaign palace intrigue, stories that functioned more to entertain readers than to educate them on essential differences between political parties." The Post showed a bit more interest in issues of interest to Democrats, while the Times focused on Republican issues, but the papers shared the same time-worn - and frankly, profitable - approach to campaign coverage. It's a model that has been in effect for decades - and one that has taken heavy criticism since well before Trump.

In 2012, journalist Patrick Hruby decried what he called "The SportsCenter-ization of Political Journalism," a critique that still holds up today. Media criticism was a backbone of both The Daily Show with Jon Stewart and the Colbert Report, and remains a central mode of analyzing US politics. But that criticism has not led to wholesale institutional reform - in part because change is hard and expensive, in part because it's risky, in part because the horserace model fits a set of journalistic values around objectivity and balance that is much harder to meet in analytical and contextual coverage. (And, of course, in part because readers often don't display appetite for policy stories, a hindrance in a media universe where success is largely a function of reader engagement.) But the change has to happen, and soon. A democratic system can't survive without strong, independent, and useful journalism - for a democratic system on the brink, it is even more vital.

CNN

Rise in hate speech over Gaza a defining moment

Osama Al-Sharif

ISRAEL'S war on Gaza has polarized the world in an almost inconceivable way, with one outcome being a rise in both antisemitism and Islamophobia. Both are extremely dangerous and have led to a spike in hate crimes, especially in the West. According to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, there was an "appalling" rise in reported anti-Arab and anti-Muslim incidents in the first month after the violence erupted between Israel and Hamas.

The council said it had received 1,283 requests for help and reports of bias in the month from Oct. 7 - a 216 percent increase compared to the previous year. The organization said that, in 2022, it received an average of 406 complaints in a 29-day period. A week after Israel waged war on Gaza, a 71-year-old man stabbed and killed a six-year-old Palestinian American child and attempted to kill his mother in Illinois. He was charged with murder and hate crimes. Investigators determined the victims were "targeted by the suspect due to them being Muslim and the ongoing Middle Eastern conflict involving Hamas and the Israelis." Just this week, three Palestinian university students were shot in Burlington, Vermont, in what authorities have described as a "hate-motivated crime." Police characterized the gunman as "a white man with a handgun." Although no official motive has been confirmed, two of the three young adults shot were wearing the traditional Palestinian keffiyeh. Two were described as being in a stable condition, while the other suffered more serious injuries.

Perhaps the most-reported case of hate crime was that of former Obama administration adviser Stuart Seldowitz, who was caught on video harassing and insulting an Egyptian halal cart vendor in downtown New York. Several videos captured the former diplomat harassing the vendor about his Egyptian roots and Islamic faith. He was later arrested and is facing one count of aggravated harassment of race or religion and four counts of stalking as a hate crime. Many of those marching in support of the Palestinians in the US and Europe have been harassed and accused of justifying terrorism or supporting Hamas. Some Western governments made things worse by labeling such peaceful protests as antisemitic or even "hate marches."

Likewise, antisemitism cases have spiked since Oct. 7. According to CNN, a wave of global hatred directed against Jews has followed Israel's indiscriminate response in Gaza to Hamas' attack and killing of Israelis. Reuters reported that Jewish advocacy group the Anti-Defamation League reported that antisemitic incidents had risen by about 400 percent in the two weeks following the Oct. 7 attacks compared with the same period last year. Similarly, there was a 1,350 percent increase in hate crimes against Jewish people in the two weeks following Oct. 7, according to London's Metropolitan Police. Ade Adelekan, the deputy assistant commissioner, described the rise as "significant" and added that Islamophobic offenses in London were up by 140 percent over the same period last year.

Social media platforms have seen numerous cases of antisemitic and Islamophobic hate speech, which often goes unreported. The rise in hate speech has been fueled by horrific images being shared on social media of the carnage in Gaza, especially where children were involved, and the devastation and loss suffered by Israelis in the south of the country in the wake of the Hamas attack. The incendiary language used by a number of Israeli officials - describing Gazans as "human animals" or claiming that "there are no innocent civilians" there, as well as suggesting that Israel could drop a nuclear bomb on Gaza - has added fuel to the fire and stoked both antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Many Israelis, full of rage, have threatened to "kill the Arabs," while American and European bigots used the Palestine issue as an excuse to express Jewish hatred. This is a case where the two sides are both wrong and dangerous. To portray the Palestinian tragedy and struggle for liberation as a religious war is shameful and insulting. Hamas, a militant group with an Islamist ideology, is not a representative of the Palestinian people. Its 17-year-old rule of the Gaza Strip is both complicated and controversial. Until Oct. 7, its popularity in the besieged Strip had reached record lows. Israel has used Palestinian divisions to its benefit, with the clear intent of weakening the Palestinian Authority. Likewise, the PA has become a dysfunctional political entity and it too has become unpopular in the West Bank. Palestinians have not voted for a legitimate representative since 2006.

The Palestine-Israel conflict is not a religious one and it never has been. Until the Zionist colonization of Palestine, Muslims,

Christians and Jews had coexisted peacefully for centuries. The Palestine Liberation Organization charter calls for the establishment of an independent, secular and democratic state. Palestinians are against Zionism, not Jews. The now-sidelined Palestinian National Council, which acted as a Palestinian parliament in exile, included Jewish members who were anti-Zionists. The complexity of the Palestine-Israel conflict notwithstanding, it should never be used by extremists and fanatics on either side to ignite religious hatred or to justify the use of racist or ethnic slurs. It is unfortunate that the biggest supporters of Israel today are the followers of certain branches of US evangelical Christianity whose loyalty toward Zionism is rooted in biblical beliefs.

Zionism must not be conflated with Judaism or the Jewish people and those standing against it, including many Jews, cannot be described as antisemites. The Palestinian struggle for liberation is about justice, freedom and the rule of law and those supporting those rights come from all walks of life and from every faith, race and nationality. The emotional expressions of humanity and empathy toward the suffering of Palestinians, especially in Gaza, are in no way a show of support for Hamas and its strategy. Those who support one side against the other, for whatever reason, should not be used by sinister forces to stoke the fires of hate speech, antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Antisemitism is a European scourge that is alien to the people of the Middle East. The Palestinians, of all people, should never be dragged into this distinctively Western syndrome, which has resulted in pogroms and massacres of Jews in Europe that were resolved at the expense of the Palestinians. Politicians, academics, influencers and religious leaders are responsible for calming people. The message must be that supporting the Palestinian right to self-determination is not and should not be perceived as antisemitic, just as supporting Israel must not be used to trigger Islamophobic hate speech.

There are people - powerful individuals and governments - who want to cancel others by labeling them. Hate speech leads to hate crimes and innocent people then suffer at the hands of bigots and fundamentalists. Sober leadership is needed at all levels to make sure that neither antisemitism nor Islamophobia deflects attention from the real issue, which is ending the occupation.

Western media's disinformation a much bigger virus

Liu Jianna

CHINA'S National Health Commission said on Sunday the surge in acute respiratory illnesses was linked to the simultaneous circulation of several kinds of pathogens, most prominently influenza. In fact such a phenomenon has happened in many countries. Just as Maria Van Kerkhove, acting director of the WHO's department of epidemic and pandemic preparedness and prevention, said the increase appeared to be driven by a rise in the number of children contracting pathogens that they had avoided because of strict measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Chinese experts' views, the recent surge in respiratory diseases is a complex phenomenon with various contributing factors, seasonal change, strict pandemic control measures in the past three years that lowered the chance of being infected with other viruses, and enhanced sensitivity in testing. Notably, Zhang Wenhong, a well-known Shanghai-based infectious disease expert, has suggested multiple pathogens are tested in infections may be because testing methods are more sensitive. While some attribute the upswing in immunocompromised populations, the intricate nature of the situation challenges such simplistic explanations. Climate change emerges as a significant factor, with its intricate influence on disease patterns.

Some foreign media outlets compare the ongoing flu with the early outbreak

of COVID-19 in China, accusing China of lack of transparent information. Such accusations are unfounded, given the ongoing challenges faced by healthcare systems globally. Pinpointing specific causative agents in cases remains a challenge not exclusive to China; it is a global conundrum. The complexity arises from the potential coexistence of multiple pathogens within an individual, making clinical diagnosis challenging. Recent observations suggest an increase in respiratory infections in other countries. The surge in cases in China could partly be attributed to its large population and the sensitivity of its monitoring systems. However, the intricacies of this situation necessitate careful observation, and, according to official tests, there is no evidence of new unknown pathogens emerging.

In conclusion, the surge in respiratory diseases is a multifaceted issue that requires comprehensive analysis. The interplay of climate change, infectious disease control measures, testing methodologies and global epidemiological complexities underscores the need for ongoing observation and research. Liang Xiaofeng, vice-president of the Chinese Preventive Medicine Association and chair professor of Jinan University

In recent days respiratory diseases have gained attention in China, prompting calls for thorough monitoring and response from the relevant authorities, including the World Health

The China Daily

Politicians have created a multicultural monster beyond control

Allison Pearson

BACK in July, around the time of my birthday, I happened to clock a protest by women my age in south Dublin. Several splendid Irish mummies with crossly-crossed arms and don't-mess-with-me-mister expressions were blocking roads in their neighbourhood after rumours circulated on social media that 60 undocumented male asylum seekers were to be housed there. "We come out and stand here and protest to keep our children and grandchildren safe and we are called 'racist,'" one woman said defiantly. "People are afraid. There is no one coming to speak to us. All the political parties do is use Facebook to call frightened women racists and bullies."

What struck me about those women in their 40s, 50s and 60s - women with daughters and granddaughters to worry about - was that a major part of their anger arose from the fact that, not only were they not being heard, they were being treated as the problem. They weren't the problem, and they knew they weren't. The problem was that their government was allowing men from God-knows-where into their community. Mainly young men who would want sex (how rarely that basic fact is mentioned) and who came from countries where girls with their heads uncovered, their flesh exposed, are viewed by some as fair game.

It was perfectly clear to the Irish women that the safety of their children should come first, above any other consideration. In any previous generation, it would have. But Western governments like theirs are so wedded to a multicultural experiment that they have failed to prevent a large number of illegal migrants (and far too many legal immigrants in the UK's case) into their countries, often without adequate checks. This is such a vast, epochal mistake, the consequences so volatile and hard to control, that governments are now running scared and cannot own up to their mistake. Instead, the people must be blamed for their "hateful" reaction to the mistake.

