

Fawad Chaudhry arrested

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former federal minister during PTI government Fawad Chaudhry was arrested from Islamabad by the police on Saturday. Confirming her husband's arrest, Fawad Chaudhry's wife said the police party came to their house and took Fawad into their custody and sped away to unknown place. Fawad's brother Faraz Chaudhry also confirmed the arrest by the police, saying he did now where they took him.

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Iran mark 1979 US embassy takeover

TEHRAN: Demonstrations have been held across Iran to denounce the United States and Israel and to mark the 1979 takeover of the US embassy in Tehran as Israel bombards the Gaza Strip. Saturday marked the 13th day of the Iranian month of Aban, the day the US embassy was stormed by young revolutionaries shortly after the country's 1979 revolution, which birthed the current theocratic establishment in Iran.

The November 4, 1979, takeover, which took place after the fall of Iran's US-backed monarch, lasted 444 days, and 52 Americans were held captive. The site of the US embassy is now accessible to the public as a representation of what Iranian officials call a "den of spies". This day on the Iranian calendar is also known as Students Day and the National Day of Fighting Global Arrogance.

Demonstrators, some of whom were children, started marching in Tehran about 9am (12:30pm GMT) from Palestine Square in the downtown area to the site of the former US embassy a few kilometres away. State television showed people holding Palestinian flags and others burning Israeli, US and United Kingdom flags. In some places, the US and Israeli flags were put on the ground, so demonstrators could walk over them.

Chants of "death to America" and "death to Israel" rang out throughout the marches. One demonstrator could be seen holding a cardboard cutout of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on his knees with his hands behind his head in a sign of surrender. Revolutionary student groups released statements to condemn the "atrocities" committed by Israel against Palestinian civilians and to cite a promise made by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in 2015 that Israel would cease to exist by 2040.

State-organised demonstrations were also held in other large cities, including Mashhad, Isfahan, Ardebil and Hamedan, and government ministers and other officials were in attendance. The state-run IRNA news website reported rallies were held in more than 1,200 cities and towns. Iranian officials have called for an immediate cessation of Israeli bombings and operations in Gaza, which have killed more than 9,488 Palestinians, most of them women and children, since the October 7 Hamas attacks, which killed about 1,400 Israelis.

Tehran has also warned that the war could spread as the "resistance axis" of forces across the region – including in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and Syria – could retaliate against Israel's killing of civilians and promises to destroy Hamas. — Aljazeera

Nawaz to visit Sindh, KP soon

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who recently returned to Pakistan after four years in exile, is likely to visit Sindh, KP and Balochistan province to mobilise his party ahead of polls. Sources privy to the matter stated that the PML-N supremo is likely to visit cities in Sindh, KP and Balochistan at the end of this month.

PML-N has started preparations to finalise the schedule of Nawaz Sharif's upcoming visit. Earlier, Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif appointed Senator Ishaq Dar to head PML-N's election cell for the upcoming polls. A notification in this regard was issued on Saturday by PML-N secretary general Ahsan Iqbal with the approval of Shehbaz Sharif.

Attack on PAF base in Mianwali foiled ISPR says 9 terrorists killed in clearance operation

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: The security forces have eliminated nine militants in a clearance operation after a terrorist attack on Pakistan Air Force's (PAF) Mianwali Training Air Base was thwarted in a swift response by the troops, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said Saturday.

The air base was targeted by militants earlier on Saturday, however, the security forces foiled the attack and launched an operation to eliminate any potential threat in the surroundings. "Alhumdollah, the combing and clearance operation at PAF Training Airbase Mianwali has been concluded and all nine terrorists have been sent to hell," said the military's media wing.

The statement added that the clearance operation was launched to eliminate any potential threat following the cowardly and failed terrorist attack on the base this morning. "No damage has been done to any of the PAF's functional operational assets, while only some damage was done to three already phased-out non-operational aircraft

during the attack," added the statement.

ISPR further said that the prompt and professional conclusion of the operation serves as a stark reminder to all enemies of peace that PAF remains vigilant and is fully capable of defending the homeland from any threat.

ISPR said 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". Interim Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani strongly condemned the terrorist attack. "Such acts are utterly reprehensible. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the martyred and injured. Pakistan stands resolute against terrorists," he said in a post on X.

Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar commended the security forces, saying that the valiant PAF has proven its mettle by thwarting the terrorist attack once again. "The valiant Pakistan Air Force has once again proven its mettle by thwarting a cowardly terrorist attack in Mianwali. Any

attempt to undermine our security will meet with unwavering resistance. The nation stands with you and we salute your courage and resolve," he wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Former PM Shehbaz Sharif condemned the terrorist attack, saying that these repeated attacks reveal our enemies' desperation, but the country stands resilient. "Our forces are vigilant, united to defeat terrorism. We're determined to preserve peace and stability. Prayers for the affected families and our brave security personnel," he added.

President Dr Arif Alvi has strongly condemned the attack on the convoy of Pakistan Army in Gwadar. In a statement, he said terrorists are enemies of Pakistan and efforts will continue for their complete elimination. He said we stand by the armed forces to completely eliminate the scourge of terrorism. He paid tributes to the martyrs. Arif Alvi also denounced the attack on the training air base in Mianwali. He expressed satisfaction on the foiling of the terrorist attack.

We stand resolute against any threat to our nation: PAF

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force visited PAF Base, Mianwali following a recent foiled terrorist attack.

During the visit, the Air Chief commended the on duty security personnel for their unwavering professionalism and bravery in thwarting the malicious attempt and neutralizing the intruders in the minimum possible time.

Chief of the Air Staff interacted with the base personnel, expressed his utmost appreciation for their exceptional commitment in putting service before self and reiterated the required level of readiness of each & every person in the Pakistan Air Force to counter any malicious intent of hostile elements & terrorist outfits.

He lauded the morale of base personnel and highlighted the collective resolve of PAF to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and preparedness in the face of evolving security challenges. He also thanked the joint operations team comprising Zarar Company of Pakistan Army and civil LEAs for their timely support to counter the infiltration most optimally.

Speaking at the occasion

the Air Chief stated, "The security scenario demands our unwavering vigilance and commitment. We stand resolute against any threat to our beloved nation. Pakistan Air Force will continue to play a pivotal role in safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan."

The visit of Chief of the Air Staff serves as a strong message of solidarity and reassurance to the entire Pakistan Air Force personnel, inspiring them to remain steadfast in their duty to protect the nation. It also showcases the PAF's unwavering commitment to upholding the highest standards of professionalism, bravery and dedication.

Stop genocide of Palestinians, Pak tells Israel

UNITED NATIONS (INP): Pakistan told in a UN meeting that an immediate ceasefire was critical to meet immense needs in the besieged Gaza, and called on Israel to stop its ongoing 'genocide' of Palestinian people. "We cannot mince our words; we have to tell the Israelis: stop the genocide," Ambassador Munir Akram said during a briefing on the 'Humanitarian Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.'

UN Humanitarian Coordinator Martin Griffiths, fresh from the war-torn region, and Lynn Hastings, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, were among those who briefed the member states about the latest developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both officials called for humanitarian ceasefires to ensure safe delivery of food, fuel and other essential items. In his remarks, the Pakistani envoy said that the Israelis, having suffered the Holocaust, were now committing the 'modern genocide' against the Palestinians, and 'we must call it for what it is'. In this regard, he called for respecting and adhering to the international humanitarian law that forbids attacks on civilians and civilian objects. "Let us, as the international community, adhere to what the General Assembly has

said. Let us adhere to what the international humanitarian law says," Ambassador Akram said. "This is what we expect from all those who are leading the United Nations, all those who are speaking for the conscience of the international community."

The Pakistani envoy said that the deadly Israeli strikes against schools, hospitals and civilian sites in Gaza on the pretext that there were military targets in those facilities were a gross violation of international law and norms as well as a 'collective punishment' of a helpless people. "Where does international law justify this?," Ambassador Akram asked, pointing that under the terms of that law civilian sites and facilities, especially the hospitals, cannot be targeted. "Even if there was a target, a military target that which is not proven; How did the Israelis ever prove that any of the schools that they (Israelis) have bombed; any of the hospitals that they have destroyed; any of the refugee camps which they have bombarded, has Israel proved that there was a military target remotely? There they are doing this as collective punishment," he added.

Responding to Canadian Envoy Robert Rae's call for a humanitarian truce,

Ambassador Akram said that the General Assembly has already called for a truce, leading to the cessation of hostilities. But, he said that a call for a humanitarian 'pause' to allow the Israelis to stop for five minutes and then bomb the Palestinians again, was contrary to international humanitarian law; to the obligations of international humanitarian law, a violation of the obligation that they have undertaken as parties to all the international humanitarian conventions – a violation by taking that position.

The Pakistani envoy also countered Canada's call for the release of Israeli hostages, but not the thousands of Palestinians arbitrarily arrested and kept in Israeli prisons, saying, "Talk about that, too." The briefing session opened with a moment of silence for all those who have lost their lives since the start of the conflict on October 7 and those being held against their will in the region. "What we've seen unfold over the last 26 days in Israel and in the Occupied Territories is nothing short of what I think I would call a blight on our collective conscience," said Griffiths, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator. "All of us, we are all somehow involved in this."



MIANWALI: Security personnel travelling in a military vehicle after terrorist attack on PAF's Training Air Base.

Funeral prayers of 14 martyred offered

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Funeral prayer of 14 Pakistan Army personnel who were martyred in a terror attack in Gwadar yesterday has been offered. Senior army officers and jawans attended the funeral. The martyred army personnel will be laid to rest in their ancestral towns and cities with full military honour.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), terrorists had attacked two vehicles, carrying security forces' personnel, while they were on their way from Pasi to Ormara in Gwadar district, resulting in the martyrdom of 14 army jawans. The ISPR has expressed the resolve to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the country by bringing perpetrators of crimes like these to justice.

The country's political leadership, too, has strongly condemned attack by militants on security forces. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar said that the entire nation was proud of its martyrs. Former president Asif Ali Zardari too condemned the incident in strongest possible terms, saying there was a need to eliminate hatred and avenge the killings of army personnel.

While former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif said that such attacks could not dampen the spirits of the people of Pakistan. "We will never allow terrorists to succeed in their designs," he vowed. Former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the war against terrorism would continue until last terrorist was eliminated.

IHC to hear Imran's pleas on 7th

ISLAMABAD (INP): The bail applications of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan in NAB corruption cases have been fixed for hearing in the Islamabad High Court.

The Islamabad High Court registrar office released cause list on Saturday, according to which a two-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Aamer Farooq will hear the petitions of the PTI chairman for bail restoration in the 190 million pounds scandal and Toshakhana NAB investigation cases on November 7. Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri will be the part of the IHC divisional bench. Justice Jahangiri has returned to his office and will resume his duties after a month's vacation. The accountability court had dismissed the bail of PTI chairman in NAB cases for non-pursuance. A two-member bench has already restored the bails of PTI Chairman Imran Khan in six cases.

Separately, a district and sessions court in Islamabad has adjourned the hearing of the illegal Nikah case against PTI Chairman Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi till November 13. Special prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi appeared in the court of Civil Judge Quadratullah. PTI chairman's lawyer Sher Afzal Marwat did not appear and his assistant lawyer attended the court proceedings.

Israel strikes Gaza UN school after ambulance attack, 15 dead

GAZA: An Israeli air strike on UN-run school sheltering displaced people in Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza killed 15 people and injured dozens more, said Mohammad Abu Selmeyah, the head of Al-Shifa Hospital.

"There are 15 martyrs and the number is expected to increase," said Abu Selmeyah, who is also an official in the health ministry in the Hamas-run enclave. Earlier on Friday, Israel targeted an ambulance being used to evacuate the wounded from besieged northern Gaza killed 15 people and injured 60 others, the Hamas-controlled enclave's health ministry said.

Israel's military said it had identified and hit an ambulance "being used by a Hamas terrorist cell." It said Hamas fighters were killed in the strike, and accused the group of transferring militants and weapons in ambulances. Hamas official Izzat El Rishiq said allegations its fighters were present were "baseless." Ashraf Al-Qidra, spokesperson for Gaza's health ministry, said the ambulance was part of a convoy that Israel targeted near Gaza City's Al-Shifa Hospital.

Qidra said Israel had targeted the convoy of ambulances in more than one location, including at Al-Shifa Hospital gate and at Anfar Square a kilometer (0.6 miles) away. In a statement on the incident, Israel's military gave no evidence to support its assertion that the ambulance was linked to Hamas but said it intended to release additional information. "We emphasize that this area is a battle zone. Civilians in the area are repeatedly called upon to evacuate southwards for their own safety," the military said.

Reuters was unable to independently verify either side's account. Video shared on social media, which Reuters has verified, showed people lying in blood next to an ambulance with flashing lights on a city street as people rushed to help. Another video showed three ambulances standing in a line, with about a dozen people lying either motionless or barely



Erdogan says Netanyahu 'no longer someone we can talk to'

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday he was breaking off contact with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu due to Israel's actions in Gaza.

"Netanyahu is no longer someone we can talk to. We have written him off," Turkish media quoted Erdogan as saying. Erdogan's remarks came a week after Israel said it was "re-evaluating" its relations with Ankara because of Turkiye's increasingly heated rhetoric about the Israel-Hamas war. Israel had earlier withdrawn all diplomats from Turkiye and other regional countries as a security precaution. Israeli forces have encircled Gaza's largest city, trying to crush Hamas in retaliation for October 7 raids into Israel that officials say killed around 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and took some 240 people hostage. The health ministry in Gaza, which is run by Hamas, says more than 9,400 Gazans, mostly women and children, have since been killed in Israeli strikes and the intensifying ground campaign. Erdogan said Saturday that Turkiye was not breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel. "Completely severing ties is not possible, especially in international diplomacy," Erdogan said. He said MIT intelligence agency chief Ibrahim Kalin was spearheading Turkiye's efforts to try and mediate an end to the war. "Ibrahim Kalin talking to the Israeli side. Of course, he is also negotiating with Palestine and Hamas," Erdogan said. But he said Netanyahu bore the primary responsibility for the violence and had "lost the support of his own citizens". "What he needs to do is take a step back and stop this," Erdogan said. — Arab News

moving next to them. Blood was pooled nearby.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a social media post he was "utterly shocked by reports of attacks on ambulances evacuating patients," adding that patients, health workers and medical facilities must be protected. The head of the United Nations was "horrified" by a strike by Israeli forces on a convoy of ambulances in Gaza on Friday, Antonio Guterres said in a statement. "I am horrified by the reported attack in Gaza on an ambulance convoy outside Al Shifa hospital. The images of bodies strewn on the street outside the hospital are harrowing," he said.

Earlier on Friday, Qidra said ambulances would send critically injured Palestinians who urgently need to be taken to Egypt to be treated from besieged Gaza City to the south of the enclave. Israel, which has accused Hamas of concealing command centers and tunnel entrances in Al-Shifa hospital, ordered all civilians to leave the north of Gaza last month and its military encircled the area on Thursday. Despite its order for civilians to leave northern areas of Gaza, Israel's military has continued to bombard the south of the strip as well. Hamas and Al-Shifa hospital authorities have denied the facility is used as a base by militant fighters. — Arab News

Blinken reaffirms US support for 'humanitarian pauses' in Gaza

AMMAN: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has reaffirmed Washington's position calling for "humanitarian pauses" in Gaza to protect civilians and allow foreign nationals to leave, as the Israeli military bombarded a UN shelter and hospital in the Gaza Strip.

Blinken held a news conference in Jordan's capital, Amman, on Saturday alongside Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister Ayman Safadi and Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, during his third visit to the region since the war began. While Jordan and Egypt reiterated the demand of Arab states calling for an immediate ceasefire in

Gaza, Blinken said humanitarian pauses "can be a critical mechanism for protecting civilians, getting aid in and getting foreign nationals out of Gaza" while "still enabling Israel to achieve its objective" to defeat Hamas.

"It's our view that a ceasefire now would leave Hamas in place to regroup and repeat attacks," Blinken said. "We spoke about ways to accelerate and expand the sustained delivery of aid," he told reporters, adding that "as Israel conducts its campaign, how it does it matters." Countries across the Middle East have played an essential role in preventing the spread of conflict to the

rest of the region, Blinken said, and that discussions were continuing with Qatar on efforts to release hostages in Gaza.

He pointed out that while 100 trucks are now moving through Rafah every day, up from about 20 a week ago, that is still "not nearly enough". Safadi said Israel was "committing war crimes" in Gaza and it should not be above international law. He condemned the Hamas attack on October 7, but said the war on Gaza could not be permitted to continue. "The whole region is sinking in a sea of hatred that will define generations to come," Safadi said. — Aljazeera

Earthquake shakes Lasbela

LASBELA (INP): An earthquake measuring 3.4 on the Richter scale jolted Lasbela and its adjoining areas in Balochistan province in the wee hours of Saturday. People came out of their homes in panic and started reciting verses from the Holy Quran. No loss of life and property was reported from any part of Lasbela. The epicenter of the earthquake was located 16 Km north of Bela at the depth of 22 kilometres.



Siraj demands level playing field for all political parties in upcoming polls

LAHORE (NNI): Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Sirajul Haq has said that the political parties belong to two families, have been consistently provided unjust advantages in their pursuit of power, demanding fair and level playing field for all political entities in the upcoming elections.

Speaking at a training workshop for the JI workers at Mansoorah on Saturday, he said the two ruling families often align to safeguard their own interests but swiftly become adversaries when their interests clash. He stressed that exposing the entrenched ruling elite

would serve the cause of democracy and the national political landscape. Instructing party members to intensify their election campaign, he urged them to educate the public about the poor performance of the former rulers.

Haq stated that JI would be contesting the election under the symbol of the "Scale," with the aim of transforming the country into an Islamic welfare state. JI plans to field candidates in all national and provincial assembly constituencies, with a strong emphasis on providing party tickets to

youth, he added.

Haq called upon the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to ensure that all contestants adhere to the election code of conduct. He highlighted that while the country possesses significant resources, the problem lies in their inequitable distribution and the prevalence of corruption. He criticized the riba system, which has plagued the economy. He said the international establishment controlled the countries through mechanisms imposed by the IMF and the World Bank.

He said the flawed poli-

cies implemented by past rulers have led to rampant inflation and unemployment, resulting in the suffering of the common man. He emphasized that the tested political parties are not the solution to the country's challenges and reiterated that JI would be capable of setting the country on the right course if voted to power.

He said the rulers of Muslim world were silent spectator of the atrocities committed by the Israeli forces in Gaza. He said the JI would hold the historic pro-Palestine rally in Lahore on November 19.

CM directs inspection, inquiries team to start 100-day inspection plan for all govt offices

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd.) Maqbool Baqar, while presiding over a joint meeting of Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) and the Chief Minister Inspection and Inquiries Team (CMIIT) at CM House here Saturday, observed that both the agencies were understaffed and directed them to abolish their non-technical posts and appoint investigators and technical persons so that performance of their organizations could be improved.

The chief minister ordered the CMIIT to start a 100-day Inspection Plan for all government offices including hospitals, schools, municipalities, and development authorities. Chairman E&ACE Zulfiqar Shah while briefing the CM said that anti-corruption was a special agency for the investigation of certain offences relating to corruption by, or inquiry into misconduct of public servants and holding preliminary inquiries against such servants in the province.

The other functions of anti-corruption include Inquiring and investigating cases of corruption in government departments, the public sector, corporations and semi-government Organizations.

The CM was told that the total sanctioned strength of the anti-corruption establishment was 1416 against which only 679 were working and 742 posts were vacant. At this, the CM directed Chairman Anti-Corruption to abolish non-technical posts and, in their place, create posts of investigators, and technical officers who can investigate the cases, prosecute them properly in the courts and prepare proper files.

The chief minister said that he was not satisfied with the recruitment

being made through a third party. "I want you to send a request to the Sindh Public Service Commissioner and make its recruitment through them," he said. Baqar also directed the Anti-corruption establishment to evolve an automated digital system under which the institution of a complaint, initiation of an inquiry, its findings, statements, and decision of the committees or in case of the challan to the anti-corruption courts must be automated, transparent and digital.

The CM directed the chairman to make his organization – the anti-corruption establishment a trustworthy, efficient, hardworking and smart organ of the government. Chairman ACE Zulfiqar Shah shared the performance of his organization and told the CM that during the last five years- 2018 to 2023 – it paid 328 surprise visits, conducted 158 raids, trapped 59, registered 759 cases, challaned 725 cases, of them 65 were convicted. At this, the chief minister said that the ACE would have to improve its performance. The conviction rate is not satisfactory.

The CM said that there was a dire need for capacity Building and Training of ACE Officers and Officials. He directed the Chief Secretary to ensure the holding of regular Anti-Corruption (I, II & III) meetings. Chairman CMIIT Rafiq Burro briefing the CM said that the main functions of the CMIIT include ensuring good governance, public service delivery, transparency & efficiency and enforcement of office discipline and punctuality in government offices.

Inspections, verifications and supervision of financial transactions, auctions, and liabilities; inspection of the tendering processes; monitoring and

Inspection of development schemes and ensuring removal of shortcomings are the main functions of the CMIIT, the CM was told. The CMIIT also conducts assigned inquiries/verifications relating to works and services to unearth malpractices, violations, and misuse of authority and of public funds.

The CM directed the CMIIT to develop digital solutions to monitor the presence and performance of government functionaries and ensure bio-metric and geo-tagged attendance of employees of all departments including the police." The CM said that the CMIIT should develop a Dashboard and Online Interface for general and specific public complaints and their redressal and regular review.

The CM was told that the CMIT human resources came to 94 against which 53 were working and 41 positions, including four of grade BS-21, and 17 of BS-14 to BS-16 were vacant. The shortage of staff has affected its performance. The CM directed the Chairman CMIIT to hire technical persons who could inquire into financial matters. He was told that the Chief Minister or Chief Secretary assigns the CMIIT to carry out inquiries/verifications. The CMIIT also probes public complaints, if not anonymous, after verification of their veracity and availability of evidence.

