

FIA arrests Khadijah Shah

LAHORE (INP): The FIA has arrested PTI activist Khadija Shah from the central jail in Lahore produced Shah in court and sought a 14-day physical remand. Judicial Magistrate Imran Abid is hearing the remand plea of FIA wherein FIA legal advisor Rana Ijaz Khalil appeared in the court. FIA prosecutor said Khadija Shah made provocative tweets which are still being retweeted.

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GAZA: Relatives carrying an injured boy towards car for shifting to hospital after Israeli airstrike.

Netanyahu rules out Gaza cease-fire

— Blinken presses for more aid, civilian protection

GAZA/JERUSALEM: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Israel on Friday to ensure more humanitarian aid and do more to protect Palestinian civilians in Gaza or else there will be “no partners for peace.” Israel warned that it was on high alert for attacks on its border with Lebanon as fears grew that the conflict could widen.

Israeli troops tightened their encirclement of Gaza City, the focus of their campaign to crush the enclave’s ruling Hamas militants, who launched a brutal attack on Israeli communities that started the war.

But ever since that Oct. 7 assault, there have been concerns the conflict could ignite fighting on other fronts, and Israel and the Iranian-backed militant group Hezbollah have repeatedly traded fire along the Lebanon border.

In his first public speech since the war began, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said his group had “entered the battle” with the past weeks’ unprecedented cross-border fighting. “We will not be limited to this,” he said, suggesting escalation was possible. Still, Nasrallah stopped short of announcing that Hezbollah is fully engaging in the war.

Blinken, on his third trip to Israel since the war began, reiterated US support for Israel in the war, saying it has the right to defend itself. But he said a “humanitarian pause” was needed to boost aid deliveries to Palestinian civilians amid growing alarm over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

After meeting Blinken, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel “refuses a temporary cease-fire that doesn’t include a return of our hostages,” referring to some 240 people Hamas abducted during its attack. He said Israel was pressing ahead with its military offensive with “all of its power.”

Blinken said there had to be a substantial and immediate increase in humanitarian aid to Gaza, where “we need to do more to protect Palestinian civilians.” Without that, “there are no partners for peace,” he said, adding that it was critical to restore the path toward a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

More than 9,200 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza so far, mostly women and minors, and more than 23,000 people have been wounded, the Gaza Health Ministry said, without providing a breakdown between civilians and fighters. More

Wider Middle East conflict ‘realistic possibility’: Hezbollah

BEIRUT: Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said Friday that his powerful militia is already engaged in unprecedented cross-border fighting with Israel along the Lebanon-Israel border and threatened a further escalation as the four-week-long Israel-Hamas war rages on.

In televised remarks — Nasrallah’s first since the beginning of the war sparked by the Palestinian militants’ deadly Oct. 7 incursion into southern Israel — he stopped short of announcing his Lebanese militia would fully enter the conflict. Nasrallah also said that Hezbollah, an ally of Gaza’s militant Hamas rulers, is not deterred by US warnings to stay out of the latest war. Referring to US military deployment in the region, he said American warships in the Mediterranean Sea “will not scare us.”

Hezbollah is prepared for all options, Nasrallah warned, “and we can resort to them at any time.” The fighting on the Lebanon-Israel border would “not be limited” to the scale seen until now, he added. His speech had been widely anticipated throughout the region as a sign of whether the Israel-Hamas conflict would spiral into a regional war, following weeks of limited exchanges between the Lebanese militant group and Israeli forces on the Lebanon-Israel border.

“Some say I’m going to announce that we have entered the battle,” Nasrallah said Friday. “We already entered the battle on Oct. 8.” He argued that Hezbollah’s cross-border strikes have pulled away Israeli forces that would otherwise be focused on Hamas in Gaza. Celebratory gunshots rang out over Beirut as thousands packed into a square in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital to watch the speech broadcast via video-link on a massive screen. Nasrallah’s address to supporters came a day after the most significant escalation in clashes between Hezbollah and Israeli forces on the Israel-Lebanon border since the war started — and on the same day as a visit to Israel by the top US diplomat. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to urge protections for civilians in the fighting with Hamas, as Israeli troops tightened their encirclement of Gaza City. — Arab News

than 1,400 people have died on the Israeli side, mainly civilians killed during Hamas’ initial attack, when some 240 people were also taken hostage. Some 5,400 have also been injured.

Twenty-four Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza since the start of the ground operation. Since the start of the war, seven Israeli soldiers and a civilian have been killed in different incidents along Israel’s border with Lebanon.

(Continued on Back Page)

Six killed in blast targeting police van in D I Khan

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: At least six people were killed and 20 were injured after a blast targeting a police van was reported from Dera Ismail Khan, said Caretaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Minister Firdous Jamal Shah on Friday. According to law enforcement officials, gunshots were also heard after the explosion.

The blast took place in Tank Adda in the city near a police van, injuring 22 people who are being shifted to a nearby hospital. Some of the injured are in critical condition. The minister also shared that among the 22 included two policemen and said was saddened by the news. “Those elements involved in the explosion and terrorism will be brought to justice,” assured the minister.

Moreover, two policemen were also injured during the firing, officials of the law enforcement agency said, adding that the other militant blew himself up inside the mosque. Earlier in the day, a suicide blast in Balochistan’s Mastung district killed at least 35 people including a police officer while injuring over 45.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has terrorist attack in Dera Ismail Khan claiming six precious lives besides leaving more than 20 others injured was strongly condemnable. The prime minister expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of innocent citizens in the blast, said a news release issued by PM Office.

Premier Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar prayed for the departed souls to rest in eternal peace and courage for the bereaved families to bear this loss with fortitude. He also instructed the authorities concerned to provide the best medical facilities to the injured persons.

The prime minister stated that the war against terrorists would continue until the eradication of the scourge of terrorism from the country. “Thanks to the sacrifices of the law enforcement agencies, we have been thwarting the evil intentions of these terrorists,” he added.

Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Friday condemned a terrorist attack that took place near a police mobile in Dera Ismail Khan.

The minister, in a condolence message, expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of the citizens in the attack. He also prayed for the early recovery of those who sustained injuries in the blast. Solangi said such attacks could not demoralise the nation which fought against terrorism in an unprecedented way. “Terrorists are enemies of the peace and development and we will deal with them with iron hands,” he added. He said the security forces with the support of the citizens would uproot terrorism from the country.

Cipher case: Imran files bail plea in SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister and PTI chairman on Friday approached the Supreme Court (SC), seeking bail in missing cipher case. The PTI chairman filed a bail plea through his counsel Salman Safdar, says in media reports.

The petition maintained that the cipher case is just another example of the ‘politically motivated cases’ targeting the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman. The PTI chairman contended that the bail application has been filed under Article 185 of the Constitution. The cipher case is a manifestation of the maliciousness of the FIA (FIA), he pleaded. The petitioner urged the apex court to overturn IHC order in cipher case and set him free.

14 soldiers martyred

Terrorists attack security forces’ vehicles in Gwadar

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: At least 14 soldiers were martyred when terrorists attacked two vehicles carrying security forces in Gwadar, the military’s media wing said Friday.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), in a statement, said that the unfortunate incident occurred when the security convoy was moving from Pasni to Ormara in Gwadar district. The military’s wing added that a sanitisation operation was being carried out in the area and perpetrators of “this heinous act will be hunted down [and] brought to justice”. The ISPR mentioned that the security forces are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of “our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve”.

Interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani strongly condemned the terrorist attack. “Such acts are utterly reprehensible. Our thoughts and prayers are with families of the mar-

tyred and injured. Pakistan stands resolute against terrorists,” he said in a post on X. The nation of 240 million has faced a surge in terrorism in recent months, with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant outfits intensifying their actions against security forces.

In response, the state has also launched operations to curb terrorism. Interim Balochistan Chief Minister Ali Mardan Khan Domki also condemned that attack. In a statement, he said that the attack on jawans responsible for protecting the lives and property of the people was “a cowardly act”.

Domki paid tribute to the soldiers who lost their lives and also offered his condolences to their families. He termed terrorist incidents a conspiracy aimed at sabotaging peace in the province, adding that permission would not be allowed to disturb the peace won after countless sacrifices. PPP Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari said militants had ambushed soldiers in a

“cowardly attack”. Paying tribute to the martyred soldiers, Bilawal said that the fight against terrorism would continue until the “last militant is eradicated”.

“What a price our country has paid in this long war against terrorism! So many lives left desolate,” said PPP’s Sherry Rehman. “Heart goes out to the families of the martyrs and the injured. Their sacrifices will be remembered,” she said. Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir last week said that the armed forces and its security and intelligence setups have fought the menace of terrorism in an exemplary manner despite sustained and varied support of inimical forces.

“Success will be ours InshaAllah with the continued support of the people of Pakistan,” COAS Munir said. Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), in a report released in October, noted that the security forces lost at least 386 personnel in the first nine months of 2023, marking an eight-year high.

All political parties allowed to hold rallies: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday said that the impression of acquittal from the accusations of May 9 arsons after addressing a condemnatory press conference was not completely true, as ultimate exoneration would be determined by the courts.

“This is an impression. I know many people who also condemned the May 9 violence and are still facing the legal challenge. Therefore, this is not completely true that they walk free after addressing a press conference,” the prime minister said in an interview with a private television channel. He said it was impossible to get riddance once you get implicated in an FIR, without going through the legal process.

To a question, he reiterated his earlier position that as per the law, the power of finalizing the election date rested with the Election Commission. Even now, the date was finalised by the ECP which has powers to hold consultations including with the head of the state, he added. He said all the political parties were allowed to hold rallies as no additional laws were in place to disrupt gatherings of any party. Sometimes, the political parties also create such impressions to attract their voters which was nothing serious but a part of the politics.

He said the political parties including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan Peoples Party were free to file their candidatures and contest poll. The caretaker government would ensure a level playing field for all the parties and the national and international observers would also validate the fairness of the elections, he maintained.

Asked about the action against smugglers and hoarders, the prime minister said it yielded positive results in the form of historic improvement in the stock market and dollar depreciation which reduced the country’s debt by Rs4000 billion, besides declining the prices of rice, sugar, ghee and other commodities. He said the smuggled goods deprived the government of tax revenue and impacted local industry but after the operation, local industry had started receiving orders which would also create employment and enhance tax collection.

Asked about the action against those involved in the said crimes, Prime Minister Kakar said it was a challenge due to the lack of evidence admissible in the court. However, the situation can be addressed through necessary legal amendments, he remarked. As the interviewer asked whether his meeting with former cricketer Shahid Afridi was linked with the expiry of the incumbent Pakistan Cricket Board chairman’s term on November 4, the prime

minister said it was a social interaction. About any extension in the tenure of Zaka Ashraf, he said the government would make any decision after the World Cup was over and would keep working under a “doctrine of necessity” till that time. Regarding the repatriation of illegal foreigners, he said the policy was not meant for any vendetta rather aimed at regulating the movement which was in the interest of both the countries. He said sometimes, human rights organizations also unnecessarily criticized the policy which otherwise kept mum when immigrants were left to drown in the Mediterranean.

He said there was no perpetual ban on foreigners being repatriated as they could be back to Pakistan after obtaining their travel documents and visas. He said a mechanism had been developed at NADRA to eliminate any abuse or pollutants in family trees while respecting the rights of the Pashtun people of Pakistan. The scientific DNAs are also being suggested to ascertain their originality.

To a question, he said the government was making efforts to fully privatise some entities or at least leave behind the process at a mature stage for the next government. Regarding the Pakistan Steel Mill, he said two or three models were being considered. Asked about the enforced disappearances, he said the state had an inherent right of apprehension which was wrongly called enforced disappearance.

PM directs holding of regular CSS special exams to fill up posts reserved for minorities, marginalized areas: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar directed the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the appointment of competent civil servants in remote areas of the country including Balochistan.

He also ordered the restoration of rotation policy of civil servants in line with its original spirit and to ensure its strict implementation. The prime minister was chairing a meeting to review progress on filling up vacant seats reserved for marginalized areas in civil bureaucracy through special examinations as well as rotation policy.

PM Kakar directed to regularly hold the competitive examinations to fill the vacant seats in civil bureaucracy reserved for minorities and people from marginalized areas. He stressed persistent awareness campaigns to encourage minorities to participate in the competitive examination for government jobs. The prime minister said the country’s constitution provides equal rights and opportunities to minorities and people belonging to underprivileged areas. He said the government was fully committed to ensuring equal opportunities for progress for every citizen.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing a meeting regarding progress of filling of vacant seats for marginalized areas in civil bureaucracy through special examinations as well as rotation policy.



139 connections disconnected in Punjab, KP and Islamabad

F.P Report

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, SNGPL continued raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, disconnecting another 139 connections while imposing fine of Rs.40.75 million and 194 under billing cases processed

In Lahore, the regional team disconnected 5 connec-

tions on illegal use of gas and another 9 on use of compressor, 11 Under billing cases have been processed and amount of Rs 35.84 booked against gas thieves and under billing cases.In Bahawalpur the company disconnected 4 connections on the use of compressor and 1 on illegal use of gas.In Multan the company disconnected 2 connections on illegal use of gas and 55 Under billing

cases have been processed and fine of Rs 0.1 Million imposed against gas pilferers. In Peshawar and Karak, the company disconnected 45 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal. The regional team also lodged 2 FIRs against gas thieves and also imposed fine of Rs 1.40 against gas thieves.In Rawalpindi the regional team disconnected 38 gas

connection on illegal use and 3 Under billing cases processed.In Mardan 30 under billing cases processed while imposing fine of Rs 0.05 million.The regional team in Islamabad disconnected 6 connections on illegal use of gas.

In Sialkot, 1 Under billing case processed and imposing fine of Rs 0.32 million against gas theft and Under billing cases.

PBSA attends Republic of Turkiye 100th anniversary



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Boys Scout Association (PBSA) Commissioner Sardar Waqar Shahzad honored to have attended the 100th Anniversary of Türkiye, on Friday, Türkiye's Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı welcomed participants while

PBSA Commissioner thanked him for the warm invitation. The strong and enduring friendship between Pakistan and Turkey is a testament to the power of unity, shared values, and mutual respect. From diplomatic cooperation to cultural exchanges, our nations have always stood by each other.

**HEADQUARTERS
PAKISTAN RANGERS (SINDH)**
MUSLIM JINNAH COURTS DR.ZIA-UD-DIN AHMED ROAD KARACHI-4
No. 1617/PRO/697/2023 Dated 01-November-2023

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed tenders are invited from government approved auctioneers for their services (auction of unserviceable vehicles and stores) by Pakistan Rangers (Sindh). Tenders will be opened on **17 Nov 2023 at 1400 hours** in presence of concerned/ authorized firms representatives:-

Ser	Services
a.	Auction of unserviceable vehicles and stores

2. Desirous auctioneers should be registered with Sales Tax, Income Tax Departments, Active Tax File at FBR (as applicable).

3. Desirous auctioneers should drop sealed quotation mentioning services charges in tender box of Ordnance Branch Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) from **3 Nov 2023 to 17 Nov 2023** from 1000 hours to 1330 hours (except Saturday and Sunday/ Public Holidays).

4. Director General Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders as per government rules.

5. For further details please contact on telephone # 99205285-7 (Extension # 3095).

Lieutenant Colonel for Director General
(Muhammad Salah Ud Din) **PID(K) 1336/23**

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Energy, (Petroleum Division)
Directorate General of Petroleum Concessions

ADDENDUM

EXTENSION IN INVITATION TO BID FOR GRANT OF PETROLEUM EXPLORATION RIGHTS

Reference advertisement published in the Press (PID (I) No. 881/23) on **August 10, 2023** with respect to invitation of bids for 10 blocks. The Petroleum Division is pleased to extend the bid submission date for **15 days**. The sealed applications should now be submitted by the interested E&P companies to DGPC office, 3rd Floor, Petroleum House, G-5/2, Islamabad by **10:00 a.m. (PST) on November 30, 2023**.

2. All other terms and conditions remain the same.

(Kashif Ali)

Director General Petroleum Concessions
Tel: 092-051-9204176 Fax: 092-051-9213245
website: www.petroleum.gov.pk

169 new dengue cases reported in a day

LAHORE (INP): Punjab remains in the clutches of dengue fever, as 169 new cases were reported just on Friday. The most recent data from the Health Department indicates a total of 9,862 confirmed dengue cases across Punjab this year.

Lahore takes the lead in this unfortunate count with a staggering 4,215 cases, closely followed by Rawalpindi with 2,318, Multan with 1,001, Faisalabad with 446, and Gujranwala with 831 cases. The situation is ongoing, as Lahore reports an additional 90 new dengue cases, Rawalpindi 16, Multan 17, Gujranwala 26, and Faisalabad nine. Sheikhpura reported three cases of dengue, while Kasur recorded two new cases in the same time period. Attock, Sialkot, Lodharan, Pakpatan, Khoshab, and Vehari reported one case each in 24 hours. Currently, 148 dengue patients are under treatment in various hospitals across Punjab, with 68 of them in Lahore district hospitals.

Secretary Health Punjab Ali Jaan Khan has urged people to keep their surroundings clean and dry as a preventive measure against dengue fever.

He urged cooperation with Health Department teams who are tirelessly working to combat this outbreak. People could seek information about dengue fever and treatment at free helpline 1033.

'Research work holds key importance as per society, market trends'

LAHORE (INP): Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood said that research work holds key importance according to the society and market trends.

He was addressing the inauguration ceremony of the newly constructed building of Punjab University School of Chemistry.

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Sajjad with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Liaqat Ali citizen number 1730113179961 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Saira Bano (Daughter) 2. Inayat Bibi (Spouse) 3. Muhammad Sajjad (Son)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Sarfaraz Inderyas with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Inderyas of Barkat Mr. Said Man citizen number 2120268435573 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Watan Khela Bibi (Mother) 2. Shabana (Spouse) 3. Mazman Khan (Father)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Sarfaraz Inderyas with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Inderyas of Barkat Mr. Said Man citizen number 1730192314735 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Maryam Inderyas (Daughter) 2. Amelia Inderyas (Daughter) 3. Cecilia Bibi (Spouse) 4. Sarfaraz Inderyas (Son) 5. Rameez Inderyas (Son)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA MARDAN-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Azizul Haq with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Irfan Ullah citizen number 1560503594411 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Asmat Begum (Mother) 2. Azizul Haq (Father)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SWAT-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Khalid Laiq Siddiqi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Rehana Yasmin citizen number 1730176486456 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Momal Khalid (Daughter) 2. Hareesha Khalid (Daughter) 3. Hashmat Jehan Begum (Mother) 4. Khalid Laiq Siddiqi (Spouse) 5. Arsalan Khalid (Son)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Raheel Ahmad with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Wakeel Ahmad citizen number 1730114783853 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Namra Ahmad (Daughter) 2. Farah Naz Wakeel (Spouse) 3. Harris Ahmad (Son) 4. Shas Ahmad (Son) 5. Sharjeel Ahmad (Son) 6. Raheel Ahmad (Son)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU	

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Iram Jabeen with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Abbas Khan citizen number 1730114783853 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.	
1. Iram Jabeen (Daughter) 2. Muslima (Spouse) 3. Liaqat Ali (Son)	
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU	

MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES

Tender Notice

1. The Office of **CMES (A) Psc** invites sealed tenders for the following works in the light of PPRA Rules 13 (1) of 2004:-

Ser	Name of Works
a.	Upgradation of Sewerage System Psc Gar Northern Cantt Psc
b.	Upgradation of Water Supply System in various Sldrs Clys Psc
c.	Const of resdl / non resdl bldgs under AOR of CMES (Army) Psc
d.	Repair / Maint of resdl / non resdl bldgs under AOR of CMES (Army) Psc
e.	Provn of Ext Svcs works under AOR of CMES (A) Psc
f.	Repair / Maint of Ext Svcs Works Under AOR of CMES (Army) Psc

2. The contractors are required to submit their applications for issuance of tender documents alongwith their complete credential as shown at ser (8). The applications shall be scrutinized and the tender documents will only be issued to the firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field and satisfy other special conditions required for the job area. Tender will be issued to the scrutinized contractors. The tenders must be received in the office of the Accepting Officer by **11:30 Hrs on 22 November 2023** and tender will be opened at **1200 Hrs on the same date**.

Note: Contractor shall provide certificate that they are not involved in any type of litigation with Government Department in the Court of Law and that no special report of Directorate of Inspection and Evaluation (E-in-C's Branch GHQ) is outstanding against them.

3. All contractors will certify in writing that they are registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), and will submit a copy of their registration. Contractors not registered with PEC are ineligible to apply.

4. Contractors born on approved list of MES in Categories 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D' and also having experience of this type should only apply.

5. Contractors who desire may be present at the time of opening of tenders.

6. The accepting officer reserves the right to accept or reject the tender. Rejected tenders will be dealt with as per Para 33 (i) of PPRA Rules. 65t

7. The interested parties can contact to concern CMES / authorized representative for further details from **0800 hrs to 1500 hrs** on all working days.