The very thing those south Dublin mummies were supposedly "fearmongering" about happened last week in - oh, look! - Dublin. Three tiny children and a teacher were stabbed in a crazed knife attack. The chief suspect is a man who arrived from Algeria two decades ago; who has come to

Garda attention for possession of a knife, and who was scheduled for deportation years ago, but won the right to remain in Ireland in the high court. Shocking riots broke out on the streets of the city. Irish Garda commissioner Drew Harris condemned the "disgraceful scenes in Dublin", claiming that "a hooligan faction driven by far-Right ideology" was behind the violence on the streets. But that wasn't the whole story. It's true that a lot of opportunistic yobs piled in, looting shops and setting fire to vehicles. But it's also true that peaceful protests came to a head in that blazing eruption of public anger.

As the political commentator John McGuirk, editor of the Gript website, tweeted: "When thousands of people protested peacefully in East Wall, and in other communities across Dublin, their reward was not to be recognised or engaged with for their peaceful political participation. Their reward was rather to be called far-Right, deplorable, and the dregs of Irish society. Every single effort has been made to silence people. Today, they made themselves heard. I wish they had chosen another way. And then I remember. They did. And you all refused to listen." The appalling attack on the children came just a few days after a Slovak Romany migrant was jailed for the murder of a teacher, 23-year-old Ashling Murphy. The brutal killing shocked Ireland. Last year, an Iranian migrant murdered two Irish gay men, decapitating one of them. What were those appalling, primitive brutes even doing in the country?

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and his wike commissars act swiftly to suppress such unhelpful thoughts, branding them "far-Right" (the new phrase for patriotism and defending your culture). There is mounting evidence, however, that left-leaning Irish people are also concerned about the damaging impact of rapid demographic change. (One fifth of Ireland's five million population are now foreign-born.) Polled on the question, "I think the number of refugees Ireland is now taking in is too many", 75 per cent agreed. And 76 per cent backed, "I can appreciate some of the anger people feel about asylum seekers being moved into their local area." Yet, the only problem the Irish authorities were prepared to admit had been caused

by vast numbers of incomers is "a rise in anti-immigrant sentiment". See what they did there? It's your fault you're scared, you bigots!

Repulsively, Varadkar devoted less than 10% of his post-riots press conference to the attempted slaughter of tiny children, preferring to denigrate the white working class for their racism. However, it's getting harder and harder for globalists like him to suppress inconvenient facts about nationality and religion in order to maintain public order. In a devastating victim impact statement, Ashling Murphy's boyfriend Ryan Casey demanded: "How can someone come to this country, get social housing, social welfare, not hold down a job of any description and never contribute to society for 10 years? This is not the country that Ashling and I grew up in and once loved. It has officially lost its innocence. This country needs to wake up. This time things have got to change. This country is simply not safe anymore. I'm afraid our country is heading down a very dangerous path."

Ryan's impassioned speech was omitted from every report of the trial, but they can't stop it resonating in the hearts of millions. Surely, by now, it is clear that the Irish and, indeed, the population here in the UK, are being gaslit on a grand scale. Undocumented males from the war-torn Middle East and North Africa arriving in our neighbourhoods are not the problem, they say smoothly. It's prejudiced people like us, who don't want young foreign men with no concept of Western values around our daughters and granddaughters, that are the problem.

So why do I keep being sent stories about British women being terrorised on the streets of their towns? Here is just one email I got last week from a Telegraph reader in Staffordshire. "The situation with the migrants in Cannock is dire," writes Jenny. "Women cannot go out on the streets alone, especially at night. The males gather around school gates and follow the girls and they follow the women around in gangs. They do not speak English which makes their behaviour all the more alarming."

When the police are called, they arrive in their cars, place the men in them then drive them back to where the illegal migrants are liv-

ing. "This happens daily. Locals have written to the council and MPs and the outcome is that anyone who is worried about this is invited to sessions with police who tell them there is nothing to be done and that the indigenous population have to alter their behaviour so as not to cause upset among the migrant population. Women are advised not to go out alone in the evening and be mindful of the way they are dressed."

You'll have to forgive me, but learning about women in my own country being advised to adjust their behaviour and their clothing to avoid inflaming men who arrived here uninvited makes me mad as hell. Multiculturalism only works if - and it's a big if - newcomers are obliged to integrate with the host culture; not the other way around. The British political class needs to look urgently across the Irish Sea to glimpse what dangers lie ahead. As grief-stricken Ryan Casey urged us, we need to wake up as a country. Major public support is emerging for an immediate, five-year freeze on all further immigration into the UK so we can absorb the huge numbers already here - 53 per cent of all voters agree; 78 per cent of Conservative voters and even 33 per cent of Labour voters. Instead, the Prime Minister this week gaily urged yet more foreign students to come and his Suella-less Cabinet shut their eyes and look the other way. Laura Farris, newly appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Victims and Safeguarding, said "the arrival of hundreds of thousands of immigrants could embolden political extremists".

Yeah, right, Laura, that's obviously the main threat posed by the out-of-control mass immigration presided over by your hapless government. Seriously, where do they find these people? I don't know about you, but I stand with the Irish mummies guarding their communities like lionesses. "The likes of the toerings coming into this country - they're not vetted and are causing havoc. When we do things peacefully we get ignored," one mother said after the Dublin riots that an Irish government, which has recklessly endangered its own citizens, tried to blame on far-Right thugs. Here's the thing: all of us are "far-Right" when our loved ones are at risk of being stabbed by someone who shouldn't be in our country.

The Telegraph



Pakistan Stock Exchange loses 228 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Wednesday shed 228.26 points, a negative change of 0.38 percent, closing at 60,502.00 points against 60,730.26 points the previous trading day.

A total of 692,220,122 shares valuing Rs 27.039 billion were traded during the day as compared to 779,671,060 shares valuing Rs26.138 billion the last day.

Some 387 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 143 of them recorded gains and 231 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 13 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 50,052,966 shares at Rs5.61 per share, Cnergyico PK with

35,689,157 shares at Rs 4.60 per share and Pak Refinery with 35,409,231 shares at Rs 25.01 per share.

Sapphire Textile witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 53.39 per share price, closing at Rs 1,149.99, whereas the runner-up was Pak Services with a Rs 38.32 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,017.59.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 300.00 per share closing at Rs 22,100.00, followed by Hoechst Pak Ltd with a Rs 100.00 decline to close at Rs 1,248.00.

Rupee gains 14 paise against Dollar: Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday gained 14 paise against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 285.38 against the previous day's closing at Rs 285.52.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 285.4 and Rs 288 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs 1.10 to close at Rs 313.49 against the last day's closing of Rs 312.39, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen gained one paise to close at Rs 1.93; whereas an increase of Rs 1.95 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 362.28 as compared to the last closing of Rs 360.33.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 and 04 paise to close at Rs 77.71 and Rs 76.08 respectively.

Gold rates up by Rs 2,600 to Rs 221,000 per tola: The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.2,600 and was sold at Rs 221,000 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs 218,400 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 2,229 to Rs 189,472 from Rs187,243 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 173,683 from Rs 171,640, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,620 and Rs.2,246.21 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$29 to \$2,062 from \$2,033, the Association reported.



MULTAN: Vendor displaying tomatoes bags for bidding at vegetable market.

KSA extends term for a \$3b deposit

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has extended the term for the deposit of USD 3 billion maturing on 05 December 2023 for another one year. The said amount has been placed with SBP on behalf of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The extension of the term of the deposit is a continuation of the support provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which will help to maintain the foreign currency reserves of Pakistan and contribute to the economic growth of the country.

The USD3 billion-deposit agreement was initially signed through the SFD with the SBP in the year 2021 and rolled over subsequently in 2022, after the issuance of the royal directives that reflect the continuation of the close relationship between the two brotherly countries.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, scheduled to load/offload Rice and Containers, berthed at Multipurpose Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile five more ships, scheduled to load/offload Rice, Wheat, LNG and Gas oil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during last 24 hours.

A total of ten ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, an oil tanker Evridiki left the port on Wednesday morning and four more ships Maersk Cabo Verde, Maersk Columbus, Ullswater and Yasa Saturan are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo throughput of 178,524 tonnes, comprising 127,270 tonnes imports cargo and 51,254 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 5,690 Containers (3,390 TEUs Imports and 2,300 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Gas theft crackdown: SNGPL disconnected 105 gas connections

F.P. Report

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 105 connections while 386 under billing cases processed and imposed fine of Rs 4.38 million.

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected 20 connections on illegal use of gas while another 10 on use of compressor and 73 under billing cases have been processed. The team also imposed fine of Rs 0.86 million against gas theft and under billing cases.

The regional team of Rawalpindi disconnected 1 connection on illegal use of gas.

The team of Islamabad disconnected 3 connections

on illegal use.

In Multan 2 connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas, 124 under billing cases have been processed and 0.19 million booked against under billing cases. The team also lodged two FIRs against gas theft cases.

The team of Sheikhupura disconnected 13 connections on illegal use of gas and 19 under billing cases have been processed and fine of Rs 2.23 million imposed against gas pilfers.

In Sargodha 124 under billing cases processed and amount of Rs 0.06 million have been booked against under billing cases.

In Peshawar and Karak, the company disconnected 34 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal use of gas and amount of Rs 0.78 million against

gas theft cases.

The team of Bahawalpur booked 26 under billing cases and amount of Rs 0.06 million against gas pilfers.

In Sahiwal, two connections were disconnected on illegal use of gas.

In Faisalabad the team disconnected 5 connections on illegal use of gas and 20 under billing cases have been processed and amount of Rs 0.11 million booked against gas theft and under billing cases.

The team of Gujarat disconnected 12 connections on illegal use of gas while another 3 on use of compressor. The team also imposed fine of Rs 0.07 million against gas theft.

In Sialkot the team booked an amount of Rs 0.02 million against gas theft cases.

ICCI demands Auto City to boost car showrooms business

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the Motor and Importer Dealers Association led by its President Haji Tariq visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and discussed the issues being faced by their sector.

Raja Amir Karim President of Rawalpindi Region, Sardar Irfan President of Islamabad Region, Muhammad Waseem Abbasi General Secretary of Islamabad Region, Azhar Akhlaq Abbasi Chairman Islamabad Region, Ajab Gul President of Islamabad Motor Dealers Association and others were in the delegation, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President of, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that car showrooms provide employment to thousands of people along with pro-

moting business activities, but the action against them by CDA authorities not only affects the business of this sector, it also increases unemployment.

Therefore, he demanded that CDA should establish Auto City for car showrooms in Islamabad in consultation with motor dealers and importers so that the parking problems in the markets can be better solved and the business activities of this sector can be promoted smoothly.

He assured that ICCI will cooperate with the Association to solve the problems of motor dealers.

Haji Tariq, President, Motor and Importer Dealers Association, said that motor dealers have an important role in the development of business and providing employment, but many times CDA moved to close car showrooms in Islamabad due to which the

business community of this sector had to suffer.