Giving performance of the CMIIT its chairman said that since 2018, 57 inquiries and 187 inspections have been carried out. The CM said that the CMIT performance should be more impressive. The interim CM directed the CMIIT to optimize its functioning and directed it to complete all the pending inquiries, and inspection/verification/ evaluation reports.

Control room set up to monitor by-polls

KARACHI (NNI): A control room and a complaint cell have been set up in the Election Commission Secretariat for three days to monitor the by-elections to be held in 16 districts of Sindh on November 5.

According to a spokesperson for the Election Commission, the central control room has been set up for monitoring the election process and redress of grievances.

The control room will continue to function till the results of the elections are declared and the officers in the central control room will monitor the election process along with the monitoring team.

The complaints regarding the election process will also be addressed immediately in the central control room. The control room will continue to work from the start of the polling process till the compilation of the preliminary results.

MCL removes encroachments

LAHORE (APP): The Metropolitan Corporation (MCL) carried out an anti-encroachment operation and demolished structures in various parts of the provincial capital on Saturday.

According to an MCL spokesperson, the anti-encroachment squad removed encroachments from Ring Road Interchange, Barki Road, Green City and others areas and shifted 10 truck-loads of goods to the MCL junkyard.

Slums and shanties were also removed from more than 10 spots on state land during the operation

Headed by Metropolitan Officer (Regulation) Haris Jalil, the anti-encroachment squad imposed hefty fines on the violators and demolished more than 100 structures including sheds, grills, billboards, hoardings and make-shift shops.



KARACHI: Governor Kamran Tessori along with CM Maqbool Baqar, Consul General of Russian Federation, Andrey V. Fedorov Jointly Cutting Cake during People's Unity Day Ceremony.

Naqvi oversees rapid progress on Lahore's mega projects

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Continuous visits and vigilant monitoring by Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi have driven four mega infrastructure projects in Lahore towards swift completion.

According to sources, these projects, aimed at significantly improving traffic flow, are about to open for public use this month, thanks to relentless efforts and strict timelines.

The four major projects including the Bedian Road Underpass and Akbar Chowk Flyover will be accessible to the public shortly. Furthermore, the Shahdara Flyovers and Khalid Butt Chowk Underpass are also in the final stages of construction.

The Akbar Chowk Flyover project is a standout success, being on course to completion in just six months instead of the originally slated 10 months.

This project covers two flyovers, the creation of ten U-turns, and the remodeling of Maulana Shaukat Ali Road, all without the felling of a single tree. Construction commenced on May 26, with a contractual completion date of March 25 next year.

The Shahdara Flyover, initially planned for a 10-month timeframe, is nearing completion in just seven and a half months. Work began on April 4, and the project is scheduled for public use by January 4 next year.

The sources further added that the Bedian Road Underpass, with a six-month deadline, is rapidly taking shape in just 2.5 months, with work commencing on August 26. The contractual deadline for

completion stands at February 26 next year.

Similarly, the Khalid Butt Chowk Underpass, originally slated for six months, is progressing at an accelerated pace and is expected to open for public use in around two months. Work officially kicked off on September 14, with a contractual completion date of March 10 next year.

These strategic projects are poised to significantly enhance traffic management at crucial junctions, benefitting approximately 800,000 vehicles per day. The completion of these mega projects will lead to substantial savings in terms of fuel and time, ultimately improving the overall quality of life for the people of Lahore.

CM wants strict implementation of one-dish order at weddings

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi ordered on Saturday strict implementation of one-dish and working hours restriction at the wedding ceremonies. According to a letter, issued to the district administration, the CM took notice of violation of one-dish and working hours restriction at wedding functions. The letter called upon commissioners and deputy commissioners to ensure implementation of one-dish and working hours restrictions at weddings. Naqvi said that one-dish and 10p.m. closing timing at wedding halls should be strictly implemented throughout the province, including Lahore. He said indiscriminate action should be taken against the violators of orders.



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- Consultant Pathologist
- Consultant Physician Critical Care & Pulmonary Medicine
- Consultant Physician Internal Medicine & Infectious Diseases
- Consultant Physician Internal Medicine & Nephrology
- Consultant Physician Internal Medicine & Pulmonology
- Consultant Radiologist
- Locum Consultant Pathologist
- Locum Consultant Radiologist
- Consultant Breast Surgeon
- Locum Consultant Breast Surgeon
- Consultant Upper GI Surgeon
- Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
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- Part Time Consultant Anaesthetist
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 - Electrician
 - Foreman
 - Generator Operator

Note: All Senior Instructor positions for Karachi & Peshawar involve working at Lahore for two years, followed by two years of training overseas. For further details regarding the position and eligibility criteria, please visit our website on www.shaukatkhanum.org.pk

TO APPLY: Only online applications will be entertained. Please share your CV at the email address given below and do mention the position applied for in the subject line. We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

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NATIONAL DATABASE & REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Candidates from respective district are invited, for Walk-in Test/Interview for below mentioned project based vacancies of Dynamic National Socio-Economic Registry Project (D-NSER):

Position	Qualification	District	Tehsil	Test Date & Time	Interview Date & Time
Data Entry Executive Age: 35 Years	Preferably Graduation or equivalent & Computer Literate Minimum: Intermediate	Bajaur	Mamund (Loe & Wara) (1), Utman Khel (2)	13 th Nov 2023 (Monday) 8:30 am to 12:30 pm	14 th Nov 2023 (Tuesday) 9:00 am Onwards
		Bannu	Bannu (2), Kakkai (1), Meryan (1), Wazir (Sub-Division) (1)		
		Charsadda	Charsadda (1), Tangi (2)		
		Dera Ismail Khan	Dera Ismail Khan (Bhudani, Khokar, Pota, Yarik, Panyala) (6), Paharpur (1), Paroa (1)	14 th Nov 2023 (Tuesday) 8:30 am to 12:30 pm	15 th Nov 2023 (Wednesday) 9:00 am Onwards
		Karak	Karak (2), Takht-e-Nasarati (1)		
		Khyber	Bara (1)		
		Lakki Marwat	Lakki Marwat (1), Bettani Sub-Division (1)		
		Lower Chitral	Chitral Sub-Division (Drosh, Lotkoh, Garam Chashma) (3)		
		Lower Dir	Adenzai (1), Lal Qilla (1), Sumerbagh (1), Timergara (Khal, Talash) (2)	15 th Nov 2023 (Wednesday) 8:30 am to 12:30 pm	16 th Nov 2023 (Thursday) 9:00 am Onwards
		Upper Dir	Dir Sub-Division (including Barawal, Larjam) (4), Sheringale (2)		
		Malakand	Swat Ranizai (2), Bathkela (1)		
		Mardan	Gari Kapora (1), Katlang (1), Mardan (1), Rustam (1), Takht Bhai (1)	16 th Nov 2023 (Thursday) 8:30 am to 12:30 pm	17 th Nov 2023 (Friday) 9:00 am Onwards
		Mansehra	Mansehra (1), Baffa Pakhal (1), Bala Kot (1), Oghi (1)		
		Nowshera	Nowshera (1), Pabbi (1)		
		Peshawar	Badshah (2), Mathra & Chagharmatti (2), Peshawar (2), Pishta Khara (2), Shah Alam (2)	16 th Nov 2023 (Thursday) 8:30 am to 12:30 pm	17 th Nov 2023 (Friday) 9:00 am Onwards
Swat	Babuzai (1), Barikot (1), Behrain (1), Charbagh (2), Khwazakhela (1), Matta (1)				
Tank	Tank (Gul Imam / Dabara) (1)				
Upper Chitral	Mastuj Sub Division (including Mulkow, Torkhow) (3)	17 th Nov 2023 (Friday) 12:00 pm Onwards			
North Waziristan	Mir Ali (1)				
Haripur	Haripur (1)				
Security Guard Age: 50 Years	Middle/Matric & Preferably one-year Relevant Experience or equivalent	Torghar	Daur Mera Tehsil (1)	-	17 th Nov 2023 (Friday) 12:00 pm Onwards

Venue: Regional Head Office NADRA, Phase-5 Hayatabad, Peshawar

Terms and Conditions:

1. Residents of respective District ONLY, shall be allowed.
2. Females, Transgenders & differently – abled people are encouraged to apply.
3. No TA/DA will be admissible.
4. Only shortlisted candidates (after the Test) for Data Entry Executive shall be interviewed.
5. Interested candidates must bring their Original Documents i.e. Personal, Educational & Professional.
6. 05 years' age relaxation already included in maximum age.
7. Posting request to other Project / Site will not be entertained unless the Management requires it.
8. Sample Test is available at <https://careers.nadra.gov.pk/> which can be viewed for guidance.

Note: Positions are for a specific Project; therefore, selected staff shall be laid-off upon completion of Project. This Contract shall not confer any entitlement of regular / contractual employment in NADRA.

Human Resource Section Peshawar
Regional Head Office NADRA, Phase-5 Hayatabad, Peshawar
091-9217735

PID(0) 273123



Reshuffling in KP bureaucracy

Election Commisison given permission

PESHAWAR (INP): Reshuffling in bureaucracy of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has been witnessed with transfer and posting of more than a dozen officers after the permission of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

According to announcement of Department of Administrative Affairs on Saturday, among those who have been transferred are senior officers of Grades 18, 19 and 20 including Amir Afaq of Grade 20 was instructed to report to the Managing Director (MD) of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority, KP and Engineer Abdul Ghafar Khan to Industries, Commerce from Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (TE&VTA).

Deputy Commissioner Khyber Abdul Nasir Khan as Additional Secretary Home, Additional Secretary Home Captain retired Sanaullah Khan appointed

Deputy Commissioner Khyber and Additional Secretary Home Javedullah Mehsud has been transferred as Deputy Commissioner Kurram, Deputy Commissioner Kurram Syed Saiful Islam Shah as Additional Secretary Home, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Special Secretary Establishment Zubair Ahmed has been appointed as Special Secretary Home, Additional Secretary Health Kaleemullah Khan as Special Secretary Establishment and Director General Food Safety Shahrukh Ali Khan has been sent as Additional Secretary LG&RD Department while Additional Secretary LG & RD Shafiullah Khan Director General Food Safety.

Director Officer Food Altaf Hussain has been appointed as Additional Secretary Relief Habilitation, Additional Secretary Home Maqsood Hasan as Director General Law and Human Rights

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Deputy Secretary Labor Department Gohar Zaman Wazir has been appointed as Additional Secretary LG&RD Department while Additional Deputy Commissioner General Bunir Akhtar Nawaz has been transferred as Director Food Safety, Zahid Usman Kakakhel as Additional Director Food.

The services of Additional Deputy Commissioner General Abbottabad Jibraeel Raza were referred to the Home Department and Additional Deputy Commissioner F&P Bajaur Abdul Naseer has been appointed as Deputy Secretary E&SE Department while Additional Deputy Commissioner General Orakzai Muhammad Shahbaz Khan Khattak has been appointed as Additional Deputy Commissioner Charzadda. Likewise, Muntasar Masood Jan, who is awaiting appointment, has been appointed Additional Deputy Commissioner General Orakzai.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a meeting to review arrangements for re-holding MDCAT test.

PAJCCI hails appointment of DG TDAP

PESHAWAR (APP): Coordinator Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Ziaul Haq Sarhadi has welcomed the appointment of Director General (DG) Pakistan Trade Development Authority (TDAP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a press release issued here on Saturday, a delegation of traders led by Ziaul Haq Sarhadi met with newly appointed DG, TDAP in KP, Noman Bashir in his office, said a press release issued here Saturday.

Ziaul Haq Sarhadi expressed the hope that DG TDAP would play an important role in resolving issues that were being faced by the business community. He also apprised DG TDAP KP about reservations of the business community about lack of facilities at Aza Khel Dry Port.

He also highlighted the need to restore export cargo trains from Peshawar to Karachi. He said that transportation of export goods through trucks has impacted stakeholders besides incurring revenue loss to Pakistan Railways. The DG TDAP KP Noman Bashir assured to resolve all issues of traders and conveying relevant authorities about their problems.

160,638 illegal foreigners deported to Afghanistan

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Interior Department released the data of the evacuation of foreigners till November 3, last and the process of returning illegally residing foreigners to

Torkham border is going on. According to details shared by the Interior Department KP, a total of 160,638 illegal foreigners have gone to Afghanistan with as many as 1089 families were returned till November 3 that including 3675 men, 3307 women, 5558 children.

Along with those who left voluntarily, 178 foreign deportees

were also included and 88 foreigners have been deported from Punjab while 67 people have been deported from Peshawar, the officials of the Interior Department, KP said.

A total of 12689 people have returned to Afghanistan through the Torkham border and from September 17 to November 3, 9737 foreign families were able to return from the Torkham border that included 44718 men, 33699 women and 82221 children, the official of the Interior Department, KP said.

21 more prisoners from jail deported to Afghanistan

PESHAWAR (APP): As many as 21 more prisoners from Central Jail Peshawar left for Torkham border to be deported to Afghanistan and with this the number of prisoners deported from the Central Jail has increased to 76, an official of the Jail told APP here on Saturday.

On the assurance of not to be named, the officials confirmed that among all 76 prisoners, 52 minor prisoners were deported in the Central Jail on Wednesday last and five prisoners were deported from Central Jail on Thursday last.

The prisoners who were deported on Saturday were deported after necessary procedures in the transit center before all of the prisoners were also examined in the center, the official confirmed.

Minister calls on AG, Chairman SOS Village

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Information and Public Relations Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel met with Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Aamir Javed and Chairman SOS Village Peshawar Managing Committee Justice (Rtd) Qalandar Ali Khan at Chief Secretary Office Peshawar.

Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry was also present during the meeting. In the meeting, the role of SOS Village Peshawar was discussed regarding the welfare and education of the children.

Chairman Managing Committee SOS Village Justice (Rtd) Qalandar Ali Khan discussed the facilities and procedures of the SOS Village for the support of orphans.

The Caretaker Provincial Minister of Information described the support and education of orphans as a common responsibility and said that institutions like SOS Village have a very important role in this regard.

He said that along with government initiatives, the private welfare organizations are providing the best services.

The important duties like welfare of orphans can be performed better by

mutual cooperation and patronage.

He said that we have to learn from the life of the Prophet of Islam Khatam-ul-Nabieen Hazrat Muhammad PBUH and follow his orders and from the blessed life of the Prophet of Islam Khatam-ul-Nabieen Hazrat Muhammad PBUH we should learn kindness and compassion towards orphans.

In the meeting, Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Aamir Javed discussed the legal affairs of the province with Caretaker Minister of Information and Public Relations Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel meet with Advocate General KP Aamir Javed and Chairman SOS Village Peshawar Managing Committee Qalandar Ali Khan. Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry also present on occasion.

Police stopped of harassment of legally resident Afghans

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar police authorities have taken notice of harassment of legally resident Afghans.

According to detail here on Saturday, the Police officials received complaints of unnecessary harassment of registered Afghan citizens by some officials and the process of evacuation of illegal Afghan refugees is going

on, SSP Peshawar Kashif Abbasi told media men.

Some elements are harassing legally resident foreigners under the guise of illegal immigrants, SSP Peshawar said. Foreigners who do not have legal documents should not be disturbed, Police officials said.

"If there are complaints related to any police station or police post, strict disciplinary action will be taken," SSP Peshawar Kashif Abbasi said. All SPs and SDPOs have been directed to self-monitor in transfer of foreigners from Peshawar, Punjab to Peshawar Transit Center continues.

As many as 197 foreigners have been sent to Peshawar from eleven different cities, Interior Department official said.

These foreigners will be brought to the transit center of Peshawar, Interior Department said, adding, "Necessary action and registration will be done at the Transit Center of Peshawar, the official of the Interior and Home Department said. They will be sent to Torkham border from the center to send them to Afghanistan and during the current year.

Town Police foil drug smuggling attempt

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Town Police on Saturday have successfully foiled an attempt of drug smuggling and apprehended the culprit.

As per details, station house officer (SHO) Town police station Ibrahim Khan along with team took action on secret information and foiled the attempt to supply drugs to specific customers including educational institutions.

During the operation, the accused Ahsan Wali, son of Khayal Wali, resident of Afghanistan, was arrested. The arrested accused was trying to

supply drugs to specific clients including educational institutions through the vehicle.

He was arrested during the Canal Road blockade and after searching the secret compartments of the vehicle nearly two kilograms of ice and two kilograms of heroin were recovered.

During the initial investigation, the arrested accused confessed to being involved in drug trafficking.

Similarly, the vehicle used in drug supply was also taken into police custody.

A case has been registered against accused and further investigation is underway.



SCCI, WWF agree to launch joint ventures

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Water Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan (WWF) have agreed to launch joint ventures for conservation and water and prevention of its wastage.

This was agreed during a meeting between president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Fuad Ishaq and WWF Regional Head KP/ Senior Manager Conservation and NBS Muhammad Waseem here at the chamber house. Secretary General of the chamber Sajjad Aziz and others also present in the meeting.

On the occasion, officials of the WWF apprised the meeting about various ongoing projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and highlighted key-initiatives and interventions in various sectors, mainly agriculture, forestry, wildlife, climate change and oceans etc.

The officials urged the SCCI to work with WWF for conservation of water and its utilization in an efficient manner on which the president of the chamber fully agreed and identified a number of sectors for launching joint ventures by both institutions.

Fuad Ishaq in his

remarks during the meeting stressed the need for adopting an effective strategy for preservation of water, which is draining from industries. The SCCI chief said he had given viable proposals to the government and relevant institutions for prevention of water wastage and conservation.

Fuad Ishaq said If the proposals were implemented then the unlimited/unnecessary consumption of water will be prevented while the environment will become clean by plantation and erecting green belt by using water, besides, environmental challenges/issues would also be addressed and prevent from serious damages as well.

SCCI chief gave suggestions jointly initiating plantation, and joint ventures in dates, olive and other key-sectors on which members of the WWF delegation agreed and expressed willingness to hold meetings and collaboration among both institutions on a regular basis. Fuad Ishaq assured the WWF delegation of holding joint awareness sessions to highlight significance of water, proper utilization and prevention of wastage of water and other key-initiatives and interventions in various important sectors.

Covid-19 pandemic: Brain power dropped among over-50s: Study

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Covid pandemic may have impacted brain health in people in the UK aged 50 and over, according to a new study.

More than 3,000 volunteers completed yearly questionnaires and online cognitive tests to measure changes in memory, and other faculties, as the pandemic unfolded.

The results revealed a decline, irrespective of Covid infection.

Stress, loneliness and alcohol consumption may explain some of the findings, experts say.

Coping with Covid fears, worries and uncertainties and disruption to routines may have had a "real, lasting impact" on brain health, they say.

The rate of the drop in cognitive function was accelerated during the first year of the pandemic, when lockdowns occurred, the study found. For memory issues, the decline continued into the second year.

People who already had some mild memory problems before the pandemic began had the worst overall decline. The study, called PROTECT - published in The Lancet Healthy Longevity - was set up to help understand how healthy brains age and why some people develop dementia.

Efforts underway to boost agriculture seed production

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a ground-breaking initiative aimed at bolstering Pakistan's agricultural sector, USAID's Economic Recovery and Development Activity, in collaboration with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Agriculture Research Department and local farmers, is pioneering an innovative approach to certified wheat seed production in Mardan district.

This project, termed "Enhancing Wheat Seed Production through Seed Cluster Approach," promises to bring about transformative changes in the region's wheat production capabilities.

Pakistan, being the 8th largest wheat producer globally and the 3rd largest in Asia, has a significant stake in agriculture, contributing 7.8 percent of the value added in the sector and 1.8 percent of the country's GDP (Economic Survey of Pakistan 2021-2022).

To address the challenges faced by wheat farmers in procuring good quality high yielding wheat seed in a sustainable manner, the seed cluster approach has been adopted.

Dr. Shakeel Kakakhel, Deputy Chief of Party for USAID's Economic Recovery and Development Activity, highlighted the

activity's significance, stating, "In KP, the yield of wheat has remained low as compared to other provinces. The average yield in Punjab and Sindh is 2.9 tons/hectare, while average yield of wheat in KP is 1.56 tons/hectare. Various factors such as lack of high yielding varieties, water shortages, and uneven pesticide and fertilizer applications cause yield to be relatively lower. Seed determines more than any other element of what result a crop can achieve."

The annual wheat seed requirement of KP is around 30,000 tons, while only 7 percent (2,100 tons) of certified wheat seed is available to farmers according to Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department. The remaining seed comes from informal sources either farmers' saved seed or seed obtained from fellow farmers, middlemen, or village shops, where information about the source of variety is in most cases unknown.

Under the cluster approach, 250 farmers in Sawal Dher, District Mardan, will receive basic wheat seed for 250 acres of land, blended fertilizer, plant stimulant, and hand-holding - a move aimed at strengthening the foundation of the wheat farming community in the region.

This activity will ensure that certified seed is available to local farmers of district Mardan and adjoining districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the years to come. Using certified wheat seed will guarantee an increase in yield by 15-20%, thus minimizing KP dependency on other provinces for major staple crop.

Fazal Wahab, Director Planning Agriculture Research in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, expressed his enthusiasm, saying, "This project is a significant step toward modernizing wheat seed production in our region. We believe it will not only benefit the farmers but also help Khyber Pakhtunkhwa maintain its position as a major wheat producer in Pakistan."

The key to the success of the seed cluster approach lies in the training and support provided to selected seed growers. These growers will receive comprehensive training in certified seed production techniques, courtesy the Agricultural Research KP and the federal

Seed Certification and Registration Department.

With this knowledge, they will produce high-quality seeds that meet required standards.

Akbar Ali Shah, a progressive grower from Mardan, expressed his optimism, noting, "I am excited about this project as it offers us an opportunity to contribute to our community's growth and produce better wheat seeds. This initiative will not only increase our income but also boost the region's agriculture."