Sr/ No.	Name of Works executed during the last 2 years and in hand	Agency	Amount of works Rs.	Time allowed in Months	Date of Commencement	Date of Completion	Percentage progress of works in hand	Departmental performance report on each work by the Engineer in charge



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION BANNU
Phone & Fax: 0928-9270049 Email: xenphedivision.bannu@gmail.com

"RE-NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING"

Electronic Bids are invited from pre-qualified Firms/Companies on the basis of Single Stage Two Envelope System in accordance with KPRA Rules 2014 for the following works:

S#	Description	No of Schemes	Bid Security i/c S/Duty (m)	Estimated Cost (m)
1	Construction of Water Supply Schemes/Pressure Pumps and Sanitation Work at Tehsil Bakka Khel & Miryan District Bannu ADP No. "198/200214" (2021-2022)			
i	Solarization of DWSS Mirali Narmi Khel U/C Bakka Khel (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
ii	Solarization of DWSS Narmi Khel (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
iii	Solarization of DWSS Akhund Khel Takhti Khel (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
iv	Solarization of DWSS Ali Khel Sardi Khel (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
v	Solarization of DWSS Patoona Mumand Khe: (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
vi	Solarization of DWSS Eidya Khel Jani Khel No #2 (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
vii	Solarization of DWSS Sardi Khel Bakka Khel (MRS-2020)	01-No	0.084	3.967
2	Solarization of 400 schemes both existing and new water supply schemes, Gravity Schemes and High Head Schemes without Solar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under ADP No. "244/150206" (2021-2022)			
i	Solarization of DWSS Shobar Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.080	3.800
ii	Solarization of DWSS Khalif Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.004	3.703
iii	Solarization of DWSS Takhti Khel Kotka Abid Ullah (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.078	2.856
iv	Solarization of DWSS Kam Kot Saqi Tehsil & District Bannu (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.068	3.213
v	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Naimat Shah Koti Sadat (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.090	4.304
vi	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Hamdullah Jan Kot Azad Mughal Khel Ghoriwala (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.068	3.213
vii	Solarization of DWSS Abdullah Jan Kala Azeem Kili Tehsil Domel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.056	2.599
viii	Solarization of DWSS Ayub Khan Killa Zubair Abad (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.084	3.999
3	Construction/Rehabilitation of Water Supply & Sanitation Schemes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Phase-II) ADP No. "248/160557" (2021-22)			
i	Solarization of P/Pumps at U/C Bakka Khel (MRS-2022)	14-No's	0.128	8.943
ii	Solarization of DWSS Aimal Khel No#II Shahbaz Azmat Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.063	2.962
iii	Solarization of DWSS Sokari (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.079	3.745
4	Construction/ Rehabilitation of Water Supply & Sanitation Schemes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Phase-III) ADP No# "251/170645" (2017-18)			
i	DWSS:- Rehmat Ali Barakzai in PK-89 District Bannu (MRS-2017)	01-No	0.079	3.596
5	Construction/ Rehabilitation of Water Supply & Sanitation Schemes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Phase-III) ADP No# "251/170645" (2017-18)			
i	DWSS:- Palosi Sardi Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.066	3.116
ii	Solarization of DWSS Adil Jan S/O Malak Zal Bakka Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.075	3.571
iii	Solarization of DWSS Hazrat Ullah S/O Umer Khan Mama Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.073	3.495
6	Construction of Water Supply and Sanitation Schemes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (District Bannu) under ADP No# "258/210473" (2022-2023)			
i	Solar Based P/Pump at Umer Baz Fazal Haq Malwana (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.021	0.875
ii	Solar Based P/Pumps at Qismat Ali & Shahzeb (MRS-2022)	02-No's	0.021	0.875
iii	Solar Based P/Pump at Kotka Raizullah Dabak Saeed Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.030	1.342
iv	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Noor Rahman Landi Jalander (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.063	2.953
v	Solarization of DWSS Muhammad Salim Khan Matakai Bizen Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.758
vi	Solarization of DWSS Syed Nawaz Matakai Bizen Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.758
vii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Shabir Abad (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.758
viii	Solarization of DWSS Fazal Naib Kot Daim (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.758
ix	Solarization of DWSS Inayat Ullah Sherdal Landidak (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.055	2.582
x	Solarization of DWSS Kiramatt Ullah Kotka Muhammad Akram Dri-Dareez Landidak (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.758
xi	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Abdulullah Nar Jaffar (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.048	2.241
xii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Rahman Ullah Sero Bada Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.046	2.101
xiii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Sheraz Khan Ismaili Mama Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.050	2.333
xiv	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Matullah Mandev (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.051	2.393
xv	Solarization of DWSS Haroon Kotka Gul Baz Khan Mandan (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.046	2.101
xvi	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Sher Khan Amad Khan (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.059	2.759
xvii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Amanir Muhammad Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.057	2.693
xviii	Solarization of DWSS Jamil Noor Bakka Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.057	3.218
xix	Solarization of DWSS Noor Zaman Narmi Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.057	3.218
xx	Solarization of DWSS Rasool Zaman Narmi Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.057	3.218
xxi	Solarization of DWSS Muhammad Alam Takhti Khel Bakka Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.058	3.237
xxii	Solarization of DWSS Nekdaraz Mandev Khass (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.068	3.096
xxiii	Solarization of DWSS Rameez Ali Shah Ahmad Shah Sheikhhan (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.055	2.586
xxiv	Solarization of DWSS Iqbal Haved (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.057	3.218
xxv	Solarization of DWSS IKotka Ghulam Khalil Umer Zai (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.071	3.357
xxvi	Solarization of DWSS Syed Nawaz Matakai Bizen Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.061	2.897
xxvii	Solarization of DWSS Falak Dad Khan Landidak (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.061	2.897
xxviii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Ghulam Khalil Umer Zai (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.071	3.357
xxix	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Ihsan Ullah U/C Aral II Domel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.069	3.202
xxx	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Syed Nawaz U/C Zeraki Pirba Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.067	3.174
xxxi	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Kotka Yunus Khan Murghali (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.067	3.174
xxxii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Zahid Ullah Tapi Kala (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.068	3.202
xxxiii	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Dost Muhammad Zaker Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.074	3.507
xxxiv	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Malik Adh-Khan Haved Landidak (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.077	3.697
xxxv	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Akbar Ali Musa Khel (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.080	3.820
xxxvi	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Shah Poor Koti Sadat (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.074	3.507
7	Drinking Water Supply Schemes in TSD Wazir Bannu under ADP No# "287/220908" (2022-2023)			
i	Solar Based DWSS Sarmale Zone-A (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.078	3.740
ii	Solar Based DWSS Upper Baka Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.080	3.829
iii	Solar Based DWSS Upper Narmi Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.082	3.949
iv	Solar Based DWSS Rocha Shui Khel Zone A (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.082	3.934
v	Solar Based DWSS Upper Jani Khel Zone-A (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.083	3.996
vi	Solar Based DWSS Upper Baka Khel Zone-A (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.080	3.784
vii	Solar Based DWSS Upper Rocha (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.081	3.860
viii	Solar Based DWSS Upper Takhti Khel (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.080	3.844
ix	Solar Based DWSS Takhti Khel Zone A (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.080	3.829
x	Solar Based DWSS Takhti Khel Zone B (MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.080	3.800
8	F/S and Construction/ Rehabilitation & Solarization of Drinking Water Supply Shcmes in Newly Merged Districts (District Bannu) under ADP No# "284/210601" (2022-2023)			
i	Solar Based DWSS Kotka Selab Khel Narmi Khel (SDW-Bannu)(MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.065	3.060
ii	Solar Based Kotka Asmat Ullah Chappari (SDW-Bannu)(MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.057	3.212
iii	Solar Based DWSS Kotka Asti Khel Jani Khel Area (SDW-Bannu)(MRS-2022 2 nd)	01-No	0.068	3.294
iv	Const. of Gravity Based in South FATA (Revised) (A)/FDWP ADP No. "273/191252-170397" Solarization of DWSS Khar Ghar Bodin Khel (MRS-2021)	01-No	0.018	0.743
9	Construction and Solarization of New DWSS including Gravity Based Schemes AIP No. "280/195177" (2019-2020)			
i	Solarization of DWSS Issor Ghar to Sher Dog (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.043	1.975
10	Construction/Rehabilitation of Drinking Water Supply Schemes in Newly Merged District (AIP) under ADP No# "281/200103"			
i	Solarization of DWSS Kotka Toor Ali Nasir Khel	01-No	0.076	3.618
ii	Solarization of DWSS Toor Ghundai Abid Killa	01-No	0.080	3.837
iii	Solarization of DWSS Mir Wali Khel	01-No	0.060	2.835
iv	Solarization of DWSS Mutabar Khel Rocha	01-No	0.058	2.707
11	Rehabilitation and Revitalization of Existing Drinking Water Supply Schemes in Tribal Districts (AIP) No# "282/200104" (2020-2021)			
i	Solarization of DWSS Taweezi (MRS-2022)	01-No	0.049	2.271
ii	Rehab: & Solarization of DWSS Latif Sarabal Kale (Aslam Roshnai)	01-No	0.056	2.723
iii	Reh: of DWSS Latif Khan Barghanatu Area	01-No	0.056	2.723
iv	Rehabilitation of DWSS Wala Noor Shah Khali Bakka Khel (Sharof)	01-No	0.066	3.136
12	Rehab: of Non-Functional Pumping/Gravity Based DWSS (Govt/VDO Owned) in All Tribal Districts. (B) ADP No# "283/191260-190012"			
i	Solarization of DWSS Sher Ali Khan	01-No	0.064	3.002



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a special meeting of provincial cabinet.

SCCI argues for consultation on framing economic policies

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fuad Ishaq said that the role of bureaucracy is vital in framing sustainable and growth-oriented policies. He, however, emphasized that the chamber and relevant stakeholders should be consulted before formation of economic policies and reforms in the taxation system.

SCCI president said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should be given due rights of Gas and Electricity under article 158-A of the constitution of the country. He called for signing of free trade agreements with Afghanistan, Iran and China along with allowing trade in Pakistan rupees with these countries so that the national economy would be stabilized and trade volume to be improved as well.

He was speaking during an inland study tour of participants of the 38th Mid-Career Management Course (NIM) Islamabad here at the chamber's house on Friday. The NIM Directing Staff Ms Semi A Khan headed the delegation of the participants. Sanaullah Khan, Senior Vice President and Ijaz Khan Afridi, Vice president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, executive members Munawar Khurshid, Qurat Ul Ain, Naeem Qasmi, Ismail Safi

and former president Faiz Muhammad Faizi, former vice president Anees Ashraf, and Muhammad Asad Ashraf, Ihsanullah and others were present on the occasion.

A comprehensive multi-media presentation was given regarding the chamber's history, key role, objectives, main functions and future programs during the meeting. Fuad Ishaq while replying to various queries of the participants said industries in KP have adversely suffered owing to unavailability of gas and electricity. The dilemma is that despite unavailability of gas, the gas tariff has been increased exorbitantly, which is an attempt to further push the war-hit KP industries toward destruction, he added.

Furthermore, he said KP has first right to use its natural resources under article 158-A of the constitution of the country but for the last 13 years, no new gas connection to industries in the province was given, contrary to that new gas connections were given to industries in Punjab, while on the other hand, he said Punjab gas consumption is high against its production.

Similarly, he said production of gas in KP is in surplus but gas wasn't available there, even consumers being charged with exorbitant rates. Therefore, he urged the government to ensure new gas connections to

industries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is a constitutional right of this province. To a question about CPEC, Mr Ishaq responded that the CPEC is a guarantee for economic prosperity and development of Pakistan and the whole region.

He urged the government to provide equal facilities and incentives for foreign and local investors to fully reap the benefits of the CPEC and make the dream of economic prosperity come true. To another question regarding regional trade, the SCCI chief said bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and Afghanistan had dropped from \$2.5 billion to \$800 million while the actual trade is higher than this figure and illegal trade is going on and urged to correct policies to promote legal trade.

About the promotion of handicraft, Fuad Ishaq replied that SCCI's Research and Development Cell has planned to make a comprehensive documentary on ancient places, handicrafts and other traditional items to highlight their importance in rest of world because there was immense potentials, which need to be promoted at global level in an efficient manner. Later, the NIM Directing Staff Ms Semi A Khan thanked the SCCI president for hosting participants and giving answers to their questions comprehensively.

Governor inaugurates road inside Johns Cathedral church

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here Friday inaugurated a road inside Johns Cathedral church at Peshawar cantonment completed at a cost of over Rs7 million.

He said our relations with Christian community was based on respect, and the minorities communities settled in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were highly respectable for them. The Governor said the services of Christian community were highly praiseworthy for the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, says an official statement.

The Christian community is very peaceful that all-ways played a significant role in the province's development and their welfare and uplift was top priority of the Government. The constitution of Pakistan has ensured protection of the personal and religious rights of all minorities, he said. He said we all duty to stand with state of Pakistan and served it with best of our abilities and professional commitment.

Two new industrial units opened

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce & Technical Education and Tribal Areas Syed Aamer Abdullah inaugurated new industrial ventures in Mohmand Economic Zone (MEZ) worth Rs.1.2 billion, said a press release issued by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC) here on Friday.

During his visit today, he inaugurated HMB Oil and Ghee Mills Pvt Ltd, Alam Ghee and Oil Mills Pvt Ltd, and performed the groundbreaking ceremony for Inspire Flour & General Mills. These new projects would provide 550 job opportunities for locals in Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). The zone is set to become a thriving hub for industrial activities, with plans for Special Economic Zone (SEZ) status in progress, offering exclusive incentives for investors.

The Caretaker Minister stressed the importance of Corporate Social Responsibilities, urging stakeholders to contribute to local facilities such as medical dispensaries and educational initiatives. This visit underscores the Government's unwavering dedication to fostering economic growth and prosperity in the province, particularly in the Newly Merged Districts.

Students visit Judicial Academy

T.M. Report

PESHAWAR: Following its tradition, a delegation of students of 10th Semester of the Frontier Law College, Peshawar, visited the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy here on Friday.

Akhtar Ali Khan, the founder and director of the college, and faculty members of the college accompanied the delegation.

Muhammad Shoaib, Director General (Acting) of the Academy, in his welcome address, highlighted objectives of the Academy. He appreciated efforts of the college administration for arranging the visits as a part of legal education. The delegation was briefed about the administrative structure and working of the Academy. An interactive session was also arranged for the students with directors of the Academy. The students discussed various matters including those relating to careers in legal and judicial professions.

The delegation also visited various wings and the facilities available at the Academy. The Founding Director, in his concluding remarks, appreciated warm welcome and hospitality by the Academy. He admired the services of the Academy in building capacities of the justice sector stakeholders.

High level meeting discuss general elections

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary, and Inspector General Police, Akhtar Hayat Gandapur on Friday chaired a meeting relating to smooth conduct of upcoming general elections.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs, Provincial Election Commissioner, Local Government Secretary and concerned officials. During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Abid Majeed gave a detailed briefing on elec-

tion preparations.

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary directed commissioners and deputy commissioners to work closely with district election commissioners in their respective districts and said that provincial government would extend needed support to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in conducting free, fair and transparent elections. He urged concerned authorities to expedite preparations in accordance with the ECP's guidelines, emphasizing that the caretaker government's primary objective was to facilitate transparent electoral process in collaboration

with ECP.

Chief Secretary also ordered provision of facilities at polling stations, especially those located within educational institutions ensuring conducive environment for voters. The meeting decided that political parties would be required to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from deputy commissioners for their public meetings. The meeting was informed that the upcoming general elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would cover 55 National Assembly and 145 Provincial Assembly seats with a total of 21,621,211 registered voters in the province.

KMU, HMC and KGMC sign MoU

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A memorandum of understanding for health care education and training was signed, between Khyber Medical University (KMU) Department of family medicine Peshawar, MTI Hayatabad medical complex and Khyber Girls Medical College (KGMC), Peshawar. On behalf of KMU, VC Prof Dr. Zia ul Haq, Dr. Abdul Jalil Khan Head Department of Family Medicine while on behalf of HMC Prof. Dr. Shehzad Akbar Medical Director and on behalf of KGMC Prof Dr. Zahid Aman signed memorandums of understanding.

The MoU states that KMU is committed to introducing quality medical education and a multidisciplinary holistic health care approach. Dr. Kashif, Dr. Wajid Ali, Dr. Nazir, Dr. Shamsad, and Dr. Ambreen of HMC and senior faculty members were also present in the presti-

gious MoU ceremony of MoU.

Speaking on the occasion, VC KMU Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq said that we are delighted to share an important milestone in our ongoing commitment to enhance healthcare education and delivery. This partnership is a significant step forward in our mission to provide structured clinical training in various specialties at the Hayatabad Medical Complex for the Family Medicine Program and KMU. We sincerely thank HMC for joining hands with KMU in our collective efforts to strengthen the healthcare system. He said that it is very important to recognize the important role of primary care.

He said that the world's most successful health care models depend on a strong foundation of primary care. It is crystal clear that 60 percent of primary and secondary care cases are managed by physicians. HMC will offer clinical rotations

in various specialties (Medicine and Surgery Allied, Emergency Room / Casualty, Paediatrics, Psychiatry, Obs and Gynecology) as part of Diploma in Family Medicine. This initiative is an important step to address the problem of overburdened tertiary care, which stems from the lack of an organized primary care system and an effective referral mechanism.

Meanwhile the KMU Department of Family Medicine welcomes all to join us in this collaborative endeavor to strengthen our healthcare structure. Together, we can make a lasting impact on healthcare in our region, enriching the lives of countless individuals. Both the parties have welcomed the agreement and expressed the expectation that it will benefit both institutions and overall it will open new avenues for better medical education and medical facilities in the province.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali inaugurating a road inside Johns Cathedral Church.

People urged to ensure use of iodine

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In order to create awareness among people of merged districts and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the iodine day was being celebrated to let the people know about deficiencies of iodine.

Doctors and health experts on the occasion threw lights on the importance of usage of iodine and its benefits for the health of children and others. A program was held last day in

this regard and an awareness walk was also organized. Talking to participants, Dr Waqar of Health department and Mrs Asfsha told that due to iodine deficiency, the mothers and their children can face problems and other health complications.

Experts emphasized that all people, especially women, should always use an iodized salt so that iodine deficiency can be reduced and they and their children can lead a healthy

life. The awareness program was attended by Coordinator Dr. Haroon, Expanded EPI Program Dr. Arif, Nutrition Manager Afsha Fawad and Focal Person Farooq along with ADC Fauzia.

It should be noted that more than one-third of people in Pakistan are suffering from iodine deficiency, which includes rural districts of Upper Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other northern areas including Kaghan and Naran.

Diabetes awareness program organized

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Diabetes Awareness Program organized by the Diabetes and Endocrinology Department at Mercy Teaching Hospital (MTH) here was designed to inform and educate the community about diabetes, with a focus on prevention, care, and management.

The event brought together a team of dedicated healthcare professionals and diabetic patients, who shared valuable insights on various aspects of diabetes. Dr. Fahem Ullah, the Head of the Diabetes and

Endocrinology Department, opened the program with an in-depth discussion about diabetes. He shed light on its causes, symptoms, and management, ensuring that attendees gained a comprehensive understanding of this form of diabetes.

The program featured a lineup of expert speakers who covered essential topics related to diabetes. Dr. Nida delved into the complications associated with diabetes, emphasizing the importance of early detection and management to prevent these complications. Dr. Umar provided valu-

able insights into insulin management and its crucial role in controlling blood sugar levels, making it an engaging and informative session for the audience. Alya, a nutrition specialist, offered guidance on crafting a proper diet for diabetic patients. Her advice on healthy eating habits was both practical and educational.

Dr. Sara addressed the psychological challenges faced by diabetic patients, underlining the need for emotional and mental support in addition to medical care.



PESHAWAR: KP Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and IGP Akhtar Hayat Gandapur chairing a meeting regarding upcoming general polls.



In brief

Reading Club inaugurated
F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Shaukat Ali Yousafzai formally inaugurated the Reading Club in Mardan while Deputy Commissioner) Abdur Rehman along with Additional Deputy Commissioners Sami Ur Rahman, Engineer Shahzeb and District Youth Officer Usman Khan were also present on the occasion. Assistant Commissioner Ayesha Tahir while briefing the Commissioner Mardan regarding the facilities available for students in the Reading Club said that the purpose of the establishment of the Reading Club is to encourage the youth of Mardan to be literate and to expose them to modern technology so that they can meet the challenges of modern times. He said that library, indoor games and information technology facilities are available for students of different schools. Commissioner Mardan Shaukat Ali Yousafzai visited different parts of Mardan Reading Club. He directed the concerned authorities that all the facilities should be available to the students of different schools and colleges. He said that development is not possible without education and the importance of literacy for education is clear. He interacted with the students present on the occasion and exhorted them to strengthen their bond with books.

ANF official injured

JHELUM (INP): An Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) official was injured in an exchange of firing with smugglers. The incident took place when ANF officials intercepted a vehicle carrying a large consignment of drugs at Domeli Chowk in Jhelum. According to the ANF spokesperson on Friday, the ANF team had received a tip-off about the drug consignment and signaled the suspect vehicle to stop at Deena Check Post Jhelum. However, the car riders opened fire and escaped. The ANF team gave chase and intercepted the accused at Domeli Chowk. In the cross-fire, one ANF official was injured by a bullet in the leg, while a smuggler was also injured. The smuggler and his accomplice were arrested, but the third accomplice managed to escape. The ANF recovered a total of more than 343 kilograms of drugs from the vehicle, including 277 kilograms of hashish and 67 kilograms of opium. A case has been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act and further investigation is underway. The injured ANF official has been rushed to the hospital and his condition is said to be out of danger.

Ardaly room at DPO office held
F.P. Report

WANA: District Police Officer Farman Ullah held the ardaly room in the DPO office here on Friday, to learn about the grievances and problems faced by the police personnel and to listen to their legitimate demands. District Police Officer South Waziristan Lower Farman Ullah listened to the problems of the policemen very carefully on this occasion, while issuing orders to solve them on the spot. During the orderly room, the DPO clarified that these force are the real asset of the office, and as a district police officer, I am proud of them. He said, the South Waziristan Lower Police are brave and exemplary policemen, who have set an example of courage and bravery by fighting terrorism manfully.

19344 more
Afghans repatriated

F.P. Report

TORKHAM: Repatriation of illegal Afghan citizens is in progress as 19344 Afghans returned to their homeland via the Torkham border in the last twenty four hours.

As per Afghan Commissionarate 0.147949 Afghan nationals had returned to Afghanistan in the last one month. Approximately 17118 Afghan citizens illegally resided in various parts of the country returned back to Afghanistan.

According to available information 2530 Afghans from Punjab, 2330 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 536 immigrants from Islamabad, 103 from Azad Kashmir, 103 from Sindh had been shifted to the holding center, Landi Kotal where from they were repatriated to Afghanistan. It is to be mentioned here that after the expiry of the deadline, a crackdown against unlawful immigrants was launched across the country.

Meanwhile, locals' philanthropists and political workers set up welcome camps in Landi Kotal and Torkham and provided food and non-food items for the repatriated Afghan families.

Custom seizes millions of non-custom goods in four months: Custom Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (North) has claimed to have seized non-custom paid commodities worth 1745 million rupees in 60 raids at various exit and entry in the province. Chalking out four month report, Chief Collector KP Saeed Akhtar said that in connection of crackdown launched against non-custom paid goods, the custom intelligence in its anti-smuggling activities, carried out from July 2023 to 31 October, 2023, confiscated foreign made vehicles, cosmetics goods, black tea, cloth etc. worth of 950 million rupees.

Cases had been registered against the smugglers, he added. The confiscation had been made during raids

conducted at different borders and Bacha Khan AirPort.

In the same way, the Chief Collector maintained that the Custom Enforcement also seized huge quantities of non-paid custom goods in the previous four months. It repossessed smuggling goods including gold, cars, foreign brand cloth, tires etc. value of 795 million rupees from inside custom checkpoints and the crossings. These commodities smuggled from Afghanistan to Pakistan via various sections of the Pak-Afghan border, he added.