He said that the Islamabad High Court has also issued instructions to the CDA to find a permanent solution to the problem of car showrooms in Islamabad and for this purpose, it should analyze the best models of this business in other major cities of the world including London, Malaysia and Singapore. He stressed that the CDA should find a sustainable solution for car showrooms by taking all stakeholders into confidence.

Engr. Azharul Islam Zafar Vice President of ICCI termed it important to address the problems of motor dealers for the better growth of the business activities of this sector and assured that ICCI will cooperate with the Association to solve their issues.

Former President ICCI and Secretary General of

UBG Pakistan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the auto industry is playing a vital role in the development of the economy by paying taxes of around 30 billion rupees and stressed that the government should facilitate this industry and motor dealers by creating favourable conditions for their business. It will enable the auto industry to play a more effective role in the revival of the economy.

Raja Amir Karim President of Rawalpindi Region, Sardar Irfan President Islamabad Region, Muhammad Waseem Abbasi General Secretary of Islamabad Region, Azhar Akhlaq Abbasi Chairman of Islamabad Region and Ajab Gul President of Islamabad Motor Dealers Association also spoke on the occasion and stressed that the CDA should address their issues on a priority basis.

EMERGE established by Hunar, Amir S. Chinoy Foundations

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The launch ceremony of EMERGE, Pakistan's first technical and vocational education and training (TVET) Incubation Centre was held recently. This initiative is collaboration between The Hunar Foundation (THF) and Amir Sultan Chinoy Foundation (ASCF).

The establishment of Emerge on THF's Korangi campus was announced. The incubation centre has been set up with the aim to combine entrepreneurial learning, industry insights and practices within the curriculum. In addition, the faculty and mentors will aid in accelerating entrepreneurial learning.

As part of the MoU signed between THF and ASCF earlier during 2023, EMERGE has been established with a donation provided by the Amir S. Chinoy Foundation with a vision to promote entrepreneurship and empower the youth of Pakistan.

"EMERGE will serve as a launch pad for young entrepreneurs. It is a space set to empower students through their incubation projects and help make a



social and economic impact", said Samir M. Chinoy, Chairman - ASCF who was present at the launch ceremony.

Eligible contestants include current students of THF. Student proposals reviewed and judged under the criteria of relevance,

marketability, and social and environmental awareness by THF.

"EMERGE aims to enable our youth with the power to establish their own enterprises, thus reviving the worsening unemployment situation and providing sustainability to the

economic infrastructure in the long run" said Tahir Javid, CEO - The Hunar Foundation.

Through the collaboration between THF and ASCF, EMERGE is set to strengthen empowerment opportunities that can be sustained over time.

IPO-Pakistan, US for improving IP policies, laws in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to promote intellectual property rights in the country, Intellectual Property Organization Of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan) and US Intellectual Property Counselor for South Asia Wednesday reaffirm the commitment to carry forward the agenda of improving Intellectual Properties (IP) policies, laws and regulations in Pakistan.

This was discussed during a high level visit of the US delegation to IPO-Pakistan Headquarters here headed by US IP Counselor for South Asia, John Cabecca, and consisted of Ms. Dong Eun, Zach Bailey and Hamza Khan.

While the Pakistani side was led by Chairperson IPO, Farukh Amil, Director General, Ms. Shazia Adnan, and senior management of IPO-Pakistan were also present in the meeting, said a press release issued here.

The chairperson IPO-

Pakistan briefed the delegation about the measurements taken by the organization for promoting IPRs.

He said that IPO-Pakistan believed that Patents, Trademarks and Copyrights had an important role in economic growth and development and in that regard it had already taken a number of initiatives to improve the IPR regime in the country.

Regarding the establishment of IP tribunals in the country, the chairperson informed the US delegation that two new IP tribunals had been established in Quetta and Rawalpindi and approval of two more had been granted.

Appreciating the advancement and development of IPRs by the US, Farukh Amil desired that IPO-Pakistan would like to benefit from the US experience and expertise in IP.

To raise IP awareness in Pakistan, it was useful to

have high profile engagement such as an MoU that would chart further action.

It would also help provide a conducive environment for stronger commercial ties and greatly strengthen investor confidence, he added.

Shazia Adnan informed that IPO-Pakistan's accession to the Marrakesh Treaty was also in the final stage and would be signed by the President soon.

She said that after deliberate discussions on the draft amendments in the Copyright Bill, 2023, it would be soon forwarded to the Parliament for its final approval. Emphasizing on the capacity building, the DG said that IPO-Pakistan might face some post copyright amendment/treaties accession capacity building issues and sought help in training judiciary, enforcement agencies and copyright staff.

Regarding the trademark

examination in IPO-Pakistan, she said that there was a need to develop an examination manual to standardize the assessment criteria for similarity and content deception, aiming to harmonize the examination process.

She urged upon the training of Madrid examination and signing of MoU with USPTO for capacity building of officers on need basis. US IP Counselor for South Asia, John Cabecca, in his remarks informed that they were working for the capacity building of IP related experts in the South Asia.

About the strengthening of IP enforcement system in Pakistan, he said that the US companies considered Pakistan as a safe place of investment.

He expressed satisfaction over the line of direction adopted by IPO-Pakistan and appreciated the chairperson IPO and the director general.

Gold prices higher

BEIJING (APP): China's benchmark prices for spot interbank gold transactions were higher Wednesday, according to the China Foreign Exchange Trade System.

The benchmark price for gold that is 99.95 percent pure or above stood at 472.19 yuan (about 66.48 US dollars) per gram, up 3.23 yuan from the previous trading day, while the price for gold that is 99.99 percent pure or above gained 1.48 yuan to 471.31 yuan.

Spot transaction prices on the interbank price inquiry market are allowed to rise or fall within 15 percent from the benchmark prices each trading day.

Tokyo stocks end lower

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks ended lower on Wednesday, as a higher yen against the dollar weighed on the market.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was down 0.26 percent, or 87.17 points, to end at 33,321.22, while the broader Topix index slipped 0.51 percent, or 12.21 points, to 2,364.50.

The dollar stood at 147.21 yen, against 147.50 yen in New York and 148.18 yen in Tokyo on Tuesday.

Overnight, US Federal Reserve Governor Christopher Waller said he was "encouraged" by

recent progress on the economy and more confident that inflation was returning to the Fed's desired level.

The comments, seen as fairly dovish, helped weaken the dollar against its major peers including the yen, analysts said.

The Tokyo market started lower "with investors spooked by the yen's shift toward appreciation," Iwai Cosmo Securities said.

But a subsequent pause on the yen's strengthening "prompted traders to buy high-priced stocks, which is bolstering the market", said Daiwa Securities.

Public Notice

It is published through this Notice that I Waqar Ahmed S/o Wajid Gul, resident of village and P/O Shakardara District Kohat is the owner of Plot No. 191, size 11.1 Marla, Sector VII, Phase-I KDA Kohat. It is requested that the original Allotment Order of the said plot has been lost somewhere and now issuance of duplicate papers is desired the plot is not mortgaged. There has been appointed no Attorney and not sold to anybody. If any bank/institution/firm or person has any objections, he/she should contact the Housing Officer UADA Kohat within 15 days of publication of this Notice in writing with proof, otherwise, duplicate Allotment Order will be issued and no objection will be accepted. (Project Director Urban Area KDA Kohat).



In brief

Women's sport revenues tipped to break \$1b barrier

LONDON (Agencies): Global revenues from women's sport will top \$1 billion for the first time in 2024 thanks to an explosion in popularity, according to financial experts Deloitte. Fresh from a highly successful 2023 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, football's revenue is expected to reach \$555 million out of a total predicted figure of \$1.28 billion in 2024. But more than 50 percent of total revenue for women's sport is still generated in North America despite the growth of women's football in Europe. Deloitte expects valuations for teams and leagues will continue to rise, with several team values predicted to exceed \$100 million next year. "Over the last few years we have seen exceptional growth in women's sport across the globe, driving a significant uplift in its commercial value, which in turn has led to growing interest from investors," said Jennifer Haskel, insights lead for Deloitte's Sports Business Group. "Crucially, women's sport is increasingly being viewed as a unique product that is becoming ever more distinct from men's elite sport. "This surge in fan and investor engagement is leading to new and improved opportunities for clubs and leagues, including greater commercial partnerships, increased participation and bigger match days." The booming popularity of women's sport is expected to lead to more prime-time broadcasting slots and visibility on streaming platforms. Commercial income still accounts for more than 50 percent of total revenue, but that percentage share is falling thanks to bigger broadcast deals and attendances on match days.

Hasan Ali moves to Karachi Kings

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): HBL PSL 5 winning captain Imad Wasim will don Islamabad United colours in the ninth edition of the tournament. Imad, who was named as the All-Rounder of HBL PSL 8, has been snapped by Islamabad United in the Platinum category while Hasan Ali (Diamond category) moves to Karachi Kings. By virtue of this player trade, Karachi Kings have received Islamabad United's first round silver pick in exchange for their second round silver pick. The successful relegation requests from franchisees ahead of the HBL PSL 2024 Player Draft include Lahore Qalandars' Mirza Tahir Baig, Islamabad United's Rumman Raees and Karachi Kings' Mir Hamza (all Gold to Silver).

Barcelona come from behind to reach last 16

BARCELONA (Agencies): Barcelona came back from a goal behind to beat Porto and seal a spot in the Champions League last 16. Brazilian winger Pepe hammered home a rebound to give the Portuguese visitors the lead after half an hour. However, Porto's advantage lasted just two minutes as Joao Cancelo equalised with a stunning curling strike after cutting inside from the left. Porto goalkeeper Inaki Pena made several fine saves before Joao Felix tucked home a 56th-minute winner. Barcelona are guaranteed to qualify from Group H with Porto and Shakhtar Donetsk - who are both three points behind - playing each other in their final game. Although they have not yet won the group, they will only need to avoid defeat against point-less Royal Antwerp to finish top.



SYLHET: Mominul Haque broke through the 78-run between Kane Williamson and Glenn Phillips.

New Zealand trail Bangladesh despite Williamson ton

SYLHET (APP): Kane Williamson struck a defiant century Wednesday but was unable to put New Zealand in control in the first Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet.

The visitors reached 266-8 at stumps on the second day, still trailing Bangladesh by 44 runs in the first innings. Williamson hit 104 off 205 balls in his 29th Test century with 11 fours, before Taijul Islam broke through his defence to bowl out the right-hander.

Taijul was the pick of the Bangladesh bowlers with 4-89, while Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Nayeem Hasan, Shoriful Islam and Mominul Haque claimed one wicket apiece. Glenn Phillips scored 42 runs to boost Williamson in their 78-run sixth-wicket partnership -- which dug the visitors out of a hole after they lost the top half of their batting order for 175 runs.