PESHAWAR: A shopkeeper selling fish in market Ganta Ghar Bazaar.



In brief

Blind murder case resolved

OKARA (INP): The police resolved blind murder case and arrested killer of cousin along with murder weapon here on Saturday. According to details, accused Samiullah had killed Sarfraz in Gogera police station jurisdiction some 10 months earlier. The murderer and deceased were first cousins hailing from Lodhran who used to work at a poultry farm in Gogera. The police continued investigation for 10 months and arrested the culprit who admitted the crime.

Man killed over enmity

FAISALABAD (INP): An old enmity has claimed life of an old man in the area of Saddar police station, here on Saturday. Rescue 1122 spokesman said that rivals had opened fire on Arshad Ali (68) resident of Chak No. 79-GB Satiana Road to avenge an old enmity. As a result, Arshad died on the spot while the accused managed to escape from the scene after firing. The police took the body into custody while further investigation was under progress, he added.

Abducted woman rescued

LARKANA (INP): The police rescued an abducted woman and arrested two kidnappers during a raid here on Saturday. According to details, the Larkana police on a tip-off regarding presence of abductors launched crackdown. During operation, an abducted woman was rescued and two kidnappers were arrested. The detainees in the preliminary investigation revealed of kidnapping woman from Sindh and Punjab.

Target set to sow wheat

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): Muzaffargarh's district administration has set a target of sowing wheat at 578,000 acres land with an increase of 7.5 maund per acre. Leading a rally in connection with the maximum sowing of wheat, organized here on Saturday, Deputy Commissioner Mian Usman Ali said reiterated district administration's stance of taking every possible step to improve wheat production to 38.5 maund per acre. The Deputy Commissioner urged farmers of district to complete sowing by November 10. Deputy Director Agriculture Abdur Razaq informed that a rainy spell was expected after November 15. The farmers should complete sowing before the rainy spell. The farmers can enhance production by following the recommendations of experts from the agriculture department.

MAPCO action against thieves

MULTAN (INP): Multan Electric Supply Company (MAPCO) caught 88 more consumers stealing electricity in a single day during its ongoing operation against electricity thieves and defaulters in the region. Cases were registered against 69 electricity thieves in different police stations. According to a MAPCO spokesperson, since the campaign against electricity thieves and defaulters began on September 7, 6716 electricity thieves have been caught stealing electricity on the spot. MAPCO teams have conducted raids in different areas and caught a total of 9518 consumers stealing electricity. Cases have been filed against them in different police stations, bringing the number of registered cases to 9221. A total of 63 crore 31 lakh rupees have been imposed on the electricity thieves.

QWP for strategy to tackle worsening law, order situation

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Saturday condemned the terrorist attack on the Mianwali airbase and said the federal and provincial governments should sit together to come up with a strategy to tackle the worsening law and order and curb terrorism.

Addressing a gathering at Kangra union council in Shabqadar tehsil in Charsadda, he said terrorism was again rearing its ugly head therefore prompt and timely action should be taken to nip this evil in the bud. Expressing concern over the fresh wave of terrorism across the country, he condemned the attacks on the police and army soldiers in Dera Ismail Khan and Gwadar respectively.

On this occasion Mian Usman Shah announced joining the QWP along with his family and supporters. Welcoming the announcement of the date for the next general elec-

tion, he said that government should create an environment conducive to the holding of the election. He said that a level playing ground should be provided to all the political forces to ensure a free and fair election. "The announcement of the election date has ended the uncertainty surrounding the polls," he remarked.

"Our party had suggested at the time of making the 18th Amendment to do away with the caretaker setup," adding that under the original 1973 Constitution, there was no concept of installing the caretaker setup. He said that the ECP should be strengthened to conduct the polls. He said that whichever political party formed the next government after the general election should amend the constitution and abolish the role of the caretakers in future.

He cited the example of India, Bangladesh and other regional countries, where there was no role of the caretakers. Aftab Sherpao said that Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ruled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for straight nine years, but left the province in dire financial straits. He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government lacked money to pay salaries to employees. The KP is facing a host of problems due to the incompetence and misrule of the previous PTI government, he added.

He also condemned the Israeli aggression against the innocent Palestinian people and said hundreds of children were killed in the bombing. He expressed concern over the lack of unity among the Muslim countries for being unable to stop the killings of defenseless Palestinians. The QWP leader said that US was backing the Zionist regime, which was committing atrocities with impunity. He called for a two-state solution for the Palestinian conflict. Aftab Sherpao said that PTI leader Imran Khan was the main character behind the May 9 attacks on the military installations and government properties.

Collaboration of religious, social organization vital

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): In a proactive move to create public awareness regarding family planning, Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to collaborate with social organizations and religious scholars.

The joint effort aims to engage communities in heeding their advice and implementing necessary actions. This initiative was voiced during a meeting held with officials of the Population Welfare Department, here on Saturday. Highlighting the significance of maintaining a balance between resources and population, the Deputy Commissioner expressed that sustainable

progress could be achieved by regulating the burgeoning population.

Stressing individual responsibility in population control, the officials aimed to instill a sense of ownership among citizens. District Officer of Population Welfare, Farzana Kosar, detailed the objectives, outlining their mission to raise awareness about family planning, control population growth, and improve living standards for the public.

As per the latest census data of 2023, Muzaffargarh and Kot Addu districts have a total population of 5.15 million, with over 16% residing in urban areas and the remaining 83% in rural

regions. Stressing the need for family planning facilities, the officials highlighted the presence of 86 centers in both districts dedicated to the cause.

They remarked on their ambition to reduce the birth rate to 2.1 by 2025 and further down to 1.5 by 2030, intending to achieve this through seminars, collaborations with social societies, and engagement with religious scholars. The meeting witnessed the participation of various officials from different departments, including Gul Rana, Deputy District Officer of Population Welfare, along with representatives from the education, demography, and medical sectors.

Haseeb holds 2nd position in int'l writing competition

ATTOCK (APP): In the annual international essay writing competition organized by the Goi Peace Foundation Japan and the Ministry of education Japan, a Pakistani youth made the country proud by winning the second position.

The purpose of the competition was to hail the efforts of the youth for the establishment of peace in the world. The competition was organized in two categories for children and youth in which a total of 20,674 students and youths from 168 countries of the world participated. Haseeb Iqbal from Pakistan made the country proud by securing the second position in the youth category. He belongs to Dhoke Garhi Alizai, a backward village of Hazro tehsil district Attock. He is the only one Pakistani position holder in this competition.

The Ministry of Education of Japan has announced a prize money of ¥50,000 for them, as

well as certificates, awards, and gifts, which will be presented at a grand ceremony held in Japan.

Haseeb Iqbal is doing BS (Hons) English at University of Education Attock Campus. Expressing his happiness on this wonderful achievement, he said, "It is an honor for me to represent Pakistan at the international level and I hope my success inspires others to pursue their passions with dedication."

The Chief Petron CMC & famous writer Muhammad Khalid Khan, Chairman Chhachh Muhafiz Committee and well-known journalist Nisar Ali Khan, writer Arshad Ali Arshad, President of Literary Organization Bihar-E-Nou Sultan Mehmoond, President Chhachhi Baitak Umar Farooq Khan congratulated Haseeb Iqbal and expressed their best wishes for him.

Nisar Ali Khan said, "Haseeb Iqbal's outstanding accomplishment not only marks a significant personal

milestone but also stands as a testament to Pakistan's rich talent and potential on the global platform." "It highlights the nation's intellectual prowess and dedication to academic excellence," he added.

Drug peddler arrested

F.P. Report

DIKHAN: Dera police during an ongoing operations against drug dealers in the jurisdiction of Parova police station on Saturday, nabbed drug peddler and recovered hashish from his possession.

According to the police spokesman, On the direction of District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, SHO Parova police station Zaffar Abbas conducted various operations against the criminal elements in the different areas in the jurisdiction of the Parova police station.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmad, receiving the honorary shield from Mufti Mustafa Aziz during Seerat Un Nabvi conference.

Fesco directed to refund 1.35 lakh units to 27 customers

SARGODHA (INP): The Federal Ombudsman Regional Office in Sargodha has ordered Fesco to refund 1.35 lakh units to 27 customers who were overcharged. According to media reports on Saturday, In October, 27 Fesco customers filed complaints with the Ombudsman's office, alleging that they had been overcharged.

The Ombudsman investigated the complaints and found that the customers had indeed been overcharged. The Ombudsman's office ordered Fesco to refund the overcharged units to the customers. Fesco has complied with the order and has refunded the units to the customers.

The Ombudsman's office has also sent a report to the CEO of Fesco regarding the irregularities in the billing system. The report recommends that departmental action be taken against the Fesco officers who are responsible for the irregularities. The Ombudsman's office has taken a timely and important step to protect the rights of Fesco customers.

Can effective governance be achieved sans RTI laws?

Ijlal Riffat

THE right to information is a powerful instrument to achieve the objective of good governance in a country. Without access to the information, the mission to establish a transparent and accountable society remains an illusion. The right to information, in its most stable terms, means that the residents of a country should have easy access to the records of the government, documents of the government, and the day-to-day official activities of the government.

It gives state citizens the right to access information about the operation of any public authority or institution. In a society in which democracy is an established norm, the government is responsible for its actions towards the people. In other words, people have the right to keep themselves aware of government activities. The availability of free and easy access to information for the residents of a state is now an established norm in the international arena.

Subsequently, Pakistan attempted to enact right-to-information laws in the

country. Through the 18th Amendment passed in 2010, the government acknowledged the citizens right to access information. While implementing the constitutional amendment, the right to information commissions were established in the provinces. For instance, in the year 2013, in Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa, an act was passed in the provincial assembly promulgating right to information (RTI) laws.

The move was admired widely. However, various civil society organizations (CSOs) have pointed out various loopholes in the right to information laws. They argue that there are certain international standards that need to be incorporated into the existing RTI rules for easier and more affordable access to information.

Moving towards the significance of the right to information laws in the governance model, it is a good move to empower citizens of a country to hold their official public institutions accountable. In a larger domain, it is helpful in curbing corruption and detecting maladministration. The availability of information equips a person to understand that no public

official could overcharge them for a service.

Furthermore, citizens can inquire about the ongoing local projects, such as road construction, street dismantling, repairs, and many more, thus strengthening the local governance system. The right to information laws establish an open environment in which the layman can question the operation of a public authority, paving the way for an efficient governance system. Last but not least, the efficient democratic environment created in the wake of the right to information laws helps citizens affect the decision-making process at the government level.

To sum up, the enactment of RTI laws serves as the foundation for an open and dynamic government. It has enhanced the general welfare of the masses by involving them in national affairs. The need of the hour is that citizens should be aware of their due and constitutional rights, so in this way, they would benefit society and play a vital role in ensuring an effective governance system. Therefore, the implementation of the right to information laws is a prerequisite for the practice of good governance in a nation.

Sifat Gul trained 2800 girls in different skill at her center

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: A brave woman Sifat Gul trained 2800 girls in different skills and enabled them to gain their livelihood with a honor way. Sifat Gul belongs to Lower Chitral, Garamchishma valley despite being illiterate, she has become an example for other uneducated as well as for educated women too. She was deprived of education for some reason in childhood, but she decided to learn skill and stand on her own feet instead to burden on her family.

She enrolled in a handicrafts center and learned different work related to skill and opened a handicrafts center on self help basis at his village to train other girls, and aged women who were unable to study for some reason like an adventurous Sifat Gul.

Women and young girls from all over the area also learned work at its handicraft center. When his work began to grow, she opened another vocational center in Chitral Town's Zargrandeh, in addition to crafts and

carcads, stressing on women's sheets, making purse and ringings from horn. In its center, the girls of Gilgit - Baltistan province also came here to learn the skills, in their handicraft center.

A carpet -making woman says that the demand for a handmade carpet is arrived from all over the country. However, no government or non-governmental organizations have been supported yet Sifat Gul. she says that if government or non-governmental organizations provide them modern machinery and large center, they want to teach more women want to learn different skills like cutting, polishing and packing of Gems stone, precious stones, etc. Those women fold who are unemployed for some reason they did not get any job nor they get good so those women would be trained to enable them for earning money at their door steps.

Shahida Sahar, Zia-ur-Rehman and Professor Hafizullah, who visited this center, greatly appreciated the

efforts of Sifat Gul, who opened a handicraft center on self help basis without any support by Govt or NGO from where about 3,000 girls have been given skill in different sectors. They were trained and now these women earn a livelihood in honor way at their house. They added that employment opportunities for women in Chitral are not sufficient and the increasing trend of suicide among women is also cause by poverty and unemployment.

They demanded that if the government and non-governmental organizations cooperate with this brave woman, she can open a large handicrafts center in Chitral which has modern machinery and thousands of women have the opportunity to get employment after learning work by this way. They said that poverty and unemployment, can eradicate from backward district like Chitral by this way to trained these women in different skills who can earn money by selling their masterpieces of different hand made items.

Azerbaijan's role in regional connectivity: Bridging nations and, cultures

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani

AZERBAIJAN'S strategic positioning not only makes it a central player in regional affairs but also a land of immense opportunity," said President Ilham Heydar oglu Aliyev. Indeed, this diverse nation at the crossroads of Europe and Asia has much to offer. Let's delve into the key facets that make Azerbaijan stand out.

Azerbaijan, often referred to as the 'Gateway to the Caspian,' is more than just a dot on the map. It's a linchpin of trade and connectivity, linking Central Asia to nations like Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. To the west, it forges connections with Turkey and Iran, granting access to the Middle East.

Beneath its surface, Azerbaijan conceals a treasure trove of valuable minerals. Think copper, iron ore, rare earth elements, aluminum, gold, silver, zinc, mercury, and lithium. This rich geological endowment

is estimated to be worth a staggering amount, forming the foundation for economic growth.

Azerbaijan is paving the path for regional cooperation with projects like the Belt and Road Initiative. Improved infrastructure and transport links can rejuvenate its economy and boost trade with neighbors. India, one of the largest regional markets, is within reach through efficient ground routes. As populations grow in the region, the need for energy rises. Azerbaijan, as a gateway to resource-rich Central Asian republics, can play a pivotal role in meeting this demand, contributing to regional stability and prosperity.

Azerbaijan's cultural identity is rich and vibrant. Music, poetry, and dance are integral, with traditions dating back millennia. The nation cherishes its customs and artistic expressions.

Azerbaijan's journey to self-determination in the 20th century was a turbulent odyssey through the annals of history. In the wake of the crumbling

Russian Empire, the nation valiantly hoisted the flag of independence, only to see it swiftly eclipsed as the Soviets imposed their rule, subsuming Azerbaijan into the USSR. This era of foreign dominion cast a long shadow, subjecting Azerbaijani people to a litany of challenges and hardships. However, amidst the darkest pages of Azerbaijan's history, a chapter of unparalleled resilience and sacrifice emerged during World War II. The nation bore the weight of colossal losses, with a staggering 350,000 lives laid down in the battle against the Axis powers. These sacrifices stood as an indomitable testament to the unwavering spirit of the Azerbaijani people, their unyielding resolve, and their ardent yearning for self-determination. Then, in the dawn of 1991, Azerbaijan emerged from the looming specter of the USSR, once more unfurling the banner of independence. This time, the nation stood resolute in its determination to safeguard its

sovereignty and set forth on a path toward prosperity, with a renewed sense of purpose and the unwavering spirit of a people who had weathered the storms of history.

Under President Ilham Aliyev's visionary leadership, Azerbaijan has not only achieved remarkable economic diversity but has also emerged as a prominent player in enhancing European energy security. The President's steadfast commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility is exemplified by the nation's transition towards renewable energy sources, marking a crucial step in mitigating the global climate crisis. Azerbaijan's strategic promise to double its natural gas exports to Europe by 2027 is set to yield substantial benefits, not only for the nation itself but for the entire continent. This commitment positions Azerbaijan as a dependable and substantial contributor to Europe's energy stability, further solidifying its role as a key player in the region's energy landscape. The

President's forward-thinking approach has not only paved the way for economic growth and diversification but has also set a sustainable and environmentally responsible trajectory for Azerbaijan. By harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources, the nation is not only securing its own energy future but is also making a vital contribution to the global effort to combat climate change. With President Ilham Aliyev at the helm, Azerbaijan stands as the beacon of progress and environmental responsibility, demonstrating that economic prosperity and sustainability can go hand in hand, benefiting both the nation and the broader European community.

As Azerbaijan spreads its wings in the global trade arena, its strengthening bonds with countries like Pakistan are akin to a symphony of partnership. With the launch of direct flights and the lifting of customs duties, Azerbaijan's dedication to international cooperation becomes an unmistakable crescendo.

Together, they've created 'Working Groups,' like artisans crafting a masterpiece, to weave a tapestry of collaboration across diverse sectors.

In short, the story of Azerbaijan is one of promise and prosperity. It serves as an inspiration for resilience, determination, and the preservation of cultural traditions. The nation has not only weathered the storms of history but also embraced the opportunities of the modern world. In a world where the fusion of geopolitical significance and cultural heritage is like a mesmerizing dance, Azerbaijan emerges as a luminous guiding star—an embodiment of strength, unity, and boundless growth, extending an open invitation for all to bask in its radiant glow.

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US airs concerns to China about ‘dangerous’ South Sea actions

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The United States and China held "candid" talks on maritime issues, including on the contested South China Sea, and the US side underscored its concerns about "dangerous and unlawful" Chinese actions there, the US State Department said.

The talks took place in Beijing between the department's China Coordinator Mark Lambert and China's Director-General for Boundary and Ocean Affairs Hong Liang, the State Department said in a statement, without saying when they were held. The meeting follows recent high-level diplomacy ahead of an expected meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the mid-November APEC summit in San Francisco.

The US statement said the talks were part of "efforts to maintain open lines of communication and responsibly manage the US-China relationship" and that the US side reiterated

the need to resume military-military channels, "to avoid miscommunication and miscalculation." It described the talks as "substantive, constructive, and candid" and said they covered a range of maritime issues, including the South China Sea and East China Sea, which are contested by China and other nations.

"The United States underscored concerns with the PRC's dangerous and unlawful actions in the South China Sea," it said, referring to the People's Republic of China. Such actions included China's obstruction of an Oct. 22 Philippine resupply mission at Second Thomas Shoal and its "unsafe" intercept of a US aircraft on Oct. 24, the statement said. China said on Monday after a visit by Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Washington that the US and China would hold "consultations on arms control and non-proliferation" in the coming days, as well as separate talks on maritime affairs and other issues.

A State Department spokesperson

said the US Assistant Secretary for Arms Control Mallory Stewart would host Sun Xiaobo, head of the arms-control department at China's Foreign Ministry, at the State Department next week.

"We have continually called on the PRC to substantively engage on arms control issues and reducing strategic risk," the spokesperson said, a reference to US concerns about China's nuclear weapons build-up and frustration that Beijing has shown little interest in discussing this. A flurry of diplomatic engagements in recent months, largely at Washington's request, has sought to salvage what were rapidly deteriorating ties between the two countries following the US downing in February of a suspected Chinese spy balloon. While Biden and Xi are expected to meet this month, China has yet to confirm this and a senior Biden administration official said on Tuesday important details have yet to be hammered out.

15 UN peacekeepers in Mali hurt

UNITED NATIONS (AP): Fifteen UN peacekeepers in a convoy withdrawing from a rebel stronghold in northern Mali were injured when vehicles hit improvised explosive devices on two occasions this week, the United Nations said. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said eight peacekeepers injured were evacuated by air and "are now reported to be in stable condition."

He said seven peacekeepers injured by an IED also were evacuated by air. He did not give their conditions. Dujarric said the peacekeepers, who were withdrawing weeks earlier than planned because of growing insecurity, suffered two other IED attacks after leaving their base in Kidal on Oct. 31.

JNIM, an extremist group with links to al-Qaida, claimed responsibility for the earlier attacks, in which at least two peacekeepers were injured. Dujarric said the UN doesn't know if the IEDs that hit the convoy had been there for a long time or whether the peacekeepers were deliberately targeted. The convoy is heading to Gao on the east bank of the Niger River, and "it's clear what road they will use," he said.

He said the UN hoped the convoy would complete the estimated 350-kilometer (220-mile) journey to Gao, a staging point for peacekeeping departures, by the end of the weekend. In June, Mali's military junta, which overthrew the democratically elected president in 2021, ordered the nearly 15,000-strong UN peacekeeping force known as MINUSMA to leave after a decade of working on stemming a jihadi insurgency. The UN Security Council terminated the mission's mandate June 30 and the UN is in the throes of what Secretary-General António Guterres calls an "unprecedented" six-month exit from Mali by Dec. 31.

MINUSMA was one of the most dangerous UN peacekeeping operations in the world, with more than 300 members killed since operations began in 2013. About 850 UN peacekeepers had been based in Kidal along with 150 other mission personnel. An employee with MINUSMA earlier told The Associated Press that the peacekeepers left Kidal in convoys after Mali's junta refused to authorize flights to repatriate UN equipment and civilian personnel.

Although noting the junta allowed the medical evacuation flights, Dujarric said, "We're not operating as many flights as we should be able to operate in order to up the safety of our peacekeepers who are moving on the ground." After the convoy left Kidal the town was taken over by ethnic Tuareg rebels, who have been clashing with Mali's military. The spike in those clashes prompted the UN to move up its departure from Kidal, once planned for mid-November. Analysts say the violence signals the breakdown of a 2015 peace agreement between the government and the rebels. That deal was signed after Tuareg rebels drove security forces out of northern Mali in 2012 as they sought to create an independent state they call Azawad.

Six dead in Italy as heavy rain, high winds sweep Europe



ROME (Agencies): At least six people have been killed in central Tuscany when Storm Ciaran swept through Italy after causing chaos in more western parts of Europe. Tuscany Governor Eugenio Giani said that six people died as torrential rain fell from the coastal city of Livorno to the inland valley of Mugello and rivers burst their banks flooding towns and villages.