In addition to anti-smuggling activities of the Collectorate of DI Khan, it was the effective action of the custom (North), he added and vowed that the crackdown would be in progress against smuggling. The Chief Collector observed that excessive smuggling of foreign goods from Afghanistan to Pakistan had affected the economy and had paralyzed the country's industry.

Orakzai Mela displays indigenous culture

F.P. Report

KALAYA: The three-day "Orakzai Zalmu Mela," jointly organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Authority (KPCTA), Tourism Wing, Pakistan Army, in collaboration with Civil Administration and district sports department, started at the Kalaya Sports Complex in Orakzai Tribal District.

The event was inaugurated by Commandant Orakzai Scout Col Syed Saadat Hassan, who was the Chief Guest, and attended by District Police Officer (DPO) Salahuddin, Captain Rana Zeeshan Assistant Commissioner Lower Orakzai Hamza Abass, and Tehsil Chairman Maulana Tariq.

The festival aimed to introduce the tourism sector as an industry in the merged Orakzai district and invite tourists to explore the area's beauty while experiencing the traditions and culture of Orakzai district. It also aimed to 'fill playgrounds and empty hospitals.'

A large number of elders and youth, including students from different schools, attended the event and enjoyed the festival. Seven

stalls were set up in the festival to highlight the rich traditions of the area, in addition to pavilions showcasing local cuisines and items representing the traditions of the merged district.

Speaking at the event, Commandant Orakzai Scout Col Syed Saadat Hussain said that the event would project a positive image of the area and open up new avenues for local development. The objectives of the event also included changing the mindset of youngsters and diverting their attention towards healthy activities, preparing them to compete in international sports events.

He added that Orakzai has many tourist attractions that need to be explored. He also mentioned that KPCTA is doing a tremendous job promoting the tourism industry and has taken remarkable steps to facilitate tourists visiting the Orakzai district.

Various events, including cricket, kabaddi, volleyball, stone lifting, tractor stop, truck pulling, tug of war, Desi Kushti, archery, sling-shot, and athletics, were also held during the festival. 1st batch of Paragliders from Orakzai Paragliding Club will showcase the skill in the

air during this event.

KPCTA also set up stalls featuring Charsadda Chappal, walnuts, Sindh Biryani, Chappli Kabab, Samsoa Chai, handicrafts, and Mithayi. Prizes were distributed among the winners of various games. It is worth mentioning that KPCTA has organized different events in collaboration with the Pakistan Army (Frontier Corps) and locals to promote tourism and project a positive image of the area worldwide.

These events will help attract tourists to the area and create economic opportunities for the locals. The festival will also convey the message to the world that peace has been restored in the area through the joint efforts of the Pakistan Army, law enforcement agencies, police, local elders and the people.

KPCTA has also introduced Samana Top, Nanwar Cave, and Sampogh Top as tourist destinations and the majority of work on the installation of camping pods has been completed. Facilitation centers and rest areas have also been established for tourists, with information providing boards installed at prominent places.

AKF distributes 11 pushcarts among vendors

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Al-Khidmat Foundation with the financial support of the Heroic Hearts distributed pushcarts for fruits and vegetables among 11 selected vendors during a function held at the Timergara Rest house.

The Anjuman Tajirran Timergara president Haji Anwarud Din, AKF activist Hafiz Yaqub ur Rehman, AKF general secretary Sultan Zeb and director Al-Khidmat Hospital Timergara Majidullah distributed pushcarts and cash among the vendors. The vendors were also provided with Rs 5000 cash.

Talking to local journalists, Sultan Zeb said the step was taken to encourage jobless youth to make their small

businesses and feed their families respectfully. He said that Rs 60,000 were spent on each pushcart.

Illegal Foreigners repatriated: According to the Lower Dir administration a total of 189 foreigners living illegally in the district had been repatriated so far.

An official of the administration told that law enforcement agencies and police were inspecting the Afghan refugees' camps at Mayar, Mian Banda and Chakdara. He said that an exit point had been set up at Chakdara for people who were being repatriated. The official said that additional deputy commissioner relief and human rights had been nominated as the district focal person for the repatriation of illegal for-

eigners.

Seminar on pharmacists' role held: A seminar on "Pharmacist as a Member of Healthcare Professional's Team in Hospital Settings" organized by the Department of Pharmacy, University of Malakand (UoM) at Seminar Hall, Department of Education was held here on Friday.

The Resource Person, Dr Muhammad Rehman, Assistant Registrar Pharmacy Council, Government of KP also attended the event and said that pharmacists play a crucial role in healthcare systems worldwide where they work alongside other healthcare professionals and help ensure optimal patient care, medication safety and improved health outcomes.



MUZAFFERABAD: A girl is busy in making traditional dresses with traditional "Khaddi."

Tehsil Gadezai building needs govt attention
F.P. Report

BUNER: The Swat state era tehsel Gadezai building is in shamble due to decades long torrential rains earth quacks air stiles against militants and is in dire need to be restored.

This historic building was made up with stones muds walls and time roof with wooden sealing. This building was used to be used by the rulers and administration of Swat state. This building was witness to the era of Swat State Rulers onward all of ruling governments till date.

This building is in shamble and the tehseldar and his staff is afraid to set there and mostly working under Swat State Rulers planted old big trees and during raining mostly in the office of Halqa Patwari room at a corner of the tehsel lawn. Its merit a mention here almost all of the deputy commissioners in their first visits were promised its restoration but to no avail.

The newly posted deputy commissioner Hamid Ali in his first visit had waved head when saw the bad condition of the building and the visible fear on the faces of the staff and those visiting them for revenue and other related matters. The deputy commissioner who is known for his commitment and devotion especially caring for state properties is due expected he would have the pride and appreciation for restoration this historic building for what the locals were long awaiting.

ASJ visits jail
F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Additional Session Judge Upper Dir Inam Khan along with Judicial Magistrate Anwar Khan made a detailed visit to District Jail Timergara and inspected various barracks, hospital and kitchen of the jail, he met the prisoners individually and asked them about the problems.

However, no complaint was received against the jail administration, the honorable judges appreciated the efforts of the jail superintendent for providing dental OPD facility which will be inaugurated soon, and for the inmates to go to the hospital outside for dental diseases.

Chitral uplift top priority of PTIP: Parvez

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: If we come in power, we will give Pakistan real freedom and save them from the defect of external loans. Almighty Allah has bestowed everything in Pakistan, but due to the incompetent rulers, we are still forced to beg for loans from IMF.

These views were expressed by former Federal Minister for Defense and Chief Minister Pervaz Khattak and Mahmood Khan in a public meeting at Chitral. They said that if we had a chance again to establish our government in KP, we would also focused on backward districts like Chitral and track them on the path of development.

Pervaz Khattak said that when I go abroad and see the life standard of these people, I am very sad to see the difference in Pakistan. "We left Imran Khan because he had no policy or plan for development of the country. Secondly, he started hateful activity of the Pak army who made sacrifices to defend this country."

The two former Chief ministers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa arrived here on the invitation of Prince Khalid Pervaz, chairman of Tehsil Drosh, who, along with his seat, resigned from the Pakistan Peoples Party and announced to join the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians.

Speaking on the occasion, Prince Khalid Pervaz said to the public meeting, that after regular consultation with my people, I decided to join PTI. I am leading by Pervaz Khattak's and serve for Chitral. They said that the people of Chitral want real freedom and development, so they trust me on and participated in this public meeting on such a large scale.

He said that the people of Chitral never forget who benefit or serve them. Pervaz Khattak gave us a second district during his tenure and now if he gets the opportunity again, it is hoped that the current backwardness of Chitral will not remain same and development works will be started in Chitral.

Former Chief Minister

Mahmood Khan said, "We were working on the construction of roads from Dir to Chitral, but our government was prematurely finished. So those projects remained incomplete. And work will be assumed on these developmental schemes again when we succeed once again in upcoming election. "We will not announce at present but when we came in power, you will see that we do not deliver verbal promises but work practical." On this occasion, the Kalash woman also presented them Chitrali caps according to her traditions.

A large number of people from both districts of Lower and Upper Chitral participated in this public meeting. On this occasion, former CMs also met with the delegation of the Contractor Association, Maine Association and the Councilors Association in Chitral to address their problems. The former Chief ministers both assured that they never left any stone un-turned to resolve the issues of the people of Chitral.

24 electricity thieves held

FAISALABAD (INP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) is conducting a full scale crackdown against electricity thieves and defaulters in eight districts of its region.

In the last 24 hours, Fesco teams have caught 24 more electricity thieves who were involved in electricity theft through direct supply and other different methods. They have been fined more than 33 lakh 71 thousand in the name of more than 77 thousand detection units, while applications have also been filed for registration of FIRs against them in the respective police stations by disconnecting the connections of all electricity thieves.

Fesco spokesperson Tahir Mehmood Sheikh on Friday said that so far 1115 electricity thieves have been given more than 29 lakh 89 thousand detection units and fined more than 13 crore 88 lakh in district Faisalabad. So far 357 electricity thieves have been fined more than 12 lakh 66 thousand detection units and fined more than 5 crore 31 lakh in Jhang district.

So far, 364 electricity

thieves have been given more than 919,000 detection units and more than 472 million fines have been imposed on 364 electricity thieves in Chinot district. He said that 118 electricity thieves have been imposed more than 3 lakh 81 thousand detection units and more than 1 crore 84 lakh fine in Khushab district.

In Mianwali district 438 electricity thieves have been imposed more than 9 lakh 75 thousand detection units and more than 4 crore 40 lakh fine. In Sargodha district more than 8 lakh 81 thousand have been imposed on 368 electricity thieves. Detection units and more than 4 crore 14 lakh fines have been imposed.

Similarly, 271 electricity thieves have been given more than 642,000 detection units and more than 331,000 fines have been imposed on 271 electricity thieves in Toba district. He said that 3237 domestic, 102 commercial, 88 agricultural and 8 industrial consumers have been involved in electricity theft.

He said that 2777 electricity thieves have been

arrested from the Fesco region and more than 25 crores have been recovered while cases have been registered against 3269 electricity thieves in different police stations.

Two youth shot dead

SARGODHA (INP): Armed men gunned down two youth over various reasons in jurisdiction Jhal Chakian police station of Sargodha on Friday, police said.

According to details, the first incident took place Chak 55 Northern where a youth identified as Anwar was shot dead after exchange of hot words.

Police arrested the culprits with murder weapons. Armed men of rival group gunned down Ubaid ur Rehman 35, over old enmity and fled the scene of crime. The police registered separate cases in both incidents and started raids to arrest culprits involved in second murder.

Boots protecting roots of Pakistan

Muhammad Umair Khan

THE 76-year-old country with a Nation of two hundred and twenty-two million with 5 provinces, agriculturally based with diverse culture, and is a history-oriented country named Pakistan. From winning conventional wars to modern wars, proxy wars the country paid a huge price and laid thousands of sacrifices of its citizens and soldiers fighting at multiple ends to safeguard every inch of its country. It is pertinent to mention that the Pakistan Army is just one component of Pakistan's military establishment, which also includes the Pakistan Navy and the Pakistan Air Force. The three branches work together to ensure the nation's defence and security.

The life of a soldier is challenging and unusual in compari-

son to an ordinary man. It is a profession that requires dedication, sacrifice, and a strong sense of duty. The Pakistan Army which is the 5th biggest army in the world operates with a hierarchical structure, with officers at different ranks leading and supervising soldiers. The role of the Pakistan Army is to defend the country against external, and internal threats, ensuring its territorial integrity and safeguarding national interests. It is also involved in providing assistance in internal security operations when required. Pakistan Army can be deployed both domestically and internationally. Domestically, they assist in maintaining law and order, especially in areas affected by terrorism or insurgency. Internationally, they participate in United Nations peacekeeping missions, providing assistance in conflict zones around the world. Like any professional army, the

Pakistan Army places significant emphasis on training. Soldiers undergo training programs designed to develop physical fitness, combat skills, discipline, and teamwork. This includes basic training for new recruits, specialized training for various roles, and professional development courses for career progression. Since 1947, the Pakistan Army had to face multiple challenges including war with its neighbour India which never accepted the composition of Pakistan.

Followed by 3 battles with India and after 9/11 Pakistan Army fought vigorously against terrorism. The war the Pakistan Army fought against terrorism is self-explanatory and exemplary to date. Their integral role in bringing back peace in the country is unprecedented. From conventional war to modern proxy warfare Pakistan Army stands out.

The Pakistan Army has played a significant role in counter-terrorism efforts, particularly in the context of combating domestic and transnational terrorism within Pakistan's borders. This involvement has been driven by various factors, including the threat posed by militant groups, insurgencies, and the country's commitment to fighting terrorism on a global scale. The Pakistan Army conducted several military operations in the tribal areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. These operations, such as Operation Zarb-e-Azb and Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad, aimed to clear these regions of militant sanctuaries and establish government control. In addition to FATA, the Pakistan Army has been involved in counter-insurgency operations in various parts of the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Baluchistan, and Karachi. These

operations targeted insurgent and terrorist groups and aimed to restore law and order. Pakistan has been a key ally in the global war on terror, and the Pakistan Army has cooperated with various international partners, including the United States and NATO, in efforts to combat terrorism and stabilize the region.

The Pakistan Army has played a crucial role in securing its border with Afghanistan to prevent the cross-border movement of militants and terrorists. This is particularly important in the context of the porous and rugged Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The army has also been involved in intelligence gathering and surveillance operations to track down and neutralize terrorist networks. In addition to military operations, Pakistan has implemented initiatives to counter extremist ideologies that fuel terrorism. These include

efforts to counter radicalization and promote moderation and tolerance. The Pakistan Army has been involved in post-conflict rehabilitation and development efforts to help rebuild areas affected by conflict, providing humanitarian assistance and infrastructure development. Pakistan's efforts in countering terrorism have come at a high cost, with many soldiers and officers losing their lives in the line of duty.

The Pakistan Army has also faced challenges such as militant attacks on military installations and personnel. It is worth noting that Pakistan's Armed Forces are the most disciplined, organized, and determined forces in the world. Pakistan Army, like any military organization, operates within the legal framework established by the government and adheres to principles of international law and human rights.



UN plans to cut number of refugees receiving cash aid in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP): Faced with an increasing funding crunch, the United Nations will cut the number of refugee families receiving cash assistance in Lebanon by nearly a third next year, a spokesperson for the UN refugee agency said. Due to "significant funding reductions," UNHCR and the World Food Program will give monthly cash aid to 88,000 fewer families in 2024 than in 2023, UNHCR spokeswoman Lisa Abou Khaled said.

About 190,000 families will continue receiving the assistance, which is capped at a monthly maximum of \$125 per household, she said. In the past, some families received extra assistance in the winter months for heating fuel expenses, but this year that program will also be halted, Abou Khaled said. That aid "was critical for vulnerable families to survive the winter season," she said. Lebanon, which has been in the throes of a severe financial crisis since 2019, hosts some 790,000 registered Syrian refugees and potentially hundreds of thousands more who are unregistered, the highest population of refugees per capita in the world. About 90% of Syrian refugees in the country are living below the extreme poverty line.

Syria's uprising-turned civil war, now in its 13th year, has killed nearly half a million people, displaced half of its prewar population of 23 million and crippled infra-



structure in both government and opposition-held areas. Recent months have seen a substantial uptick of violence in the largely frozen conflict, but international attention has largely turned away from Syria to the conflict in Ukraine and now to the Israel-Hamas war. UNHCR's Lebanon office has only received funds to cover 36% of its annual budget so far this year, while at the same time last year it was 50% funded, Abou Khaled said. The office has already cut staff and reduced programs this year and may make further cuts in 2024, she said. Earlier this year, the UN slashed assistance to Syrian

refugees in Jordan, also citing funding shortfalls. Since Lebanon's economic meltdown began in 2019, officials have increasingly called for a mass return of Syrians, saying they are a burden on the country's scarce resources and that much of Syria is now safe, while human rights organizations have cited cases of returning refugees being detained and tortured. Over the past year, the Lebanese army has deported hundreds of Syrians. Many of those were intercepted while entering the country at illegal crossing points, but others were registered refugees who had been living in the country for years.

China bids farewell to ex-premier Li funeral

BEIJING (Agencies): China's flag was lowered to half-mast in Tiananmen Square as former Chinese premier Li Keqiang was laid to rest in Beijing, a week after he died unexpectedly of a heart attack at age 68. Li was cremated at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery, the resting place of prominent government officials and "revolutionary heroes" from China's recent past.

The ceremony was attended by President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and other members of the Politburo Standing Committee in addition to Li's family. Prior to the cremation, Li's body briefly lay in state, with the national flag of China and white flowers, the colour of mourning in East Asia, on display. Outside, hundreds of people gathered to pay their last respects to the former premier, who stepped down earlier this year after completing his second five-year term in office. More than one thousand kilometres away in Hefei, Li's hometown in Anhui Province, crowds also gathered outside his childhood home and laid funeral wreaths at the entrance. China's government has been on high alert since Li's unexpected death on October 27, as previous deaths of political figures have led to periods of unrest. The 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy protests followed the death of reformist leader Hu Yaobang while another major protest in 1975 followed the death of widely respected leader Zhou Enlai. In the days preceding Li's funeral, state media were warned to be on the lookout for "overly effusive" comments online that contained tacit criticism of President Xi. Many internet users reposted one of Li's famous sayings - "the Yellow River and the Yangtze River won't flow backwards" - a pledge that reform and opening up would continue in China despite fears to the contrary. As a trained economist, Li was once seen as a major proponent of economic liberalisation, but he was gradually sidelined during his tenure, observers say, as Xi tightened his control of economic policymaking. Public displays of grief following news of Li's sudden death last week were described by New York Times columnist Li Yuan as the "most significant outpouring of emotion" in China since mass protests were staged late last year to protest COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Li was born in Anhui Province in 1955 and was part of a generation of Chinese leaders who were sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution.

He was later able to return to his studies and received degrees in law and economics from the elite Peking University, where he also rubbed elbows with leaders of China's democracy movement during the relatively open 1980s.

UN votes overwhelmingly to condemn US economic embargo on Cuba

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to condemn the American economic embargo of Cuba for a 31st year after its foreign minister urged, "Let Cuba live without the blockade!" The vote on the resolution in the 193-member General Assembly tied the record for support for the Caribbean island nation: The vote was 187 in favor, with the United States and Israel opposed, and Ukraine abstaining. Somalia, Venezuela and Moldova didn't vote.

The "yes" vote was up from 185 last year and 184 in 2021, and it tied the 2019 vote of 187. Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez urged the assembly before the vote to support "reason and justice," the UN Charter and international law and back the resolution. He said the US embargo has imposed "the most cruel and long-lasting unilateral coercive measures that have ever been applied against any country" and that it constitutes "a crime of genocide" and an "act of economic warfare during times of peace." The American aim, Rodriguez said, is to weaken Cuba's economic life, leave its people hungry and desperate, and overthrow the government. General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding and are unenforceable, but they reflect world opinion, and the vote has given Cuba an annual stage to demonstrate the isolation of the US in its decades-old efforts to isolate the Caribbean nation. The

embargo was imposed in 1960 following the revolution led by Fidel Castro and the nationalization of properties belonging to US citizens and corporations. Two years later it was strengthened. Then-Cuban President Raul Castro and President Barack Obama officially restored relations in July 2016, and that year the US abstained on the resolution calling for an end to the embargo for the first time. But Obama's successor, Donald Trump, sharply criticized Cuba's human rights record, and in 2017 the US again voted against the resolution. Rodriguez said new sanctions were added in the waning days of the Trump administration and he accused the Biden administration of strengthening measures "to harass Cuba in the economic and financial sectors."

Cuba is in the throes of what some experts have called its gravest economic crisis since the 1959 Cuban Revolution. While increased imports of a range of goods would be welcome on the island, the Cuban government is widely thought to lack the funds to pay. But Cuba is also going through a transformation process, with the opening of small and medium-sized private companies. Since small ventures became legal in September 2021, more than 8,000 companies have been launched in Cuba. Rodriguez said no other people have faced "such systematic and long-lasting hostility from a superpower, but Cuba will continue to renew itself, and to build a

sovereign, independent, socialist, democratic, prosperous and sustainable nation." US deputy ambassador Paul Folmsbee told the assembly after the vote that the United States stands by its sanctions, which are "one set of tools in our broader effort toward Cuba to advance democracy and promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."

He said approximately 1,000 political prisoners remain behind bars in Cuba, more than at any point in its recent history. Nearly 700 were detained after historic protests on July 11, 2021 when civil society representatives including human rights defenders and minors exercised their right to freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly. "We share the Cuban people's dream of democracy in Cuba and join international partners in calling for the Cuban government to immediately release all those unjustly detained," Folmsbee said. He urged Cuba to respond to requests from the UN Human Rights Council to send experts to the country to investigate its adherence to rights including freedom of expression, religion and peaceful assembly.

There was sporadic booing in the assembly chamber when he concluded by saying the General Assembly should urge the Cuban government "to adhere to its human rights obligations and listen to the Cuban people and their aspirations to determine their own future."

Two killed as Russian artillery attack Kherson

KYIV (AP): Russian shelling killed an 81-year-old woman in the yard of her home and a 60-year-old man in southern Ukraine's Kherson region, local authorities said. The deaths were the latest civilian casualties in Moscow's recent ramped-up bombardment of the front-line area. Kherson is a strategic military region located on the Dnieper River near the mouth of the Black Sea. Unconfirmed reports say attacking Ukrainian troops have gained a foothold on the Russian-held side of the river during Kyiv's months-long counteroffensive.

The two civilians died when Russian artillery targeted Kherson region villages, according to Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin. Four others were injured in the strikes, which also damaged residential and public buildings, authorities said. One person died in Russian shelling that caused extensive damage in the Kherson region's capital city of the same name. Prokudin called it "an apocalyptic scene." A 91-year-old local

woman was killed in her apartment last weekend in what Prokudin described as a "terrifying" nighttime barrage.

The Kherson region is a key gateway to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014 and is now home to a lot of Moscow's war logistics operations and rear supply depots. Ukrainian forces recaptured the city of Kherson last November after nearly nine months of Russian occupation following Moscow's full-scale invasion on Feb. 24 2022. The Kremlin's forces retreated across the river to the eastern side of the Dnieper. The developments placed the city on the southern front line and at the mercy of Russian drone and artillery attacks from across the river that frequently target civilian areas. The current counteroffensive, which started four months ago, so far has fallen short of the Ukrainian military's goal of dislodging Russian forces from large areas. The war

now appears set for another winter of grinding attrition. But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed claims by Ukraine's commander-in-chief that the war had reached a stalemate. Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi made that observation to The Economist. Russia is steadfastly pursuing its war goals, Peskov said. "It's absurd to talk about any prospect for the victory of the Kyiv regime on the battlefield," he added.