Occasional left-arm spinner Mominul forced Phillips to give a catch at slip, ending their partnership. Williamson took a single off Nayeem to complete his hundred off 189 balls, drawing him level with Don Bradman and Virat Kohli in terms of Test centuries.

Taijul redeemed himself for dropping Williamson at midwicket on 63 by taking the wicket of the former New Zealand captain and Ish Sodhi (0) in successive overs. Daryl Mitchell earlier rode his luck to reach 41 before he was stumped by Nurul Hasan, off Taijul's bowling.

Mitchell, who put on 66 runs with Williamson for the fourth wicket, had nicked pacer Shoriful while batting on four. But Bangladesh did not review the caught-behind appeal, which was turned down by the on-field umpire.

New Zealand bowled out

Bangladesh for 310 on the first ball of the morning when Tim Southee trapped last man Shoriful leg-before for 13. The Black Caps then got off to a fast start, the first three balls yielding 10 runs. Bangladesh's spinners slowly took control to check the initial batting surge.

Taijul dismissed Tom Latham for 21. Nayeem taking the catch at fine leg. Fellow opener Devon Conway fell to off-spinner Mehidy two overs later after making 12. Debutant Shahadat Hossain took a brilliant one-handed catch, diving to his right at silly point after an inside edge hit Conway's pad and popped up to the fielder.

Shoriful dismissed Henry Nicholls for 19 after lunch to leave New Zealand struggling at 98-3. The two-match series is the beginning of a new cycle in the World Test Championship for both teams.

Int'l Squash Series 2023 from Thursday

ISLAMABAD (APP): Serena Hotels in collaboration with Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Squash Federation will be organizing the International Men & Women Squash Series 2023 here from Thursday.



The championship would continue till December 4. Besides Pakistani players, athletes hailing from other foreign countries will compete in the forthcoming tournament.

The tournament carries US\$ 12K for Men and US\$ 6K for Women. The prize money for the men's championship was USD1805 for the winner and USD1140 for the runner-up. The prize money for the women's event was USD 902 for the winner and USD 570 for the runner-up.

Apart from 25 Pakistani players, a group of 23 international Men and women players from four countries (Malaysia, Egypt, Hong Kong and Spain) will also be participating in the event.

The championship finals were set to take place on December 4.

In the Men's event, World No 64 Ibrahim Elkabani from Egypt is Seed No 1 along with World No. 72 Muhammad Asim Khan from Pakistan as Seed No. 2. In total, there are 10 Pakistanis and 14 foreign players.

In the Women's event, World No 77 Chan Yiwen from Malaysia is Seed No. 1 along with World No. 114 Nour Khafagy from Egypt as Seed No. 2. In total, there are 14 Pakistanis and 10 foreign players. Pakistan Squash Federation has also planned to conduct the 31st Asian Junior Individual Championships in June or July, next year.

PAF's Int'l Shoaib Khan wins 10th KP DIG Aman Ullah Memorial Tennis Cup

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Air Force's International Shoaib Khan clinched the trophy of the 10th DIG Aman Ullah Khan Memorial Tennis Cup played here at Peshawar Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Former Sports Minister and President KP Olympic Association Syed Aqil Shah, Director General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abdul Nasir Khan, DIG Muhammad Saleem Marwat, President KP Tennis Association, known cardiologist and plastic surgeons Dr. Farhat Abbas and Dr. Muhammad Tahir, Additional DG Sports Rashida Ghaznavi, ANP Candidate for PK-81 Arsalan Khan, Secretary KP Tennis Association Umar Ayaz Khalil, coaches Roman Gul, Zakir Ullah, Nouman Khan, Shaharyar Khan, officials, players were also present.

International Davis Cupper Shoaib Khan of the Pakistan Air Force won the trophy of Men singles by defeating another international Davis Cupper Saqib Umar of SNGPL by 6-2, 3-6 and 6-4 in a marathon thrilling final witnessed by a capacity crowd present on this occasion.

Shoaib Khan faced tough resistance against his strong rival Saqib Umar of SNGPL in the final. In the Boys U18 final another promising national ranking player Hamza

Roman defeated Uzair Khan by 6-4, 6-3, in the U-14 final, M Shayan Afridi of APS won the first position by defeating Junaid Khan by 6-4, 6-2, Faizan Afridi in the boys U-10 final defeated his strong rival Ryan Umar Khalil by 3-6, 6-2 and 6-4. In U10 doubles Ryan Umar and Faizan Afridi defeated Salar Khan and Shehryar by 6-2 and 6-2, Shoaib Khan and Hamza Roman defeated Shahid Afridi Shaheen Mehmood in Men's doubles final, the score was 6-3, 2-6 and 6-3.

On this occasion former Provincial Sports Minister Syed Aqil Shah, DG Sports Abdul Nasir Khan, DIG Saleem Khan Marwat, Dr.

Tahir, Dr. Farhat Abbas, Secretary KP Olympic Association Zulfiqar Ali Butt distributed prizes among the winning players along with Additional DG Sports Rashida Ghaznavi, Chairman KP Tennis Association Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tahir, Provincial Leader of ANP PK81 Arslan Khan Nazim, President Tennis Association DIG Saleem Marwat, Senior Vice President of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tennis Association Cardiologist Dr. Prof. Farhat Abbas, Administrator Peshawar Sports Complex Syed Jafar Shah, Provincial Olympic Association Secretary Zulfiqar Butt, Director Operations Azizullah,

Director Namatullah Marwat, Provincial Tennis Association General Secretary Umar Ayaz Khalil, coaches Roman Gul, Nauman Khan, Zakirullah, Shehryar, Shah Hussain and Shahid gave away trophies, cash prizes and certificates.

Dr. Farhat Abbas, who contributed Rs. 200,000 for the cash prizes along with ANP's Arsalan Khan for awarding Rs. 50,000 cash to the position holders players during the event.

Dr. Farhat Abbas also thanked all the participants and assured them that more such events would be organized to ensure competitive exposure to the players of Tennis.

DG Sports also mingled with the players and appreciated the KP Tennis Association for organizing different events on a regular basis. He said things would soon be on the right track as far as holding various sports activities.

He said after assuming charges a day earlier, he would soon hold a meeting with all the office-bearers of the association affiliated with KP Olympic Association.

He said two more Tennis Courts would be developed looking after the suitable place inside Peshawar Sports Complex while soon a letter would be sent to the Pakistan Sports board about handing over the place for such facilities.

Pakistan team named for Jr Hockey World Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan team has been named to feature in the Junior Hockey World Cup to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from December 5 to 16.

According to the details, after the approval of Pakistan Hockey Federation President Brig (R) Khalid Sajjad Khokhar, PHF Selection Committee Chairman Olympian Asif Bajwa has selected 20 players for the World Cup organized by FIH.

The member squad was announced by

Member Selection Committee Olympian Anjum Saeed while Manager Lt. Col. (R) Asif Naz Khokhar, and Head Coach Roelant Oltmans were also present on this occasion.

The team officials include Team Manager Asif Naz Khokhar, Head Coach Roelant Oltmans Coaches Olympian Shakeel Abbasi, International Muhammad Ali, International Muhammad Asif, Physiotherapist Muhammad Aslam and Video Analyst Nadeem

Lodhi.

The selected players comprise Ali Raza, Abdul Rafay Sajid goalkeeper, Arbaaz Ahmed, Muhammad Sufyan Khan, Ehtsham Aslam, Aqeel Ahmed, Abdul Manan, Muhammad Murtaza Yaqub, Zikaria Hayat, Muhammad Hayat, Ghazanfar Ali, Ali Murtaza, Arshad Liaquat, Abdul Hanan Shahid, Abdul Rehman, Umar Mustafa, Abuzar, Abdul Qayyum are included while the reserve players include Basharat Ali and Arbaaz Ayaz.

'Exceptional' Rahul Dravid to stay on as India coach

NEW DELHI (AFP/APP): Rahul Dravid will stay on as coach of India, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday, having led the hosts to the final of the World Cup earlier this month.

It was "unanimously agreed to further the tenure" of the 50-year-old former skipper, the Board

of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said in a statement.

"The board acknowledges Mr. Dravid's instrumental role in moulding the Indian team and commends his exceptional professionalism," it said.

Dravid's contract had expired after the World Cup, which ended on

November 19 with India's defeat to Australia.

Dravid was appointed in November 2021 for a two-year period.

His team of support staff, including batting coach Vikram Rathour and bowling coach Paras Mhambrey, have also been retained.

The BCCI did not say how long the new term would be, with India now eyeing the Twenty20 World Cup in June next year as they attempt to break their painful drought in global tournaments.

"Mr. Rahul Dravid's vision, professionalism and unyielding efforts have been important pillars in team India's success," Roger Binny, president of the BCCI, said.

India, captained by Rohit Sharma, remained unbeaten in 10 matches coming into the World Cup final in Ahmedabad.

But they lost by six wickets to an Australia side who extended their record of World Cup titles to six.

India last won a global title with the 2013 Champions Trophy and their last World Cup triumph came in 2011 at home.

Dravid, nicknamed "The Wall" or "Mr. Dependable" for his classic batting and rock-solid defence, is expected to lead the team on their tour of South Africa next month.

Before retiring as a player in 2012, Dravid scored 13,288 runs in 164 Tests, second only to the legendary Sachin Tendulkar for India and fourth overall in the world rankings.

Shan Masood eager to do well in Australia

LAHORE (APP): The newly-appointed Pakistan test cricket captain, Shan Masood, has said that the team is excited to take up the challenge in unfamiliar conditions during the three tests rubber away in Australia.

Addressing a pre-departure press conference at the PCB headquarters, Gaddafi Stadium here on Wednesday, he said "we see the Australian series as an opportunity and challenge and how it can help us rise in the World Test Championship".

He expressed his intent to play good cricket for Pakistan and make fans happy. On his lackluster performance as a test batter, Shan Masood attributed his below-par past performances to inconsistent selection criterion, adding that he had made up the deficiencies in his batting approach where he could not translate good starts into big scores. He said he had done well in England and Pakistan Cup recently and was confident to take his form forward in Australia. "I am in a good shape and, hopefully, will contribute good scores on the tour," he added.

On Pakistan's chances of

turning the tables on Australia against whom the team had lost 14 test matches on the trot, he said the team did well in the 2019 tour and managed 300 plus runs in all four innings of the two test match series, adding that there was need to score 400 plus runs by the batting unit, especially in the first innings of a test match. When asked, he said Babar Azam is the best batsman in the unit, adding that he is leader of the batting unit and whole batting strategy revolves around him. He further said Babar Azam will bat at No. 4 in the test as always. He also confirmed that Imam ul Haq and Abdullah Shafique will open the innings as they have enviable record over the past one year, while he himself will bat at No. 3 as he batted at the position during the domestic tournament.