The dead included two elderly people from the city of Prato, north of Florence, according to Italian news agency ANSA. One person was also killed in Albania after they lost control of the car they were driving, bringing the storm's death toll across the continent to 14. Italian Civil Protection authorities said that 200 millimetres (nearly eight inches) of rain fell in three hours.

Giani said it was the heaviest amount of rain recorded in the last 100 years. "There was a wave of water bombs without precedence," Giani told Italian news channel Sky TG24. Climate scientists say human-induced climate change has led to heavier

rainfall during storms like Ciaran, often resulting in more severe damage. "If the conditions are different than 20 years ago, it is obvious to everyone," Nello Musumeci, the government's minister for civil protection, told Sky TG24, noting that weather systems in Italy have become more tropical in nature.

At one point there were concerns the River Arno could flood the historic city of Florence, but the high water point passed without major incident. About 190 people were forced to evacuate their homes, including 150 in Campi Bisenzio, where houses were inundated and parked cars half-submerged in the water. Resident Enza Carfagna told the Reuters news agency how her family rescued an elderly wheelchair-bound ground-floor neighbour, using a blanket to lift her up the stairs.

"Last night, it didn't seem like a big thing, there was very little rain. Then at about 9pm (20:00 GMT), we saw all this brown water coming and we went to get the lady," she said. High-speed train services

between Florence and Milan were suspended and with an estimated 48,000 people left without power, the Italian government declared a state of emergency. It allocated an initial 5 million euros (\$5.4m) to help the worst-hit areas. Huge waves also pumelled the Adriatic shores of the Balkans, as strong winds uprooted trees and ripped off roofs. Ferry services connecting Croatia's islands were suspended because of the weather.

Storm Ciaran was driven by a powerful jet stream that swept in from the Atlantic, unleashing heavy rain and furious winds that have already caused heavy flooding in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. More than half a million French homes remained without electricity for a second day, mainly in the northwestern region of Brittany. Trains were halted in several areas and many roads remained closed. French President Emmanuel Macron visited storm-ravaged areas of Brittany while Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne went to hard-hit areas of Normandy.

Australian PM to protest blogger's vague detention conditions

CANBERRA (AP): Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said Saturday he would protest a lack of transparency in China's treatment of a detained Australian democracy blogger when meeting with President Xi Jinping in Beijing during a trade-focused state visit.

The detention of Yang Hengjun without conviction for almost five years will be one of the topics raised with Xi when they meet in the Great Hall of the People on Monday. Yang is being held in a Beijing detention center awaiting the verdict of a 2021 closed-door trial on espionage charges. The 58-year-old's family fears he is dying. "I'll be saying that Dr. Yang's case needs to be resolved and I'll be speaking about his human rights, the nature of the detention and the failure to have transparent processes," Albanese told reporters in the northern Australian city of Darwin shortly before his plane departed for Shanghai.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry this week defended Yang's prosecution, saying his case had been handled in strict accordance

with the law. Albanese will on Saturday become the first Australian prime minister to visit China since 2016, signaling an improvement in strained relations between the two nations since Australia's center-left government was elected last year. Albanese has been raising the plights of Yang and another detained Australian, journalist Cheng Lei, with Chinese leaders since he first met Xi on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit in Indonesia a year ago.

Cheng was freed and deported last month after three years in a Beijing detention for breaking a government-imposed embargo by a few minutes. Her release was interpreted as a Chinese concession ahead of Albanese's visit. Albanese will on Tuesday meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang, whose message of congratulations soon after the prime minister's election victory on May 21 last year raised the prospects of a reset in bilateral relations. Beijing has previously refused top-level ministerial contacts between the two countries.

From the outset of his

prime ministership, Albanese had demanded that China immediately lift what he described as "unjustified" official and unofficial trade barriers costing Australian exporters 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year. Those barriers have since been substantially reduced and now cost around AU\$2 billion (\$1.3 billion).

Albanese on Saturday credited his government's different approach toward China for what he describes as "stabilizing" the relationship, after nine years of conservative rule in Australia. "My approach towards this relationship has been patient, deliberate and measured, making sure that both of our interests are put forward because that is the way that good diplomacy works," Albanese said.

"The fact that it is the first visit in seven years to our major trading partner is a very positive step, and I look forward to constructive discussions and dialogue with the president and the premier during my visit to Shanghai and Beijing," he added.

Zelensky considering whether to hold elections on schedule

KYIV (Agencies): President Volodymyr Zelensky is considering holding elections as scheduled in the spring of 2024, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said during a briefing. "We are not closing this page. The president of Ukraine is considering and weighing the different pros and cons," Kuleba said during an online appearance at the World Policy Conference, Reuters reported.

Ukraine's parliamentary elections were supposed to be held in October 2023, while presidential elections were scheduled for March 2024. Under Ukraine's Constitution, elections are prohibited while the country is in a state of martial law. Kuleba said that there are clearly logistical and security challenges involved in holding free and fair elections during wartime. Millions of voters live abroad or in territories currently occupied by Russia.

A poll published by the International Republican Institute (IRI) on Oct. 24 showed that 62% of Ukrainians believe that elections should only be held after the war is over. According to the results of the survey, only 22% of respondents prefer to see elections take place as early as March 2024, if the war is still ongoing. Ukraine's newly appointed head of defense industry says he is working tirelessly to ramp up local arms production and wants to turn the

country into a weapons production hub for the West. Oleksandr Kamysyhin, the minister for strategic industries of Ukraine, said that Russia's invasion of his country and the Israel-Hamas war raging in the Middle East have highlighted the need for countries to spend on their defense systems.

"We're really focused on making Ukraine the arsenal of the free world," Kamysyhin told The Associated Press in an interview. Kamysyhin said approximately 500 companies in Ukraine's defense industry are contributing to the country's efforts to increase weapons production in order to counter Russia's attempts to seize more territory. Among those are 70 state-owned factories, over 200 primarily private factories producing unmanned systems, and more than 200 private sector companies involved in the production of various types of weaponry and ammunition. "We are focused on producing all types of weapons and ammunition, and we show that we can test it on the battlefield and make it better during the war," Kamysyhin said. "That's something we can contribute to the free world, because as you see, defense industry is becoming more and more important globally." Oleksandr Kamysyhin was appointed to the post around eight months ago, and is now in charge of 300,000 peo-

ple employed in Ukraine's defense industry.

He previously worked as the chief of the national railway Ukrzaliznytsia, which under his rule, became famous for keeping trains running on time despite the war, crucial to evacuating hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians to safety in the early days of Russia's invasion. Now he recalls that time as his "past life" and says he is completely focused on make the defense industry a successful enterprise like Ukrzaliznytsia. He acknowledges that he has had to start scaling the local manufacture of weapons from scratch. Ukraine barely had a local defense industry to speak of before 2022, he said, with the military mainly relying on what it already had and what it received as military aid from allies before the war began with Russia's invasion in February 2021.

Now, Ukraine is delivering locally produced munition to the battlefield and can increasingly strike inside Russia, he said. He declined to disclose specific figures but said Ukraine is manufacturing mortar and artillery ammunition, drones, armored vehicles, missiles and various other items. The industry, he says, has grown by dozens or even hundreds of times compared to the previous year in some segments.

Acapulco residents struggle to access food, medicine after Hurricane Otis

ACAULCO (Agencies): For 25 years, the Tres Hermanos Pozoleria in Acapulco, Mexico, served 64 litres a week of pozole: a rich, stomach-warming soup made of hominy corn. It was a favourite neighbourhood haunt. Customers would belly up to the modest, brown-and-white tiled counter to order a bowl of soup, before settling into the dining tables nearby. But on the morning of October 26, the Tres Hermanos Pozoleria disappeared. All that remained was its sign, inviting customers to a pile of rubble where tables and chairs once stood.

The wreckage at the restaurant reflected the devastation across the city as a whole. Acapulco suffered a direct hit from Hurricane Otis, a Category 5 storm that left at least 46 dead and 58 missing. Just 16 hours before it made landfall, Otis was predicted to be a Category 1 storm, the lowest level on the five-tier scale. But the hurricane intensified rapidly, defying all forecasts. When it struck Acapulco, it brought sustained winds of 270 kilometres (165 miles) per hour. Flood waters rose, power lines tumbled and the coastal city's steep cliffs crumbled into mudslides.

The National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration in the United States has called Otis the strongest hurricane to strike the Eastern Pacific since the advent of satellite forecasting. "It was like a water tornado, spinning and eating things up," said Lucia Transito, one of the owners of the Tres Hermanos Pozoleria. "We saw when everything was destroyed, but more than that, we heard it." The rapid acceleration of the hurricane's power, fuelled in part by climate change, gave Acapulco residents little time to evacuate.

Three generations of the Transito family live together in a small, two-story house behind the restaurant. There's Lucia, her father Santiago, her mother Beatriz Transito, her husband and their baby daughter. On the night of October 25, they huddled together on the upper floor of their home, dodging pieces of window glass blown in by the wind. When their neighbourhood, La Rinconada, flooded, the mud downstairs reached as high as their thighs. It took three days for the family to clear out all the muck. Their home was one of more than 200,000 that suffered serious damage in Acapulco.

But in the restaurant, the destruction was worse. Its corrugated metal

roof lay twisted in pieces atop a nest of debris: broken wicker chairs, Coca-Cola bottles filled with mud, the shattered basin of a sink and shards of tile. Though they once fed an entire neighbourhood, now the Transito family is itself without food. Seeing their need, former customers gifted them a bag of rice and one 11-litre jug of water. Lucia said she expects the supplies to last only a day. But Lucia and her family are most worried about Beatriz, the matriarch of the family. She has diabetes, and at the time Al Jazeera visited their home, she had only one day's worth of insulin left.

To make matters worse, the insulin has likely lost its potency, as the medicine needs to be refrigerated. La Rinconada has been without electricity for days. "I don't know what effect this will have on my body," Beatriz said, as she prepared to take the insulin. Fear kept threatening to overwhelm her, as she grappled with the overall devastation. "I look around at the damage, and suddenly it grabs me and I realize that this is actually real. I have to hold in my emotions," she said. "We're really living in hell, aren't we?"

After Golden Dawn's demise, a dangerous new far right flourishes in Greece

ATHENS (Agencies): Far-right activists and neo-Nazi organisations in Greece recently called for a pan-European memorial in Athens, to commemorate 10 years since two members of the self-described Nazi organisation, Golden Dawn, were killed. On November 1, 2013, Manolis Kapelonis and Giorgos Fountoulis – both in their 20s – were fatally shot in a drive-by attack outside the party's office, an apparent revenge assault for the murder weeks earlier of the anti-fascist rapper, Pavlos Fyssas, by a Golden Dawn member.

In response to this week's call, dozens of antifascist groups organised counterprotests at nearby metro stations and squares. A few days before these events, which were planned, the General Police Directorate of Attica issued a 24-hour ban on all public outdoor meetings. The situation heated up on Tuesday night, when 21 members of the Italian neo-fascist group Casa Pound were arrested upon arrival at the Athens airport, and put in process for deportation.

On the appointed evening, a sense of chaos erupted in some parts of the Greek capital. At two different metro stations in Athens, hundreds of antifascist demonstrators were held in static positions by rows of riot police.

At the small marble memorial for the Golden Dawn, supporters passed by rows of police, and left flowers or took selfies. Later, anti-authoritarian protesters clashed with police at another metro station.

At the central Monastiraki metro station, a group of neo-Nazis attacked counterprotesters inside a cabin. In videos posted online, far-right activists can be seen hitting people with belts and sheets of metal, and later dousing them in what appears to be petrol, threatening, "We will burn you alive." There were no fires, but several people were hospitalised with injuries. Though Golden Dawn was officially deemed a criminal organisation in 2020, this week's spectacle was evidence that the ideals and followers of Golden Dawn have not disappeared, and that the Greek far-right is reorganising.

"Clearly with the conviction of Golden Dawn, we didn't finish with the far right in Greece," Kostis Papaioannou, member of the monitoring network Point for the Study and Countering of the Far Right, told Al Jazeera. "The main factors that feed the extreme right continue to exist and there is also a mainstreaming of the extreme right, of far-right ideas, both through the mainstream news and unfortunately by political parties." In the 2000s, Golden Dawn

was a central and potent force in Greek politics.

The party took on a populist appeal, positing that only their brand of fervent nationalism would assuage the country's devastating economic woes. They built up support in struggling neighbourhoods across Greece, and in 2012 won 7 percent of the seats in the Greek parliament. During this period, the organisation basked their arguments with violence. They regularly deployed members on nighttime patrols to beat and kill refugees and migrants – and sometimes left-wingers, often with impunity.

In 2013, Golden Dawn organised the coordinated murder of Fyssas, the popular anti-fascist rapper; several of the party higher-ups were later arrested. In 2020, after years of trial proceedings, Golden Dawn was found guilty of several attacks on migrants and refugees, and trade unionists, as well as the murder of rapper Pavlos Fyssas. After being criminalised, Golden Dawn was largely prohibited from engaging in political organising, but its former leaders have continued to campaign for political office from prison, members have shifted their support to other far-right organisations, and their violent methods have been glorified and parroted.

Ilias Kasidiaris, a Golden Dawn

leader with a swastika tattoo who was jailed in 2021, founded the nationalist Hellenes party just before beginning his 13.5-year sentence at the Domokos prison. The party was banned from this year's parliamentary elections due to Kasidiaris's criminal record. But the 42-year-old, heavily active on YouTube and X, then endorsed the formerly unheard-of Spartans, and the party garnered a groundswell of support that won them 4.7 percent of the parliament.

The party's leader, Vasilis Stigkas, has previous ties to Golden Dawn, and several other neo-Nazi organisations in Greece. Two other far-right political parties also gained seats in this year's elections – the ultranationalist Greek Solution and the Christian-conservative Victory. In sum, these far-right parties now comprise 16 percent of parliament, making the current government Greece's most far-right parliament since the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974.

Outside of party politics, Golden Dawn's use of street violence has also been replicated and mimicked. In the middle of this year, as fires raged across Greece's northern Evros region, a man broadcast on social media an extrajudicial kidnapping of refugees and migrants in Evros, whom he blamed for the fires. This video was shared by the leader of

Greek Solution. On August 12, a young Pakistani man, Sizar Saftar, was killed, in what the organisation the Movement United Against Racism and the Fascist Threat has identified as a racist murder, though it remains unclear who the perpetrators were. In recent weeks, far-right youth groups around Athens have publicised their night patrols, during which they spray paint nationalist and racist slogans in various neighbourhoods.

Papaioannou said there has been an increase in street attacks recently. "After the 2020 conviction of Golden Dawn, there was a decrease in the presence of this violence of racist neo-Nazi groups on the streets," he said. "However, there have been some appearances, around schools in the north of Greece and in Athens. And there is now a reactivation of these sorts of groups and violent attacks." Magda Skoutzou, head of a parents' association in Athens, said "fascist" groups are "acting undisturbed".

At the end of the previous school year here, she added, far-right activists stabbed two 15-year-olds in her neighbourhood. Skoutzou stood with other parents and groups in the antifascist camp, and though they argued with police, were not allowed to go ahead with their demonstration. "I believe it is my obligation to be here today," said

Skoutzou. "To emphasise that we do not want fascist groups to have any space in our neighbourhoods and schools." Experts of the Greek far right note that, despite their more visible presence, these attack groups are still not nearly as organised or as strong as they were during the heyday of Golden Dawn.

"The groups we have now – Propatria, or for example, the Youth Front of Golden Dawn, which is essentially a group in Thessaloniki – these are very small groups that try to recapture the threads of the old to do the same thing, but it doesn't work now," said Dimitris Psarras, a journalist who reported on Golden Dawn since its formation. "They imitate [Golden Dawn] but have neither the power nor the appeal." Psarras said these neo-Nazi groups operate differently from the all-encompassing top-down approach of Golden Dawn. "The groups that do far-right politics now, such as Velopoulos [Greek Solution] in the Parliament, or even the Spartans, on the surface, they want to appear that they are only political activists, they don't do other actions," he said. "It's like the Golden Dawn has split into the political and military branches that used to be together and now they've split, although there definitely remain among them connections and contacts."

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Upsurge in terrorism

DURING an unfortunate incident on Friday, 14 soldiers got martyrdom when terrorists attacked two vehicles carrying security forces moving from Pasni to Ormara in Gwadar District. According to the Pakistan Army media wing, a sanitisation operation was being carried out in the area and perpetrators of this heinous act will be hunted down and brought to justice as the top priority. The ISPR categorically underscored 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 to wipe out this evil from our soil.

Pakistani nation and its elite security forces stand resolute against the giant of terrorism that witnessed a sharp upsurge in recent months after the defunct Tahreek-e-Taliban (TTP) resumed violence and bloodshed in the aftermath of the state refusal to meet its demands for a possible truce between the government and the banned outfit. Meanwhile, foreign-sponsored Baloch insurgency regained an uptick in recent years after the government launched multiple development and uplift projects in the poverty-ridden province under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which has been a prime target of global powers and Indian Intelligence throughout the past. According to a report of the Islamabad-based Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the number of fatalities from terrorist attacks has increased by 19% in the current year as compared to 2022, while the two provinces bordering Afghanistan, i.e. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan suffered 92% of all casualties during this time. The report suggests that more than 700 Pakistanis lost their lives in the terrorist attacks including 386 security personnel during the first nine months of 2023, marking an eight-year high death toll in terrorism-related incidents.

The Security forces have stepped up their Counter Terrorism campaign in recent months by launching a countrywide intelligence-based targeted operation against the terrorist groups. A large number of miscreants have been killed and numerous others were arrested during the multiple operations. The continuous hot pursuit of terrorist groups by the LEAs has significantly damaged terror infrastructure in Erstwhile FATA and border-belt region Balochistan while terrorists are on the run and making a last resort to regain their foothold. According to the reports, several terrorist outfits including the TTP, Al-Qaeda and other splinter groups have concluded a deal to cooperate and coordinate each other against the Pakistani state. Meanwhile, Indian intelligence is continuously funding Baloch insurgents to specifically target the CEPC-related infrastructure, Chinese nationals working on CPEC and the LEAs to disrupt the pace of development and cause embarrassment for Islamabad and Beijing at the global level.

Historically, Pakistan has been a victim of foreign-sponsored terrorism and religious violence over the past decades, as the religious militant organizations and Baloch rebels have always enjoyed safe havens, essential funds and training from neighbouring countries throughout the past. New Delhi's long-held support for terrorism and patronage of the Baloch separatist movement is an open secret to the world. At the time, the state of Pakistan was passing through a crucial period of its history and faced grave risks to its economic survival, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and ideological cohesion as the enemies of the country were making all-out efforts to breach our security, undermine national unity and collapse our nation economically. There is a dire need for the interim government to take the diplomatic front by persuading our Eastern as well as Western neighbours to abandon their support for Pakistani separatist and terrorist groups when the Security Forces are engaged in a kinetic Counter Terrorism campaign in the country. Meanwhile, the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP), and the introduction of extremism and terrorism-related legislation is of utmost importance to curb radicalization and religious violence in our society. So, the menaces of terrorism and extremism could be eradicated from Pakistani soil once and for all.

Rebirth of nation saviours

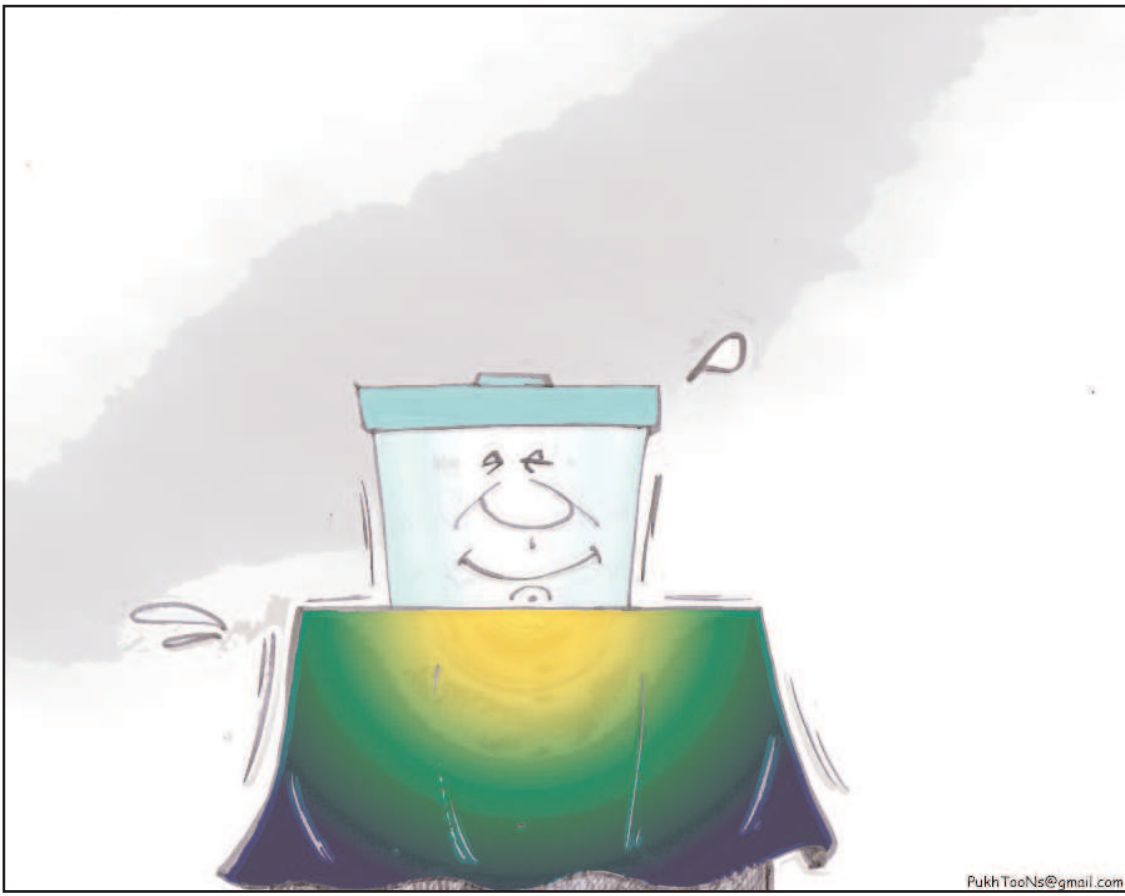
THE former PTI's leaders, and Chief Ministers KP, Perviz Khattak and Mahmood Khan have once again taken the stage after a month long absence from the Political scene. During the Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian (PTIP) power show at Chitral, Perviz Khattak vowed to give Pakistanis real freedom and save them from the defect of external loans after coming to power in the future. According to him, Almighty Allah has bestowed everything in Pakistan, but due to the incompetent rulers, the nation is still forced to beg for loans from the IMF. Both the mentor and his blue-eyed expressed regret that if they had a chance again to establish their government in KP, they would focus on backward districts like Chitral and track them on the path of development. According to them, they left Imran Khan because he had no policy or plan for the development of the country and staged a hateful activity against the Pak army who made sacrifices to defend this country.