"The sooner the Kyiv regime comes to realize that, the earlier some other perspectives will open up," Russian authorities commonly use the term "Kyiv regime" when referring to Ukraine's democratically elected government. Ukrainian officials are striving to maintain the crucial Western support the country has received during the war even as international attention is pulled toward the possibility of the Israel-Hamas war evolving into a wider conflict in the Middle East.

Criminals and sanctions-busters exploiting UK secrecy loophole

LONDON (BBC): An offshore firm helped create companies used by members of Vladimir Putin's inner circle, including one hiding the late mercenary boss Yevgeny Prigozhin's yacht, the BBC can reveal. Seychelles-based Alpha Consulting also helped to form more than 900 UK partnerships which used a secrecy loophole to conceal their true owners.

One partnership was involved in running a sanctions-busting oil tanker, while others committed crimes. Alpha said it always followed the law. The investigation by the BBC, Finance Uncovered and the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation has analysed internal Alpha documents and thousands of company records to identify some of the people who secretly benefited from the work of the offshore firm, based in the island nation in the Indian Ocean. As well as catering to members of Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle, Alpha Consulting was a secrecy factory - one of the most prolific companies helping to exploit a gaping loophole in UK law. Some of the partnerships it helped create have been involved in alleged fraud and running an illegal essay mill. One has been accused of interfering in a foreign election.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, boss of the Wagner Group who died earlier this year, was one of those who benefited from Alpha's services. His company Beratex Group Ltd was sanctioned by the United States in 2019, as a front company which concealed ownership of his private jet and yacht. Leaked documents - obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and examined as part of the 2021 Pandora Papers investigation - show Alpha helped set up Beratex in the Seychelles, and the hidden beneficial owner was recorded as the mercenary boss's elderly mother-

-in-law. Alpha said it was "never involved in any business activity" with Beratex. Leonid Reiman, a close friend and associate of President Putin, was a client of Alpha. In 2006, while he was Russia's communications minister, Reiman was found by a Swiss tribunal to have been the secret owner of a company that received corrupt payments. Despite Mr Reiman's well-documented relationship with the Russian president, the documents show that Alpha provided a director for one of his companies who failed to declare Mr Reiman was a "politically exposed person" - someone whose position or relationships mean they may be more exposed to risks of corruption and who therefore requires a greater level of checks. Anti-money laundering expert Graham Barrow said this was "not really an oversight". Failing to make a declaration is "a breach of the rules if you are knowingly doing business with somebody who is a politically exposed person," he said. Alpha said it had carried out all the required checks on Mr Reiman and did not find information which suggested he was a politically exposed person or involved in money-laundering. It said it does "not act for clients or professional intermediaries who we find have been involved in wrongdoing". The investigation also reveals that Alpha, run by a Russian businesswoman named Victoria Valkovskaya, helped to create 927 limited partnerships - one in five of those registered in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since 2017.

Limited partnerships, a type of firm usually created by two or more people to own and run a business together, can also be used to sidestep transparency regulations. After a law was introduced in 2016 requiring UK companies to declare who owns them or is really in control, there was a surge in the registration of limited partnerships, which

were exempt. This requirement was extended to Scottish limited partnerships a year later after it was revealed that they were being increasingly used for money laundering and other crimes. But last year, the BBC and Finance Uncovered revealed the increasing use of English limited partnerships and evidence linking a number of them to fraud, terrorism and money laundering. Despite this, the government has failed to extend laws requiring companies to identify the people really in control - known as "persons of significant control" - to all limited partnerships. Kevin Hollinrake, a junior business minister, dismissed concerns about a loophole, telling the House of Commons "limited partnerships cannot own property or assets in their own name". But our investigation shows that Alpha helped create limited partnerships which were used to acquire assets and hide the owners of them - including an oil tanker, the Delfi, which polluted the coast of Ukraine after it was wrecked in 2019.

Investigations by authorities obtained documents identifying the owner of the tanker as a Cardiff-based limited partnership called Mister Drake PC. Like many of the firms Alpha helped to set up, it appeared to be partly owned by a Seychelles resident who on paper looked like a prolific entrepreneur: Luther Denis, who is listed as general partner of 184 UK limited partnerships. But internal documents show that partners like Mr Denis sign over all their powers to the secret "beneficial owner". Mr Denis is one of 12 nominee or sham partners provided and paid by Alpha, who often know nothing about what the firms that they help to create actually do. Following the wreck, a court imposed a fine on Mister Drake PC - but it has never been able to identify the real owner and the fine has never been paid. Michelle

Wiese Bockmann, an analyst at Lloyd's List Intelligence, said: "The beneficial owners, as they're known, are ultimately liable and responsible for any of the environmental costs or damages that the vessel causes." Our investigation found internal Alpha documents that record the beneficial owner of Mister Drake PC as Alla Kovtunova, the mother of a former local politician in Ukraine's now-banned pro-Russian Party of the Regions.

Alpha said it was "not aware of any of your claimed activities in relation to this company". Baroness Kramer, Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesperson in the House of Lords, said it was a shock the government had not used its economic crime bill to shut down every loophole. "It certainly is aware of this one, and frankly, it can't even be called a loophole - it's so wide, you can drive an oil tanker through it," she said. The investigation uncovered another eight partnerships linked to Alpha which at one time were registered as owning ships. In September 2020, Luther Denis was named on paperwork of another partnership, Cilkon PC, which this time was involved in running an oil tanker called the Ostra.

Under a different name, the Ostra had already breached sanctions against Syria in 2019. Mr Denis's partnership became involved in running the tanker after its registered owner, a Russian company called Rustanker, was sanctioned for attempting to evade the US ban on trading in Venezuelan oil. Our investigation analysed tracking data for the Ostra during the period after Mr Denis's partnership took over. It found the tracker was turned off for three weeks in September last year, allowing it to disappear off the coast of Venezuela - indicating it may have been breaching sanctions again. Ms Bockmann said ships "go dark" to obscure where they are loading and

unloading their cargo, "in order to deceive, evade, and keep one step ahead of any regulatory authorities that are monitoring these vessels". The BBC wrote to Cilkon and Rustanker but received no response. We also wrote to Mr Denis but he declined to comment. Other partnerships Alpha Consulting helped set up include: Green Line LP, a firm that illegally sold heart pills by promoting unproven health claims; NIC International Services LP, which appeared to run paperwriter.com, a website offering to write students' essays for them - a service illegal in England; Histol Corporate LP, a firm accused of involvement in a "large-scale fraud" in Russia. Two Russian officials allegedly ordered chemicals for the defence industry at inflated prices from a company owned by Histol, which they controlled.

The BBC attempted to contact these partnerships and the people we were able to identify behind them but did not receive a response. Alpha said it was not aware of any of the activities of these partnerships. Financial crime consultant Graham Barrow said that this use of nominees "brings the whole process into disrepute". "It is making a mockery of this idea that the UK is open for business because frankly, we'll accept anyone's name on a piece of paper and away you go," he said. As well as exploiting this loophole, Alpha may have breached the law in relation to Scottish partnerships, which does require that the people who really control them are disclosed. In March 2017, the firm involved, Biniatta Trade LP, paid a US lobbyist on behalf of Lulzim Basha, leader of the Democratic Party of Albania. The lobbyist arranged access to Republican politicians and a fundraiser, where Mr Basha was able to get a photo opportunity with then-President Donald Trump - later used

in the Albanian election campaign. Reports last year suggested US intelligence believed that Mr Basha's election campaign, whose slogan was Make Albania Great Again, had been secretly backed by Russia with \$500,000.

Biniatta's ownership was hidden through offshore secrecy and sham directors, but the leaked Alpha documents include an agreement from 2015, when the partnership was set up, which named the beneficial owner as a Russian national called Maxim Trofimets. In summer 2017, when the law for Scottish partnerships changed, Mr Trofimets was not declared as the "person of significant control" of Biniatta, and an Alpha nominee falsely declared that the firm had provided all the information it had to. The next day, the same Alpha nominee secretly signed a new power of attorney agreement, renewing Mr Trofimets' control over Biniatta. After media reports of a possible Russia connection in 2018, Alpha's owner Victoria Valkovskaya set out in an email how Biniatta could conceal its ownership. The ownership of Biniatta could be structured using a Seychelles foundation with five nominee councillors "so as to not declare a controlling person". This would give the appearance that no one person had control over 25% of the company, the threshold under UK law for the requirement to name a person of significant control.

Biniatta followed the advice and no person of significant control was declared. Alpha said it rejects the allegation that it attempted to avoid Biniatta having to make such a declaration. In September this year, the Council of Europe appointed Mr Basha to prepare a report on supporting the reconstruction of Ukraine following the Russian invasion. He said he had no conflict of interest.

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What next after polls date

THE Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced on Thursday it would hold the next general elections on February 8, 2024, after a consultation with President Arif Alvi which was held in adherence to a constitutional requirement underscored by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa earlier in the day. The chief justice was hearing a set of petitions calling for fixing the date of the next elections within the 90-day constitutional deadline ending in early November.

A saga of an early election, timely, transparent, as well as credible polls that should be equally acceptable to all political groups and fall within the stipulated time frame categorically set by the constitution have been crucial demands of all segments of society over the past few months after the PDM coalition handed over the ruins of government to caretaker setup in the centre as well as in the provinces. Irrespective of the political objectives and fringe motives of the previous PML-N-led government, that paved the way for approval of digital census from the Council of Common Interests (CCI) making it mandatory for the ECP to clear off all potential legal and administrative glitches concerning forthcoming polls before the election to make them credible and trustworthy. Whilst, the ECP and other relevant institutions are mulling over future scenarios regarding the upcoming polls, the political pandits, the media commentators civil society, and political groups were anxious about the prospects of the future polls and a flood of rumours caused confusion and uncertainty regarding the forthcoming polls. Amid such ruckus and anxiety, scores of petitions were filed by political groups, lawyers associations and common citizens praying to the apex court to ensure timely election in the country.

Surrounded by wide-ranging uncertainty and political chaos, the conduct of certain personalities representing high offices including the Election Commission, and the Presidency was somehow biased, politically motivated and egoistic, which further augmented hype and polarization in the country. The two high-ups turned their tussle into political wrangling between their respective institutions through self-assumed appreciation of selected clauses of the electoral laws. President Alvi once again was ready to use his office to unilaterally appoint the dates for election while the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) was disillusioned about his prerogative/mandate and no one was ready to respect the law and forge consensus in good faith. Interestingly, the arrogance and hostility dispelled at the top levels significantly poisoned the lower ranks and files of both institutions as the ECP counsels blatantly refused to consult the Presidency during the last day's hearing in the apex court that met anger from the top adjudicator and resulted in immediate consultation between the two high ups.

Historically, the PDM coalition introduced certain amendments to Sections 57 and 58 of the Election Act 2017 allowing the election commission to bypass the president and unilaterally announce election dates. It was a politically motivated move aimed at restricting Dr Alvi's authority under Article 48(5) who was openly lobbying on behalf of Lahore's Zaman Park and supporting his parent political group. However, independent legal analysts were of the view that the power of the president to set a date for elections under Article 48(5) is an independent power under the law and not subservient to any other provision of the Constitution.

Presently, the nation has come out of the fiasco of the poll date, while the Apex court has categorically mentioned that February 8 would not be altered and elections would be held in a free, fair and transparent manner in due course of time. Therefore, the floods of rumours and propaganda must come to a calm and all political groups and relevant stakeholders must initiate their electoral campaigns in line with the ECP's guidelines and constitutional provisions, so this important political activity smoothly reaches its climax and a peaceful transition of the government could be ensured in the country.

Free speech and western Machismo

A prominent civil rights group in the United States has urged colleges and universities to respect free speech and resist calls to investigate or disband student organisations rallying on behalf of Palestinian rights. In an open letter to academic institutions, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) warned against politically motivated efforts to police speech on campus, which could destroy the foundation on which academic communities are built.

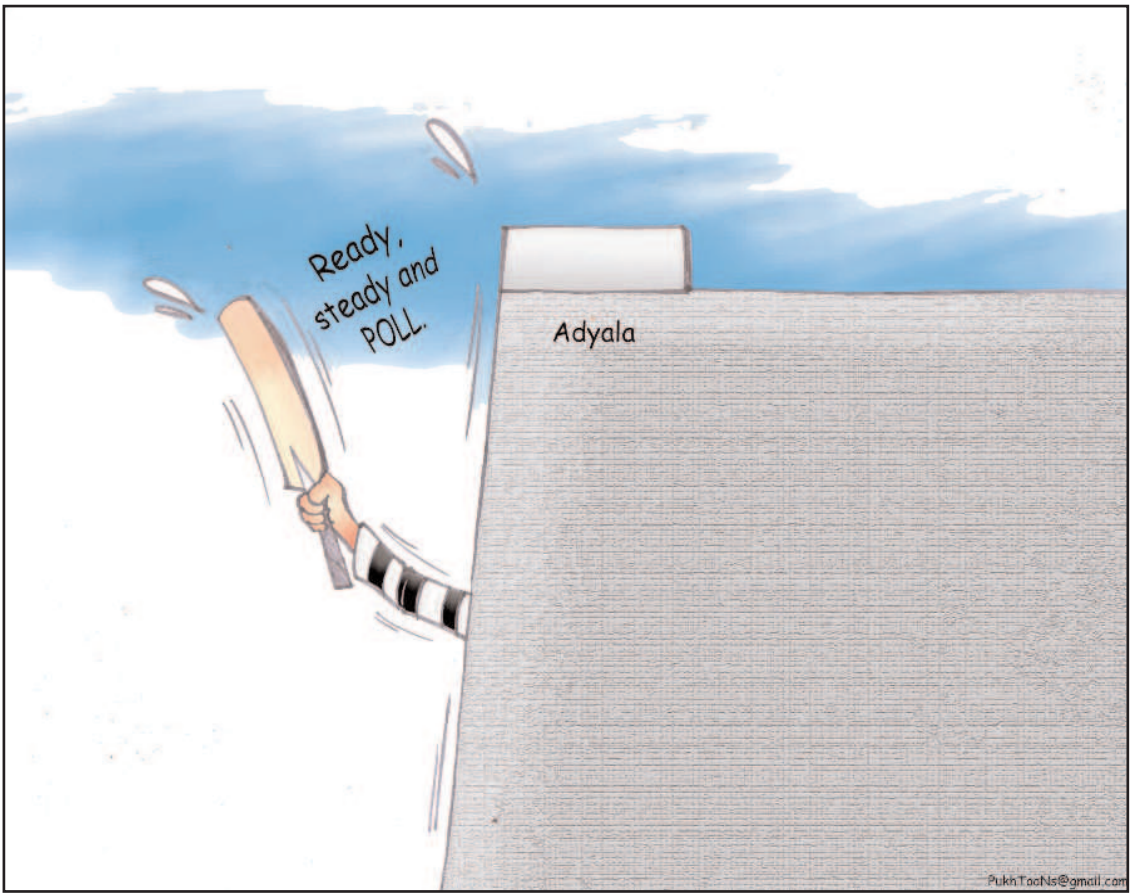
The letter has recently surfaced in the media amid heightened tensions in US academia, scholarly circles and the media as the Israel-Hamas war enters its fourth week, anti-Israel protest demonstrations against reckless bombardment and airstrikes on civilian populations continued without any pause following October 7 incidents in Israeli occupied territory. Some US academic campuses are reporting pressure to crack down on critics of Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza, where an estimated 8,796 Palestinians have been killed so far. Meanwhile several media houses have banned their Muslim anchorpersons and journalists from reporting/ hosting talk shows, and started censoring their articles/ programs for any breach of instructions or airing of any anti-Israel comments from their platform that might displease the Jewish state or their supporters in the west. Similarly, several social media platforms blocked accounts of Muslim journalists who highlighted Israeli war crimes or posted pro-palestinians material on their accounts.

The ACLU urged the colleges, and universities that the mission of learning and tutoring can not be accomplished by a forum without debate and discussion while sane criticism helps mankind to correct its mistakes and address its course if one takes it positively. According to human rights group, baseless investigations into those who express disfavored or even loathsome views chill speech, foster an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, and betray the spirit of free inquiry, which is based on the power to persuade rather than the power to punish.

Historically, human morals have not yet capitulated such rottenness and people still owe kind hearts that feel regret and express displeasure over injustice, suppression and violent aggression against unarmed innocent civilians who so ever perpetuates, advocate or support such machismo in this world. Presently, western leaders' have turned a blind eye and blatantly supported Israel's war crimes and inhuman bombardment in Gaza, while a majority of western scholars, unbiased journalists and common public raise their voice against such grave crimes against humanity. Although those sane voices have no impact on leaders' culpability yet this moral support instils courage and hope in bereaved Palestinians against the aggressors.

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Western silence over Israelis' genocidal comments speaks volumes

Chris Doyle

ONE of the most glaring omissions from the Western political and media debate on Israel's war on Gaza is the lack of any comment, let alone criticism, of the chilling statements made by the Israeli president, prime minister, defense minister and other key figures. These should never have been ignored.

They indicate an official Israeli intent to willfully commit war crimes. Many of the statements were motivated by revenge, but some were more about long-term, ultranationalist ambitions. What follows are just some choice low-lights from the maelstrom of quasi-genocidal rhetoric emanating from Israel. There are several trends. The first is that all 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza are guilty. This view has history. In 2018, then-Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman claimed: "There are no innocent people in the Gaza Strip." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu this month wrote that "this is a struggle between the children of light and the children of darkness."

Even the supposedly centrist Israeli President Isaac Herzog stated: "It's an entire nation out there that is responsible. This rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved, it's absolutely not true. They could've risen up, they could have fought against that evil regime." The notion that Palestinian civilians in Gaza could have ousted a brutal militant group like Hamas is laughable. The belief that no Palestinians in Gaza are innocent is a dangerous message to be sending to the 300,000 Israeli reservists that have been called up to fight. The second trend is to boast of just how devastating the Israel bombardment of Gaza will be - a threat that has been all too clearly realized. "We will eliminate everything - they will regret it," said Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, the man who commands all the military forces that are doing the bombing. The airstrikes would also not be precise or targeted, as demanded by international law, with an Israeli army spokesman stating that "our focus is on (creating) damage, not on precision." Moshe Feiglin, a former prominent Likud Knesset member, added:

"There is one and only (one) solution, which is to completely destroy Gaza before invading it. I mean destruction like what happened in Dresden and Hiroshima, without nuclear weapons."

The third trend is to portray Palestinians as animals, a stark process of dehumanization that is necessary if you are going to get involved in ethnic cleansing and war crimes. This too has a long history

tons of explosives" from the Israeli Air Force.

Part of this trend is to outright deny that there is a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, neatly forgetting that the Strip has been suffering one for at least 16 years.

Israeli Ambassador to the UK Tzipi Hotovely said: "There is no humanitarian crisis." Incredibly, she went on to state that "the humanitarian crisis at the moment is in Israel." The fifth trend is to declare the intention to

told the Arab members of the Knesset: "You're here by mistake, it's a mistake that (first Israeli PM David) Ben-Gurion didn't finish the job and didn't throw you out in 1948."

The seventh trend is openly genocidal, although some of the above are too. Likud MK Amit Halevi stated: "There should be two goals for this victory: One, there is no more Muslim land in the land of Israel ... After we make it the land of Israel, Gaza should be left as a monument, like Sodom." Most of these trends are replicated in the Israeli media. "Gaza should be wiped off the face of the Earth," journalist Shimon Rivkin wrote on social media. He also asked: "Why exactly do we have an atomic bomb?" Yanan Magal, a journalist and politician, believes "it is time for Nakba 2."

Crucially, a large number of ordinary Israelis have demonstrated extraordinary humanity toward Palestinians, which has been strangely lacking from Western leaders. It has often been the Israelis who lost loved ones to the Hamas atrocities who have made the most powerful comments. Noï Katzman, whose brother Chaim was killed, said: "The most important thing for me and also for my brother is that his death will not be used as a justification for killing innocent people." One man, the son of a missing Israeli, stated: "You can't cure killed babies with more dead babies. We need peace." Yaakov Argamani, whose daughter was taken hostage, said: "We are two nations from one father ... let's make peace, real peace." Of course, Hamas has a long history of making bloodthirsty, antisemitic comments threatening to wipe out Jews. The difference is that they were rightly called out, albeit not often enough. Western powers sanctioned and proscribed Hamas, while refusing to talk to it. However, when Israeli leaders make these comments - and they have been for decades, but more so in recent years - not one senior Western political leader says a thing. The reality is that antisemitism is rightly condemned, while anti-Arab racism of the most extreme variety is ignored or even condoned. This has to be addressed for real peace to take hold.

The fourth trend is to be brazen about denying Palestinians collectively from having any food, water, medicine or power. This was the declaration of the total siege on Oct. 9. Energy Minister Yisrael Katz said that "no electric switch will be turned on, no water tap will be opened, and no fuel truck will enter until the kidnapped Israelis return to their homes." National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said the only thing that should enter Gaza until the hostages are released are "hundreds of tons of explosives" from the Israeli Air Force.

seize land in Gaza. Former Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar stated that the Gaza Strip "must be smaller at the end of the war ... Whoever starts a war against Israel must lose territory." This sentiment was echoed by Foreign Minister Eli Cohen. Meanwhile, Ohad Tal, a Religious Zionism lawmaker, called for the return of settlements to Gaza: "We cannot go back to the same conception ... we need to exact a territorial price from (Hamas), including returning Jewish settlements at least to the north of Gaza Strip." Acquiring territory through war is illegal under international law. The sixth trend is to call for a new Nakba, expelling Palestinians from their land. Nissim Vaturi, the deputy Knesset speaker, threatened: "Nakba? Expel them all. If the Egyptians care so much for them - they are welcome to have them wrapped in cellophane tied with a green ribbon." This is not new. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has a history of making alarming racist statements about Palestinians. In 2021, he

Vietnam and Gaza: How truth will change American attitudes

Ray Hanania

ISRAEL has always had the upper hand both in violence and the propaganda war against the Palestinians, with the backing of Western politicians and a heavily slanted news media. Hamas attacked and reportedly killed 1,400 Israelis, including women and children, on Oct. 7. US politicians and media have denounced anyone who questions the Israeli version.

In contrast, US politicians and media call claims that Israel has killed mostly civilians, Palestinian women and children, in Gaza "unverified." Israel brushes off criticism of its destruction of civilian homes and businesses. The backlash in the US and the West, driven by this imbalanced media coverage, has given Israel an unchallenged mandate to continue its revenge carnage. Israeli civilian fatalities are shocking and reported without any challenge, while Palestinian civilian casualties are minimized and challenged. Sympathy for Israel in the West is exaggerated beyond facts and reality.