On captaincy, Shan Masood said that he did not see captaincy as a threat to be made a scapegoat in case of failure but as an opportunity to relish and perform with responsibility. He said his stint as captain of Multan Sultans, Derbyshire and Yorkshire have contributed to



his growth as a captain and "I will try to translate that experience in my responsibilities with the Pakistan team".

He said he was not awed by the presence of former captains Babar Azam and Sarfraz Ahmed in the team, adding that he would cherish their presence as big names bring good advice and make one's job easy. He said Babar, Sarfraz, Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi had performed in pressure situations and their experience would be an asset to his being on-the-field.

"Everyone in the team is leader and he should come forward and lead in his field," he said and added that the team would only

grow when all would play as leaders and contribute for Pakistan.

He expressed his satisfaction with the squad selected for the Australia series, adding that he was completely on board in the selection matters. He said the recent team selection is a message for the domestic players that their performance would be recognised whenever an opportunity occurred, adding that selection of Khurram Shahzad and Mir Hamza was a testament to his statement.

On being asked, the captain said some wished were not fulfilled, adding that he had wished, in the absence of injured Naseem

Shah, to have the pace of Haris Rauf at his disposal, but it did not happen. He said English pacer Mark Wood did really good with his pace.

Shan admitted the fact that the Australia-bound squad lacked in the fast-bowling department due to the absence of Naseem Shah, adding that the batting lineup was 'settled' and was doing well for some time now. He said that the decision on playing Sarfraz Ahmed or Muhammad Rizwan or both of them would be made in the light of conditions, adding that Rizwan did well in the Australian conditions during the 2019 series and was the highest run-getter for Pakistan in the two-test rubber.

About criticism, Shan said he would welcome constructive criticism and try to improve through it, adding that he would accept responsibility for his acts. He said the team had prepared well by replicating Australian conditions in anticipation of the bouncy pitches, adding that the team had prepared well for the series.

On drop-in pitches in Pakistan, he said the idea was good to have drop-in

pitches in Pakistan. However, he added, he was appreciative of the beauty of the game that every country played in its own conditions. He said the need was to expose the younger players to an opportunity to play in the Australian conditions and gain the first-hand knowledge of the conditions there and perform well when the series comes up.

Hailing Adam John Hollioake's appointment as batting coach during the Australia series, he said different teams hire local coaches to get first-hand knowledge of the foreign conditions, and different teams in the past hired services of former Pakistani cricketers like Saqlain Mushtaq and Mushtaq Ahmed to exploit local conditions in a better way. He said Adam had served as England captain and played cricket for Surrey besides winning nine county championships, and he also served as consultant of the English team during the last Ashes. He said Hollioake was currently coaching Queensland, adding that his appointment would serve the cause of the team in good stead.



In brief

IRSA releases 90,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 90,600 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 43,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1498.96 feet and was 98.96 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 21,900 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1177.15 feet, which was 127.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 5,600 cusecs and 30,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 58,400, 45,000, 39,900 and 16,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 7,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Over 1,47,000 bikers fined

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police issued more than 1,47,000 fine tickets to motorcyclists driving their bikes without helmets during the ongoing year. Police spokesperson said, "Islamabad police is endeavoring to maintain an exemplary traffic system in the city and check those involved in negligence on roads." Over 1,47,000 fine tickets were issued to motorcyclists driving their bikes without helmets during current year. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) of Islamabad Muhammad Sarfraz Virk while hailing the performance said, "A vigorous campaign of Islamabad capital police had been launched as per directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan to create awareness among citizens about traffic rules." As per directions he said that the Islamabad Capital Police personnel have been directed to ensure implementation on traffic rules irrespective of status and demonstrate patience as well as politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users. He further said, "Islamabad Capital Police is utilizing all available resources to facilitate the general public."

ANF busts Int'l drug smuggling racket

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has successfully busted an organized group involved in international drug smuggling. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, led by Abdul Qayyum Khan and Hussain Khan, with key involvement from Qari Inayat, a crucial member of this illicit network, the group exploited individuals facing financial hardships, using them as narco-mules for drug trafficking to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. ANF conducted 18 operations against this group at international airports, resulting in the apprehension of 19 individuals connected to the smuggling of narcotics from June, 2021 to August 2023. On November 18, 2023, a successful operation led to the arrest of Abdul Qayyum Khan and Hussain Khan, confirming their direct involvement in drug trafficking. Subsequently, on November 19, this year, another crucial member, Qari Inayat, was also apprehended, ensuring the complete dismantling of the group.



ISLAMABAD: A group of students from various universities of Pakistan under model council of common interests (CCI) project of the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House.

Providing quality telecom services to masses govt's top priority: Dr Saif

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif said on Wednesday that providing quality telecom services to the masses was the government's top priority. "The government is taking all possible steps to improve connectivity in the country," he said during a meeting with the Group Chief Executive Officer of VEON, along with CEO Jazz, Aamir Ibrahim.

Matters of mutual interest related to the telecom sector were also discussed during the meeting, said a news release.

During discussions with the VEON delegation, Dr Umar Saif mentioned that the tech-neutral spectrum would be auctioned soon to enhance telecom services for the public. Vowing to launch 5G, he expressed that the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication would provide every possible cooperation to the

telecom industry. Smart mobile phones would be provided in easy installments soon, he added.

Dr Umar Saif informed the delegation that Pakistan has a conducive investment atmosphere, urging Jazz to invest in e-agriculture, education, and e-health sectors. He also commended the VEON Group for its efforts in the technology field and the provision of smartphones.

The meeting was also attended by senior officers of the IT Ministry.

Three more dengue cases surface in RWP

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as three more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 2,680 in the district.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Wednesday said that one of each case had arrived from Potohar town urban, Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantonment area.

He added that presently 25 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 17 were confirmed cases while 2,661 were discharged after treatment.

Dr Sajjad informed that during indoor surveillance, in the last 24 hours, the teams checked 1,950 houses and found larvae in 30 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 1,701 places, the teams found larvae at eight sites during outdoor surveillance.

WASA to take strict action against defaulters: MD

RAWALPINDI (APP): Managing Director (MD), of Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA), Rawalpindi Muhammad Tanveer has said that strict action in accordance with the law would be taken against the defaulters.

He said that the officers concerned had been directed to ensure revenue recovery, disconnect all illegal connections and lodge FIRs against the defaulters.

The operation against the defaulters would continue without any discrimination, he said.

Sewage and water connections of the defaulters would be disconnected, the MD added. He informed that instructions had been issued to the authorities concerned to review the performance of all revenue inspectors on a daily basis.

The performance reports of all revenue inspectors would be prepared in the light of specified targets.

Strict disciplinary action would be taken against the official concerned to show negligence in revenue collection. Muhammad Tanveer said.

‘Significant legislations in place to protect and empower Women’

RAWALPINDI (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister for human rights and women empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, has said that higher education is not just a pursuit of knowledge but a gateway to critical thinking and skills acquisition. It provides individuals, especially women, with the necessary resources to navigate an ever evolving world.

She was addressing the opening ceremony of the two-day international conference would bring together distinguished guests, scholars, and policymakers to explore the nexus between higher education and women empowerment.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick threw light on the systematic obstacles women had faced in accessing higher education in the past. She said that though some milestone in this regard had been achieved, challenges such as gender bias, cultural norms and economic disparities are still hindering women's educational access.

SAPM said that Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, 2020; Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act 2020; The Anti Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021; and The Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2022 are significant legislation enacted by the Government to protect and empower women.

She stressed the connection between women's education and economic progress. Spending on women's higher education is an investment in the country's economy, leading to a more diverse and innovative workforce and reduced poverty rates, she added.

Mushaal Mallick highlighted that education goes beyond academic accomplishments to critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills which are essential for effective leadership. Women with education are not merely economic contributors but also act as agents for driving social transformation, She further said.

Sharing her personal commitment to

gender equality and women empowerment, SAPM said that she had initiated a 100 days Action Plan to support human rights and women empowerment. She further said that Ministry of human rights had initiated work on a National Gender Policy in consultation with all stakeholders to end violence against women. She further said that the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020 enacted by the Federal Government provided legal and financial assistance to ensure access to justice to vulnerable groups, including women, in criminal cases.

She underscored the need to extend women's empowerment beyond the classroom to mentorship and supportive networks. Mushaal said that the establishment of Provincial Commission on status of women (PCSW) helpline 1043, KPK Bolo helpline, Sindh Women Development Department Helpline 1094, and Tele Psycho Social Support Services were crucial in combating Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Describing the distressing situation in the Indian illegally occupied Kashmir and Palestine, Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that Kashmiri and Palestinian women were facing a complex and challenging reality due to the prolonged land disputes in the region. She said that many women have lost their loved ones, and the militarized environment has exposed them to violence and trauma. Despite these challenges, Kashmiri and Palestinian women exhibited resilience by actively participating in their communities and steadfastly facing the brutality of Indian and Israeli forces. Praising Ahd Tamimi for her courage in the face of adversity, SAPM said that Kashmiri and Palestinian women were the women of substance and a beacon of hope for the women around the World.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick called for a future where every woman had the opportunity to access higher education. She further said that the transformative power of higher education would empower women that would transform the world.

Railways upgrade 181 un-manned crossings in country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has converted approximately 181 un-manned level crossings to manned level crossings across the country, out of 550 identified by the department over the entire railway network in over one year.

"The relevant provincial government provided the finances to Pakistan Railways for the up-gradation of un-manned level crossings in the country," official sources in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

They said the department was taking several steps including the up-gradation of unmanned and vulnerable railway level crossings across the country in collaboration with respective provincial governments. The sources said there were two types of level crossings over the Pakistan Railways network, unmanned and manned level crossings, adding that the un-manned level crossings were without gate leaves.

"There is a total of 1,565 unmanned level crossings over the entire railway network and as per railway policy in vogue, the up-gradation of any

unmanned or manned level crossing is the responsibility of road owning authority," they added.

The said that un-manned level crossings without gates leaves and gate men, were previously provided where 'Kacha path' with low traffic volume crosses the railway track to facilitate movement of locals, farmers and carts at their own risks.

However, they said, "Due to high risk of accidents on existing un-manned level crossings, construction and provision of new un-manned level crossing is completely banned on entire Railway system as per Railway policy for level crossings from 2019."

The sources said that a joint survey of Pakistan Railways and the Provincial Government was also conducted in 2013-14 to identify accident-prone/vulnerable un-manned level crossings across the country. They said that it also mentioned Section 12 of the Railway Act of 1890 that the district administration or road authority should bear the expenses for the upgrade of these unmanned level crossings.