Politics is a strange profession that resembles a grocer and a magician, one owe a tact of selling rotten items and attracting crowds through flimsy tales and magical acts for the sake of money and fame. Both uncle and his nephew enjoyed a decade of rule and unrestricted authority in the province since the PTI came to power in late 2018. Both Chief Ministers were competent enough to initiate development schemes and serve the public through provision of employment, cost cost-effective and timely justice, instead, former top executives used provincial resources to accomplish their political agenda, appease the PTI Chairman, stage protests and demonstrations and weigh crusades against the centre during their terms in office. They owe credit for nepotism, victimization of political opponents and abuse of authority, while the misuse of the government's helicopter is an undeniable scam of the self-claimed nation saviours.

Currently, both former Chief Ministers have made some disguise in their appearances by wearing a new attire of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians and denouncing the policies of their mentor who was once a red line for them. Interestingly, several PTI leaders have parted ways from their previous political cabal, got pardoned for their malignancy and started trading nationalism, and public issues. The nation is all set for a fresh election, hence the time would decide the success of their play, tact of their politics and innocence of their voters in due course of time.

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A genocide is under way in Palestine

M Muhanad Ayyash

IT is now clear that Israel is engaging in a genocide of the Palestinian people. As reported by Al Jazeera, the Israeli state has "loosened" its military rules of engagement, essentially giving its soldiers the green light to kill anyone they encounter inside the Gaza Strip as part of their ground operations. Israeli politicians and soldiers are talking openly about turning Gaza into dust, eliminating Palestinians, and imagining Israeli settlers living on land that used to be called Gaza. Palestinians are being deliberately deprived of all the basic necessities for life, including food, water, shelter and medical care. Bombs from the air are indiscriminately killing and maiming Palestinians.

Palestinians are being encouraged to leave their lands and homes in northern Gaza and head towards the south - Israel clearly wants to colonise northern Gaza and turn it into a security or military zone, permanently expelling the Palestinians who currently live there. Scholars of genocide have always argued that such mass atrocities are rarely the product of an "evil leader" or "a small extremist political class". The terrifying reality of genocide is that it happens with mass support, which either comes in the form of active participation (direct and indirect), or complicity through silence.

I am not sure that we have ever seen a case of genocide being supported by this many actors, openly and actively. The majority of institutions in North America, Western Europe and elsewhere are either actively participating in this genocide, or completely silent and are thus complicit. For genocide to happen, two critical elements are needed: the infrastructural and material capabilities to commit the genocide and the ability to conceal the genocide by calling it something other than what it is. The West is participating in both of these critical elements. In terms of material capabilities, the United

States empire has sent, not one, but two aircraft carriers to the region, and has made it abundantly clear in word and deed that if any state or group attempts to enter the picture and aid Palestinians in their desperate attempt to survive Israel's genocidal operation, that the US will intervene with its full force. The United Kingdom has also sent naval ships to support this Western imperial threat to the people of the region. The US is sending military equipment and weaponry to Israel, refusing to call for a ceasefire or de-escalation. Corporations and economic institutions are providing financial support to Israel all in the name of supporting Israeli victims, as well as reportedly offering financial incentives to Egypt, attempting to entice it to host the Palestinian refugees who will not be allowed to re-enter the Gaza Strip. Years of US and Western aid and support to Israel have allowed Israel to develop the infrastructural capabilities to carry out a genocide.

In terms of concealment, political, media, social and cultural institutions are fully mobilised in the West to hide and conceal this act of genocide, presenting it as a righteous violence of a victimised Jewish people everywhere in the world. Those expressing support for Palestine in the West are being threatened with job loss (and are actually losing their jobs), possible criminal charges and bans, and other punitive measures and harassment campaigns. The media is continuously and consistently sending the outrageous message that Hamas is the one responsible for the loss of Palestinian civil life in the Gaza Strip, attempting to wash their hands clean of the genocide.

The Israeli operation is being framed as a mission to "eliminate Hamas" as opposed to what it really is: a genocide of the Palestinian people and their erasure from the map. The few voices that are questioning these narratives are being marginalised,

silenced and de-platformed. In short, all of the establishment institutions in the West are mobilised, fully and coherently, at this moment in enabling the genocide of Palestinians, all under the guise of protecting "civilisation" from "barbarism".

As I write this, I am dreading what's to come. The suffering that Palestinians have endured so far is already unfathomable and very difficult to register in words. And what is coming is going to be even worse. In moments like this, everything becomes clear. It was clear to many of us for a long time, but now there can be no doubt. The imperial West is still firmly committed to the imperial project it launched against the world late in the 15th century. Yes, it has changed and transformed its methods, tactics, strategies, and its apparatus of power and force. The players have changed, some things became more complex, some things less so. And on and on. All of these academic debates are important, but not right now. What is important right now is to say it clearly and loudly - the imperial West is hell-bent on maintaining its supremacy and will kill indiscriminately in order to achieve the only goal it has ever had, the only value it has ever stood for, power and wealth.

The same imperial project that brutalised millions of Black Africans, committed genocide against millions of Indigenous peoples across the Americas, in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere, colonised Asia and Africa through unfathomable brutality and force, destroyed countless societies full of complexity and beauty, massacred civilians in its imperial wars in places like Vietnam and Iraq, dropped atomic bombs on Japanese civilians, created a neocolonial economic infrastructure that is continuously robbing the majority of the world's population blind, and I can go on and on, but this project is ongoing and nowhere

at this moment is this more visible than in Palestine. The world will never forget any of these brutalities and injustices. We will always remember our dead and injured; our suffering will always guide us in our actions and provide the impetus for us to create a better world.

The world is seeing that we do not live in an international system of nation-states, but an imperial world order where the West reigns supreme; it is seeing that white supremacy is not just alive and well, but is an expression of the material conditions of our world; succinctly put, the world is seeing how the Euro-American empire posits itself, forcefully and violently and through all and any means necessary, as lords of the world. The world should be seeing that the only way to begin a serious movement out of this age of colonial modernity is to oust Western European and North American states, not people but states, from our political and economic lives everywhere around the globe. People across the world must begin to withdraw their participation from this system that primarily works for Euro-American powers and political and economic elites across the world.

Don't do it just for Palestine, do it for your own sake as well. Do it for your dignity, freedom and humanity. European and North American people can and should join us in creating this better world. But not unless they actively participate in dismantling the imperial world order that primarily benefits their political and economic elites. You as well, can and should join this brave decolonisation project as equals with the rest of the world, but never again, as lords of it. For you and indeed for Israeli people, joining the decolonisation project is the only way to evade what history teaches as the inevitable fate of all lords, which is their eventual violent replacement with new lords.

Aljazeera

Fawaz Turki

How Gaza became Guernica, mirroring war's havoc

NO, it's not true, as psychotherapists and other clinicians would have us believe, that while contemplating mass suffering, especially mass suffering beyond all rational understanding such as that we are witnessing in Gaza, our empathy quotient decreases as the number of victims and the degree of mayhem increases.

This happens presumably because our brain at that time goes numb as it contemplates the unspeakable, or in the words of Joseph Conrad, as it "penetrates deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness". What is true, rather, as those of us who contemplated images of the pain-haunted faces of ordinary Palestinian men, women and children in Gaza waiting to perish by an air strike or die slowly of dehydration, unattended wounds, starvation and the like, is that the more these victims' suffering increases the more we feel with them - indeed the more we

share it with them.

The war in Gaza has entered its fourth week and the death toll, as I write this, has already topped 8,000, including well over 3,000 children, with more than 20,000 injured - this inflicted on a people inhabiting a little, tormented strip of land 25 miles long and six miles wide, inhabited by 2.3 million souls. And that toll, as we all know, is expected to climb more rapidly as Israel continues to expand its ground offensive and air strikes. As our mind then penetrates deeper and deeper into that heart of darkness, the realisation dawns on us: Gaza, once described as a prison camp, is now being turned into a death camp.

The brute ferocity with which Israel has waged this war - a ferocity transparently mixed with hatred - is made all the more deadly as it makes its goal the wholesale annihilation of anyone who moves and anything that stands in Gaza, a war waged against a civilian population but

disguised as a war against Hamas. How else to see it? Israel's terror-bombing of this little strip of land over the last four weeks is now being seen by the overwhelming majority of people in the world as the most controversial military campaign in modern history, comparable in its brutality to the bombing of Dresden in February 1945, at the tail end of the Second World War, which turned the German city into rubble and killed roughly 25,000 of its inhabitants - an act designated in the history books as a war crime. No wonder then that the horrors in Gaza have stirred a wave of global protests. "Across the world, protesters have taken to the streets in great numbers", according to a review in the Washington Post on Monday. "The aggregate figure of participants is hard to gauge, but it could well be in the millions".

Look, when you expose helpless human beings,

which is what Gazans are, to the murderousness and the caprice of the inhuman, which is what Israel is displaying in the Gaza Strip, human beings everywhere, those certainly with a penchant for siding with the injured party in the dispute, the underdog, as it were, are likely to take to their streets, to their podiums and, for that matter, to their rooftops and tell you publicly where they stand.

That's how the world feels today. Now, you wonder, how do Palestinians themselves feel? As a Palestinian myself, whose work has for decades been devoted to exploring the energies of spirit that animate his people's long struggle for freedom, and the role that remembrance plays in that struggle, I will tell you this: Never before, over the last 75 years, has anything triggered in Palestinians the dread realisation that they may these days be living

Rules of war are being rewritten in Gaza

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

ISRAEL has described its indiscriminate bombing of Gaza, and its targeting of hospitals, schools, shelters, refugee camps and civilian cars, as lawful self-defense. While states, like individuals, have that right, international law has long put important restrictions on the exercise of that right. Self-defense is an exception to the prohibition against use of force under the UN charter and customary international law, and as an exception should be interpreted narrowly.

Some of Israel's supporters, while disagreeing with its excesses, have asserted that it has the right to defend itself, which has been misconstrued as implicitly condoning its relentless attacks against Gaza. There have been clarifications, but not enough to dispel the notion that some Western nations are acquiescing.

Clearly, war to avenge an earlier attack, no matter how gruesome, cannot be legally considered in itself as legitimate self-defense, and even when it is so considered, it needs to be carried out in accordance with those rules of war, including the rules of necessity, proportionality and sanctity of civilians and civilian structures.

According to the Geneva Conventions as interpreted by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Court of Justice, the rule of necessity requires that force may be lawfully used in self-defense only when this is necessary to bring an attack to an end, or to avert an imminent attack, and there must be no practical alternative to the proposed use of force that is likely to be effective in ending or averting the attack.

In other words, force should not be the first recourse but the last, when all peaceful means have been exhausted, and when there is no practical non-military alternative. Force must be limited to what is necessary to avert an imminent attack or bring it to an end.

Self-defense must also comply with the rule of proportionality, which has been misapplied in the Gaza conflict. It means that the force used must not be excessive in relation to the need to avert or bring the attack to an end. The human, physical and economic consequences of the force used must not be excessive in relation to the harm expected from that attack. The proportionality criterion also means that the physical and economic consequences of the force used must not be excessive in relation to the harm expected from the adversary's attack.

The right of self-defense does not permit the use of force to "punish" an aggressor and, as such, proportionality should not be thought to refer to parity between a response and the harm already suffered from an attack, as this could turn the concept of self-

defense into a justification for retributive force.

Protection of civilians during war should not be controversial. In modern times, that hallowed principle was codified in the Geneva Convention of 1864 and the Hague Convention of 1907. After the Second World War, the rules were rewritten to enhance that protection of civilians, in light of the unspeakable atrocities against them during the war, especially against Jewish communities in European lands overrun by Nazi Germany.

The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols of 1977 have been signed and ratified by 196 countries - all of the UN 193 member states, plus the two non-member UN observer states (the Holy See and Palestine), and the Cook Islands. There are few international instruments that have been so unanimously accepted.

The Fourth Geneva Convention is dedicated to protecting civilian populations. While Israel has ratified that convention, it has unilaterally declared that it does not apply to its occupation of Palestinian lands including Gaza. It claims that it alone decides how to treat Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. The UN has repeatedly reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Conventions to the Occupied Territories, as has the US, Israel's closest ally, and almost every other nation and legal authority addressing this issue.

Failure to uphold international humanitarian law in the war against Gaza has been the main bone of contention between Israel and the international community and certainly its neighbors. As Israel refuses to observe international humanitarian law in Gaza, it is not clear what legal yardsticks it uses to guide its military's conduct. Many were alarmed when, on Oct. 10, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told his soldiers: "We have removed every restriction."

Then, on Oct. 29, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu compared the attacks on Israel to those of the Amalekites in ancient history. Citing the Old Testament, he said: "Remember what Amalek did to you. We remember and we fight," according to the translation published by his office.

Invoking this bloody episode was ominous, because the rest of the text he cited goes on to say: "You must destroy the Amalekites and erase their memory from under heaven."

Never forget this." In another chapter, it said that the memory of the Amalekites was indeed "erased" after they were put to the sword in later attacks. The no-holds-barred policy described by Israel's defense minister and the genocidal vengeance cited by the prime minister should not be acceptable substitutes for the Geneva Conventions.

Arab News

through another Nakba - a meta word in every Palestinian's semantic fashion of expression that refers to the catastrophic event in 1948 that culminated in the dismemberment of the Palestinian people's home and homeland. The thought of it is haunting. It sends chills up your national spine.

And, yes, we Palestinians see this war as truly bloody - Lord, to be a father in Gaza today is to pass a death sentence on your own children - but we also see it as extremely tragic. And in enduring tragedy, as our poets and prophets tell us, respectively in their verse compositions and in their holy texts, victims of oppression always emerge ennobled by the spite of their enemies.

If Gaza today were a painting, it would be Picasso's Guernica, the most powerful painting in history about the horror, suffering and chaos that a war, devoted to overkill, such as that waged against the people of Gaza, could

wreak. How could we, diaspora Palestinians ask themselves, living as we are, comfortably, safely in our adopted homelands, sit back and ... well, watch, just watch, that horror, that suffering and that chaos on our TV screens? And why is it that, by a trick of fate, we are diaspora Palestinians not there to share it all with Gazan Palestinians?

You know, there may be latent in our guilt-ridden sensibility a kind of envy, a dim resentment, that we are, unlike our fellow-Palestinians there, missing our rendezvous with hell. The Palestinians have never evinced fear since the day we first made contact with the Zionists a century ago? Have you heard them declare 'mission accomplished' ever since they made contact with us? Negative, baby. We are native to this land. We have inhabited Palestine since time became time and we will continue to inhabit till the sun dies.

Gulf News

California dreaming? UK leader’s AI hopes face hurdles

Andrew Hammond

WHEN UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced in June that he would build momentum toward launching a big global AI initiative in November, he claimed the country should become the "geographical home" of AI safety. Laudable as that lofty goal is, however, it is unlikely to be fully realized. Sunak is known to be fascinated by technology after years spent in California before he became a politician. Moreover, his father-in-law is the founder of the Indian multinational technology company Infosys.

He has frequently argued that Britain has fallen behind other economies, especially the US, because of an innovation gap, and, therefore, wants to "make sure the UK is the country where the next great scientific discoveries are made, and where the brightest minds and the most ambitious entrepreneurs will turn those ideas into companies, products, and services that can change the world." Few would disagree with this ambition, but realizing it in practice is not so easy. This is likely to be true, too, with his otherwise commendable AI ambitions.

To be sure, there is little question that the UK can be influential on the AI agenda. The nation has precedents for developing rules for governing emerging technologies, for example in stem-cell research. One of the key challenges for Sunak with this huge agenda is that it comes in the context of multiple existing initiatives from other powers, including the US. On Monday alone, President Joe Biden, who will not attend the summit, signed an executive order that he claims represents the most far-reaching action on AI of any country. The new order requires AI system developers that pose risks to national security, the economy, or public health to share the results of safety tests with the US government, in accordance with the Defense Production Act, before being released to the public. Meanwhile, the EU is working on AI legislation to align alongside

other digital regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation and the Digital Services Act. China, too, is also moving forward with its own AI regulatory frameworks.

At the multilateral level, moreover, the Japanese-chaired G7 is planning soon to announce joint principles, likely to be a code of

with the rest of the globe. After all, the computing power needed to research and develop large AI models can be out of reach even for medium-sized states given the expense. In so doing, the UK can help build a stronger international consensus on bringing AI more clearly into more inclusive global governance structures. At present,

For one, the proposed new, UK-based "world's first AI safety institute" could play a key role in looking into the capabilities of new types of AI, and share its findings with the rest of the globe. After all, the computing power needed to research and develop large AI models can be out of reach even for medium-sized states given the expense. In so doing, the UK can help build a stronger international consensus on bringing AI more clearly into more inclusive global governance structures. At present, there is a significant risk of private sector tech firms ruling the roost. Unlike some previous era-defining technological advances, such as space or nuclear, AI is mostly being developed by private companies which are disproportionately located in the US.

conduct for firms developing advanced AI systems. Meanwhile, there is also a separate Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence event in India in December. So, if anything, the UK is catching up with regulatory moves in other key political jurisdictions rather than "leading the pack." Nonetheless, its initiative can still do good work on this important agenda in the period to come. For one, the proposed new, UK-based "world's first AI safety institute" could play a key role in looking into the capabilities of new types of AI, and share its findings

there is a significant risk of private sector tech firms ruling the roost. Unlike some previous era-defining technological advances, such as space or nuclear, AI is mostly being developed by private companies which are disproportionately located in the US.

The UK-driven initiative, therefore, can add value in the period to come by deepening shared international understanding of major AI opportunities and challenges. This includes offering innovation to help address AI knowledge gaps, and offering more inclusion, including for so-called global

south nations without the financial means to develop a critical mass of AI capacity. However, yet another area of challenge is whether the specific focus of the UK initiative on so-called "frontier AI" makes most sense. That is, systems that severely threaten public safety and global security, and the best approaches to safeguarding them. The public conversation about this topic is important, for sure. Yet, some critics argue that this threat is over-hyped in the short to medium term, and that the government is wrong to put so much emphasis on dangers. The University of Oxford's Keegan McBride, for instance, claims that "AI systems based on technology that we have now and in the foreseeable future aren't able to rise to the level of sophistication and intelligence that governments - the UK, basically - and companies like OpenAI are discussing." His argument is that there are regulatory frameworks already in place for these serious threats, and that the industry is exaggerating the dangers of AI to shut out would-be rivals to centralize AI development.

Whatever the merits of this view, some key figures, such as Elon Musk, disagree profoundly. The Tesla founder has often warned about the dangers he perceives in advanced AI systems, even signing a letter last spring warning that "out of control" advancement could "pose profound risks to society and humanity," and calling for a pause on AI development. From this vantage point, it is curious for Sunak to champion this agenda, too, given his position that the UK will not "rush to regulate" so as not to stifle innovation. This is despite his avowed concerns over the speed of AI development and the possibility of humanity's "extinction" as a result of the technology. Taken together, the UK AI initiative is unlikely to deliver the huge ambition Sunak hopes for. Laudable as the prime minister's ambitions are, outcomes may be more modest - albeit still potentially important - than he intends.

If you cancel Palestine, cancel us

Sreko Horvat, Paul Stubbs & Dubravka Sekuli

EARLIER this year, we received an invitation from the Maxim Gorki Theatre in Berlin to deliver a lecture about Yugoslavia and participate in a debate on the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) today as part of a programme called Lost - You Go Slavia.

The theatre, founded in East Berlin in 1952 and named after Soviet writer Maxim Gorki, has long been celebrated across Europe as an inclusive, critical and diverse hub for contemporary theatre. As scholars who have long been researching the NAM and various aspects of Yugoslav socialism and all its accomplishments, failures and contradictions, we were honoured to have been invited to one of Germany's most respected theatres to talk about a subject we care deeply about.

The NAM emerged as a response to the bipolarisation of the world during the Cold War and included countries that refused to side with either of the world's two main power blocs at the time. The movement united countries and struggles against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, occupation and foreign aggression of all kinds. Its founding principles included the doctrines of peaceful co-existence and self-determination. As we stated in the announcement for the Gorki Theatre event: "Today, we don't live in a bipolar world any more, and the world has never been closer to a nuclear catastrophe or a new world war. Thus the question of non-alignment also confronts us with new challenges. The question is not only what we can learn from the Non-Aligned Movement, but what is the relevance of non-alignment today."

We were very much looking forward to taking part in the event scheduled for the last week of October, but everything changed on October 7. Hamas staged an attack on civilians in southern Israel, killing about 1,400 people, and kidnapping dozens of others. Israel retaliated with a total siege of the Gaza Strip and a bombardment campaign that saw more than 8,000 civilians killed in a matter of a few weeks.