No wonder recent polling shows Americans believe Israel is justified in its scorched-earth assault on the Gaza Strip, insensitive to the carnage, and willing to give Israel billions of dollars in military and "humanitarian" aid. Israeli leaders exploit this by calling Palestinians "animals" in their rhetoric. Politicians such as Nikki Haley are urging Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to "finish them." Palestinians are dying as Israel's "Lord of the Flies" reenactment fuels anger, hatred and more bias. It will not last forever, though. The truth always manages to get out.

Israel has been killing Palestinians, destroying their homes, and stealing their land almost every week for the past two decades with barely any condemnation from US politicians or news media. The same poll showing Americans sympathizing with Israel - how could you not, given the exaggerated and imbalanced media? - also shows deep American sympathies for Palestinians. Eventually, Americans will see past the propaganda and the lies, and wake up to the ugly and harsh truth that the violence is a direct consequence of Israeli policies and actions. Why? Historically, Americans have shown that truth will impact their beliefs, and they will change, as they did during the Vietnam War.

Like Israel's war in Gaza, the Vietnam War was based on lies and carefully managed propaganda in the West. Americans feared a communist takeover of Vietnam would spread to other Southeast Asian nations and then to Europe, Africa and South America. It was called the "Domino Theory." Lies and exaggerations were used to strengthen that unquestioned sentiment during the Vietnam War, just as they are in Israel's war against the Palestinians. American attitudes began changing in 1969. Reports of carnage by US soldiers against the Vietnamese surfaced. Questions were raised about a critical incident in August 1964 that gave President Lyndon Johnson the mandate to launch a massive offensive. It began with a skirmish in the Gulf of Tonkin on Aug. 2, 1964. The USS Maddox, a destroyer, engaged in an exchange with three North Vietnamese navy torpedo boats. Johnson used

the incident to justify war. He eventually sent 500,000 soldiers to Vietnam and, like Israel, engaged in a scorched-earth policy to destroy communism (insert Hamas).

The Vietnam War caused massive destruction and the killing of millions of civilians. Despite suspicions that the Gulf of Tonkin incident was a lie, it took years to expose. But the suspicions fueled distrust, and public concerns grew. The tipping point came in September 1969, 18 months after a US infantry unit massacred about 500 Vietnamese civilians in the Vietnamese village of My Lai (think Gaza City). Men, women, children and babies (think Gaza) were savagely killed that day on March 16, 1968. Suddenly, the news media began investigating other massacres and showcasing the carnage in TV reports. The TV videos shocked Americans, who thought everything was going their way. Charges were filed against 26 US soldiers, including C Company Platoon leader Lt. William Calley, Jr. In 1972, a photo was published of a 9-year-old girl, Phan Thi Kim Phuc, badly burnt by a napalm strike and running terrified down a trail. She was called the "Napalm Girl," and the photographer who took the picture won the Pulitzer Prize.

Another photo showed South Vietnamese Brig. Gen. Nguyen Ngoc Loan putting a gun to the head of a Viet Cong prisoner and executing him. Americans wondered how these brutal horrors could take place. The Gulf of Tonkin attack, which justified the war, was eventually exposed as a lie. The My Lai massacre, photos such as the "Napalm Girl," and the prisoner being executed showed how the US military was brutalizing civilians. It sparked protests and demonstrations across the US and on college campuses.

Protesters against the war were called "communist sympathizers" and unpatriotic, just as those protesting against Israel's violence are called "antisemitic." Analysts years later said it was the increase in television video reporting, and photos of cruelty that showed Americans the truth and changed public attitudes. Eventually, Americans turned against the war. Overwhelmed by protests, Johnson decided not to run for reelection. His successor, Richard Nixon, fought an "awakened" news media and was forced to withdraw from Vietnam. He eventually resigned.

The point is, you can hide the truth for a long time. But when it does come out, the public backlash can be furious. That is one reason Israel manipulates and controls media coverage in Gaza and is disabling their internet access. All you see on American TV are images of suffering Israeli women and children, and Israeli-provided military videos showing missile strikes destroying buildings. Images of Palestinian women and children being killed or pulled from the rubble of the destroyed buildings are rarely shown by American media. But they are there. And they are getting out on social media. When Americans see the truth, their feelings about Israel's war crimes in Gaza will change, just as surely as when they saw the truth of war crimes in Vietnam.

More tax reduction a viable option

Yang Zhiyong

SINCE the Chinese authorities implemented policies to alleviate the tax burden of the people, especially those with dependent parents (mostly senior citizens) and young individuals two months ago, it is too early to assess their effectiveness. As a result, the question of whether there is a need for more tax cuts continues to be debated. But if the burden of personal income tax is further reduced, it might help accelerate the economic recovery by boosting consumption.

On Aug 31, the State Council, China's Cabinet, announced additional deductions for children below three years of age, children's education and elderly support for individual income tax payers. This is a targeted measure aimed at easing the financial burden of middle-income families, especially those with young children/or elderly family members. The standard deduction for children below three has been

increased from 1,000 yuan (\$137) to 2,000 yuan per child per month.

China is facing a critical demographic challenge with a birth rate of 6.77 per thousand (in 2022), a death rate of 7.37 per thousand, and a natural population growth rate of -0.60 per thousand. The total fertility rate in China, too, is well below the replacement level of 2.1 - required to maintain a stable population. Without effective measures, therefore, China's population is at risk of a rapid decline, which could have serious implications for the country's future.

While a declining fertility rate is a common phenomenon in modern society, it can be mitigated with effective policy measures. A substantial population decline would create a demographic imbalance with a rapidly growing aging population, impacting both the economic and social fabric of the country. To address this challenge, the country needs robust policy measures. In recent years, the

easing of the family planning policy, including allowing all couples to have three children, has created conditions for population growth which in turn can help maintain the demographic balance. However, maintaining the population equilibrium necessitates a comprehensive public policy framework, with the tax policy being an important aspect of it.

The increase in standard deduction for children's education, from 1,000 yuan to 2,000 yuan per child per month, is a tax policy aimed at reducing the cost of raising children and thus encouraging couples to have two, if not three, children. This is a positive incentive for families which may have refrained from having more than one child or decided to have no children at all. China's rapidly rising aging population is a major concern - the country had about 209.78 million people aged

65 or above by the end of 2022, accounting for 14.9 percent of the total population. China has already entered the stage of an aging society. So the burden of supporting the elderly is increasing, with less than two tax payers supporting one elderly person. That's why the increase in the standard deduction for elderly support, from 2,000 yuan to 3,000 yuan per month, will ease the financial burden of families and support eldercare in society. The personal income tax deduction for the three special categories can, by default, increase the disposable income of middle-income individuals and families, potentially stimulating consumption. While the extent to which this increase in disposable income will translate into consumption remains to be seen, the move could increase households' savings.

The tax reduction is not about raising the tax-free

threshold of 60,000 yuan a year. Instead, it is targeted at specific areas of need, paying special attention to households with elderly family members and/or young kids. The social significance of this policy is thus immense. China has introduced large-scale tax and fee cuts during the past several years, resulting in a relatively low macro tax burden. In 2022, tax revenue accounted for only 13.8 percent of China's GDP, which may not be enough to support the government to provide high-quality public services. Besides, looking at the direction of tax reform, there is limited room for significant reduction in personal income tax. That's why, in the future, the tax authorities need to gradually increase the proportion of direct tax revenue. Given the difficulty in increasing revenue from other direct taxes such as property tax, the important role of personal tax in the direct tax system needs to be maintained.

But this does not mean

there cannot be moderate or structural tax reductions in the future. China's comprehensive income tax, with a top marginal tax rate of 45 percent, may discourage top international talents from working in China and promoting its development. Lowering the top marginal tax rate or expanding the tax brackets, such as by changing the 45 percent rate threshold for incomes between 960,000 yuan and 1.92 million yuan a year (double the previous threshold), with corresponding reductions in other tax rates, is a policy option the tax authorities could consider. Importantly, lowering of tax rates, so long as the tax base expands, may not necessarily cause a decline in overall tax revenue. Therefore, any future tax reductions or structural changes should consider both the economic and fiscal impacts of the change. As long as the tax burden is stable, tax reductions remain a viable policy option.

The China Daily

Greed and inaction are putting planet on path to ruin

A new report by the United Nations University has warned that the world is rapidly approaching six interconnected tipping points that could lead to dramatic outcomes for the people and the planet. While many of the issues raised are not new, the report does serve to highlight the severity of the crisis that the world is blindly racing toward.

We should perhaps be even more worried about the deep connections that link most of the points, which means that a worsening situation on one can push the others over the brink, even if independently their own deterioration may have slowed. Thus, collectively, it represents a potential snowball effect, where major slippage in one area can propel all others. Another common thread in all these factors is the significant role played by humanity.

The first, and perhaps the most global, tipping point is extreme heat, caused mainly by global warming and related climate change. Over the past few years, in vast parts of the world, from northwestern Canada to southeastern Australia and from far eastern corners of Russian Siberia down to Argentina and Chile, extreme heat waves have become common, along with higher-than-normal temperatures year round. Heat waves have been particularly

intense in South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and even parts of Europe, leading not only to severe illnesses but also to the untimely deaths of people and animals.

Extreme heat, in turn, has a severe impact on at least two other issues raised in the report. First, it leads to faster melting of mountain snow, especially glaciers, and as a result an overwhelming majority of mountain glaciers in the world are receding rapidly or disappearing. Between 2000 and 2019, glaciers lost 267 gigatons of ice per year, and over 90,000 glaciers of the Himalayas, Karakoram and Hindu Kush mountains are at risk of reaching a tipping point, threatening almost 870 million people who rely on them for water.

While the faster melting of glaciers leads to flash floods, it also has a paradoxical impact on falling groundwater tables across parts of the world worst hit by rising temperatures. Supplies of freshwater are rapidly declining across the world, threatening the fate of over 2 billion people who depend almost exclusively on underground water reservoirs or aquifers. According to the report, about 70 percent of groundwater withdrawals are used for agriculture, often when there is insufficient water available from above-ground

sources. But due to climate change, lower rainfall, and a sharp rise in water use for domestic, farming and industrial needs, the aquifers are being rapidly depleted and are close to their own tipping point. The report says that more than half the world's aquifers are being depleted faster than they can be replenished. While nations such as Saudi Arabia have already passed this point, bigger worries lie ahead as one of the world's most populous countries, India, races toward this tipping point, putting at risk close to 700 million people who depend on groundwater for survival or their livelihoods. The depletion of groundwater will also disrupt global food production systems, especially when the depletion hits countries such as India, one of the largest food producers in the world and currently the largest rice exporter.

The threat of extreme weather events, failing crops, rising illnesses and untimely deaths due to the impact of climate change is also pushing global insurance premiums significantly higher, making them increasingly unaffordable for many, especially farmers in poor nations. In some cases, insurance companies are withdrawing from areas or regions where the incidence of extreme weather events, such as wildfires,

flash floods or hurricanes, are increasing sharply.

Since the 1970s, damage as a result of weather-related disasters has increased sevenfold, with \$313 billion in global economic losses in 2022 alone, while severe disasters are forecast to double globally by 2040, according to the report. This puts a large number of people, including farmers, homeowners and small businesses, in a precarious situation, as being without insurance leaves them at high risk of financial ruin. For all practical purposes, it may already be too late to reverse the direction of the changes being seen and to pull the world back to safety. However, it certainly is possible to mitigate the impact of these challenges. This needs a uniform and united approach, which begins with every individual changing the way things have been done, and completely overhauling our lifestyles and priorities.

It will require saving the proverbial drop of water, eliminating the last sign of wastage, be it in water, food, energy or other areas, and taking proactive measures, such as protecting the flora and fauna around us. Even these measures may prove inadequate, but inaction and continuing the way we have acted in recent years are certain to accelerate the journey of the planet and people toward total destruction.

Gaza conflict raises worrying questions for Kyiv

Mohamed Chebaro

"a third world war could start in Ukraine, continue in Israel, and move on from there to Asia, and then explode somewhere else."

In Congress this week, a joint \$106 billion aid bundle proposed by President Joe Biden to fund plans for Ukraine, Israel, and US border security is unlikely to pass, with pro-Trump Republicans continuing to pressure the Biden administration at Ukraine's expense. The US has spent

could be costly and threaten a hard-earned tactical edge. Fearing the worst, Kiev has been ramping up its own weapons production and developing its own drones. This in addition to effectively deploying the newly supplied US Army Tactical Missile Systems, and the UK and France's Storm Shadow long-range missiles, which have been damaging Russian supply lines, and command and control assets.

However, the worry for Ukraine is that its biggest

He has often voiced fears that if Russia is not stopped in Ukraine, it could result in wars elsewhere. Zelensky's thinking is that "a third world war could start in Ukraine, continue in Israel, and move on from there to Asia, and then explode somewhere else." In Congress this week, a joint \$106 billion aid bundle proposed by President Joe Biden to fund plans for Ukraine, Israel, and US border security is unlikely to pass, with pro-Trump Republicans continuing to pressure the Biden administration at Ukraine's expense.

more than \$77 billion supporting Ukraine since the Russian invasion on February 24 last year, according to the Council on Foreign Relations, and Biden wants Congress to agree to \$60 billion more. The EU has spent \$86.7 billion since the beginning of the war.

But similar challenges await Ukraine on its European front, as Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who recently met the Chinese and Russian leaders on the fringes of a conference in China, is trying to oppose a \$53 billion European aid package for Ukraine that needs a unanimous vote in December as part of the EU budget for 2023-2027. Meanwhile, as Ukraine's allies waver, Russia is intensifying its operations. Although the Ukrainians have maintained the momentum of their counter-offensive, Russian assaults are becoming more persistent in various sectors. Any disruption to supplies and or commitment on the part of Western powers

ally's hesitance regarding the conflict could erode the national morale. This war has cost the allies money and hardware, says Zelensky, but it has cost Ukraine lives. And keeping up the flow of Ukrainian troops after more than 87 weeks of fighting has not been easy, with the average fighting age creeping above 40. Although Ukraine keeps its losses secret, according to US and EU sources, fatality rates on both sides have risen well above 100,000. Gaza is not Ukraine, and Ukraine is not Gaza. But volatility caused by both conflicts has stifled diplomacy, and made the global conflict environment messier than ever. Though it would be difficult for the US and EU to completely abandon their commitment to Ukraine, it seems Kyiv has to concede that the Middle East crisis has drawn attention away from its own existential war, forcing it to operate with reduced aid and visibility if it is unwilling to "freeze" the conflict now and fight another day.

Liz Truss is slowly winning the argument

Matthew Lynn

THE cap on bankers' bonuses has been quietly scrapped. Our planning rules are getting reformed, even if painfully slowly, and the Bank of England's forecasting errors will soon be reviewed. True, the 45pc top rate of income tax is still in place, and so is the punishing 25pc corporation tax rate. But given how clearly damaging they are, they may be scrapped eventually.

Add it all up, and something interesting is happening. Many of the reforms of the short-lived Truss government are either already being implemented, or becoming part of the consensus. And there is a reason for that: when anyone starts to think seriously about growth, they end up with something very like the Truss agenda. Yes, her presentation may have been catastrophic, but Trussonomics is steadily winning the argument. In the end, it happened without much reaction, or even a very significant political row. Sterling didn't crash, the markets didn't turn on the UK, and even Shadow Chancellor Rachel Reeves could hardly be bothered to take time off from cribbing stuff from Wikipedia to complain too loudly. We learned this week that the Bank of England's Prudential Regulation Authority will end the limits on bankers' bonuses, with the cap finally being removed on Tuesday. Unsurprisingly, the Trades Union Congress stirred itself to some ritual condemnation of the move.

"At a time when millions up and down the country are struggling to make ends meet, this is an insult to working people," according to its secretary general, Paul Nowak - trotting out lines that were so predictable that they seemed to have been written by ChatGPT. But otherwise few people really noticed. Yet, when the measure was announced in Kwasi Kwarteng's notorious mini-Budget last autumn, it provoked outrage, with accusations that the Chancellor was simply

rewarding his rich mates in the City, at the risk of destabilising the economy. One year on, such controversy has evaporated into thin air. And it does not stop there. While it might not be obvious yet - and there is still plenty of opposition - we are steadily reforming the demented planning rules that make it virtually impossible to build any new houses in the UK. The "nutrient neutrality" regulations that we inherited from the EU may still be heading for the scrap heap, despite the Lords' opposition, and more radically the Labour Party has pledged to give local authorities more power to build on "green belt" land. Next, reform of the Bank of England is rising up the agenda, with the former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke leading a review into its forecasting, which will inevitably lead to some changes. This ought to vindicate the Trussites, who questioned the methods and value of pie in the sky economic charts.

True, there are major policy reforms that are still desperately needed. Our top rate of tax remains scandalously high, and the threshold for paying it is far too low at just £125,000 a year. The increase in corporation tax to 25pc is looking like a terrible mistake, especially when our neighbour Ireland is raking in so much money from its 12.5pc rate that it is settling up a sovereign wealth fund to stash it away. Our dire economic state would have been improved by the key reforms in Truss and Kwarteng's mini-Budget, which the Government must revive soon if it wants Britain to remain competitive. For it is easy to parrot a few slogans about a "green industrial strategy" or a "wellness economy" that will turbo-charge growth, but no one really believes in that guff. As the green wreckage mounts up, the notion that transitioning to a net zero economy will make us richer will be exposed for the pipe dream

that it is. In reality, if anyone starts to think seriously about how the UK might get close to a 3pc annual growth - necessary to support our bloated welfare state - they end up with something very like Trussonomics.

Our tax system has to become more competitive against our main rivals, and some cuts can actually raise more revenues even if they don't necessarily do much for equality. Our planning system has become a major obstacle to growth, given that so many forms of economic activity must involve building something new, or changing the way a building is used. Investment zones are the only way to genuinely revive the most depressed areas, given that entrepreneurship and deregulation are among the few ways that areas get richer in the medium-term. And of course, the evidence from the US, Canada and perhaps soon Argentina as well, is that fracking is transformative, and that having a domestic energy industry while the transition to renewables is completed generates huge numbers of jobs and vast tax revenues. In the real world, these are the things that actually work. The timing and presentation of Trussonomics was unsatisfactory. In the middle of an energy crisis, it was not the moment to make major fiscal reforms, and the Bank of England had so woefully lost control of inflation that rising interest rates threatened the stability of the pension system.

The arguments for reform had not been made convincingly enough to win over even Tory backbenchers, never mind the financial markets. The support required for radical changes simply wasn't in place. Even so, one point is becoming clear. Piece by piece we will get there in the end. Had it been done sooner, we might be enjoying more rapid growth by now. But we can take faith in the fact that, slowly but surely, the champions of economic growth are winning.

Trump's immunity defense should be rejected - and fast

Norman Eisen & Joshua Kolb

IN the blizzard of pretrial motions in the federal Jan. 6 case, the most potentially consequential is Donald Trump's demand that the case be thrown out because he has "presidential immunity" against being prosecuted for his acts in office. While US District Judge Tanya Chutkan's gag order has gotten more attention, her granting Trump's request for immunity would not only derail the case, but also elevate future presidents above the law. Judge Chutkan and the appellate courts that will review her should reject Trump's position - and speedily, lest the legal wrangling interfere with the March 4, 2024 trial date.

In his latest filing, Trump argues that the founders of our nation and the framers of the Constitution understood that the president must be able to serve in office without being inhibited by fear of future prosecution by political opponents. He points to legal sources expressing this protection that range from the Federalist Papers to the seminal Supreme Court case of Nixon v. Fitzgerald. It established an extremely deferential rule of immunity, holding that a president is immune for any actions arguably falling within the scope of his official duties, so long as they are not outside the "outer perimeter" of those job responsibilities as president.

Trump has also claimed that the federal executive branch has the responsibility to make sure federal elections are lawful. Accordingly, as the head of that branch, he was overseeing an unquestioned federal power in his conduct surrounding the 2020 election and therefore may not be prosecuted under the principles of presidential immuni-

ty. Or so the argument goes. Not so fast, prosecutors have argued in their brief, supported by an excellent amicus submission from former judges and other legal experts. They point out that the Fitzgerald case was a civil matter, where the stakes are much less and the rules are different. Criminal cases are reserved for the most serious misconduct in our judicial system, and neither Fitzgerald nor any other has ever created the kind of blanket presidential criminal immunity Trump seeks.

In our view, the government has the better argument. The principle upon which our nation was founded and that remains at the center of our justice system today is that no person - even a former president - is above the law. Giving a president absolute immunity would grant him essentially monarchical powers, antithetical to our history and our rule of law system. As a practical matter, DOJ points out that the implications of Trump's position would "grant absolute immunity from criminal prosecution to a president who accepts a bribe in exchange for a lucrative government contract for a family member; a president who instructs his FBI Director to plant incriminating evidence on a political enemy; a president who orders the National Guard to murder his most prominent critics; or a president who sells nuclear secrets to a foreign adversary."

Still, because this issue remains unresolved after our 234-year constitutional history, it poses a challenge for the judge and for the appellate courts that will scrutinize her decision. We think the solution is to sidestep a final determination

of the underlying and agonizing legal question of presidential immunity. The judge can avoid that by holding that Trump's conduct was so extreme that whether you apply the exacting "no immunity" standard urged by the government or the more generous Fitzgerald "outer perimeter" test, he still loses. As we have previously argued, it is ludicrous to suggest that Trump's actions in the wake of the 2020 election fell within the "outer perimeter" of his responsibilities as president. Presidents have no official role in adjudicating who won state-run elections, and the conduct here was the political machinations of a failed candidate, not the official duties of the commander-in-chief. We think Judge Chutkan will also see it this way, and we already have some insight into her perspective. In Trump v. Thompson, she authored the now-famous line that "Presidents are not kings, and Plaintiff is not President," referring to Trump. She there harkened back to our nation's origins to reject Trump's claim that sweeping executive privilege blocked the January 6 Committee from subpoenaing his presidential records. That is a close cousin to Trump's claim here that sweeping executive immunity blocks the special counsel from prosecuting him.

The judge will also have to contend with one other Trump legal ally, but it should not detain her for long. Trump argues that a president can only be prosecuted if he is first impeached and convicted. But that nonsensical view appears nowhere in the Constitution, as the DOJ has long maintained. Both of us have worked for Congress, one

as counsel for a presidential impeachment and trial, and we would have been laughed out of our jobs had we advanced such an argument. Judge Chutkan is a fair-minded and conscientious jurist and will honestly wrestle with the merits of the arguments Trump has raised here. In our judgment, she and the appellate courts that will review her will ultimately reject Trump's positions as inimical to the Constitution. But they must move briskly. In the ordinary case, such complex legal issues can take years to wind their way through all the way up to the Supreme Court. The commencement of trial is sometimes held until that painstakingly slow progress is completed.