Islamabad police launch special campaign against menace of narcotics

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police have initiated a special awareness campaign to eradicate the use of narcotics from the federal capital and ensure the safety of the youth from the curse of drugs.

Police teams have conducted special lectures in various educational institutions to educate students about the harms of drugs and preventive measures.

In a statement, Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan highlighted that Islamabad Capital Police have launched a special awareness campaign to rid the federal capital of narcotics and safeguard the young generation from the curse of drugs.

During this campaign, police teams

have delivered lectures in various educational institutions about the harms of drugs and preventive measures, emphasizing that drug abuse is detrimental to the health and future of students. Students are urged to protect themselves and contribute to saving their surroundings from the curse of drugs.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to collaborate in preventing youth from falling victim to drugs. The police teams have appealed to the public to immediately inform the police about any drug-related activities in their vicinity. The cooperation of the public is deemed crucial for the successful eradication of this menace.



ISLAMABAD: Students enjoying swings at a local park near G-6 area in the Federal Capital.

NADRA brings to France's global platform its story of digital transformation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) is showcasing its journey of digital transformation at a global event TrusTech 2023 being held in France, Paris till November 30. Chairman NADRA Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar represented Pakistan at the three-day exhibition which is related to digital technologies and identification solutions.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman NADRA highlighted the evolving role of NADRA since its establishment in 2000 and its accomplishments including identity documents (national identity card, overseas card), financial systems (mobile/branch-less banking, remittances, pension disbursement), and e-governance (online visa, taxation system, e-passport, legal inheritance).

He also mentioned the steps taken by NADRA in the areas of health and education (vaccination system, scholarship programs) and social protection (disaster relief pro-

grams, subsidy programs). The Chairman NADRA said that several countries benefitted from the services offered by the organization in their journey of digital transformation.

The NADRA's clients were able to make use of customized solutions together with complete transfer of technology - building trust and mutual learning, he added.

Pakistan's Ambassador to France Asim Iftikhar Ahmad referred to NADRA's work as 'empowerment through identity' and lauded the new services being introduced by NADRA, especially its mobile app facility.

The TrusTech is an annual meeting place for professionals in the Cards and Digital Trust technologies industries, attracting visitors from across the globe.

The 39th edition of the TrusTech exhibition in Paris has brought into the spotlight representatives from tech, smart card, and innovative payment industries, as well as financial and governmental institutions.

The said exhibition provides an opportunity for the exhibitors, sponsors, and startups to exchange views on their latest innovations.

During the three days, the exhibition will hold 70 conferences featuring over 100 international experts with almost 200 exhibitors and 6,500 professionals from 92 countries. It is expected that 80 percent of visitors will be attending the TrusTech exhibition with specific investment projects in mind.

"The participation of Pakistan at the exhibition will provide NADRA with an excellent opportunity to hold important meetings with various stakeholders and will likely open new vistas for its growth and development in the future," said the Pakistan embassy in Paris in a statement issued here. Earlier, the Chairman NADRA visited the Pakistan embassy and appreciated its role regarding the efficient delivery mechanism adopted for the online visa facility to the Pakistani diaspora and others.

FDI arranges seminar on Cervical Cancer elimination

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI) has arranged a national seminar on Cervical Cancer elimination and introduction of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.

The event was organized for advancing public health immunization initiatives and combatting cervical cancer.

Addressing the seminar, caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan said that Cervical cancer is a significant public health concern globally, and Pakistan is no exception to the challenges posed by this preventable disease.

He said that recognizing the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to combat cervical cancer, the government through such event bringing together government health dignitaries, experts, policymakers, healthcare professionals, partner organizations, thinktanks and other stakeholders across the country to share insights, discuss best practices, and formulate strategies to eliminate cervical cancer.

Dr. Nadeem Jan said that Cervical cancer is a preventable and treatable disease, and the introduction of the HPV vaccine is a crucial step towards reducing its prevalence in Pakistan. He said that the FDI is dedicated to implementing evidence-based strategies and fostering partnerships with organizations like Gavi, World Health Organization, UNICEF, Bill and Melinda

Gates Foundation, JHPIEGO and others to ensure the success of this specific public health immunization initiative.

Ifitikhar Ali Shallwani, Federal Secretary Health said that the HPV vaccine stands as a pivotal tool in safeguarding the health and well-being of Pakistani young girls. He said that HPV is a common virus that can lead to cervical cancer, a potentially life-threatening condition.

He said that administering the HPV vaccine to young girls helps protect them from the most common types of HPV that can cause cervical cancer.

He said that by targeting this vulnerable population, the vaccine serves as a preventive measure against a disease that is not only highly prevalent but also largely preventable. "Empowering them to lead healthier lives and contributing to the global effort to eliminate preventable cervical cancers," Dr. Muhammad Ahmad Kazi, Director General, Health said that the introduction of the HPV vaccine holds great promise in preventing HPV infections, which is a leading cause of cervical cancer. He thanked the minister and all other participants for their invaluable contributions to this critical dialogue. He said that the FDI is committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to drive progress in cervical cancer elimination efforts.

Governor attends meeting
KABUL (BNA): Hidayatullah Badri, acting governor of the Afghanistan Bank, led a delegation on an official visit to Bahrain to participate in the annual meeting of the AAOIFI and the Islamic Development Bank. The meeting aimed to share new developments in Islamic banking among member countries, foster the growth of Islamic banking, strengthen relations between central banks, and learn from the experiences of Islamic countries in this field.

Construction of road started
KABUL (Ariana News): IE's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said that construction of the Wakhan corridor road in Badakhshan has started and once complete will have a huge impact on economy. The planned road will directly link Afghanistan with China through the narrow strip of land separating the two countries. The leadership of IEA has taken important steps in the direction of developing the country's economic relations and is trying to create different transit routes.

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

Karzai calls for intra-Afghan talks

KABUL (Khaama Press): Hamid Karzai, former President of Afghanistan, has called for immediate Intra-Afghan Dialogue and emphasized that the international community should not seek to remove the caretaker government of Afghanistan through force. Former President Hamid Karzai, who held office from 2002 to 2014, stressed the importance of the Taliban resuming girls' education in a rare interview with foreign media. He believes this step could help the Taliban gain legitimacy and international recognition as a government. Meanwhile, the Taliban administration has not been recognized internationally by any country since its takeover of the country due to specific policies, including the ban on girls' and women's education and employment. According to reports, Hamid Karzai, in a conversation with Japan's Kyodo News on Tuesday, stated that the Taliban administration acknowledges the necessity of dialogue but requires preparation and time to initiate these talks. "We don't want conflict in this country anymore. Conflict will make things worse than they are today," Karzai said in the interview conducted at his residence in central Kabul. "We don't want a collapse of the regime or split of the regime. We have had enough of that in Afghanistan. We want improvements in policy. We want all Afghans getting together to build the future." While insisting that women and girls be allowed to return to school "immediately," the former leader wants intra-Afghan talks involving all ethnic groups to commence "as soon as possible." He stopped short of elaborating on a specific timeline for the negotiations. Meanwhile, Karzai characterized the 20-year process of reconstruction and democratization led by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan as a period filled with ups and downs. He cited the Doha Agreement, the mismanagement of the Afghan government at the time, and the countries supporting it as reasons for the collapse of democracy. He emphasized that the "failure of democracy in Afghanistan was not due to its rejection by the people. They embraced democracy. It was mismanagement by the government and the international community and its supporters at the time." According to the former Afghan President, the 20 years of the US and its allies' presence in Afghanistan, which began in 2001 after the collapse of the Taliban regime in the early 2000s and the establishment of a democratic government in Afghanistan, was both an achievement and a period filled with challenges and disappointment for the people and the international community. It's worth noting that Hamid Karzai, along with other former presidents of the country and officials from various countries, had previously called for reopening girls' schools beyond the sixth grade and establishing inclusive governance in Afghanistan.

UNICEF warns about rise in child Malnutrition cases

KABUL (Khaama Press): The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has reported that in October 2023, they identified 838,637 children suffering from malnutrition in Afghanistan. This alarming statistic underscores the urgent need for humanitarian assistance and intervention in the country to address the critical issue of children's malnutrition. The organization issued a warning about the rising number of children suffering from malnutrition in Afghanistan by releasing its monthly report. UNICEF has emphasized that the severe malnutrition rate among children under five years old has decreased by 29%, and the number of individuals in treatment has decreased by 18% compared to the previous month. According to the organization, seasonal changes and improved child nutrition practices have reduced diarrhoea cases among children. UNICEF's report reveals that nearly 50,000 children between 6 months and 5 years have received treatment at health centres supported by the organization. This comes as many international organizations have warned of an increase in child malnutrition in Afghanistan due to rising poverty. Previously, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that 3.2 million children in Afghanistan are suffering from malnutrition.

Extraction to begin at eight new wells in Amu oil field



SAR-E-PUL (TOLONews): The commencement of oil extraction from eight new wells in the Amu oil field was inaugurated in Sar-e-Pul province. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum Shahabuddin Delwar and other senior officials of the Islamic Emirate. Speaking at the ceremony, Delwar said that after the oil wells become active, Afghanistan will earn approximately \$500 million in income annually from the Amu oil field. "Within three months, in the near future, the extraction of oil will increased up to 2,000 to 3,000 cubic meters," he said. "\$500 million dollars will be pouring into the budget of Afghanistan from this Amu Darya oil field," Delwar said. "In general, 17 oil wells are being extracted. It used to be less than 200 cubic meters but it has now increased to 800 cubic meters," said an official of the Afg-China company. He welcomed the inauguration of this crucial project in Sar-e-Pul province, foreseeing immediate benefits for its residents. "The needs of the province and welfare services should be first provided to this province [Sar-e-Pul]. The Islamic Emirate has many other economic projects as well," he said. According to officials of the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, another five oil wells are expected to be opened in the near future.

AI, OCHA raise concerns about women's rights in Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLONews): Amnesty International and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have expressed concern about the violation of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan. The statement of Amnesty International said that the "Taliban" did not fulfill what they promised about women's rights in Afghanistan. This organization has called for an end to the violation of women's rights in Afghanistan. In a part of the statement of Amnesty International said: "Not only the Taliban de-facto authorities (DFA) took control of Afghanistan in August 2021, it was already one of the world's most difficult countries in which to be a woman, both personally and professionally. But since the takeover, the hurdles facing women – especially those living in rural areas – have only grown." "We witness that any demonstration or any protest is suppressed and protesters are illegally imprisoned and tortured," said Zaman Sultani, Amnesty International's South Asia Researcher. "Our request to the government of the Islamic Emirate is to reach the rights of all the people of Afghanistan, especially women, to open the closed doors, and everything that is the right of women in the Afghan society today should be given to them," said Tafsir Syahposh, a women's rights activist. But the Islamic Emirate, rejecting the findings of these two institutions, said that the rights of all citizens of the country are protected. "In Afghanistan, people have their rights and we are trying to ensure that the rights of our people are still respected. The government is Islamic, it recognizes the rights of the people and has pledged to grant them their rights and they do not have to worry," Mujahid said. The 16-day annual campaign aimed at supporting women around the world was launched on November 25 and runs to December 10, which is International Human Rights Day.