In response to the Hamas attack, venues and institutions around Germany swiftly started to "cancel" Palestinian speech and advocacy. The German literary association Litprom, for example, cancelled an award ceremony that was to honour the novel Minor Detail by Palestinian author Adania Shibli at the Frankfurt Book Fair. The decision concerning the book, which focuses on the Nakba and the atrocities committed in historic Palestine during the founding of the state of Israel, caused public outrage. More than 350 authors, including Nobel prize winners Annie Ernaux and Olga Tokarczuk, warned in an open letter that it is the responsibility of the book fair "to create spaces for Palestinian writers to share their thoughts, feelings and reflections".

Regrettably, the Gorki Theatre has also decided to take action to silence Palestinian voices in response to the Israel-Palestine war. It said it would "postpone" a performance of the Yael Ronen play The Situation that was scheduled for October 23. In its published statement on how it reached this decision, the theatre admitted its powerlessness in the face of the current "situation" but added that "the attack by the terrorist organisation Hamas on Israel puts us on Israel's side". The theatre stated that "war is a great simplifier" that "demands a simple division into friend and foe" and concluded that "our arguments with the old wars do not help us with this new one". After giving the matter careful consideration, during which we discussed a number of different options, we have decided to withdraw from the Gorki Theatre's Lost - You Go Slavia programme in protest against its one-sided statement on the cancelling of The Situation.

As scholars and activists who remember the wars of the Yugoslav succession, we reject completely the argument that war is a great simplifier requiring a simple division between friend and enemy. Rightful condemnation of Hamas's attack on Israel can never be, and should never be, used as a justification for the ongoing actions of the Israeli military in Gaza. The loss of civilian lives on both sides of the conflict is a tragedy. Yet nothing can ever justify war crimes, ethnic cleansing or genocide, as our experience tells us. We are well aware that, at this time in history, a discussion on the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement today is needed more than ever. Given the current climate in Germany, where voices speaking up for the Palestinians are increasingly silenced, outlining the NAM's longstanding and sincere support for the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people and condemnation of Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank - as our debate at Gorki would have inevitably included - is indeed crucial.

Our withdrawal from the event at the Gorki Theatre is not in any way aimed at withdrawing ourselves from this important and urgent conversation. Instead, it is an effort to point the mirror back at German institutions and communicate to them the shortsightedness of their position on the current situation in Israel-Palestine. We believe today, of all days, institutions such as the Gorki Theatre should focus their efforts not on silencing Palestinian viewpoints but on bringing people together to discuss history, critique policy and work towards building a world that can hold the whole of humanity equitably together.

Unlike the theatre, we do not believe that "our arguments with the old wars do not help us with this new one". On the contrary, we believe the brutal collapse of Yugoslavia and the consequent bloody wars that defined much of the 1990s

carry many lessons for our current wars. After all, the same international community that failed to act to prevent ethnic cleansing and genocide back then is once again standing idly by as similar atrocities unfold before our eyes in Gaza. And there is much to be learned from socialist Yugoslavia and NAM's nuanced stance on Palestine-Israel at a time when the decades-old conflict is at yet another turning point.

Since the Yugoslav national liberation struggle during World War II, in which Jewish people took an active part (10 Jewish people were named national heroes of the resistance, including one of Tito's closest collaborators, Moša Pijade, who translated Das Kapital into Serbo-Croatian), the position of the Yugoslav leadership - promoted by President Josip Broz Tito himself - was that the Jewish people had the right to their own state. At the beginning of 1953 while on a visit to Great Britain, Tito met the political director of the World Jewish Congress in London, AL Easterman, who expressed his satisfaction with the attitude of the Yugoslav government towards the Jewish people.

At the same time, throughout the entire existence of socialist Yugoslavia, all final summit statements of the NAM ended with support for the people of Palestine and condemnation of Zionism as a form of racism, colonialism and apartheid. The first NAM summit in Belgrade in 1961 expressed unanimous support "for the full restoration of all the rights of the Arab people of Palestine in conformity with the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations".

During the Six-Day War in 1967, socialist Yugoslavia severed diplomatic relations with Israel and never formally restored them before its own dissolution in 1991. In a meeting of NAM foreign ministers in New York in 1977, the ministers saw "the establishment of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza" as "a clear attempt to prepare for their annexation, and the escalation of Israeli violations and oppressive practices in the area". The ministers considered these actions to "constitute an obstacle to the endeavours for the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East".

Our decision to withdraw from the Gorki Theatre event was a modest protest against this current episode of Denkverbot. It was an attempt to put a spotlight on the efforts to cancel Palestine from German public discourse to the detriment of everyone. We mourn all the innocent victims of this conflict and condemn anti-Semitism in all its forms but caution that the current episode of Denkverbot in Germany and beyond, if not contested urgently, will lead precisely to the opposite of its aims - namely, to more anti-Semitism, more terror and a continued inability to achieve peace in the Middle East.

China has to better protect culture for security

Thorsten J. Pattberg

THE world has made remarkable advances in high-tech, such as artificial intelligence, big data and cloud computing, as well as the life sciences. We travel into space, we build driverless cars, we carry a thousand libraries in our pockets, and our chickens are gene-manipulated so they won't fall sick.

The world is less aware, though, about the strides we have taken in the realm of humanities. To simplify things, let us refer to the realm of humanities - cultures, languages and the arts - as the "fifth dimension". Culture is separate from four-dimensional material civilization. Many things we previously thought as objective and real have now turned, figuratively speaking, fictile, relative and debatable. The humanities dictate history, laws, values, languages, communication and all relations. The phenomenon of social construction in the West is known to all. Combined with its advanced machines and computers, the West can now erase a faith or religion, make a country gay, turn a woman into a man and vice-versa, lie through its teeth when reporting a big event, and, most importantly, separate human

beings from the world. I am talking about cyberspace, parallel universes, role-playing games, mass media and fiction.

Everything is a construct, and often what matters most is who came first. When the Europeans discovered the Americas, they could do whatever they wanted with the land and the Indigenous peoples: "You are the sheriff, he is the professor, I am the priest." When the United States attacked Japan in 1945, Japanese samurai warriors complained that the Americans were illiterate, and were not qualified to practice swordplay, or use bows and arrows. Every "foreign devil" could hold a rifle and kill all the samurais of Japan from a safe distance. Today, the Americans construct everything in Japan from distance: markets, media, entertainment, politics, education - you name it, they do it.

The West has built great portals to the "fifth dimension". The plan is to regulate and create identities, histories, ideologies and make-beliefs for us from a distance. It is like watching a group of Western hackers on the computer screen committing a crime. When

our Chinese engineers inspect their partner infrastructure projects abroad, especially in Belt and Road countries, they report back that Westerners have already logged in with their alternative realities, investigating the local people, invoking racist and anti-Chinese sentiments. They are disrupting relations, freezing bank accounts and spreading fake news. They close China's Confucius Institutes, ban Chinese degrees, and slander Chinese companies without any basis. Another shocking fact, especially for older readers, is that technologies can make virtual images, voices, videos, books and persons look and sound real. What are the facts? Truth is laughed at. Celebrities are manufactured. To make what you think is valuable and real, you need patents, property rights and other protective measures. Think of a five-dimensional legal system.

To overcome these barriers, China needs to do certain things. Culture is vital to national security too. That's why China has to better protect Chinese culture. Therefore, the future of Chinese culture now largely depends on how that culture is constructed, regulated and expanded.

The China Daily

Boris was right - older people should have been given a choice over lockdown

Janet Daley

IT is difficult to recall now the shock of learning that it had become a crime for children to hug their grandparents. But we must hold on to the memory of that extraordinary moment when a liberal democratic society introduced prohibitions in personal and family life which went way beyond anything that the East German Stasi had devised. These rules were, in the technical sense of the word, inhuman and they should have been inconceivable.

What kind of bizarre pathological state of mind had enveloped the country - and, as we now know, much of the government - which made it acceptable to inflict such an edict? Even when the cruel consequences of its imposition had been widely publicised - the elderly parents being forced to die alone without a final embrace, the isolated and housebound being "protected" from the virus who fell into irreparable despair - still it went on relentlessly. And it was enforced even in the face of data that should

have been taken into account. That a British prime minister expressed resistance to such measures should not be shocking or even surprising. His comments on the disproportionate death rates among elderly people may sound crass but they were factually sound and acknowledged even by the implacable lockdown champions. More important, the force of his argument should have been seen, in spite of its flip-pant delivery, as ultimately compassionate: he was protesting against draconian rules which, in the end, deprived the entire population - including the old and sick - of the comfort and solace of family intimacy.

The key observation he cited, that a large proportion of people dying of Covid were beyond the normal age of life expectancy, should have been of huge importance in this. What he was suggesting was that Covid had effectively become what pneumonia had been called in a more unsentimental age,

the "old man's friend". That may or may not have been a simplistic view of what was a new and unknown virus. But the moral question at the heart of this remains the same. Should an entire population - including those who were, by virtue of their youth or state of robust health unlikely to be at risk - be locked into personal isolation from friends and family, stopped from engaging in the activities which constitute normal emotional development, and prevented from making an economic contribution to society, in order to protect people who might have been close to death under any circumstances?

Or, even more to the point, who could have chosen to isolate themselves? The idea of sheltering or advising confinement only for those in serious danger apparently appealed strongly to Boris Johnson but was firmly beaten back by the Cummings-Gove alliance who were adamant that the situation was so grave that personal choice

and individual responsibility could not be permitted any space at all. Back in 2020, before there was even a vaccine programme in place, I wrote on these pages in what seemed like very stark terms at the time. As someone who counted, because of my age, as one of those being protected by everybody else's sacrifices, I assumed the moral right to say: please don't. Don't give up the liberties and opportunities that properly belong to your stage of life for my sake and do not go meekly into that imprisonment to which the government has sentenced you.

It horrified me that my grandchildren might be disadvantaged into the indefinite future in order (possibly) to protect me from - what? Mortal illness, which must come eventually? The inevitability of death? I concluded that column with the favourite refrain of anti-war protesters: not in my name. As it happens, we know now, the then prime minister felt the same.

The Telegraph

Sociopaths in suits

Andrew Mitrovica

doctrine abounds in scores of countries scarred deeply and permanently by the West's long, engrained necessity to kill innocents without regret or remorse - in Central and South America, in Africa, in Southeast Asia, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and throughout the Middle East. So, anyone, anywhere, in any forum who denies this blatant fact is a geopolitically illiterate apologist or dupe. Beyond the repellent Starmer, we have seen this defining characteristic on obscene parade, yet again, over the past approaching four weeks, as the usual gallery of strutting presidents and prime ministers has closed fraternal ranks to approve and applaud the genocide unfolding in the apocalyptic remains of Gaza.

This is, to borrow a phrase, the latest iteration of the "coalition of the willing" - willing, of course, to provide rhetorical, diplomatic and military succour to a rancid regime intent on disappearing Gaza into dust and memory. The coalition is, bluntly put, made up of collaborators to cataclysmic carnage - which, given the not-so-distant records of France and Germany, is a bit too familiar. Still, millions of common citizens around the globe - watching in a soul-shattering mix of horror and despair while Israel has turned Gaza into a wanton killing field - have shouted stop because that is the right and humane thing to do.

Brave Jews have joined in demonstrations demanding a halt to the siege and killing, insisting that a swaggering authoritarian and his malevolent allies in the cabinet are not acting in their name. Not so the sociopaths in suits. They have, as they always do, urged Israel to obliterate more of Gaza and to kill more innocents, including thou-

sands of infants and children, who are considered the inevitable casualties of Israel's "right" to defend itself. Hence, the quick pilgrimages - with cameras in ready tow - to Tel Aviv by a succession of prime ministers and presidents to tell their dear friend, in effect, to keep killing Palestinians without restraint, regret or remorse.

It is an abominable expression of their cocky depravity that each one of them knows that Benjamin Netanyahu, like each one of them, enjoys a licence to kill with unfettered impunity anywhere, at any time, for any reason. It's worth recalling, as well, that these preening prime ministers and presidents - who claim to be devoted to the enlightened ideals of liberty, fraternity and equality - have pledged their evangelical support for, and solidarity with, an apartheid state determined to wipe out Palestinians territorially and historically. I suspect that many South Africans - who understand the grievous damage that a sick, apartheid state can inflict on a condemned, but righteous indigenous people - would agree that the dystopian-like terror that Palestinians are enduring is apartheid on an industrial scope that shocks the heart and conscience.

Not so, again, the sociopaths in suits. One of them, US President Joe Biden, even engaged - openly - in genocide denialism. In what will likely be recorded as the halting moment that defined his decrepit presidency, Biden questioned the number of Palestinian civilians killed by Israel's US-sponsored killing machine. Biden said he had "no confidence in the number that the Palestinians are using", adding, for vulgar emphasis: "I have no notion that the Palestinians are

telling the truth about how many people are killed."

Palestinian human rights advocates rightly denounced Biden's appalling remarks as "racist" and an overt attempt to "dehumanise" Palestinians "even in death". "To dispute those figures was really, really just putting both feet in with Israel on this, in yet another way that dehumanises Palestinians," Yara Asi, a Palestinian American public health expert, told Al Jazeera. While Biden's frank and calculated denialism was designed to belittle the true and lasting measure of Palestinian loss and suffering by raising spurious doubts about the true and lasting measure of their loss and suffering, it was the US president's gaping absence of any semblance of "humanity" that was on scurrilous display. Biden and his unrepentant, war-addicted predecessors have caused such harm and sorrow to so many people, in so many places, over so many decades, that they forfeited, ages ago, the licence to lecture the world about the value of humanity and who does or does not possess it. In resisting and defying their occupiers, the humanity of Palestinians is not only apparent, but will survive - indomitable and intact. It has not and will not be erased by ruthless forces who have sought and will continue to seek their annihilation - with the complicity of presidents and prime ministers.

History has proven that it is impossible to condemn to death an entire people - whatever their faith, ethnicity or nationality. Regrettably, it is futile to say "enough" since the sociopaths in suits prefer, it's clear, more mayhem, more madness, more massacres. We will remember the shameful actions and inaction as permanent proof of their signature cruelty and inhumanity.



Ambassador of Vietnam vows to increase trade

SIALKOT (APP): THE Ambassador of Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Pakistan Nguyen Tien Phong has said that lack of information was one of the major reasons for low growth in trade and relations between Vietnam and Pakistan. He stated this while addressing an important meeting of Sialkot exporters held at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) here today.

President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President (SVP) SCCI Wahub Jahangir and Sialkot business community attended the meeting. The ambassador of Vietnam urged the Sialkot exporters to come forward and tap and explore the untapped international trade markets of Vietnam to promote the strengthened bilateral trade between Pakistan and Vietnam.

He vowed to make sincere efforts to boost trade ties between Vietnam and Pakistan, saying that the time was ripe to further strengthen mutual trade relations. He also pledged full support and technical assistance to ensure the easy access of Pakistan

business community to international trade markets of Vietnam. "The main reason for low bilateral trade between Vietnam and Pakistan is lack of information about each other. Vietnam is very keen to establish stronger business-to-business contacts between the two countries besides strengthening bilateral trade relations. Bilateral trade and business relations should be further promoted with the exchange of trade delegations," he added.

He said, "My job is to promote trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Vietnam.

There is also need to promote people to people contacts between the two countries. We established diplomat ties on November 8, 1972 and both countries have been enjoying cordial relations."

He said that the volume of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Vietnam last year was US\$ 904 million and in 2021 US\$ 794 million. "In nine months of 2023, it is US\$ 546 million, a decrease of 30pc," he added.

He said that Vietnam is a fast growing country in terms of economic growth in the world.

He also showed keen interest in SCCI's documentary 'Sialkot, the City of Progressive People' which was screened during this meeting.

President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik in his welcome address said that Pakistan and Vietnam shared enduring and cordial bond of friendship, since the establishment of diplomatic ties in the 1970s. "Last year, we celebrated a significant milestone, 50 years of close bilateral relations, based on mutual respect, understanding and a shared vision for peace and socio-economic progress in both our nations. Reflecting on our journey over the past five decades, it is evident that our partnership has grown from strength to strength. Today, I would like to emphasize the importance of getting full potential of our bilateral trade. The time has come for us to focus our efforts on further enhancing our economic ties and I believe that there is a wealth of opportunities waiting to be explored," he added.

Malik said that as per the data by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the total

bilateral trade of goods and services between the two countries in the Financial Year 2023 was around \$487 million which he believes has immense potential of growth considering the cordiality of relations between the countries.

He said, "To increase bilateral trade, I may suggest that both countries work to relax tariffs and duties on items of interest from both sides specially made in Sialkot products. Efforts should be made to expedite the signing of the Pak-Vietnam FTA by including tariff lines of Sialkot made products. Both countries should facilitate single-country trade exhibitions and encourage frequent exchanges of trade delegations."

He said that Sialkot has cultivated a vibrant Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) culture that is exceptionally conducive to business collaborations and joint ventures across a diverse spectrum of industries. Exporters from Sialkot exhibited a profound understanding of international trade regulations and requirements, leading to an impressive annual export value exceeding \$2.2 billion.



FAISALABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed addressing a meeting of business community at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Flour prices raised

LAHORE (PPI): Flour mill owners in Punjab on Saturday announced an increase in the prices of flour due to the escalating cost of wheat in the market.

They revealed that the cost of a 20-kilogram flour bag has raised from Rs 2650 to Rs 2750. The new prices will be effective across the entire Punjab province.

The mill owners pointed out that the provincial government's failure to adequately supply wheat to the flour mills has led to a surge in wheat prices in the market. The price of wheat has increased from Rs 4300 to Rs 4700 per 40 kilograms, the millers said.

The mill owners expressed their dissatisfaction with the government's failure to issue an official notification setting a price range for wheat, which ideally should be between Rs 3500 and Rs 3900. This absence of an official price range has further exacerbated the situation and prompted the mill owners to adjust their prices.

It's worth noting that fluctuations in wheat and flour prices can have significant consequences for consumers and the economy, given that flour is a staple food item in many households. The situation may be influenced by a variety of factors, including supply and demand dynamics, government policies, and market forces.

Gold rates increased

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.200 and was sold at Rs.214,600 on Saturday compared to its sale at Rs.214,400 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.172 to Rs.183,985 from Rs.183,813 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.168,653 from Rs.168,496, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,580 and 2,211.93 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$7 to \$2,012 from \$2,005, the Association reported.

FCCI inks MoU with ICMA

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) and Institute of Cost & Management Accountants (ICMA) have inked an MOU to encourage international accounting standards in the corporate sector of Faisalabad by organizing training courses for the capacity building of directors and board members.

Dr Khurram Tariq, President FCCI, and Mr. Zia-ul-Mustafa, Chairman Strategic Board of the ICMA, signed the document on behalf of their respective organizations.

Zia-ul-Mustafa briefed about the ICMA and said that its main campus is in Karachi in addition to its presence in seven major cities of Pakistan including

Faisalabad, Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta and Hyderabad.

He said that ICMA has affiliation with five globally acknowledged organizations while 25% of its fellows out of ten thousand are working abroad.

He said that ICMA was establishing its own tailor-made campus in Faisalabad near FCCI. He said that we are also arranging a "job fair" on November 30, and he invited President Dr Khurram Tariq to formally inaugurate it.

He said that ICMA has also arranged a training programme for the SDOs of FESCO which played a key role in improving the overall efficiency of this organization.

Dr Khurram Tariq appreciated the role of ICMA and said that best practices must be adopted by all corporate institutes and organizations including FIEDMC to ensure transparency in their affairs.

Later, they signed the MOU and formally exchanged the document.

The meeting was also attended by Senior Vice President Dr Sajjad Arshad and Vice President FCCI Haji Mohammad Aslam Bhalli in addition to Madam Munaza Elahi Director Corporate, Ayaz Mustafa Joint Director Lahore, Mr. Jaleel Ahmad Joint Director Faisalabad, Ali Ghazanfar Deputy Director Digital Marketing and Shahid Irshad Member Faisalabad Branch Council.

Canton Fair: a golden chance for trade

BEIJING (APP): "Business is good this time. I'm here to find out more possibility of doing business with China as well as the whole world", said Chief Manager Exports, Piano Exports FZCO, Pakistan Safdar Fayyaz while attending the 134th China Import and Export Fair held in Guangzhou, China.

The 134th China Import and Export Fair, known as Canton Fair, kicked off on October 15 and entered its third and final phase on October 31. The event, which will end on November 4, has attracted exhibitors and buyers from across the globe, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday.

It is Fayyaz's 2nd time attending the fair. This year he had dazzling stationery

products with price & quality combination with him. He told CEN that they have some unique colored pencils from Pakistan that might interest international buyers.

According to the organizer, during the first two phases, a total of 157,200 overseas buyers attended the fair, representing an increase of 53.6 percent compared with the same period of last fair. Among them, more than 100,000 buyers were from Belt and Road countries and regions, accounting for 64 percent of the total, witnessing an increase of 69.9 percent year-on-year. The number of buyers from Europe and the United States saw an increase of 54.9 percent compared with the 133rd event.

On top of increasing buyer traffic, the event attracted more exhibitors, too. Compared with the previous edition, the exhibition area for the 134th fair is expanded by 50,000 square meters and the number of exhibition booths also increased.

More than 28,000 exhibitors participated in the event, with 650 enterprises coming from 43 foreign countries and regions. Famous Pakistani textile brands including Gohar Textile Mills Pvt Ltd. and M.K. Sons (Pvt.) Ltd. and so on are here to fortify ties with business partners and tap into the Chinese market.

Launched in 1957 and held twice yearly, the fair is considered a major gauge of China's foreign trade.

BYD to build plant in Hungary

FRANKFURT (Reuters): Chinese electric vehicle giant BYD (002594.SZ), plans to build its first European car factory in Hungary, a German newspaper reported on Saturday.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung (FAS), citing unnamed sources close to BYD, said the decision had already been made internally.