That is a luxury the country cannot afford. We need to know whether one of the leading candidates for the White House criminally abused the powers of the presidency to try to hold onto that office - which he seeks once more to attain. That resolution will only come once he is judged by a jury of his peers. In two other landmark precedents dealing with comparable executive powers, United States v. Nixon and Trump v. Thompson, lower court and appellate proceedings were completed in a little over three months in both cases.

The same must be done here to avoid any disruption of the trial scheduled for March. That coming Trump trial is not only a narrow attempt to hold him personally accountable. The verdict may well determine whether we continue as a democracy or put an autocrat in the White House. For the sake of our nation, Trump's baseless absolute immunity defense must be rejected - and fast.

CNN

US warships have the technology to take on the world's villains and their missiles

TODAY, instability pockmarks the world map. The Eastern Mediterranean and the Red Sea have become more than just strategic waterways; they are a playground for Hezbollah as the group flexes its Iranian-made Yakhont anti-ship missile muscles. The Gulf, a vital artery for global oil, is under the footprint of Iran's Shahab-3 ballistic missiles. The Black Sea, traditionally a theatre of East-West posturing, is a potential testing ground for Russia's missile prowess. Meanwhile, Taiwan confronts China's burgeoning missile advancements, especially the DF-21D "carrier killer".

Against this backdrop of simmering hotspots, the US Navy's Aegis-equipped warships aren't just on standby - they're on patrol, ready to respond and keep the peace. In fact, they are responding. In a recent incident, the USS Carney intercepted and neutralised missiles and drones fired from Yemen, probably at Israel, whilst patrolling the Red Sea.

The Aegis combat system, aptly named after the shield of Zeus in ancient Greek antiquity, stands alone. It is the pinnacle of missile defence technology. Central to Aegis is the AN/SPY-1 Radar, a multi-functional passive array system, which can detect and track multiple aerial threats concurrently, allowing the warship which carries it to defend against both airborne and sea-based attacks. Coupled with this radar are the Standard Missiles (SMs), a suite of interceptors designed to neutralise various threats, from hostile aircraft to ballistic missiles, from just above the sea all the way up into space. The Aegis system has emerged as the cornerstone of Western naval capability. Its adoption by non-US navies which feel themselves to be under missile threats is also symbolic of a broader trend: nations are integrating it with their indigenous ship designs.

Consider Japan. The Atago-class destroyer, steeped in homegrown Japanese design and craftsmanship, saw the seamless integration of the Aegis system. Then there's Australia. Their Hunter-class frigates, while armed with Aegis, trace their design roots as ships to Britain and its Type 26 Frigates. This combination shows a potent blend of Australian maritime priorities, British maritime design heritage, and the tried-and-tested Aegis technological shield. Shipbuilding capabilities need not be lost by adopting American weapons and sensors. The UK, perhaps unfortunately, went down a different path with its Type 45 Destroyers. These, the Daring-class vessels, are massive metal monuments to the UK's ambition to craft a distinctly European missile defence identity. Equipped with the Sylver Vertical Launching System (VLS) and the Sea Viper air defence system, which has its foundation in the Principal Anti-Air Missile System (PAAMS) - a European collaborative effort - the UK aimed to strike a balance between cutting-edge defence and regional collaboration. But it's undeniable that the US leads in anti-missile technology. Raytheon's RIM-161 Standard 3 (SM-3) missile, introduced in 2001, is among the world's top anti-ballistic missiles. A test named 'Vigilant Wyvern' just this month showcased the capability of an Aegis-equipped warship to tackle incoming ballistic missiles whilst simultaneously handling sea-skimming threats, something most European ships are unable to do.

Aegis has also proven its mettle by intercepting supersonic sea skimmers, similar to the Yakhont which today menaces the eastern Med. The US system has demonstrated this capability in numerous naval exercises, most recently by intercepting a 'Coyote' supersonic target missile in

the harsh weather conditions of the Atlantic. Moreover, the US Missile Defense Agency, steered by Vice Admiral Hill, aims to advance Aegis towards addressing hypersonic threats. With the next significant upgrade earmarked for 2025, Hill pointed out that Aegis is the "only active defence available today" to counter hypersonic missile threats.

Unlike the Type 45 Destroyers, Britain's future Type 26 Frigates will incorporate the American Mk41 missile launch system, a shift away from the Type 45's European 'Sylver' missile launch system. For future vessels like the planned Type 83 air defence destroyer, Aegis is an excellent next step if Britain wants to piggyback on American capability. While Europe can't keep up with Aegis and its missile advancements, there are those who would argue that buying European equipment is necessary to preserve British industry. I don't believe that. Every navy that has acquired Aegis ensured some local collaboration and tech transfer, allowing customisation to their specific needs.

One of the most significant British naval deployments of recent times helped to underscore the inability of the UK's current fleet to challenge ballistic missiles effectively. The year 2021 saw the deployment of HMS Queen Elizabeth to the Far East. Such a deployment is intended to showcase the power of Global Britain, support our allies in the region and challenge the dominance of China. To do that effectively, a naval task group would need to be able to defend itself against Chinese anti-ship ballistic missiles such as the DF-21D. But due to our decision to buy European instead of Aegis, there are no British warships that can mount such a defence. The Royal Navy's Type-45 destroyers are modern and robust but lack an effective

means to engage ballistic missiles.

Fortunately the Queen Elizabeth task group included USS The Sullivans, an Aegis-equipped Arleigh Burke class destroyer that can act as an anti-ballistic missile defence system. Following the deployment, Rear Admiral Burton's candid conversation with the Defence Committee during an evidence-gathering session threw this disparity in capabilities into sharp relief. His acknowledgement of the "gaping hole" in the UK's ability to "defend a carrier against a ballistic missile" highlighted to the world that despite the capabilities of Type 45 with its advanced systems, the older but Aegis-equipped American destroyer was the only ship present capable of defending the task force against ballistic missiles.

The US Navy's Aegis system, adopted with aplomb by nations such as Japan, Australia, and South Korea, is the gold standard for missile defence. Type 45 may one day be capable of ballistic missile defence, but by that time the threat will be hypersonic. Aegis will be ready: European offerings will not. If we are to put to sea a maritime force that mirrors our global aims, it's time we reconsider our dalliances with European systems. In this case, I believe it is best to buy American rather than hoping that our vessels may, perhaps, at some point be able to do in the future what American ships are already doing right now: take on the villains of the world and their weapons of choice. Shouldn't we, as a nation, shift our gaze from viewing our defence coffers purely as a job-creating mechanism and appreciate the sheer efficacy of off-the-shelf purchases? It's a matter of ensuring British forces remain credible, formidable and globally viable.

The Guardian



Inflation in Pakistan surges to 29.88 percent

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The weekly inflation measured by Sensitive Price Index (SPI) has risen to 0.71 percent pushing the overall inflation up to 29.88 percent, according to the report released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics for the current week ended on Nov 2, 2023.

According to the PBS, major increase is observed in the prices of Tomatoes (25.58%), Onions (25.25%), Chicken (10.79%), Potatoes (1.61%), Tea Lipton (1.58%), Eggs (1.30%), Garlic (0.50%), Rice Basmati Broken (0.19%), Georgette (0.28%) and Firewood (0.05%).

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 279.08 points as compared to 277.11

points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 29.88 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.85 percent and went up to 286.19 points from last week's 283.77 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.86 percent, 0.77 percent, 0.76 percent and 0.64 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 12 (23.53%) items increased, 14 (27.45%) items decreased and 25 (49.02%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included gur (2.66%), banana (1.78%), cooking oil 5 litre (1.62%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (1.23%), lpg cylinder (1.05%), pulse masoor (0.93%), wheat flour (0.62%), washing soap (0.41%) and mustard oil (0.32%).

The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis, included tomatoes (25.58%), onions (25.25%), chicken (10.79%), potatoes (1.61%), tea lipton (1.58%), eggs (1.30%),

garlic (0.50%), rice basmati broken (0.19%), georgette (0.28%) and firewood (0.05%). On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the items that witnessed decrease in prices included, tomatoes (26.26%), onions (13.98%), pulse gram (5.50%), mustard oil (4.47%) and vegetable ghee 1 kg (1.97%).

The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on YoY basis included gas charges for Q1 (108.38%), cigarettes (94.46%), chillies powder (84.11%), rice basmati broken (78.08%), wheat flour (76.51%), sugar (62.60%), rice irrigated (62.27%), gents sponge chappal (58.05%), tea packet (55.79%), garlic (54.51%) and gur (53.53%).

US Dollar inches towards Rs284 in interbank trading

ISLAMABAD (INP): The US dollar continued its upward trend against the Pakistani Rupee after gaining eight paisas and reaching Rs283.50.

The greenback closed at Rs283.43 on Thursday interbank trading with an increase of 78 paisas.

It is pertinent to note that the gap between rates in the inter-bank and open markets is required to be less

than 1.25% under one of the structural benchmarks set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The economic team, headed by caretaker Finance Minister Dr Shamshad Akhtar, has briefed the visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) team about its performance, and assured it of full implementation of the \$3 billion loan program.

The visiting delegation has asked Pakistan to strictly implement all the targets. Finance Ministry sources said the IMF delegation also appreciated the actions of the economic team.

The Pakistan side committed to meet all the targets set by the IMF. It briefed the visiting mission that almost all targets set for the first quarter of the fiscal year have been met.

As per the briefing, the tax collection of the Federal Board of Revenue and the Petroleum Development Levy exceeded their targets. The team further said that the electricity and gas tariff had been increased and reforms were underway to control the circular debt. Reforms in government institutions were also underway, while the policy of market-based exchange rate was being implemented.



HYDERABAD: A vendor displaying solar to attract the customer at Bacha Khan Chowk.

‘Enough wheat stole of 6.9mmt in country for local consumption’

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ministry of National Food Security and Research has said that there was enough wheat stock of 6.934 million metric tons in the country to tackle local dietary needs, besides keeping the strategic stocks as well as maintaining supply and demand smooth in local markets to provide the commodity at reasonable prices.

In a statement issued on Friday, the MoNFSR said, “Out of the total stocks, Punjab’s wheat reserves comprised over 4.021 million tons, Sindh has 0.817 million tons, whereas

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 0.227 million tons of grains that were enough to meet local consumption of flour and other byproducts during the season.”

The Balochistan has 0.089 million tons of wheat, whereas the wheat stock of Pakistan Agriculture Storage and Supplies Corporation (PASSCO) was recorded at 1.78 million tons, it

added.

“These reserves are poised to meet the country’s vital requirements till May 2024 and after this period, the commencement of the new crop harvest season will see a surge in grain availability in local markets, further bolstering the carry-forward stocks,” it added.

Meanwhile, the government has encouraged and supported the private sector to import wheat as so far about 700,000 tons of wheat have been import-

ed, whereas an additional 1.2 million tons of wheat are to be imported in order to ensure smooth demand and supply till the arrival of new crop.

It was worth mentioning here that due to the smooth supply of wheat, the commodity price in local markets came down from Rs4,800 per 40 kg to Rs4,300 per 40 kg.

It was expected that the wheat price would further reduce and facilitate the common man in the country.

Mayor assures ICCI of cooperation to explore UK market for exports

ISLAMABAD (INP): Mayor of the London Borough of Hounslow Afzaal Kiani along with Councillor Samia Chaudhry and others on Friday visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and exchanged views with the business community on matters for further improving Pakistan’s business relations with the UK.

The Mayor assured that he would cooperate with ICCI members in exploring the UK market for exports. He said that the Pakistani diaspora has great love for Pakistan and they are keen to contribute to the economic development of their home country.

He said that ICCI should form a delegation for the UK and he would arrange their meetings

with Hounslow Chamber of Commerce to explore areas of business collaboration with them. He said that promotion of tourism in Pakistan would promote a soft image and attract tourists and investors to Pakistan.

Councillor Samia Chaudhry and other members of the delegation said that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK prefers to buy Made in Pakistan products and stressed that Pakistani exporters should focus on enhancing their exports to the UK.

She stressed for bridging the communication gap between the private sectors of both countries to increase bilateral trade and investment relations.

Speaking on the occasion, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce &

Industry said that the UK is an important trading partner of Pakistan and we want to further strengthen these trade ties. He said that bilateral trade between Pakistan and the UK is just over £ 4 billion in 2023 and stressed for developing strong business linkages between the private sectors of both countries to further improve bilateral trade relations.

The ICCI President said that the Chinese and Indian diaspora have contributed significantly to the economies of their home countries and emphasized that the Pakistani diaspora should also play a role to steer Pakistan out of the current economic challenges. He stressed that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK should transfer technology and to explore JVs and invest-

ment in Pakistan.

Senior Vice President ICCI, Faad Waheed said that many Pakistani products reach the UK market through smuggling due to which economies of both countries suffer and he stressed for promoting direct trade to achieve better results.

He assured that ICCI would connect the investors of the UK with right partners in Pakistan.

Group Leader ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik said that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK should play the role of Ambassadors of Pakistan and promote its business and investment interests in the UK market. Maqsood Tabish, Ch. Muhammad Ali and others also spoke on the occasion and shared useful ideas to further improve bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and UK.

SBP, The Arab Monetary Fund sign MoU to facilitate cross-border remittances

F.P. Report

KARACHI: In a ceremony hosted by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), H.E Dr. Abdulrahman Bin Abdullah Al Hamidi, Director General Chairman of the Board of the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), and H.E Mr. Jameel Ahmad, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, signed today a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Abu Dhabi. The MoU is signed to establish a framework of cooperation between BUNA, the cross-border payment system operated by Arab Regional Payments Clearing and Settlement Organization “ARPCSO”, owned by AMF, and Raast, Pakistan’s Instant Payment System.

The integration of Raast with BUNA aims to facilitate Cross-border Remittances between the Arab region and Pakistan through formal channels. This initiative will benefit individuals as well as businesses not only through instant, safe and cost-effective cross border payments, but also by strengthening economic, financial, and investment ties between the Arab countries and Pakistan.

Commenting on this MoU, H.E Dr. Abdulrahman Bin Abdullah Al Hamidi, Director General Chairman of the Board of The Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and Chairman of the Board of ARPCSO, said, “This strategic collaboration with Raast underscores BUNA’s

commitment to continue connecting different regions together and reinforcing economic, financial, and investment ties between the Arab region and its main global partners. This resonates with the shared vision of innovating cross-border payment solutions to offer safe and efficient cross-border instant payments access for individuals and corporates”. He added “We also aim to increase cross-border remittances by reducing costs and processing times, this initiative confirms the global character of BUNA which adheres to the highest compliance standards to connect the Arab region with its main global partners in line with the vision of its founders, their Excellencies in the Council of Central Bank Governors. At this occasion, we would like to thank the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and his colleagues for their instrumental support to this initiative.”

Speaking at this occasion, H.E Mr. Jameel Ahmad, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan said, “This MoU is a significant strategic achievement that opens the door to closer connection between Pakistan and the Arab region. This collaboration between SBP and AMF is in line with our vision to leverage cross border integrations to complement the objective of building an innovative Digital Financial Services ecosystem” He added: “The integration of the two payment

systems will increase remittances to Pakistan through formal channels, with enhanced speed, safety, and savings in these cross-border transactions. With over 5 million Pakistanis residing in the Arab region and around 55 percent of Pakistan’s total remittances received from Arab countries, SBP is committed to complete the necessary work and operationalize the connectivity between Raast and BUNA in the shortest possible time.”

Additional Information:

BUNA is the cross-border payment system operated by the Arab Regional Payments Clearing and Settlement Organization “ARPCSO,” which is owned by The Arab Monetary Fund “AMF.” BUNA aim to enable financial institutions and central banks in the Arab region and beyond to send and receive payments in local currencies as well as key international currencies in a safe, cost-effective, risk-controlled, and transparent environment. BUNA offers participants modern payment solutions that comply with international standards, principles, and compliance requirements. Thanks to its cross-border payment system BUNA contributes to exploring and strengthening opportunities for economic and financial integration in the Arab region and supporting investment ties with the global trading partners. BUNA welcomes the inclusion of all banks that meet

the criteria and conditions for participation, primarily the standards and procedures of compliance aspects.

For more information, please visit www.buna.co and follow our page on LinkedIn

Raast SBP ‘Raast’ Instant Payment System is a transformational initiative that is built on state-of-the-art international standard ISO 20022 and promises to be simple, free, fast, interoperable, and a secure payment option for customers.

COURT NOTICE

IN the Court of Salma Ehsan Civil Judge 11/Alleppe Quail Buncer at Daggar Case No.21/241. Institution 3/3/2022. Date of hearing: 16/11/2023. Met. Medhale VS. Zameen Khan. Notice to no. 14. Rowan s/o Fazal resident of Bar Kalay Tehsil Gogara district Buncer. Whereas the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 16/11/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

COURT NOTICE

IN the Court of Salma Ehsan Civil Judge 11/Alleppe Quail Buncer at Daggar Case No.21/241. Institution 3/3/2022. Date of hearing: 16/11/2023. Met. Nazim VS. Mohammad Ijazat etc. Notice to no.14. Mohammad Yousaf s/o Mir Hassan. 18/3. Jemshaid Arwae. 19/4. Jemshaid Arwae. sons of Roshan Taj residents of Tolai Tehsil Khudkhal Buncer. 21.KPK government secretary revenue K-PK. Whereas the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 16/11/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Shell Pakistan hosts 10th Tameer Awards to honour young Pakistani innovators

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Shell Pakistan Limited hosted the finale of the 10th Tameer Awards 2023 at Shell House to recognize the brightest, young entrepreneurs in Pakistan.

This year, more than 400 applications were received for the awards program, and 30 finalists were short-listed in six award categories. The event was attended by business leaders, industry-professionals and academia.

The finalists presented their pitches to a jury of experts for the selection of winners and runners-up in each category. As part of the event, a panel of high-profile leaders engaged in insightful discussions on innovation and entrepreneurship, inspiring growth in the start-up ecosystem.

The Chief Executive & Managing Director of Shell Pakistan Limited, Waqar Siddiqui, stated: “It is wonderful to see young talent take significant strides in a

wide and diverse range of areas, coming up with innovative solutions to the problems faced by our country. We are proud to invest in our youth and accelerate enterprise development, through our flagship program - Shell Tameer; towards a bright future for Pakistan.”

The grand winners of the 10th Tameer Awards 2023 were: Algaverse – Nayab Raza for Circular Economy - a microalgae-based biofertilizer product manufacturer that aims to resolve problems of food insecurity, energy crises and climate change has a profound impact by supporting farmers income.

She Guard – Mehreen Raza for Empowering Women - a biodegradable, herbal-treated sanitary that will replace unsafe and harmful materials with safe, eco-friendly, and biodegradable materials to cater to women’s reproductive and menstrual hygiene management issues while fighting against the menace

of climate change.

Insights – Muhammed Ahmed for Transport & Mobility - an Intelligent Transportation System indigenously using emerging technologies like Computer Vision & AI for optimising timings to traffic signals that reduce congestion and waiting times. Creative 3D Pvt Limited – Bilal Afridi for Technology Innovation – an idea fostering the market of 3D printers by manufacturing them locally alongside providing 3D printing services for problem solving solutions for various industries.

HaloPlast – Shemir Ahmed for Clean Energy Solutions – a young startup that designs biodegradable and water-soluble plastic bags made with renewable energy sources and biopolymers as raw material to eradicate conventional plastics.

Bendcrete Constructions – Touqeer Ahmed for bright ideas - first-ever company of Pakistan to provide consultancy services for bend-

able concrete - a more efficient, safe, and cost-effective alternative to conventional concrete.

The runners up were: Green Black Agri Solutions for Circular Economy, Bizb Store for Empowering Women, Mehran Stairlift for Transport & Mobility, Agribot for Technology Innovation, Mycohues for Clean Energy Solutions and Ecopulp Pakistan for Bright ideas. Since its launch, Shell Tameer has strengthened local economies by promoting entrepreneurship.

A million youth have been engaged through this program. 10 Pakistani entrepreneurs won International Trade Grants worth PKR 3.8 million to visit seven countries and expand their market globally. Nine Shell Tameer entrepreneurs won the global Shell ‘Top Ten Innovators Awards worth PKR 10.4 million, receiving global and national recognition.

Health Ministry of Balochistan launches State Life Health Card Program

F.P. Report

QUETTA: A historic milestone for the residents of Balochistan unfolds today as the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLIC) Health Card Program is officially launched in the province, ensuring healthcare accessibility for all 2.3 Million families.

Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki, Chief Minister of Balochistan inaugurated the province’s health card program where Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezeai, Health Minister of Balochistan and Shoaib Javed Hussain, CEO of State Life Insurance Corporation also graced the event. Mr. Hussain, CEO of SLIC emphasized the significance of the Balochistan Health Card program, stating, “The implementation of this program signifies a more accessible healthcare landscape for every citizen of Balochistan.

By registering through NADRA, individuals can now enjoy cashless hospitalization services in both public and private sector hospitals, facilitated through our extensive network of over 1200 empanelled hospitals across Pakistan. State Life expresses gratitude to the Health Ministry of Balochistan for entrusting us with the responsibility of executing this universal health insurance program, a vital initiative for the well-being of the people of Balochistan.”

About State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan’s Healthcare Services: Residents are urged to confirm program eligibility by texting their CNIC number to 8500, granting coverage of up to PKR 1,000,000 per family each year. Eligible families can seek



treatment at any State Life empanelled hospital by inquiring at the Health Card Counter for doctor or consultant details. For assistance, reach out to State Life’s 24/7 call center at 0800-01001, where a representative will provide support. Enhance your experience by downloading the Balochistan Health Card Mobile application for convenient customer care access.

State Life is unwaveringly committed to a comprehensive mission focused on providing social welfare for the citizens of Pakistan and the broader diaspora. The health card program covers cardiac treatment, dialysis, cancer treatment, emergency care, neurosurgery, maternity in-patient services, renal procedures, cardiac surgeries, radiology, general surgery, and specialized investigations.

With a focus on transparency and

efficiency, State Life utilizes modern data tools, including a 3-tier gatekeeping system and a leading e-claim repository in Pakistan, employing a paperless claim system. In the digital era, the corporation facilitates payments to hospitals and employs robust risk controls with business intelligence and artificial intelligence.