Afghan farmers call for assistance

KABUL (TOLONews): Some farmers in different provinces of the country want more cooperation from the Islamic Emirate in the field of alternatives to cultivating crops used for illicit drugs in the country. They said that since the prohibition of poppy cultivation and drug production in the country, they have not received any cooperation in the field of alternative cultivation. "When it was opium cultivation, we used to be able to earn a lot of money and work hard, now there is no opium, and the government did not cooperate with us because of alternative cultivation," said Ghulam Nabi, a farmer. "Our request from the government is to give us seeds for alternative cultivation so that we can benefit from it," said Faridullah, a farmer. The UNODC said that more discussions are needed to grow alternative crops in Afghanistan. "UNODC recently brought a group of experts together in Kabul to discuss solutions for sustainable alternative livelihoods for former poppy farmers who relied on illicit crop cultivation. We need more conversations about alternative livelihoods," UNODC said. The Islamic Emirate said that for the purpose of obtaining alternative cultivation of poppy in different regions of the country, research and assistance from countries and institutions of the world are needed. "We need research to be done to find out what are the different areas that we have that can be offered to the people as alternative crops and we can improve the economic situation of the people through that..." said Zabihullah Mujahid. Based on the statistics of the counter-narcotics department of the MoI, fourteen thousand hectares of land in the center and provinces have been cleared of poppy since the beginning of the current solar year.

Iran, Pakistan and Turkey to respect rights of migrants



KABUL (BNA): The European Union has pledged 142 million to assist Afghan refugees who are returning or deported from other countries, according to the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation Affairs. The announcement came after a meeting between Khalil Rahman Haqqani, the Acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriation, and Raffaella Iodice, the EU Chargée d'Affaires to Afghanistan, at the Ministry's headquarters. The two sides discussed the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran, and the challenges they face due to forced repatriation. Haqqani urged the host countries to respect the human rights and dignity of the refugees and to refrain from confiscating their assets and properties illegally. Haqqani also requested the EU's cooperation in providing shelter, tents, and food for the returnees, and assured them of the transparency and accountability of the humanitarian efforts. Iodice appreciated the timely and effective management of the returnees by the Ministry and called for more coordination with the International Organization for Migration and UNHCR. She confirmed the EU's commitment to continue supporting the Ministry and the returnees. She also said that she would visit the border areas of Afghanistan to monitor the situation of the returnees in the near future.

Drug addicted women taken to centers

KABUL (TOLONews): Within the past six months, nearly 500 female drug addicts have been taken to rehabilitation centers, the counter-narcotics department of the Interior Ministry said. The head of the office of the deputy minister for counter-narcotics, Haseebullah Ahmadi, said 250 children affected with drugs were also taken to rehabilitation centers within this period. "In the country's zones, 20,000 drug addicts are being treated in the centers every three months," he said. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), said that over 1,000 female drug addicts are under treatment across the country. Aisha (alias), 38, is in a rehabilitation center in the capital Kabul. Aisha said she has three children, and they are staying with her in the center. "When I saw my life condition, I said there will be winter, what should I do. I called the doctors. They told me to come back to the hospital, otherwise, you will be addicted again," she said. "We have had economic problems. I was having kidney pain for two nights and days, then my husband told me to use this drug and will go to the doctor in the morning. Once I used it, I became addicted to it," said a drug addict. Dozens of other women drug addicts are under treatment alongside Aisha. They called on the Islamic Emirate to address their needs. The head of the rehabilitation center, Shahista, said that they are facing various challenges. "We don't have electricity. When we don't have electricity, we don't have water as well. This is our main problem," Shahista said. "The main reasons that they become drug addicts are the economic hardship, family violence, and psychological pressure," said Najia, a nurse. However, the MoPH said that there are no exact details about the number of female drug addicts but based on a survey conducted in 2018, from 3.5 million drug addicts 58,000 of them are women.

ACCI: Wakhan corridor important for trade

KABUL (TOLONews): The Chamber of Commerce and Investment has emphasized the importance of opening the Wakhan Corridor, at a press conference. Mohammad Yonis Mohammad, deputy of the Chamber, said that increasing trade, especially the export of goods to China, will be facilitated by the Wakhan Corridor. The Wakhan Corridor is 350 km long and 8 to 40 km wide and is located in the northeast of Afghanistan, this corridor is connected to China from the east, Tajikistan from the north, and Pakistan from the south. "We want to have a direct relationship with China so that both regional trade and Afghanistan trade and good economic progress will happen," said Mohammad Yonis Mohmand. "One of the very good and alternative ways to the country, with which we have the most exports and the most imports, is the Wakhan way, a very good and alternative way," said Sherin Agha Sakhi, financial head of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment. Some businessmen said that they have come to invest in the construction of the Wakhan Corridor. "It is a very big step for the development of Afghanistan because it has trade and transit advantages in the export and import sector. This can be a good alternative to our dependence on neighboring countries," said Omid Haidari, a trader. "This union of precious and semi-precious stones supports this project with all its power," said Ataye, head of the union. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce said that in the last eight months, nearly one billion dollars of trade has been done with China, most of which is done through Pakistan, and the activation of the Wakhan Corridor will increase the number of exports to China. "Afghanistan's trade with China in the first 8 months of 1402 is about \$940 million, of which \$28 million is exports and \$876 million are imports. Most of the export items are precious and semi-precious stones and medicinal plants," said Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesman of the ministry. Earlier, the Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce said that the Islamic Emirate is ready to open the Wakhan Corridor and asked China to speed up the process.

Afghan family claim son held in Guantanamo Bay



KABUL (Ariana News): A family in Kabul claims that a relative of theirs has been held prisoner in Guantanamo Bay for 17 years. Members of the family say his name is Mohammad Rahim. They have called on the Islamic Emirate to enter into negotiations with America for the release of Rahim. Safura Bibi, the mother of Rahim, claims her son was arrested seventeen years ago in the city of Lahore in Pakistan and transferred to Guantanamo. According to Rahim's mother he was selling honey at the time and was taking religious classes when arrested. This mother blames Pakistan for her son's arrest. She says she is in contact with her son through the Red Cross and sometimes gets letters from him. Other members of the family claim Rahim worked in the anti-narcotics department during the first round of the Islamic Emirate government and is currently the last Afghan prisoner in Guantanamo Bay. The family want the US to release him. The family also ask the Islamic Emirate to work to secure his release. The Islamic Emirate says it is following up on the issue and has raised this in meetings they have had with the Americans. Mohammad Dawood; the younger son of Mohammad Rahim, who was two years old at the time of his father's arrest says he hopes to see his father again.

Afghan women win Courage Award

KABUL (Khaama Press): Roya Mahboob, the Afghan Girls' Robotics Team leader and a pioneering entrepreneur, was honoured with the Courage Award this year by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Germany on behalf of the women of Afghanistan. The "Courage Award," known as the "Axel Springer Award," is one of the most prestigious honours in Germany, presented annually to human rights advocates across various fields. This award is being presented to Afghan women at a time when women and girls in Afghanistan have been deprived of their most fundamental rights since the beginning of the Taliban's rule. On the other hand, women activists and advocates for women's rights in Afghanistan have, in the past two years, demanded their rights through protests, urging the international community to recognize gender apartheid in Afghanistan. On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the "Afghan Women's Movement for Justice and Freedom" emphasized the alarming increase in violence against women in Afghanistan over the past two years through a protest gathering, describing the violence as "horrific."



ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Mian Nawaz Sharif waving hand during arrival at High Court for hearing.

22 missing Baloch students recovered: IHC informed

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan on Wednesday informed the Islamabad High Court (IHC) that 22 missing Baloch students have been recovered and assured the court that the government would try its best to recover the remaining 28 Baloch students.

During the hearing of the case of implementation on the recommendations put forward by the commission formed for the recovery of missing Baloch students at the Islamabad High Court (IHC), the AGP said that of a total 50 students, 22 had been recovered so far.

IHC judge Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiani heard the case. Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfaraz Bugti, who had been summoned on the last hearing, Caretaker Minister for Human Rights Khalil George, petitioner Imaan Hazir Mazari, and families of the students appeared in the court. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar, however, could not show up since he was abroad. AGP Awan told the court that the commission's report had been sent to the federal cabinet for review. "The matter was then forwarded to the cabinet's committee," he informed.

Justice Kiani asked the interior minister whether he had read the report. "Yes, I

have gone through it," he replied. The judge remarked that the case under consideration was related to basic human rights. "It is so unfortunate that people here in Pakistan flout laws at will, and there is no accountability," he regretted.

One should not forget, he further said, that all those who were missing were students. "After all, they all are citizens of this state; our compatriots." Justice Kiani said people were pointing fingers at the security agencies. "Will somebody tell me whether these are the agencies of the enemy country which are involved in such practices?" he questioned. He went on to say that under Article 4, it was incumbent upon the government to recover missing citizens. "It is an extremely important case. Parents are worried because their children are missing. It is an irony that FIRs are registered and then there is a complete silence," the judge said, and made it clear that action should be taken against guilty individuals and institutions no matter how powerful and influential they were.

When questions were put to the government officials by the foreign media, he added, about enforced disappearances, they had nothing to say in their defence. The court ordered

the interior minister to meet with the families of missing persons and compile a complete report. "It is the court's duty to make you realize that you have to deliver and recover the missing individuals. Because these are you, only you who have to get the job done," Justice Kiani remarked.

The judge questioned, was not it a failure on the part of the government that despite so much uproar created over the issue and tall claims being made, the result is nil? "Nobody denies the sacrifices given by the Pakistan Army and the security agencies for the country's defence. But we must not forget that incidents like these constitute a serious breach of human rights. Take action against the persons who are involved in anti-state activities, but do produce them in the court," he said emphatically.

"It will be a big relief if on the next hearing, families of these students say that their loved ones have returned to their homes," the judge said. The interior minister assured the court that he would look into each and every case. He announced that he was nominating his ministry's additional secretary as spokesman in the case. The court later adjourned the case's hearing until January 10, 2024.

UN: Gaza in midst of 'epic humanitarian catastrophe'

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday warned that the Gaza Strip was in the midst of an "epic humanitarian catastrophe," as calls grew for a cease-fire to replace the temporary truce between Israel and Palestinian Hamas militants.