A government website in Shenzhen, where BYD is headquartered, posted an article last month saying that Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban met BYD Chairman and President Wang Chuanfu on a visit to the company.

BYD, contacted by Reuters, said that it was still looking for the right location and would make an announcement at the end of the year. The Hungarian government did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

US consultancy Gallup withdrawing from China

NEW YORK (Reuters): Consultancy firm Gallup is pulling out of China, the Financial Times newspaper reported on Saturday. The Washington-based firm has told its clients it is closing its China operations and advised customers that it would move some projects outside the country, while others would be cancelled, according to the newspaper.

The company provides research and analysis to companies for marketing purposes. It started its China operations in 1993 and had offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, the report said citing public payroll records. Gallup is closing all three offices in mainland China and it is unclear whether it will retain some of its local employees, the report added.

Berkshire bigger loss as stocks fall

NEW YORK (Reuters): Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc (BRKa.N) on Saturday posted its first overall quarterly loss in a year as the prices of Apple (AAPL.O) and other stocks it owns fell, but said improvement in its insurance operations boosted operating profit to a record.

Though its businesses fared better overall, Berkshire signaled caution about valuations, as its cash stake swelled to a record \$157.2 billion in the third quarter, when it sold \$5.3 billion more stocks than it bought.

Berkshire also slowed repurchases of its own stock, buying back \$1.1 billion in the third quarter.

Investors watch Berkshire closely because its results often reflect broader economic trends, and because of Buffett's reputation as an investor.

The third-quarter net

loss more than quadrupled to \$12.77 billion, or \$8,824 per Class A share, from \$2.8 billion a year earlier.

Results included \$23.5 billion of losses from investments, primarily reflecting a 12% decline in the stock price of Apple, in which Berkshire had owned a \$177.6 billion stake.

Berkshire's net results swing widely from quarter to quarter because accounting rules require the company to report investment gains and losses even if it buys and sells nothing. Buffett says the resulting volatility is usually meaningless.

Operating profit rose 41% to \$10.76 billion, or \$7,444 per Class A share, from \$7.65 billion a year earlier.

Insurance operations generated \$4.89 billion of profit, as the Geico car insurer and reinsurance businesses made money after posting losses in 2022, while rising interest rates boosted income generated from US Treasuries.

Berkshire also benefited from a relatively quiet Atlantic hurricane season, which reduced catastrophe losses, unlike in 2022 when it lost \$2.7 billion from Hurricane Ian.

The conglomerate also owns dozens of other businesses including the BNSF railroad, several energy companies, Dairy Queen ice cream, Duracell batteries, Fruit of the Loom underwear and See's candies.

FCCI making strenuous efforts to resolve problems of businessmen

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) President Dr Khurram Tariq has said the chamber is making strenuous efforts to resolve the problems being faced by its members and the business community in addition to contributing to CSR activities and infrastructure development of Faisalabad.

Addressing participants in the 38th Mid-Career Management Course of the National Institute of Management (NIM), Islamabad, he said that FCCI had 8,500 members belonging to more than 100 sectors and subsectors. "The FCCI has to establish working relationships with the federal, provincial and local administration to resolve their issues at three tiers", he said and added, "We give our input in budget formulation and policy making at the federal level."

He said that we have close liaison with the provincial caretaker government and successfully convinced it to release withheld funds for the uplift projects of Faisalabad.

He said that FCCI was helping local administration in the fields of education, health and environment protection by adopting schools and hospitals and establishing Miyawaki forest in addition to the beautification of the city.

He expressed concern over uncertainty and said that fluctuation in PKR has

made it difficult for the industrialists and exporters to fix the prices of their exportable surplus.

He contradicted the government's claim that it was providing subsidies to the textile sector. He said that the recoveries of FESCO are 99.2% and we are bearing the financial burden of other inefficient discos. It is an issue of cross subsidies and exporters could not export the cost of inefficiencies of the government departments and wrong decisions of the previous governments, he added.

Responding to a question about the gap between import and export, he said that the main reason is the difference between exchange rates. He further said that we had deregulated our export sector in haste without waiting for the development of the import substitution industry.

He said that the smuggling has been plugged and if this momentum persists, we are expecting growth of the SME sector in 2024. He said that FCCI is part of various boards of the government departments including Compliance, EDF and Export Facilitation etc. "We played an important role in the formulation of trade policy", he said and added that we always remained in touch with the Ministry of Commerce which is our parent department.

About the minimum use of GSP plus facility, he said that it is our general problem as we failed to enhance our per acre yield of wheat

from 35maund for the last many years. He said that it is our collective, structural and multifarious problem which starts from the education of the children. He said that we must encourage and provide students to think out of box which would help in promoting the culture of creativity and innovation.

About new FBR SRO111, he said that we have already circulated it among our members but we must sensitize our members with repeated reminders and explaining its possible impacts in a more simple and clear manner.

He said that we generally become active when a law has been enforced and everyone starts feeling its heat. He said that the issue of FATF has not been concluded and yet many more compliances are required.

Commenting on the poor efficiency of industries in the energy sector, he said that currently our generation is surplus. "Similarly industrial sector was consuming only 343 MMCF gas out of 2800 MMCF", he said and added that we have adopted a quick fix solution of increasing prices which has a negative impact on the industrial growth.

He said that the piped gas supply has become obsolete all over the world and we should also get rid of it by introducing canned or cylinderised supplies.

About business related disputes, Dr Khurram Tariq said that these complaints

are simultaneously received by chambers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, TDRO and MOC. "Currently there is no clear mechanism for dispute resolution and we must work on it to provide a globally acceptable mechanism", he said and added that TDRO was established ten years ago but Dispute Resolution Act has been promulgated in August this year.

He said that it is a serious issue as FDI is directly linked with it. He quoted the example of Türkiye and said that it has settled business disputes to the tune of \$600bn during the last few years. He said we have a century old arbitration law which has lost its efficacy. A new draft has been finalized and expected to be approved and enforced very soon, he added.

Mr. Mohammad Imran Directing Staff NIM Islamabad said that study tours of under training officers is an integral part of the institute's strategy which provide them an opportunity to interact with the stakeholders and understand ground realities.

Later, Senior Vice President FCCI Dr Sajjad Arshad offered the vote of thanks while President Dr Khurram Tariq presented an FCCI memento to Mr. Mohammad Imran.

He also reciprocated by presenting a shield of NIM to Dr Khurram Tariq.

Vice President FCCI Hajji Mohammad Aslam Bhalli was also present during this meeting.

Terminal handling charges at Jebel Ali Port must be settled only via Trade Portal

DUBAI (Agencies): In another move to bring greater transparency to the local shipping and logistics sector, all Terminal Handling Charges must be settled only through the Dubai Trade Portal from November 1.

This applies to shipments directed into and through Jebel Ali Port.

The move closely follows a directive issued by Dubai Maritime Authority - in May last - for logistics companies in the emirate to submit their local port handling tariffs to the government entity.

And, most importantly, not to raise them unless the company receives specific clearance from the Authority. The intention is to standardize local port and container handling charges in Dubai where possible.

How the new system works

Logistics companies in Dubai will charge clients directly, and the local port operator will issue invoices separately for the provided services.

"This would cover terminal handling as well as truck loading and unload-

ing charges," said Haris Shaikh, Managing Director at Dubai-based Gallop Shipping. "And the payments will be collected directly via the Dubai Trade Platform. "With the implementation of the Dubai Maritime Authority ruling, the charges would now become transparent, thereby cutting down some of the other charges.

"Dubai has been the hub for trade, and this new approach to enhancing the transparency of local sea container charges will increase its competitiveness."

Submission deadline

June 30 was the deadline by when shipping and logistics businesses had to submit their local sea container tariffs. (These charges apply to the various costs that clients were billed for services rendered at the port.)

"Everyone had to submit their local charges and the authorities came back with corrections on some charges," said Usman Rehman, Managing Director of Time World Freight.

"While we can't say there was a significant drop after the Maritime

Authority directive, what we did see was charges became standardized across the Dubai market."

The intention, industry sources say, was to ensure the most competitive rates were on offer at all times. Plus, once the rates standardized, it was up to the clients to decide which company to sign up for their logistics needs.

"What Dubai Maritime Authority did was remove the grey areas on how local sea container charges were billed," said an industry source. "It's been working well and delivering the results everyone had been hoping for."

Prior approvals

If service providers find it necessary, they may increase sea container rates 'strictly to reflect' new or increased costs issued by the port operator or government. "This gives customers or freight forwarders the opportunity to move cargo on a contract basis, as any cost fluctuation can be brought under control to an extent," said Sheikh.

According to Usman Rehman of Time World Freight, the Dubai

Maritime Authority's move to bring uniformity - and transparency - to local sea container charges will remove any tendency to 'over-price'.

"Look, much of the container rates into the UAE are dependent on demand fluctuations at the port of origin," said Rehman.

"But what Dubai has done is bring to control to rate setting at the local level, and remove any 'over pricing' tendency on export shipping charges and local logistics costs. That in itself is a big step."

Meanwhile, the UAE Ministry of Finance has released two significant decisions, Cabinet Decision No. 100 of 2023 and Ministerial Decision No. 265 of 2023. Under these decisions, changes have been made to qualifying income and activities in free zones. "Free zones are central to the UAE's economic growth, attracting foreign direct investment as well as fostering a favorable business environment," Younis Haji Al Khoori, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance.

"These new decisions



In brief

Fernandes

rescues Man Utd

MANCHESTER (AFP): Manchester United eased the pressure on manager Erik ten Hag as Bruno Fernandes' stoppage time winner beat Fulham 1-0 on Saturday, while Manchester City went top of the Premier League by thrashing Bournemouth 6-1. Ten Hag's future at Old Trafford had come into question over the past week after consecutive 3-0 home defeats to City and Newcastle. United were again far from spectacular at Craven Cottage but got a much-needed three points thanks to captain Fernandes. The Portuguese midfielder has been a target of stinging criticism in recent weeks for not showing enough leadership on the field, but he produced a rare moment of quality when his side needed it. Fernandes' 91st minute shot from the edge of the area had just too much power for Bernd Leno as it squirmed into the bottom corner. "He showed every time as a captain he is an example," said Ten Hag. "You see today how he is working, how he is pressing and in the end he scored the goal." Doku stars for City City, by contrast, cruised to their three points but victory came at a cost for Pep Guardiola's men as Erling Haaland was substituted at half-time due to injury. Jeremy Doku was the star of the show for the English champions as the Belgian winger opened the scoring and played a major role in four more goals. Bournemouth held out for 30 minutes at the Etihad, but the floodgates opened once Doku prodded into the far corner after exchanging a one-two with Rodri. Doku then teed up Bernardo Silva to slot home three minutes later.

Nida steers lead Pakistan to win against BD

DHAKA (APP): Spinners Nida Dar, Sadia Iqbal and Umm-e-Hani shared 10 wickets among them as Pakistan women stun Bangladesh women by five wickets in the first ODI at the Shere Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka on Saturday. Today's victory marked Pakistan women's seventh win in the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25 from 13 matches. Wicketkeeper-batter Najiha Alvi made her ODI debut on Saturday, becoming the 91st women cricketer to represent Pakistan. The second ODI of the three-match series will be played at the same venue on Nov 7. After opting to bat first, Bangladesh struggled early on as right-arm fast Diana Baig kept the Bangladesh batters in check from one end, while left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal clinched the first four wickets to fall from the other end, leaving the hosts reeling at 25 for four in 13.3 overs. At that stage, captain Nigar Sultana and Fahima Khatun (18, 37b, 1x4) got together and added 22 runs for the fifth wicket. Nigar was the next batter to return back to the hut as opposing captain Nida bowled her out in the 21st over for a 32-ball 13. Nida, with her off-spin bowling went on to pick another two wickets, finishing with figures of three for 10 in six overs. Nida is now three wickets shy of her 100 ODI wickets. Fellow off-spinner Umm-e-Hani, grabbed three wickets for 20 in 5.5 overs. Sadia, who recorded her best ODI figures in today's match, ended up with match figures of 9-2-13-4. The hosts were bundled out for 81 in 31.5 overs. This was Bangladesh's lowest ODI total against Pakistan and their fifth overall in One-Day Internationals.

World Cup 2023
Fakhar century leads Pakistan to crucial win over New Zealand

BENGALURU (Agencies): An astonishing batting display kept Pakistan's World Cup semi-final hopes alive in a rain-affected encounter against New Zealand in Bengaluru. Set 402 to win, Pakistan raced to 160-1 in 21.3 overs with Fakhar Zaman hitting a sublime 63-ball century before the rain fell. Pakistan were given a revised target of 342 in 41 overs but only four more overs were possible. Fakhar finished with 126 and captain Babar Azam 66 in a crucial 21-run win. The Black Caps piled up 401-6 after Rachin Ravindra's masterful 108, but struggled with a depleted bowling line-up after injuries to seamers Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson. Pakistan's batters capitalised on a good batting pitch, with Fakhar smashing 11 sixes in his knock while Babar played a supportive role. Despite their bowling woes, New Zealand's batting was strengthened by the return of captain Kane Williamson, who made a majestic 95 in a second-wicket stand of 180 with opener Ravindra. Cameos from Daryl Mitchell, Mark Chapman and Glenn Phillips propelled New Zealand past 400 as Pakistan's bowlers also struggled. Haris Rauf's figures of 1-82 were the most expensive by a Pakistan bowler in World Cup history, only for Shaheen Afridi to break the record minutes later with 0-90. The result keeps the group stage open, though New Zealand remain favourites for a semi-final spot because of their superior net-run rate

to Afghanistan and Pakistan, with all three teams on eight points. Pakistan's next game comes against England on 11 November, who were eliminated by Australia later on Saturday. **Fakhar's heroics keep Pakistan dreaming** Chasing such an imposing total required something very special from Pakistan, and 33-year-old Fakhar was fearless in the face of such a challenge. His performance was all the more incredible given the nature of his World Cup campaign so far: he played in Pakistan's opening game of the World Cup against the Netherlands, was dropped for the next five, then returned with a swashbuckling 81 against Bangladesh in their most recent outing. It was a brutal innings but a smart one, too. There was pressure on New Zealand's strike bowler Trent Boult, given their limited resources, and Fakhar wisely targeted him to take 42 runs from his opening four overs. The experienced Tim Southee took the early wicket of Abdullah Shafique in the second over, but was also largely unthreatening, only playing his second game of the tournament after a thumb injury. Unable to contain Fakhar's ferocious scoring all around the ground, Williamson turned to his spinners early but with little assistance from the pitch, they were just as ineffective and played into the hands of two fine players of spin. **Ravindra shines again and Williamson's welcome return** New Zealand's World Cup campaign has been a

mixed affair, with four successive wins followed by four defeats. But regardless of their final position in the table, they have unearthed a star in 23-year-old Ravindra, who became the first New Zealand batter to score three centuries in a World Cup and the first batter ever to do so in their debut tournament. He is a classical left-hander who possesses a valuable skillset, matching his style and class with the ability to score quickly in a manner that looks effortless, exemplified by reaching his century from just 88 balls. The calmness of Williamson, making his return from a fractured thumb that he suffered in New Zealand's win over Bangladesh, made him Ravindra's perfect companion and the pair treated the enthusiastic Bengaluru crowd to an array of eye-catching drives, lofted sixes and deft touches to the boundary. Defeat felt cruel on the pair, but as a side they can be buoyed by the positivity of Williamson's return, batting with such fluency it was as if he had strode to the middle straight from a net session. Their batting line-up is significantly stronger with him in it, but is screaming for assistance from the bowlers. Seamer Henry has been officially ruled out by a hamstring injury and replaced by Kyle Jamieson, which gives New Zealand another pace option, and they will be hoping that Ferguson can recover quickly from his wrist injury in time for a key encounter against Sri Lanka on 9 November.



AHMEDABAD: Liam Livingstone of England makes their way off after being dismissed during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup India 2023.

Djokovic beats Rune to reach ninth Paris Masters semi-final

PARIS (AFP/APP): Novak Djokovic edged out Holger Rune on Friday to avenge his defeat in last year's Paris Masters final and reach the last four, while Stefanos Tsitsipas set up a meeting with Grigor Dimitrov. World number one Djokovic missed a match point in the second set but eventually claimed a 7-5, 6-7 (3/7), 6-4 win over Denmark's Rune in the quarter-finals after more than two-and-three-quarter hours on court at Bercy Arena. The Serbian star is playing in his first ATP Tour event since lifting a record 24th Grand Slam title in New York in September. Djokovic, the record six-time champion, will face either Alex de Minaur or Andrey Rublev on Saturday for a place in his ninth Paris Masters final. The 36-year-old claimed his second career victory against Rune after suffering two successive defeats by the world number seven. Djokovic snatched an opening set which was largely dominated by serve with a break in the 12th game. He saw a match point come and go on the Rune serve when leading 5-4 in the second set, before the 20-year-old went on to produce a series of brilliant points in a tie-break to force a decider. But Djokovic was clinical in the third set and a single break in the third game was enough to take him through. Djokovic has now won 16 successive matches since losing to Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final. He has won all eight of his previous Paris Masters semi-finals. - Tsitsipas powers through - Tsitsipas powered his way into the semis with a dominant 6-3, 6-4 victory over Karen Khachanov. It was the 300th win of his career and gave the Greek, ranked sixth in the world, a semi-final match-up with Dimitrov who overcame Hubert Hurkacz 6-1,

4-6, 6-4. Tsitsipas, who also reached the last four a year ago when he lost to Djokovic, has progressed to the same stage without dropping a set and produced an impressive variety of plays to counter Khachanov's baseline power. "It's working well, I feel like I can mix up play," said Tsitsipas. "It feels good to have so much variety and so much diversity in the way you can play." Tsitsipas has already qualified for the end-of-season ATP Finals as one of the year's top eight players but defeat for Hurkacz against Dimitrov almost certainly rules the Pole out of contention. Just two of the eight places for the event in Turin later this month are still open, with Alexander Zverev and Rune in pole position to clinch them. Hurkacz remains in a good position to be first reserve. Dimitrov has no chance of reaching the ATP Finals but that did not prevent him from continuing his fine late-season form. In the last few weeks, the 32-year-old Bulgarian has reached the semi-finals in Chengdu, a quarter-final in Beijing and the semi-finals of the Masters event in Shanghai. His path to the last four of the Paris indoor event included a shock defeat of world number three Daniil Medvedev in the second round. "My body is feeling well for now, that's the most important thing," said Dimitrov. "My head is good. If I'm able to play like that on a consistent basis throughout every game, I put myself in a position to do better." Dimitrov last reached the semi-finals in Paris in 2019 when he lost to Djokovic. **Sabalenka downs Rybakina to reach WTA Finals semis** CANCUN: World number one Aryna Sabalenka defeated Elena Rybakina 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 in a rain-disrupted group

match on Friday to reach the semi-finals of the WTA Finals. The Belarusian, who finished second in her group behind unbeaten American Jessica Pegula, kept her bid for the year-end number one ranking on track with a victory that took two days to complete. She had won the first set but was trailing in the second when play was halted Thursday night after multiple rain delays. Some 16 hours later, she and Rybakina returned to the outdoor hardcourts in Cancun, where fourth-ranked Rybakina of Kazakhstan calmly served out the second set to level the match in a matter of minutes. Australian Open champion Sabalenka dug deep to halt Rybakina's momentum in the opening game of the third set, surviving nine deuces and two break points to hold serve. She used a pair of ferocious forehands to break Rybakina in the fourth game. If Sabalenka wins her semi-final match on Saturday, she's assured of finishing the year at number one. If she falls, she'll open the door to Poland's Iga Swiatek -- who topped the rankings for 75 weeks but dropped from the summit after the US Open. Swiatek, 2-0 in group play, faced Tunisian Ons Jabeur later in her last group match, but was already assured of a semi-final berth. A win by Jabeur would see the Tunisian win the group and Swiatek advance as runner-up. US Open champion Gauff, who closed out group play with a 5-7, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 victory over Wimbledon winner Marketa Vondrousova in another rain disrupted match, could still advance with a Swiatek win over Jabeur. In windy conditions, Vondrousova won 12 of the first 13 points and broke twice for a 3-0 lead before Gauff rallied to 3-3.



BENGALURU: Fakhar Zaman celebrates after scoring a century (100 runs) during the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup one-day international match.