State Life’s Health Insurance, designed for cost-effectiveness, offers comprehensive coverage through a network of over 1,200 hospitals nationwide, providing cashless facilities and immediate attention during critical situations. The paperless claims system ensures timely payments, solidifying State Life’s leadership in healthcare insurance. Prioritizing customer convenience, the corporation continually sets new standards in the healthcare insurance landscape.



In brief

World Snooker C'ships

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan snooker team has been finalized for participation in the IBSF World Men's (15 Reds) Snooker and Teams & 6 Reds Championships 2023 to be held from November 5 to 15 in Doha, Qatar. The players to feature in IBSF World Men's (15 Red, November 5 to 10) include Babar Masih, Muhammad Naseem Akhtar & Ahsan Ramzan. The participating players in IBSF World Teams Championship (November 5 to 12) Muhammad Naseem Akhtar & Ahsan Ramzan (Team A), Muhammad Sajjad & Babar Masih (Team B). The cueists to participate in IBSF World 6 Reds C'ship (November 5 to 15) include Muhammad Naseem Akhtar and Ahsan Ramzan. The World Men's (15 Reds), Teams and 6 Reds Championships 2023, training camp would be held in four cities Lahore, Sargodha, Sahiwal and Rawalpindi from October 9 to 31. The players would participate in the camp, from 10am to 5pm, to hone their skills and prepare themselves for the said World events. The federation was hopeful that the players, would win laurels for the country, in the above events.

Sidra's half-century helps Pakistan

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Women A defeated West Indies Women A by 12 runs in the first match of the T20 tri-series that commenced today at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore. Wicketkeeper-batter Sidra Nawaz produced a brilliant half-century that helped the home side set a fighting target of 113 for the visitors. West Indies Women A were bowled out for 100 in 20 overs, falling short by a dozen. Pakistan Women A had a faltering start after they were put to bat first by West Indies Women A. The openers failed to provide a satisfactory start; Shawaal Zulfiqar was dismissed for a duck while Eymn Fatima scored 10 from 19, including two boundaries. Veterans Sidra Nawaz and Omaima Sohail led the recovery job for their side, building a partnership of 78 runs for the fifth wicket that got the home side to 112-5 in the allotted 20 overs. Omaima (27, 37b, 3x4s) was dismissed by off-spinner Ashmini Munisar while Sidra carried the innings and went on to score an unbeaten half-century (54 not out, 40b, 7x4s). Equalling Ashmini's tally, right-arm pacers Cherry-Ann Fraser and Jahzara Claxton also got a wicket each. Off-spinner Sheneta Grimmond was the pick of the bowlers, accounting for two wickets. West Indies Women A had a turbulent time in the middle and could only manage 100, before getting bowled out in 20 overs. Captain Rashada Williams was the top scorer for the side, hitting 21 from 28, including three boundaries. Cherry-Ann Fraser, who produced 18 from 15 and also hit three fours, tried to take her side over the line, however, it went in vain as the side was bundled over in the last over. All of Pakistan bowlers picked up wickets. Right-arm pacer Humna Bilal was the most successful of the lot as she returned with three scalps, while Omaima had two to her name. West Indies Women A play against Thailand Women Emerging in the second match of the T20 tri-series, scheduled for 4 November. The toss will be conducted at 0930 PKT and play will begin at 1000 PKT.

Shahid Afridi meets PCB's Zaka Ashraf, ends days-long 'hostility'



LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan captain and star all-rounder Shahid Khan Afridi on Friday met Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, bringing an end to days-long hostility.

The meeting comes amid speculation that the former all-rounder is in the run for a top position in the cricket board. Afridi has been critical of Ashraf, accusing him of treat-

ing the board like a "club" and ensuring him for making irresponsible and unnecessary statements.

"You [Ashraf] are the chairman of the PCB and not of some [random] club. You are supposed to handle a lot of things [but you are] calling owners of media houses and complaining about people saying this and that [on their respective channel] about you," the ex-skipper said.

"You are giving [unnecessary] statements about Babar and other players

[at a time] when the [Pakistan] team is playing the World Cup," he added.

However, today's meeting, which took place in a positive environment, is expected to reduce the tension.

During the meeting, Ashraf acknowledged Afridi's dedication and contribution towards the game terming the latter as a "hero of Pakistan" and a "great ambassador of the country".

"We would love to have your experience for the betterment of Pakistan cricket," a PCB official statement while quoting Ashraf said.

Afridi, while appreciating the PCB chief's efforts and contributions to Pakistan cricket expressed interest in playing his role in grooming and preparing young cricketers to represent their country in the future.

The breakthrough meeting comes a day after former Pakistan skipper met interim Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar to discuss cricket issues including his association with the PCB in the future.

Afridi and Kakar talked about the performance of the Babar Azam-led unit in the ongoing World Cup 2023 and the grooming of cricketers from the grassroots to the international level.

Nepal, Oman qualify for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024

MULPANI (Agencies): Nepal and Oman on Friday, booked their spots at the T20 World Cup 2024 after winning their respective semi-finals of the ICC's Asia region qualifiers.

Oman humbled Bahrain by 10 wickets while Nepal edged spirited UAE by eight wickets after a tricky run chase.

With Nepal and Oman qualifying for the T20 World Cup 2024, scheduled to be co-hosted by West Indies and the United States of America (USA), a total of 18 teams have now sealed their spot in the mega event.

The final two spots will be confirmed at the Africa qualifiers, which will be concluded later this month.

Hosts West Indies and the USA sealed automatic qualification for the next year's extravaganza while Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Netherlands, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka booked their spots being the top eight sides in the 2022 edition.

Meanwhile, the two next-highest-ranked teams in the format Afghanistan and Bangladesh sealed their spots.

Ireland and Scotland qualified for the T20 World Cup 2024 from the Europe region qualifiers, while Papua New Guinea made it from the East Asia-Pacific region and Canada from the Americas region.

The next year's T20 World Cup will feature a record 20 teams, which will be divided into four groups.

The top two teams from each of the groups will qualify for the Super Eight phase, where the sides will be split into two groups of four. The top two in each group will then make their way to the semi-finals.

According to a report in July, the next edition of the T20 World Cup will run from June 4 to 30.

Details further suggested that the ICC has short-listed venues in the USA which include Lauderdale in Florida, Morrisville, Dallas and New York, for tournament matches and warm-ups.



LUCKNOW: Hashmatullah Shahidi and Rahmat Shah helped keep Afghanistan's chase on track.

World Cup 2023

Afghanistan beat the Netherlands to boost semi-final hopes

LUCKNOW (Agencies): Afghanistan continued their late surge for a place in the World Cup semi-finals with a comfortable seven-wicket win over the Netherlands in Lucknow.

The victory moves Afghanistan level with Australia and New Zealand on eight points, with only net run-rate now keeping them out of the top four.

Hashmatullah Shahidi hit an unbeaten 56 as Afghanistan passed their target of 180 with 18.3 overs to spare. Netherlands were earlier dismissed for 179 inside 47 overs.

The win tees up a potentially pivotal encounter against Australia in Mumbai on Tuesday, though the five-time winners have a game in hand against England on Saturday. Afghanistan also still have to play in-form South Africa in their final group game.

Pakistan are also still in the top-four race and can move to eight points if they beat New Zealand in Saturday's early match.

Victory for New Zealand would see Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Netherlands and England all eliminated, given Australia and Afghanistan face each

other, so at least one of them will score a minimum of nine points.

Afghanistan stay in contention with convincing win

Afghanistan are fast becoming the story of this World Cup. They had only ever won one match at a 50-over World Cup before this tournament, losing all nine matches in 2019, but have won four of their seven matches so far, including the last three.

Their inferior run-rate and tough remaining fixtures mean they remain outsiders for a top-four spot, but the fact they even have a chance is testament to their development.

After winning the toss and choosing to bat, the Netherlands recovered from the loss of Wesley Barresi in the first over to reach 66-1 after 10 - their best powerplay performance of the tournament so far. But Max O'Dowd's run out for 42 triggered a collapse as they slumped from 73-1 to 113-6.

Sybrand Engelbrecht showed some resistance with a battling 58 from 86 balls before he became the fourth member of the Netherlands top five to be

run out - only the second time that has happened in men's international cricket.

Mohammad Nabi was the pick of Afghanistan's spin-heavy attack, taking 3-28, while teenager Noor Ahmad again impressed in just his fifth ODI appearance by taking 2-31.

Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran fell cheaply as Afghanistan were reduced to 55-2 in reply, but they showed great maturity to mirror earlier successful chases against Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Rahmat Shah fell to Saqib Zulfiqar for 52, with 51 runs still needed, but Hashmatullah and Azmatullah Omarzai, who hit a spritely 31 from 28, saw Afghanistan home.

The Netherlands, who stay eighth on four points, are all but eliminated, but can still secure qualification for the 2025 Champions Trophy in Pakistan with a top-seven finish. Eighth will be good enough if Pakistan finish in the top seven.

The Dutch take on England in Pune on Wednesday, before ending their campaign against hosts India in Bangalore on 12 November.

Quality of top Premier League teams 'unprecedented', says Arteta

LONDON (AFP): Mikel Arteta says there is "unprecedented" quality at the top of the Premier League as he prepares to take his unbeaten Arsenal team to face in-form Newcastle at St James' Park on Saturday.

Arsenal, last year's runners-up, are second in the table, two points behind pacesetters Tottenham after seven wins and three draws in 10 games. Champions Manchester City are level on points with Arsenal, with Liverpool just a point further back and Aston Villa and Newcastle rounding out the top six.

"What has happened in the last five years is unprecedented," said Arteta. "It never happened with the amount of points and level of the teams."

"Now it's the amount of teams with that level that is increasing and increasing. That's why comparing to the past in this league is a waste of time. It's very different to what it used to be, and that puts the demands of what we do every single day in a different scope."

A much-changed Arsenal team suffered a chastening 3-1 midweek defeat at West Ham in the



League Cup, on the same evening that Newcastle, also with multiple changes, beat Manchester United 3-0 at Old Trafford.

Arteta said St James' Park was one of the "toughest places" to win. "We've done it and there is nothing new to it, we know what we're expecting," he said. "It is very clear what they do, what their strengths are, and where the opportunities are for us. We will try to take the game where we want."

The Spaniard said Newcastle boss Eddie Howe deserved huge credit for the job he has done since taking over late in 2021, weeks after a Saudi-backed consortium bought the club. "I think he has transformed the club, the environment, the atmosphere and what he created in the team as well," he added.

"They have such a belief

in what they do and that's a huge compliment to him." Howe, also speaking on the eve of the match, said his whole squad would be lifted by their impressive win at Old Trafford.

"I thought the spirit, determination and collective mindset was at the highest level," he said. "We are in a good place mentally after the win." But he said Arsenal would prove a tough proposition.

"It speaks for itself what they achieved (last season)," he said. "They recruited really well in the summer. I think they have moved on from last year, mentally moved on and stepped it up. They are unbeaten, (and) it is a really big test of our credentials. We are going to have to find ways to make it very difficult for them but we are looking forward to the game."

Chief Secretary inaugurates annual RMI Media Cricket League

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, formally inaugurated the annual Rehman Medical Institute (RMI) Media Cricket League at the Army Stadium in Peshawar.

Chief Operating Officer RMI, Col (rt'd) Muhammad Tariq Khan, and Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry were the chief guests on the occasion. Caretaker Minister for Information, Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, also attended the ceremony and served as the umpire in a friendly match in which Chief Secretary-11 defeated Peshawar Press Club-11 by 47 runs.



The RMI is arranging the league as part of its corporate social responsibility to provide journalists with an opportunity to take a break from their tough job and participate in healthy activities like cricket.

Addressing the ceremony, Col (rt'd) Muhammad Tariq Khan, Chief Operating Officer RMI, said that the RMI has been arranging this annual sports event for the last seven years as part of RMI's com-

mitment to the well-being of journalists. He highlighted the challenging environment in which journalists perform their duties and stated that the event will have a very positive impact on the overall health and well-being of journalists.

The inaugural ceremony featured a thrilling match between Peshawar Press Club-11 and Chief Secretary-11. Eight administrative secretaries of the province, led by the Chief Secretary, par-

ticipated in the match.

Talking to the media, the Chief Secretary and caretaker minister for information appreciated the RMI for regularly organizing the Cricket League for journalists. They lauded RMI for its efforts in organising the league and extended their heartfelt congratulations to RMI's management for arranging the league for the past seven years.

The RMI Media Cricket League is poised to become a landmark event, promoting unity and camaraderie among journalists while simultaneously celebrating their hard work and dedication. This endeavor further underscores RMI's ongoing commitment to fostering a healthy and vibrant media community.



In brief

IRSA releases 111,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (INP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 111,100 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 57,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1522.05 feet and was 124.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 29,700 cusecs and 50,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1200.65 feet, which was 150.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 7,000 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 58,400, 38,900, 41,000 and 10,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,300 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 5,300 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

CAA returns valuables to passenger

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Pakistan staff on Friday returned back valuables worth Rs 4 million to female passenger at airport. According to CAA, passengers had reached Islamabad from Karachi by flight ER 502. The passenger had left the bag in the baby changing room on level two. The female sanitary attendant Ms. Subia Asif handed over the bag to the Terminal Manager Arrival upon receiving the bag. The Terminal Manager submitted the said bag to the CAA Lost and Found Section. Two mobile phones, 110 British pounds, 22830 rupees, 116.64 grams of gold and a lady Swiss watch were found in the bag. The next day, after contacting the Islamabad Airport, the bag was handed over to the passenger. The lady passenger thanked the civil aviation staff and praised them for their honesty.

Arshad Majeed assumes office

ISLAMABAD (INP): New chairman National Highway Authority (NHA), Arshad Majeed Mohmand on Friday assumed the charge of his office. Members and officers of NHA extended warm welcome to their new chairman and hoped that his distinguished leadership will steer the organization towards a brighter future. Chairman Arshad Majeed Mohmand, visibly moved by the heartfelt reception, reciprocated with gratitude, setting a promising tone for his tenure. His appointment signifies a new chapter of transformation and progress for the NHA.

12 gamblers arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested 12 gamblers on cock fights and recovered stake money of Rs 30,000, 11 mobile phones, and six chickens from their possession during a crackdown here on Friday, informed a police spokesman. According to the details, Dhamial Police held 12 gamblers who were identified as Nazir, Mehran, Amir, Fahad, Shahbaz, Ahmed, Qasim, Mazhar, Asif, Sikandar, Naveed and Abdul Samad. Police have registered a case against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SP Sadder appreciated the performance of the police team adding that gambling was the root of other evils and action against such elements would be continued.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah along with Palestinian Ambassador in Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rabei lit candle light in memory of the Palestinian martyred people at the Palestinian stall at opening ceremony of "Annual Ten-Day Folk Festival Lok Mela at Lok Virsu".

Sindhi stresses for implementation of laws, quality education to gain progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Education Madad Ali Sindhi on Friday stressed the need for the implementation of laws and to improve the quality education for achieving progress in the country. Talking to PTV, Sindhi said the caretaker government is taking tough decisions to enhance the efficiency of national institutions, including the education sector. He said there is a need to convene an inter-provincial conference to highlight the importance of quality education and research work in the country. Responding to a question about the dilapidated condition of some

schools in far-flung areas, Sindhi said the government has visited a number of schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces. He added that the issues of dropout children and poor quality school materials will be resolved soon. A comprehensive mechanism will be adopted to address the problems faced by different institutions, he stated. Sindhi appreciated the caretaker government's steps taken in the shortest period of time, saying law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have launched a crackdown to nab illegal and unregistered foreign-

ers living in the country.

He said Pakistan is facing terrorism issues due to the involvement of illegal and unregistered aliens. To another question about a long-term strategy to streamline the system, Sindhi said the caretaker government will complete the task of providing security and necessary funds to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for holding free and fair elections in the country. Caretaker Minister for Education Madad Ali Sindhi said a democratically elected government will take concrete measures and evolve a strategy to bring improvement in the institutions.

HEC conducts workshop for college faculty of ICT region

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) team conducted a three-day capacity-building workshop for teachers at affiliated colleges in the ICT region. The workshop was conducted by the Post-secondary Education Reform Unit (PERU) in coordination with the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), according to a news release.

The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and the Federal Directorate of Education had requested training for 70 nominated teachers from associate and graduate col-

leges in Islamabad. The Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP) 2020 was approved by the HEC and will be implemented in Fall 2023. The success of a policy depends on the preparedness of teachers, who constitute the foundation of an education system. For successful implementation of UEP, the faculty of higher education institutes must understand it well and be prepared to implement it in letter and spirit. The affiliated colleges are undergoing a transition from an annual system to a semester system under Education Policy 2020.

The introduction of associate degree programmes and bachelor's degree programmes required significant procedural and regula-

tory changes in student admission, enrollment, registration, advisement system, internship, capstone project, assessment methods, attendance system, course design and conduct, learning management system, and using technology in teaching and assessment. For the first time, a special module on environment and sustainability was also added to create awareness among teachers regarding the SDGs.

The training methods also addressed the expectations and levels of target teachers with suitable activities and involvement rather than mere lecturing. The workshop was conducted by master trainers specialising in various areas of training.

ANF recovers 343 kg drugs; arrests two smugglers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation managed to recover over 343 kg of drugs and arrested two drug smugglers after an encounter, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in an encounter in Jhelum between ANF intelligence and drug smugglers, more than 343 kg of drugs including 277.2 kg hashish and 67.2 kg opium were recovered. He said an ANF official received bullet injuries in the exchange of fire with drug smugglers.

During the operation, two suspects including one injured were arrested while one smuggler managed to escape from the spot.

Acting on a tip-off, an attempt was made to stop a Suzuki Mehran car at the Dina check post but the accused instead of stopping the vehicle tried to escape, he said adding, that the ANF team chased and forced the vehicle to stop near Domeli Chowk, Jhelum. The drug smugglers started firing at the ANF personnel in an attempt to escape. An ANF official received bullet injuries in the leg in the

exchange of fire, he added. The injured official was immediately shifted to the hospital for medical treatment where his condition is stated to be out of danger.

As a result of the firing, an injured suspect was arrested along with his accomplice while another accused escaped in the nearby forest, the spokesman informed. He said that ANF was making efforts to net other members of the group.

A case has been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act, while further investigation is underway.

Power theft crackdown

Rs4.59 bln recovered from defaulters

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Power Division has recovered Rs4.59 billion during a countrywide power theft crackdown, reported on Friday.

To minimize the losses in the power sector, the caretaker government and military leadership of the country in September decided to launch a countrywide crackdown on power thieves.

As per details shared by the Power Division, Rs4.59 billion have been recovered from 22 to 29 October, while over 5,448 people were arrested during the crackdown. Rs1.91 billion were recovered during crackdown in Punjab and Islamabad, while Rs1.08 billion from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

From Sindh, Rs1.39 billion were recov-

ered in terms of fine from the electricity pilfers. Rs0.21 billion were recovered from Balochistan during October 22 to 29, the power division said.

On October 18, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Mardan was declared loadshedding-free city under the "Zero-Theft, Zero-Loadshedding" initiative launched by the power division.

Mardan had been facing power outages for more than six hours a day. Secretary Power Division Rashid Langrial launched "The Mardan Model" in Islamabad, under which there would be no loadshedding in the city as the power theft has ended and recoveries have also improved in the region. With this Mardan has become Pakistan's first power theft-free city.

‘Heritage channel for regional literature soon’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah Friday disclosed to launch of a dedicated heritage channel to promote the regional literature of Pakistan soon which will create awareness among the young generation about their regional languages and rich lingual identities. Talking to PTV news channel, he said that Heritage channel will showcase and celebrate the Pakistan's rich culture in a way that reflects the views of the Pakistani people and the heritage, civilization and cultural history of the country. We aim to engage the general public in a modern and lively manner through content that reflects the views of the Pakistani people and the heritage, civilization and cultural history of their country, he added.

Replying to a question about the folk mela started in Islamabad, he said the biggest folk festival, "Lok Mela 2023," will serve as a cultural treat for the people, featuring a variety of activities including provincial pavilions, shopping and food stalls, and musical programs. He said that is a key

source for promoting regional languages and preserving arts, crafts, culture, folk music and traditional skills of the country. He said that this unique event has become a symbol of the federation's recognition and patronage of our rich cultural diversity and the active participation of the people.

He further said that traditional Mela is a part of government priorities as it aims to encourage initiatives related to public welfare, promotion, and development of Pakistan's culture, and to provide meaningful and wholesome entertainment opportunities to the citizens. Replying to another question, he regretted the lower wages of artists in past and disclosed that the present government will soon consider this issue on priority and will increase their maximum wages for the welfare of the artist community.

The minister also discussed the importance of federal, provincial, and territorial heritage sites to our culture and acknowledged the need for additional governmental resources to further support this sector to address current challenges.

Int'l moot on Islamic finance concludes in AIOU

ISLAMABAD (APP): A three-day international conference on "Advancing Islamic Finance" at Allama Iqbal Open University concluded with 10 recommendations, including the publication of a research journal of Islamic Finance, organizing conference on Islamic Finance regularly, collaborating with national and international institutions for the promotion of Islamic finance, designing courses and degree programs in Islamic finance.

These recommendations were presented by the confer-

ence Secretary, Dr. Ahmed Abdul Rahman. The closing ceremony was presided over by the Dean of, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi, while Prof. Dr. Mufti Zubair Usmani from Jamia Darul Uloom Karachi, and Sahibzada Muhammad Qamarul Haq from Jamia Muhammadiyah Sharif Chiniot, were the special guests. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi said that Faculty of Arabic carries a unique identity for organizing conferences, seminars and academic and intellectual

events, but this was our first experience on Islamic finance, which was a successful joint effort. On this occasion, he announced that an international conference on Arabic would be held in December on World Arabic Day. Dr Hashmi added that I now announce the approval of two recommendations, one is that the conference on Islamic Finance will be organized annually in AIOU and other is that the Islamabad Journal of Islamic Finance will be published before next year's conference.

President attends convocation of COMSATS University

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad held its 26th and 27th Convocation Ceremonies at Jinnah Convention Centre, on Thursday. Twenty-four hundred and sixty-five students received graduate and post-graduate degrees in these ceremonies.

The ceremonies also witnessed award of 35 Gold Medals, 25 Silver Medals and 20 Bronze Medals to Top graduates who qualified their degrees with distinction in respective programs.

Graduates were awarded degrees of Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the disciplines of Bioinformatics, Physics, Economics, Biosciences, Business Administration, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical/Telecommunication Engineering, Electronics, Mathematics, Architecture, Design and Psychology. The first session of the Convocation Ceremony was presided by the university Chancellor, Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

While addressing the gathering Dr. Alvi appreciated the efforts of the students to graduate from a prestigious institution dedicated towards building excellence. He urged the university to provide the best available opportunities for learning and personal development along with a caring and supportive environment.