"Intense negotiations are taking place to prolong the truce — which we strongly welcome — but we believe we need a true humanitarian cease-fire," he told a meeting of the UN Security Council, chaired by China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi because China is president of the 15-member council for November.

Last-minute talks continued between Israel and Palestinian militants Hamas on Wednesday to extend a truce in Gaza. "We should work for a comprehensive and lasting cease-fire with the greatest urgency," Wang told the council. "There is no firewall in Gaza either. Resumed fighting would only, most likely, turn into a calamity that devours the whole region."

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan — standing with counterparts from Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, Türkiye, Indonesia and Malaysia — told reporters at the United

Nations that aid entering Gaza was "far less than is needed." "The danger is that if ... this truce expires we will return to the killing at the scale that we have seen, which is unbearable," he said. "So we are here to make a clear statement that a truce is not enough. What is needed is a cease-fire."

Addressing the Security Council, Israel's UN Ambassador Gilad Erdan accused the ministers of supporting "a terror organization that aims to annihilate Israel." "Anyone who supports a cease-fire basically supports Hamas continued reign of terror in Gaza. Hamas is a genocidal terror organization — they don't hide it — not a reliable partner for peace," Erdan said.

Israel says Hamas militants killed 1,200 people and took about 240 hostage in a surprise assault on Oct. 7. Israel has focused its retaliation against Hamas in Gaza, bombarding it from the air, imposing a siege and launching a ground assault. US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said everything possible must be done to scale up aid and protect civilians, including UN staff and journalists. "The United States has urged Israel to take every

possible measure to prevent civilian casualties as it exercises its rights to safeguard its people from acts of terror," she told the Security Council, adding that Hamas' use of civilians as human shields "does not lessen Israel's responsibility." More than 15,000 people are confirmed killed, some 40 percent of them under the age of 18, according to Palestinian health authorities deemed reliable by the United Nations. Many more are feared buried under the ruins.

"The truce must become a cease-fire, a permanent cease-fire. The massacres cannot be allowed to resume," Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki told the Security Council. "Our people are faced with an existential threat. Make no mistake about it. With all the talk about the destruction of Israel, it is Palestine that is facing a plan to destroy it, implemented in broad daylight," he said.

Guterres briefed the Security Council on the implementation of a resolution it adopted earlier this month that called for humanitarian pauses in fighting to allow aid access and the release of all hostages held by Hamas. — Arab News



KARACHI: Members of civil society holding placards and Palestinian flags during a protest march to show solidarity with Palestinian people.

Jailed without charge: How Israel holds thousands of Palestinian prisoners

GAZA: As Palestinian prisoners were being released last week, Israel imposed a ban on celebrations by their family members. "Expressions of joy", National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said, "are equivalent to backing terrorism". Israel has presented imprisoned Palestinians as "terrorists" and has subjected many of the detainees to abuse.

But of the 300 Palestinian women and children whom Israel has identified for potential release as part of the humanitarian pause between Israel and Hamas, nearly 80 percent were not even formally charged. An overwhelming majority of Palestinian prisoners were arrested under a quasi-judicial process known as administrative detention, under which Palestinians are initially jailed for six months. Their detentions can then be repeatedly extended for an indefinite period without charge or trial.

Most Palestinians, including children, are tried in military courts and handed lengthy sentences in what critics call sham military trials because in many cases Palestinians are deprived of defence lawyers and due process. In comparison, Israeli citizens are tried in civil courts, highlighting the two-tier justice system that discriminates against Palestinians. Here's a look at the treatment of Palestinian prisoners, how Israel has weaponised administrative detention and why many Palestinians are forced to go through Israeli military courts.

The vast majority of the Palestinians — 233 prisoners out of the 300 — on Israel's release list have not been formally charged and were held as administrative detainees. An overwhelming

majority of them are children. The youngest is 14. Almost three-quarters of them are from the occupied West Bank, which has seen a surge of arrests since the start of Israel's war on Gaza on October 7. The West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem had already seen a spike in Israeli raids this year even before the war.

The longest serving prisoner among the 300 has been held for 102 months, or eight-and-a-half years. The most recent prisoner was arrested two months ago. Nearly half of the prisoners have no affiliation with any Palestinian political or armed group. Others are believed to be affiliated with Hamas, Fatah, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Prisoners may be held under administrative detention indefinitely. During that time, which could span years, the prisoners, their families and their lawyers may remain in the dark as to what the prisoner has been charged with and what evidence there is against them. Israel has arrested an estimated one million Palestinians since occupying East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 1967, according to a United Nations report released last year. A considerable number of them are believed to be administrative detainees.

Israel has ramped up arrests since the October 7 Hamas attacks on southern Israel, doubling the number of Palestinians in custody to more than 10,000 before releasing some of them. Hamas fighters killed at least 1,200 people during their attack. Israel's subsequent assault on Gaza has killed nearly 15,000 people, most of them

women and children. The Oslo Accords of the 1990s led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA), but a semi-government run by Palestinian has not ended the Israeli military judicial system. Israel still directly controls a majority of the West Bank and has allowed construction of illegal settlements on Palestinian lands.

The PA has faced criticism for its security coordination with Israel, under which it is obliged to share information regarding armed Palestinian groups. It has a penal code and a judiciary, but the three million Palestinians in the occupied territories could easily fall under the jurisdiction of Israel's military courts if they are accused of endangering Israeli security. That could include any activity tied to the hundreds of Palestinian organisations that Israel has deemed illegal over the decades.

When charges are filed, they regularly include "terrorist" activities, which could include acts against Israeli soldiers or settlers, and "incitement", which includes influencing public opinion. Traffic violations or being in Israel illegally for work also bring Palestinians into the military judicial system, which has a conviction rate of 99 percent. In contrast to Palestinians, Israeli settlers arrested in the West Bank are tried in civilian courts inside Israel. This practice has in effect created two legal systems, which human rights groups have called discriminatory and a form of "apartheid".

Some of the Palestinian prisoners who have been released as part of the truce have said they were beaten and humiliated by Israeli soldiers before being freed. Beatings grew more intense and

frequent after the start of the war, but testimonies of prisoners over the decades have pointed to a long-standing pattern of beatings, torture and abuse of prisoners. Since the start of the war, rights groups have reported that the Israeli Prison Service has also considerably restricted water, food, medical care and communal items for prisoners and has restricted or altogether halted family and lawyer visits.

This means that Palestinian prisoners have effectively lost some of the limited privileges that they had earned through years of campaigning and hunger strikes in prisons that are now severely overcrowded as well. Hundreds of children, some as young as nine years old, have been detained by Israeli forces in what many have said represents a violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children fare no better than adults in Israeli prisons, and an array of abuses against them has been documented.

The rights group Save the Children said in a report in July that 86 percent of children are beaten in Israeli detention, 69 percent are strip-searched and 42 percent are injured during their arrests. They have suffered gunshot wounds and broken bones among other injuries. Some children have reported violence of a sexual nature, and some are transferred to court or between detention centres in small cages, the London-based child rights organisation said. Palestinian children are "the only children in the world who are systematically prosecuted in military courts" and an estimated 10,000 have been held in the Israeli military detention system over the past 20 years, according to the group. — Aljazeera

Rights of minorities to be protected: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday said that a politically stable and economically strong Pakistan was vital for the protection of the rights of minorities in India, especially Kashmiris who had been struggling for their right to self-determination for over seven decades.

Addressing the Kashmir seminar, jointly organised by the Friends of Kashmir and the Kashmir Media Service, he said Pakistan had always extended its moral, political and diplomatic support for the just cause of Kashmiris and would continue to do so till freedom of the occupied territory. He said India was a so-called democracy where minorities were being mistreated and victimised by the majoritarian Hindu hardliners.

He said after the unfortunate Jaranwala incident, the Government of Pakistan expressed solidarity with the victims, but the Government of India never supported the victims of the atrocities deemed reliable by the United Nations. Many more are feared buried under the ruins. "The truce must become a cease-fire, a permanent cease-fire. The massacres cannot be allowed to resume," Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki told the Security Council. "Our people are faced with an existential threat. Make no mistake about it. With all the talk about the destruction of Israel, it is Palestine that is facing a plan to destroy it, implemented in broad daylight," he said.

Polls should be held on time: Shehbaz

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Referring to the incidents of violence witnessed on May 9, former prime minister and PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said these were acts of treason on the part of the PTI, which, he claimed, wanted to create fissures in Pakistan Army.

Speaking to the media after appearing in an accountability court (AC) in Lahore in connection with the hearing of Ramzan Sugar Mills reference, he said he had no idea that PTI would turn out to be a 'destructive force'. He alleged that PTI Chairman Imran Khan had built his residence in Bani Gala, Islamabad in violation of rules and regulations. He was of the view that there was a conspiracy behind the disqualification of former prime minister and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. "By sending Nawaz home, an obstruction was created in the way of the country's development. Shehbaz emphasized that general elections in the country should be held on time.

KP CM inaugurates solarization project in PPC

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (Retd) Arshad Hussain Shah here Wednesday launched Khushal (prosperous) Pakhtunkhwa campaign and inaugurated solarization project at Peshawar Press Club (PPC).

The project has been completed at cost of Rs6.4 million. Accompanied by Caretaker Information Minister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Chief Secretary KP, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and other relevant authorities, the Chief Minister KP has formally inaugurated the mega project.

The CM was informed that installa-

tion of the 25KV solar system would help save Rs2 million under head of electricity to press club and provide uninterrupted power supply to the journalist community helping them to fulfill their professional duties with ease. Upon arrival at the press club, the Chief Minister was warmly received by President of PPC, Arshad Aziz Malik, elected members of his cabinet and journalists in large numbers. Later talking to reporters, the chief minister said a Khushal Pakhtunkhwa campaign has been launched in the province under which problems of people would be addressed at their doorsteps.

Besides improving governance on principles of people's service delivery,

he said that a strict campaign against encroachment, price hike, profiteering, adulteration, crimes, traffic problems and drugs were launched in KP under the campaign.

Seeking cooperation of journalists in the fight against narcotics, the chief minister said that training through agriculture and livestock departments would be provided to people and farmers enabling them to get maximum production from crops. The Khushal campaign's positive effects would soon become visible. Tourism in KP would be promoted through awareness, linkages with tourists operators and hotels unions besides exploration of new destinations for tourism.

A TASTE

of things to come

FLY BETTER

Try a delicious Mauritian curry, a moqueca from Brazil, or a Japanese bento box prepared to perfection. Look forward to a taste of your destination before you arrive with a regional fine dining experience served to your seat. Fly to over 150 destinations including London, Dubai and Istanbul and enjoy the journey as much as the destination.

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