He said that the future of Pakistan was tied to the professional and moral upbringing of the nation's youth. Dr. Alvi conferred medals upon distinction holders of the university and distributed degrees among selected PhD graduates.

Rector of COMSATS University Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Sajid Qamar while addressing the convocation said



that life-long learning skills imbibed in our students will transform any place they choose to start their life journey, be it academia or professional workplace. He said it was very important that graduates commit themselves to excellence and creative thinking and solving local challenges. Dr. Qamar stressed that students familiarize themselves with emerging technologies and integrate knowledge gained during their degree program with current trends of the industry.

In-charge Islamabad Campus Professor Dr. Sohail Asghar while presenting the Campus Report said that the curriculum at CUI is crafted to align with the industrial demands.

He said that the focus of the Islamabad campus is on continuous professional development of its faculty comprising over 363 PhDs. He said that COMSIANS are ready to fit well into the industry and indulge in entrepreneurial roles by focusing on emerging areas.

He said that the Islamabad Campus

recognizes the importance of a healthy mind towards a prosperous society and encourages students' participation in leadership development, co-curricular programs and mental health awareness.

Dr. Asghar said that after the ceremony the Graduates have become an ever more important part of the COMSATS' Alumni fraternity. COMSATS University Islamabad is providing initiatives that support graduates to start their own businesses, he said. Speakers paid rich tribute to parents of students receiving degrees and medals. The second session of the convocation was presided over by the COMSATS University's Founder Rector, Dr. S. M. Junaid Zaidi. He said that developed countries of the world focus on Industry, Innovation, Technology and stand to promote Higher Education to achieve prosperity.

CUI from its founding is committed to the cause of furthering the highest quality of education among talented youths of Pakistan.

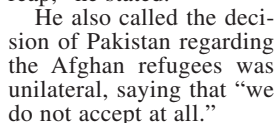


ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Fawad Hasan Fawad chairing a meeting with FA on FWBL.

KABUL (BNA) The police have arrested 15 people on charges of robbery, illegal mining and other crimes in the past 24 hours from the provinces of Kandahar, Takhar, Kabul, Ghor, Farah and Herat. The Ministry of Interior in a statement said to Bakhtar News Agency: that their Police personnel have arrested six people on charges of crimes from Kandahar, three on illegal mining along with a robber in Takhar, two in Kabul, two in Farah and two others in Ghor and Herat provinces.

KABUL (BAN): The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) has arranged for another group of children suffering from heart defects to receive treatment at two hospitals in Kabul. According to an ARCS press release, these 16 children will undergo treatment for their heart conditions, with all costs covered by the charity. It's noteworthy that over the past 15 months, ARCS has referred approximately 2,000 children with heart diseases to various hospitals across the country for necessary treatments and surgeries.

Acting Defense Minister warns Pakistan against 'cruel' treatment of Afghans



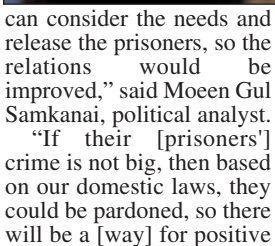
"They cannot do it by any law or rule. Such actions will be questioned," he said. "We will

Aid Organizations report concerns about expelled Afghan migrants from Pakistan



Americans detained in Afghanistan 'highest priority': Decker

"Both of the countries



engagement," said Abdul Sadiq Hamidzoi, a political analyst. In August this year, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West and the Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights, Rina Amiri, in a meeting with senior

Islamic Emirate representatives in Doha, discussed the removal of restrictions on women and girls, including access to education and work; release of detainees; end to corporal punishment, and crackdowns on media and freedom of expression.

Traders call for release of Afghan goods held in Karachi

"Unfortunately, this unresolved problem is increasing day by day, we are going to have to pay \$1 million a day, and the situation is that they want to hit Afghanistan economically," said Khan Jan Alokozai, head of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce. At the same time, a number of drivers in

The head of Faryab's Chamber of Commerce and Investment in Aqina port called for equal time-sharing for cars in neighboring countries and Afghanistan as the solution to this chal-

leage. "In a month, distribute 1,000 foreign vehicles [transit permits] to 1,000 foreign vehicles and reach an agreement with Iran and Turkmenistan to allow 1,000 of our vehicles to enter," said Abdul Majid Niazi, head of the Andkhoy-Faryab Chamber of Commerce and Investment. The challenges of stopping Afghan merchants' containers in Karachi port and problems with drivers in Iran's Chabahar port come as Afghanistan conducts the most trade with Pakistan and Iran.





ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Qazi Faez Isa administering the oath of office of Mr. Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, Acting Chief Justice of High Court of Sindh as judge of Supreme Court.

Arrest warrant of ex-Secy issued

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Accountability Court Peshawar Judge Gohar-ur-Rehman issued non-bailable arrest warrant of former Secretary Worker Welfare Board Muhammad Tariq Awan in eight references regarding assets beyond known resources, on Friday.

Accountability Court Peshawar issued non-bailable arrest warrant due to absentia from hearing. The court also ordered to produce former Secretary Worker Welfare Board before accountability court on 23rd November.

It is worthy to mention that eight different references are under proceeding against former Secretary Worker Welfare Board for malpractices during services and holding assets beyond resources.

Meanwhile, the students of 10th semester at Frontier Law College visited Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy along with faculty. Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy Muhammad Shoaib briefed the participants and administration of the academy. He appreciated college's administration for organizing exposure visits for students which will be beneficial in grooming.

The delegation visited different sections of and aware about facilities in judicial academy. Director Frontier Law College Akhtar Ali Khan Naqi paid thanks to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy Director General for provision of facility to the students.

Justice Irfan takes oath as judge of SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, Acting Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court on Friday took oath as judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Qazi Faiz Isa administered oath of the office to Justice Irfan Saadat Khan during a simple and dignified ceremony held at Supreme Court.

Attorney General for Pakistan, representatives of the Federal Judicial Academy, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan Bar Council, Supreme Court Bar Association along with Senior Advocates, Advocates, Advocates on Record and officers and staff of the Supreme Court of Pakistan attended the ceremony. Registrar Supreme Court of Pakistan, Ms. Jazeela Aslam conducted the proceedings of oath taking ceremony.

Public holiday on Iqbal Day

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The government to mark the 146th birth anniversary of national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal with zeal and fervour has announced public holiday on November 09. Cabinet division on Friday issued a notification in this.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal was born in Sialkot on Nov 9, 1877 and got fame as the "Poet of the East" worldwide. Besides a great poet, he was also philosopher and thinker of the 20th century, recognized internationally.

KP Cabinet reviews evacuation of Afghans

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a special meeting of the caretaker cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, chaired by Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan on Friday, various issues concerning the evacuation of illegally residing foreigners were meticulously assessed. Caretaker cabinet members, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Additional Chief Secretary for Interior Abid Majeed, along with relevant administrative secretaries and officials, attended the meeting.

The meeting received a briefing on the arrangements made for the repatriation of illegal immigrants and associated matters. Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan expressed his contentment with the administration's efforts in facilitating the return of illegal immigrants to their home countries and the amenities offered in the holding centres. He commended the roles played by various departments and institutions, including district administration and police, in providing facilities

ties and accommodations for the returning migrants.

The Chief Minister directed that voluntarily returning illegal immigrants be treated with the utmost humanity, ensuring special care during their repatriation, and respecting the province's traditions and values. Emphasizing the importance of transparency in all expenses related to the foreign evacuation process, he called for maintaining a detailed record of both regular and emergency expenses. He stressed strict adherence to rules and regulations governing these expenses and the development of mechanisms to ensure transparency.

During a press conference regarding the cabinet meeting's decisions, Caretaker Minister of Information and Public Relations, Barrister Feroze Jamal Kakakhel, highlighted the need for an orderly and respectful approach to the return of illegal residents, in line with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's traditions. He mentioned exemptions for women and children from biometric requirements, facilities at transit

points, and the influx of illegal residents from other provinces into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, leading to increased responsibilities for the province. An emergency has been declared in Nowshera, Peshawar, and Khyber districts to improve management.

Kakakhel revealed that the caretaker cabinet approved the release of emergency funds for the relief department, with an estimated expenditure of one billion rupees. The federal caretaker government has been contacted for immediate provision. He noted that the federal government will work with provincial governments to share expenses because this issue extends beyond Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to affect all provinces.

Providing statistics, Kakakhel mentioned that approximately 150,000 illegal individuals have voluntarily returned, and the deportation process is ongoing alongside voluntary returns. The caretaker provincial information minister emphasized the encouragement of voluntary returns.

PTI's Asad Qaiser arrested

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser has been arrested from his residence in Islamabad's Bani Gala area, the former National Assembly speaker's brother said on Friday.

Sources said that Qaiser — who is a staunch supporter of PTI Chairman Imran Khan — was taken into custody by police and Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) personnel for alleged

corrupt practices related to purchase of medical equipment for Gajju Khan Medical College in Swabi. Sources said that Qaiser is being shifted to Bani Gala Police Station, where he will be handed over to the ACE officials.

They said that the PTI stalwart faces allegations of illegal appointments in the educational institutions. Qaiser's arrest comes as another setback for the Khan-led party, which is already embroiled in legal battles as its top leadership remains

behind bars in different cases. It may be noted that Qaiser led a PTI delegation in a meeting with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's (JUI-F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence last month.

"Today, we came to offer our condolences [over the demise of Fazl's mother-in-law], this is our culture. We did not discuss politics in the meeting," said Qaiser while speaking to the media after the meeting, which he said had taken place after approval from Khan.

Netanyahu rules out Gaza cease-fire

(Continued from Page 1)

As American officials have before, Blinken pledged unwavering support for Israel and its right to defend itself.

"We stand strongly for the proposition that Israel has not only the right but the obligation to defend itself, and to make sure that October 7 should never happen again," said Blinken, who also plans to visit Amman, Jordan. It follows President Joe Biden's suggestion for a humanitarian "pause" in the fighting. The aim would be to let in aid for Palestinians and let out more Palestinians who hold foreign passports and wounded. Around 800 people left Gaza over the past two days — the first time people departed the besieged territory other than four hostages released by Hamas and another rescued by Israeli forces.

Blinken first held talks with Netanyahu behind closed doors before starting wider discussions with the leader and his War Cabinet and meeting with President Isaac Herzog. More than 3,700 Palestinian children have been killed in 25 days of fighting, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. Bombardment has driven more than half the territory's 2.3 million people from their homes. Food, water and fuel are running low under Israel's siege, and overwhelmed hospitals warn they are on the verge of collapse.

Israel has allowed more than 260 trucks carrying

food and medicine into Gaza, but aid workers say it's not nearly enough. Israeli authorities have refused to allow fuel in, saying Hamas is hoarding fuel for military use and would steal new supplies. White House national security spokesman John Kirby said the US was not advocating for a general cease-fire but a "temporary, localized" pause.

Israel has not openly responded to Biden's suggestion. But Netanyahu, who has previously ruled out a cease-fire, said Thursday: "We are advancing. ... Nothing will stop us." He vowed to destroy Hamas rule in the Gaza Strip. Israel and the US seem to have no clear plan for what would come next if Hamas rule in Gaza is brought down — a key question on Blinken's agenda during the visit, according to the State Department.

Meanwhile, military officials said Israeli forces have now completely encircled Gaza City, a densely packed cluster of neighborhoods that Israel says is the center of Hamas military infrastructure and includes a vast network of underground tunnels, bunkers and command centers. Israeli forces are "fighting in a built-up, dense, complex area," said the military's chief of staff, Herzi Halevy.

Hagari, the military spokesperson, said Israeli forces were in "face to face" battles with militants, calling in airstrikes and shelling when needed. He said they were inflicting

heavy losses on Hamas fighters and destroying their infrastructure with engineering equipment. Hamas' military wing said early Friday that its fighters battled Israeli troops in several areas in Gaza and claimed they killed four soldiers on the northern edge of the city of Beit Lahiya. It also claimed to have destroyed several tanks with locally made anti-tank rockets.

Neither the reports from Israel nor Hamas could be independently verified. Casualties on both sides were expected to rise as Israeli troops advance toward the dense residential neighborhoods of Gaza City. Israel has warned residents to immediately evacuate the Shati refugee camp, which borders Gaza City's center.

But hundreds of thousands of Palestinians remain in the path of fighting in northern Gaza, despite Israel's repeated calls for them to flee. Many have crowded into UN facilities, hoping for safety. Still, four UN schools-turned-shelter in northern Gaza and Bureij were hit in recent days, killing 24 people, according to Philippe Lazzarini, general-secretary of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA. In the occupied West Bank overnight, Israeli forces killed seven Palestinians in different places and arrested many more, according to the Israeli military and Palestinian health officials. — Arab News

Dar complaints party 'denied' level playing field

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Former ruling party Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which has been facing accusations of being given preferential treatment by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Peoples Party, claimed that it was denied a level playing field in the past.

Addressing the Senate session on Friday, Leader of the House Ishaq Dar said: "We were not given level playing field." He said that PML-N issued a "white paper" on massive rigging during the 2018 elections.

Dar said there should be a level playing field for all, stressing that credible elections are important for the country. He said we then should also have the magnanimity to accept the election results with open hearts. The former finance minister emphasised the importance of free, fair, and transparent elections to take forward the country. "Constitution says that elections should be held within 90 days [after the dissolution of an assembly] but [we] should look into other clauses of the Constitution too." The PML-N leader said that the demand for holding polls within 90 days was "unconstitutional" after the approval of the census.

Lamenting the relief granted to the PML-N leader, the incarcerated PTI chief said: "The only way a convicted criminal could be allowed to return to politics with a clean chit is by destroying State institutions. And hence, what we are witnessing is a complete collapse of our justice system." He slammed the "complete collapse of our justice system" and termed the PML-N supremo's return to the country as the execution of London "agreement".

Siraj calls for setup of Pak-Afghan commission

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Ammer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Siraj Haq has proposed the establishment of a Pak-Afghan commission aimed at formulating a viable plan for the repatriation of Afghan refugees to their home country.

Address a gathering here on Friday, he warned against the propagation of propaganda and conspiracies by adversaries of both nations regarding the refugee issue. Siraj Haq welcomed the Election Commission's election schedule, which was released following a meeting with the president and in compliance with the directives of the Supreme Court.

He emphasized that both the parliament and the top court should issue clear guidelines for the execution of all future elections, strictly adhering to the timeline stipulated in the constitution. Expressing the desire for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to operate independently in both administrative and financial realms, he underscored the need for the commission to ensure that every contestant adheres strictly to the election code of conduct.

The JI chief demanded the rulers of Muslim world make practical step to save Gaza from Israeli atrocities. "Are you (Muslim rulers) waiting for the complete destruction of Gaza and genocide of Palestinians?" He said the approval of the 14.5-billion-dollar aid by the US House of Representatives to Israeli was tantamount to issuing killing license to Zionist regime. He said the US has history of backing aggressor and by attacking Japan, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, it killed thousands of civilians.

He stressed that history would never absolve them if the rulers of the Muslim world remain passive in the face of the unjust killings of innocent Palestinians. Siraj lamented that the Pakistani rulers had failed to advocate for the Palestinian cause in line with the desires of the nation.

He said the ruling parties were directly responsible for the plight of people. The past rulers, he added, destroyed economy and burdened the country with heavy debts. He said the JI was the only political party which has the ability to put the country on track, appealing the people to vote for the JI in the upcoming polls.

PPP to win next elections: Bilawal

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has announced his party's clear victory in the upcoming general elections, saying, "InshaAllah Ta'ala, Agli Baari Pakistan People's Party (God willing, the next government will be of the Pakistan People's Party)."

According to the press release issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, the PPP Chairman, while speaking to the media after inaugurating the Free Diagnostic Laboratory under JDC Foundation, said that it is a great achievement that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has officially announced that the general elections will be held on February 8. He said that it would have been better if the Election Commission itself had given the date for the general elections, and the Supreme Court would not have had to interfere. "Well, whatever happened, it's done now, the elections should be held on February 8," he urged.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that all political parties should get a level playing field in the general elections, adding that PPP has not been given a level playing field in any of the past elections. "Even during the elections of 1988 and 2008, PPP did not have a level playing field, but despite this, PPP secured its mandate and formed governments," he pointed out.

Chairman PPP said that PTI was founded on such grounds that no other party, except PTI, should have a level playing field in the election. "If they (PTI) are facing somewhat difficulties in an election now, 'Welcome to the Club'," he added. In response to a question, he said that PPP has not yet taken any decision regarding alliance with PTI. "I think that all the political parties of the country should come to the Charter of Democracy (CoD), and if PTI also recognizes the CoD, it will be a good development," he added.

In response to a question about the deportation of refugees, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that no party can support any illegal act, but questions are being raised about the

manner in which measures are being taken against refugees. "Pakistan People's Party has always had a strong stand on human rights," he said and demanded that the law must be implemented, but human rights must be taken care of.

In response to a question regarding the situation in Gaza, the PPP Chairman said that the Presidents and Prime Ministers of different countries are silent at the moment, but the people, from East to West, of those countries are not, adding: "The people of these countries, especially the youth, are sending a message to their respective governments that they should stand with the oppressed people of Palestine." He said that this is happening for the first time in history that we are seeing genocide on social media.

"Now the world has an obligation to stop the brutality with which international law is being violated in Gaza, and the way children are being killed there, which is genocide," demanded Pakistan's former foreign minister. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that it is important to have playgrounds and public places for the people, especially the youth, so that they can participate in healthy activities. "The former provincial government of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) introduced People's Squares in Karachi for the same purpose," he said, adding that after winning the next election, the upcoming PPP government will establish People's Squares and a sports field in every district of Karachi.

On this occasion, various leaders of the party, including former Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and PPP Sindh General Secretary Senator Waqar Mehd, were also accompanied with the party chairman.

Meanwhile, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari arrived to inaugurate the diagnostic laboratory and was welcomed by JDC Foundation Pakistan General Secretary Zafar Abbas. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inaugurated the JDC Free Laboratory. He also appreciated the services of JDC Foundation during the Covid-19 pandemic and floods.

Climate change big threat for planet earth: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Friday urged official media to join hands with private media houses to create awareness about negative impacts of climate change.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of establishment of climate change desk at PTV, he said today the first step had been taken by PTV management for which it deserved appreciation.

Lauding the PTV management for acting swiftly, he said that the climate change desk has been established and connected with regional stations and dedicated reporters have been appointed. The minister urged the private media to adopt this model on coverage of climate change issues.

The minister issued directives to Ministries of Climate Change and Information and Broadcasting to work together on this front. He said that Information Service Academy should start providing training to reporters, researchers on this subject.

Murtaza Solangi also called for mobilization of social media and other digital platforms in fight against climate change. He said that the journalists working in climate change

desk should visit the regions affected by climate change and meet the local people. He proposed that media persons should also engage parents, teachers and experts in different fields as entire society has to be mobilized regarding climate change.

The minister said that climate change was a big threat for the planet earth establishment of Climate Change Desk in PTV was a great step in the right direction. Pakistan Television should telecast special programmes and documentaries about the disastrous impacts of climate change.

Murtaza Solangi said that general elections will be held in February next year and the caretaker government had no favourite party in the electoral race. He said it was responsibility of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to ensure that all registered political parties were given coverage without any discrimination on official media. According to the spirit of the constitution, the elected representatives have the prerogative to run the affairs of country, Murtaza Solangi remarked.

The caretaker government, he added, was fully committed for holding free and transparent elections in the country. Secretary Information and

Broadcasting and MD PTV Zahoor Ahmed in his speech said that climate change and disaster reporting were specialised fields. He said that the PTV would provide training to its staff deputed on climate change in collaboration with Ministry of Climate Change and development partners. He said that climate change reporting was a day to day activity and it was vital to work on disaster preparedness. He said that in the nations having better preparedness, loss of life in natural disasters was minimised whereas in Pakistan countless precious lives were lost due to lack of preparedness and weak early warning system. He assured the minister that the PTV would work on reorientation of its news system and attach priority to climate change related news.

Earlier the minister cut the ribbon to formally inaugurate the Climate Change Desk in the PTV. The desk has been established for extensive coverage of news about environmental issues and highlight its negative impacts. Besides Secretary Information and Broadcasting Zahoor Ahmed and Secretary Ministry of Climate Change Syed Asif Hyder Shah, senior officers from the ministry and PTV attended the ceremony.

SC orders govt

(Continued from Page 1)

It said that a prime minister was removed by a no-confidence motion in the recent past. "The Constitution is clear that the majority of the members of the assembly can pass the motion of no confidence." The order mentioned that a political crisis arose in the country after the no-confidence motion after which the SC took its notice. "The president dissolved the National Assembly after the no trust was tabled, which was an unconstitutional act," the order read, highlighting that the president cannot do so on the instructions of the prime minister.

"People cannot be kept away from elected representatives," the order mentioned. The court stated: "Dissolving the assembly unconstitutionally falls under the category of treason. Constitutional institutions can make important decisions only in the interest of the people." It expressed hope that all constitutional institutions will show prudence in the future.

The order mentioned that the president did not

have the power to dissolve the assembly but he did, while he did not exercise his power to appoint a date for election. Furthermore, the chief justice asked the ECP counsel if the electoral authority had issued an election programme. "The election programme will be announced after the delimitation of constituencies is done," the lawyer replied.

He added that the delimitation process will be completed on November 30, while the programme will be announced in the first week of December. The date of the election schedule should be issued for people to stay updated, the chief justice said. During the hearing on Friday, which was held in two phases, the chief justice asked the Attorney-General for Pakistan, Mansoor Usman Awan, to get the president's signature on the minutes of the meeting held with CEC Raja, as the minutes he filed earlier did not bear the president's signature.

Awan, following the temporary adjournment of the hearing, filed the signed meeting minutes at the court along with three copies as well. The

Supreme Court, however, kept the original signed meeting minutes. The CJP had earlier said that the court didn't want any kind of suspicion in the matter, as it did not receive anything from the President House. The chief justice insisted that the court doesn't want to leave any "grey area" and there shouldn't be any "ambiguity" in this regard.

"Tomorrow, no party should say that they were not involved in the consultation process. If anyone wants to come from the President House, we will welcome him," the chief justice said. On Thursday, CJP Isa ordered the ECP to consult President Alvi on the matter of finalising the election date and inform the court.

Following the SC's directives, CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja called on the president and unanimously agreed to hold general elections in the country on February 8, 2024. It should be noted that the pleas pertaining to the timely conduct of polls were filed by the Supreme Court Bar Association, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and others.