World Cup 2023
England's defence ended by Australia defeat

AHMEDABAD (Agencies): England's World Cup defence is over after old rivals Australia added the final nail with a 33-run victory in Ahmedabad. England were already all-but out but a fifth miserable defeat in succession and sixth in total ended any hope of a freak turnaround. They did well to bowl out Australia for 286 and showed some fight with the bat but were still dismissed for 253. Jonny Bairstow was caught down the leg side off the first ball of the chase and Joe Root followed for 13, leaving Ben Stokes to play a lone hand as he threatened another special knock. But, just as he began to move through the gears, Australia's greatest tormentor in recent years was tamely caught off leg-spinner Adam Zampa for 64 from 90 balls. Chris Woakes threatened the unlikely late on but his 32 only delayed the inevitable as England were dismissed in the penultimate over. Defeat leaves England bottom of the table with two matches still to play - first against the Netherlands on Wednesday before their tournament concludes against Pakistan on Saturday. Their attention now turns to attempting to avoid the embarrassment of failing to qualify for the 2025 Champions Trophy by finishing outside of the top eight in India. Meanwhile Australia are on the brink of securing their semi-final place and move on buoyed having ended the reign of their

Ashes foes. **Australia strike final blow** England's defence officially ending with defeat by Australia only adds further misery to a torrid four weeks. It also ends where it began - at the world's largest cricket stadium where English optimism was shattered by a thrashing from New Zealand in the tournament opener. The bowling performance gave them hope - Woakes impressed with 4-54 - but from the moment of Bairstow's tame dismissal, Australia were favourites. Root was dropped on seven and nicked wide of slip before a thin edge through to the wicketkeeper was shown on review, leaving Stokes to rebuild with Dawid Malan. From 19-2 they put on a careful stand of 84 from 108 balls until Malan hoisted a catch to deep square leg on 50. Captain Jos Buttler's miserable run continued as he holed out off Zampa having struggled for seven balls for one run. While Stokes was there, memories of his Headingley Ashes epic were not far away, with the required rate never too challenging. He struck two sixes in bringing up his half-century, only to flick a Zampa long-hop straight into the hands of short fine leg. Zampa finished with superb figures of 3-21, took a fine sprawling catch in the deep to dismiss David Willey and added an important 29 at number 10 with the bat. England may have fought back to draw the

Ashes this summer but it is Australia who strike the final blow of 2023. **Zampa boosts Australia's total** England's bowlers could take little blame for defeat by India last week and again they did a decent job to restrict and eventually dismiss Australia. Until Zampa frustrated by helping add 38 for the ninth wicket with Mitchell Starc, they had done little wrong. Woakes was dropped after a miserable first three games of this tournament but he summed up England's belated improvement with two impressive spells. He struck in the second over to have Travis Head caught at slip - breaking the opening partnership with David Warner that put on 175 in Australia's previous game - and then had Warner caught off a top edge with a slower ball. Afterwards Steve Smith and Marcus Labuschagne, two thorns in England's side from Ashes series past, attempted a rebuild with a stand of 75 from 96 balls but England conceded only six boundaries in that time to prevent the score running away. Adil Rashid bowled superbly through the middle and was rewarded when Smith cut a wide ball to short third. Wicketkeeper Josh Inglis then hit a reverse sweep to the same fielder. Mark Wood was more expensive, his 10 overs cost 70 runs, but one of his two wickets was that of Labuschagne - trapped in front by a ball that would have hit the top of leg stump flush.

Injury rules India's Pandya out of World Cup

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has been ruled out of the remainder of the World Cup with an ankle injury. Pandya, 30, was injured during India's win over Bangladesh on 19 October and has missed their past three games. It has been decided he will not recover in time for the later stages and fast bowler Prasidh Krishna has been named as his replacement. "[It is] tough to digest the fact that I will miss out on the remaining part of the World Cup," Pandya said. "I'll be with the team, in spirit, cheering them on every ball of every game. "Thanks for all the wishes, the love, and the support has been incredible. "This team is special and I'm sure we'll make everyone proud." Krishna has taken 29 wickets in 17 one-day internationals and played in a series against Australia in September. Although a blow to India's hopes of winning the tournament, Pandya's injury led to a recall for Mohammed Shami, who has taken 14 wickets across the three matches. The hosts have convincingly won all three of those games to maintain their unbeaten start to the tournament. The group-stage leaders play second-placed South Africa on Sunday.

First round of RMI Media Cricket League completed



PESHAWAR (APP): PPC Fighters, Markhor, Shaheen, Panthers, Zalmi, Cobra, Qalandar, and Stars qualified for the quarter-finals after completion of the first round of the ongoing seventh edition of the RMI Media Cricket League being played here at Kamal Sher Khan Army Stadium on Saturday. The second phase will start on Sunday wherein PPC Fighters, PPC Markhor, PPC Shaheen, PPC Panthers, PPC Zalmi, Cobra, PPC Qalandar, and PPC Stars have qualified for the quarter-finals. In the Saturday matches on the last day of the first round, PPC Zalmi defeated PPC Gladiator by 10 wickets in

the first match. Gladiator won the toss and scored 52 runs for the loss of seven wickets in which Zahid Usman scored 17 runs and Hasan scored 15 runs. Dr. Tariq was the special guest. In the second match of the Media Cricket League, PPC Tigers defeated PPC Bulls by 10 wickets. Bulls scored five runs only, which Tigers won without any loss. In the last match of the first round of the Media Cricket League, PPC Stars defeated PPC Eagles by seven wickets and qualified for the quarter-finals, in which the Eagles scored 86 runs in the allotted overs while playing first. Zahir Shah Shirazi

showed his best batting performance and scored 38 runs including five boundaries and one six while Asif was the outstanding scorer with 22 runs including three boundaries. In reply, Stars achieved the desired target in the seventh over for the loss of three wickets, in which Adil scored 29 runs while batting brilliantly. The quarter-finals stage in Media Cricket League will start on Sunday the first match will be played between PPC Cobra and PPC Stars at 9.00 a.m. while the second quarter-final between PPC Markhor and PPC Panthers will be played at 11:30 a.m.



In brief

IRSA releases 108,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 108,000 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 52,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1521.19 feet and was 123.19 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 27,700 cusecs and 50,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1199.60 feet, which was 149.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 6,400 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 45,100, 37,500, 39,000 and 10,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 9,400 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 3,900 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

Motorway M-4 closed due to dense fog

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Motorway M-4, Sector-I, Beat-18, has been closed to all kinds of traffic due to dense fog prevailing at locations 222 to 182. According to public relations office, the diversions have been placed at 180 NB (Gojra interchange) and 238 SB (Faisalabad interchange). All precautionary measures have been adopted and the travel advisory has been updated accordingly. Motorists are advised to avoid traveling on Motorway M-4, Sector-I, Beat-18 until the fog clears. They can take alternate routes such as the National Highway N-5

IESCO issues power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) issued a power suspension programme for Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, including GSO Circle, Q Project, DHQ, Bank Road-2, Adam Road, Sir Syed Road, Khadim Hussain, CGH, Sarafa Bazar, Jhanda, Zafarull Haq Road, Arian Mohalla, Nimbak, Askari Cement Consumer Grid, and surrounding areas.

Police raid illegal LPG refilling point

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police on Saturday raided an illegal liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) refilling point and seized equipment, a police spokesman said. Those who were arrested during raid were identified as Muzamil Khan and Sami Khan. Police have registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was in progress. SP Potohar Muhammad Waqas Khan commended police team said that the accused who endanger the lives of citizens by illegally refilling gas cylinders cannot escape from the grip of the law. He made it clear that strict action will be continued against such elements. Meanwhile, Police have arrested five illegal arm holders and liquor suppliers during crackdown. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress.

Mushaal appeals int'l community to save Yasin Malik's life

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussain Mallick has appealed to the world to protect the life of her incarcerated husband Yasin Malik, who was facing real threats in notorious Tihar jail because he was not ready to budge an inch from his principled stance of the Kashmiris right to self-determination. Speaking at a seminar on HR situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in Oslo, Mushaal said: "We are the worst victims of human rights violation, as we are divided families peacefully struggling for the right to self-determination of IIOJK."

The seminar was co-hosted by Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defence Standing Committee Member Dag-Inge Ulestein and President Foundation Dialogue for Peace Aamir Javed Sheikh, according to a press release received here on Saturday.

"We just spent one birth day together back 2014 and during 14-year-long marriage life, we just spent 60 days

together. I spoke to my husband last time back in February 2019, thereby my life is just like a movie," she added.

Speaking as a chief guest at the event, the SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment said that Yasin Malik was one of the most powerful voice of Kashmir freedom movement at present; hence the notorious Narendra Modi-led government kept in unlawful detained by falsely implicating him in fabricated and politically motivated case to break his resolve.

She revealed that Yasin Malik was not only deprived him of his legal and fundamental rights of free trials but even he was denied basic lifesaving drugs despite his fast deteriorating health issues. Mushaal feared of judicial murder of Yasin Malik ahead of general elections in India, as Modi could use his murder for political mileage because his popularity graph witnessed alarming decline.

Therefore, she urged the world powers, UN bodies and human rights organizations to save Yasin's life and ensure his early and safe release from unlawful custody of Indian brutal

forces. The SPAM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment said that the fascist Indian government turned the scenic valley into a killing field and unleashed a wave of state terrorism to muzzle the dissenting voices.

She demanded the international community and UNSC to play their due role to immediately stop the massacre and genocidal acts in the valley, besides ensuring lasting solution to the decades-old problems as per the aspirations of the people of the occupied valley and the UN resolutions.

Mushaal warned that the restive and unresolved Kashmir issue would remain a constant threat to the regional peace; hence steps to be taken on war-footing basis to find out durable and lasting solution to the Kashmir conflict. Former Norwegian PM Kjell Magne Bondevik, Raziya Sultana, daughter of Yasin Malik and Mushaal Mullick, Ambassador of Pakistan to Norway Saadia Qazi and Aamir Sheikh President Foundation Dialogue for Peace, Ms Sabien Hussein Mullick focal Person SAPM also attended the event.



ISLAMABAD: A girl takes an interest in the handmade item in balochistan pavilion during the 10-day annual Lok Mela at Lok Virsa. —INP Photo

Lok Mela: Punjab pavilion center of attraction for people

ISLAMABAD (INP): In the Lok Mela being held under the supervision of Punjab Arts Council, Punjab pavilion has become a center of attraction for people of all walks of life.

The Pavillion was built under the supervision of Director General Punjab Arts Council, Syed Bilal Haider. Folk music along with handicrafts from morning till night is entertaining the fans. The stalls of yogurt, green roti and jalebi are also crowded with citizens.

Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad has said that the purpose of the fair was to promote regional culture. Lok Mela was a guarantor of cultural unity and solidarity between the four provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

On the second day of the festival, the traditional sport of Punjab was organized by the Arts Council. Young people dressed in traditional clothes entertained the tourists. The two teams from Rawalpindi and Chakwal fought hard to win

the competition. The match ended with the victory of the Rawalpindi team. The final score of the contest was 24-18.

Prizes and certificates of appreciation were also distributed to both the teams at the end of the competition.

The musical night of Punjab province was held at 7 pm at Lok Virsa Open Air Theater. Afshan Zebi, Nooran Lal, Bashir Lohar, Aslam Lohar, Sain Riaz, Shaikat Dhali and Simi Lok Dance Party performed in the musical night.

Literature Festival: Momentum continues for Literature, Art, and Culture

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The 9th Islamabad Literature Festival, organized by Oxford University Press continued its second day.

With a focus on sustainability, diversity, and the potential of human imagination, this literary extravaganza continued to inspire and enlighten attendees who arrived in scores from all over.

The day featured panel discussions, namely Verses in Play: Celebrating Tradition through Urdu Poetry; Pakistan's Wars: An Alternative History; Destined to Fail Democracy and State Building Experiment in Post Taliban Afghanistan; and Other Days by Arshad Waheed.

Moderated by Yaqoob Bangash, the session saw Rahman present his main findings of his work tracing the history of wars in Pakistan, followed by a discussion on the economic implications of such events.

Moeed Yusuf, while commenting on the cost of wars which is not just fiscal said, "The cost of war is that no one who has been born after 1995 has seen a peaceful day in their lives. These people are our future, and they will be weighed down by this trauma tomorrow when they come forward."

Engaging conversations were held around some thought-provoking and extremely diverse themes including: The Dark Side of Journalism-Culture and Political Economy of Global Media in Pakistan and Afghanistan; Mahmood A. Jara: Collection of Unpublished Poems by Josh Malihabadi; Pakistani Prose and Verse Exploring Contemporary English Literature; Qaidi by Omar Shahid Hamid translated from English by Inaam Nadeem; Grieving from Pigeons Twelve Stories of Lahore by Zubair Ahmad; Shaping the Future of Learning; Ink and Empowerment: Women in Publishing; Lahore's Lost Legacy Unveiling the Life and

Contributions of Sir Ganga Ram; The Other In The Mirror: Stories from India and Pakistan edited by Sehry Mirza; Hans Kar Jeeyo; The Lost Heritage and Dandelion Blooms: The Evolution of Islamabad.

The insightful session, The Dark Side of Journalism-Culture and Political Economy of Global Media in Pakistan and Afghanistan, moderated by Fasi Zaka highlighted the role of stringers and fixers in the last few decades in KP region. Syed Irfan Ashraf spoke about the impediments faced by Pashtun journalists while Afrasiab Khattak shed light about the importance of KP region as a periphery within a periphery. Hamid Mir also acknowledged the various issues and lamented about the coverage of many events in the post 9/11 era where the fixers risked their lives for foreign media outlets.

Moderated by Mina Malik, Ink and Empowerment: Women in Publishing, raised various issues about the journey of women publishers. Both Muneeza Shamsie and Mehvash Amin narrated their experiences about getting published, getting the work distributed as well as the role of libraries in promoting local writers.

Different panels of diverse speakers came together to discuss the power of literature in representing and celebrating a wide range of voices and perspectives. Democracy, Bureaucracy, and Judiciary: Going Beyond the Colonial Entanglement, AI in Education: Empowering Minds, Development Pathways: India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh at 75 by Ishrat Husain, Fair Assessments: Ensuring Equity and Excellence in Education, Urdu Fiction ka Irtiqā and Investing in Human Capital: Tackling Underdevelopment in Pakistan were the featured dialogues at Islamabad Literature Festival 2023.

RPO reviews construction work of Safe City Project

RAWALPINDI (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi Region Syed Khurram Ali here on Saturday visited the under construction Safe City project of Rawalpindi district and reviewed the progress on it, informed police spokesman.

On this occasion, the RPO issued instructions to the concerned authorities and said that the construction work should be accelerated and completed within the stipulated time. Delay in construction work would not be tolerated at any cost, he added.

He further said that the progress of the construction work would be reviewed on a daily basis.

The RPO said that according to the directives of Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, the Safe City project in Rawalpindi would be activated immediately after its completion, which would help in crime prevention and safety of citizens in Rawalpindi district.

He made it clear that it was the prime duty of the police to protect the lives and properties of the people.

ANF recovers 341 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to net over 341 kg drugs, 3025 intoxicated tablets and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Saturday.

He informed that in an operation 4.4 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Multan arrested from F-11 sector, Islamabad.

In another operation, 156.6 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle inter-

cepted near Lakpass Toll Plaza Quetta. Charras was concealed in secret cavities of the vehicle. A resident of Musa Khel was arrested during the operation.

In third operation, 180 kg hashish was recovered from a house in Orakzai. Charras was stored in the house to smuggle to different cities of Punjab.

Five ecstasy tablets were recovered from a local resident netted near an educational institution in DI Khan. The accused during interrogation confessed his involve-

ment in supplying drugs to the students of Gomal University and various other educational institutions.

In fifth operation at Jinnah International Airport, 3020 intoxicated tablets concealed in a passenger's trolley bag were recovered. The accused, a resident of Karachi, was leaving for Madinah by flight number G-9543.

Separate cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act while further investigations are in process.

NA Speaker condemns terrorist attack on PAF training air base

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf has condemned the terrorist attack on a training air base of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) in Mianwali.

The NA Speaker, in a statement issued here on

Saturday, paid tribute to the security forces for thwarting the terrorist attack on the PAF training air base.

"Terrorists are resorting to cowardly acts to achieve their nefarious goals," said the NA Speaker.

He said our armed forces

are committed to completing the eradication of terrorism, adding that such acts of terrorists cannot shake the spirit of security forces.

Ashraf said the entire nation stands with the security forces in the war against terrorism.

Senate Chairman grieved over loss of lives in Nepal quake

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of life and property in earthquake in Nepal.

The Senate chairman, in a statement on Saturday, expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolence with the bereaved families, stating that he stands with the people of Nepal in the hour of difficulty.

Sanjrani further said that the people of Pakistan and the government shared grief with the families of the deceased and the injured. The chairman Senate prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured in the earthquake.

Meanwhile, Deputy

Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Leader of the House in Senate, Muhammad Ishaq Dar and Leader of the Opposition Senate Dr Shahzad Wasim in their separate messages also expressed grief and sorrow over the tragic incident.

Sanjrani condoles demise of late Senator's wife

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the death of the late Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmed's wife.

Sanjrani, in his condolence message on Saturday, said he shared grief equally with the family of the deceased. The Chairman

prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the status of the deceased and give patience to the bereaved family.

Deputy Chairman of Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Leader of the House in Senate Ishaq Dar, Leader of the Opposition Dr Shahzad Wasim, and Senator Sadia Abbasi, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee for Cabinet Secretariat, also expressed deep sorrow over the death of the late Senator's wife.

Expressing their heartfelt condolences to the family in separate messages, they prayed that Allah Almighty grant the deceased a good place in the hereafter and patience to the bereaved family.

Chronic skin diseases can raise heart disease risk

ISLAMABAD (APP): Patients with psoriasis, a chronic systemic immune-mediated inflammatory disease, could be at higher risk for cardiovascular disease, a new study has found.

While psoriasis affects 1-3 percent of the global population, cardiovascular diseases like heart attack and stroke are the leading cause of death globally.

Researchers from the University of Padova in Italy conducted a study on 503 psoriasis patients without clinical cardiovascular disease, who underwent transthoracic doppler echocardiography to evaluate coronary microcirculation. Medical Daily reported.

They found a high prevalence of coronary microvascular dysfunction

in more than 30 percent of asymptomatic patients.

"Previous studies have shown that patients with severe psoriasis have an increased cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. However, there has been limited research on the specific mechanisms underlying this increased risk, particularly regarding coronary microvascular dysfunction," said lead investigator of the study, Stefano Piaserico, Dermatology Unit, Department of Medicine, at the university.

The results have been published in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology.

The study also revealed that psoriasis severity, assessed by the Psoriasis Area Severity Index (PASI) score and the duration of the disease are independently associated with lower

coronary flow reserve (CFR), along with the presence of psoriatic arthritis.

Furthermore, conventional cardiovascular risk factors, such as tobacco use, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes mellitus, were not independently associated with reduced CFR in patients with severe psoriasis.

"We should diagnose and actively search for microvascular dysfunction in patients with psoriasis, as this population is at particularly high risk," said Piaserico.

"We might hypothesize that an early and effective treatment of psoriasis would restore the dysfunction and eventually prevent the future risk of myocardial infarction and heart failure associated with it," Piaserico added.



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing used items from a roadside vendor at Khanna Pull. —APP Photo

Minister meets Turkish team

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Minister of Energy and Water Abdul Latif Mansoor on Saturday met with officials from Turkey's IDDEF Charity Foundation to discuss potential joint cooperation, the ministry said in a statement. The energy minister has welcomed the Turkish officials and commended them on their enthusiasm for collaboration in various fields, especially in the area of strengthening religious programs, read the statement.

Minister greets returnees

KABUL (Agencies): Mullah Mohammad Fazil Mazlum, Deputy Minister of Defense, made a visit to Torkham to greet Afghan returnees. The Ministry of Defense released a statement today, announcing that the Deputy Minister of Defense extended a warm welcome to the returning Afghan migrants from Pakistan. He reassured them by saying, "This is your homeland, we are at your service, and we stand ready to offer any assistance and cooperation you might require."

Residents complain of high fuel prices

KABUL (TOLOnews): On the eve of winter, some residents of the capital complained about the high price of fuel, especially coal and wood. They said that the economic challenges and lack of work are the reasons that they are not able to buy fuel for the winter. "There is no work, there are no foreigners, people live in poverty, now a bag of coal costs 1,500, 1,700 or 2,000," said Najibullah, a Kabul resident. "The Islamic Emirate should pay close attention

because winter is coming and the people have nothing in this cold season," said Farhad, a Kabul resident. Some coal and wood sellers criticized the lack of markets and said that people are unable to provide fuel for their winter due to economic problems. "Our challenges are too many, people don't have money to buy fuel," said Mohammad Dawood, a seller. "People use coal and wood more because it is economical, but [currently] wood is 8,500 afghanis and 5 bags of coal is 5,000

afghanis," said Mohammad Karim, a seller. Meanwhile, the deputy of the Ministry of Economy said that by importing cheap and quality fuel, the problems of the citizens of the country will be removed. The Islamic Emirate intends to solve the problem of importing high-quality fuel," said Abdul Latif Nazari, deputy of the economy ministry. Earlier, some citizens of the country criticized the high price of fuel and food as winter approaches.

Meeting on railway project soon

KABUL (Agencies): Officials from the railway authorities of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan recently held a trilateral meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The meeting, which took place on the sidelines of the National Logistics and Transportation Exhibition of Uzbekistan, focused on the Trans-Afghan Railway project. The Afghanistan Railway Authority released a statement noting that a delegation led by Eng. Mirwais Ghafari, Senior Advisor to the Afghanistan Railway Authority, participated in the exhibition. The meeting involved discussions with representatives from Uzbekistan and Pakistan regarding the Trans-Afghan Railway project. The statement also mentioned that the meeting included a detailed report provided by an international company related to attracting investments for this project, along with suggestions for improvements. The railway officials from the three countries decided that practical work on various aspects of the project would commence until the amendment and finalization of the report. In addition, the Afghan Railway Authority's team at the Uzbekistan National Logistics and Transport Exhibition held discussions with officials from companies in the transportation and logistics sector. They addressed issues such as containerization, railcar manufacturing, and other technical matters.

68,000 Afghan refugees returned: Officials



KABUL (Agencies): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation said on Saturday that more than 68,000 people have returned to the country from Pakistan in less than two days. According to the ministry, over 56,000 people returned to the country

through Torkham crossing and 12,000 returned through Spin Boldak. Pakistan's deadline for undocumented foreigners to leave was on Thursday. According to Pakistani authorities, there are some 1.7 million undocumented Afghan refugees and migrants in the country.

There are widespread fears that the influx of Afghans from Pakistan will dramatically worsen the devastating humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. "Well, we — we'll let Pakistan speak to their — to their policies with respect to refugees and asylum seekers. Obviously, we

want to see all nations do what they can to help refugees and asylum seekers. And that certainly includes our — our Pakistani friends with respect to Afghans who are — are trying to flee," White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said.

Afghan Deputy Prime Minister leaves for Iran



KABUL (Agencies): A high-level delegation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, departed for Iran on Saturday. Baradar's office said in a statement Baradar and his

delegation will meet with Iranian officials to discuss bilateral relations, trade, transit, transportation, infrastructure, railways, regional connectivity, and ways to increase trade through Chabahar Port. They will also discuss the increased involvement of Afghanistan in the port,

and the expansion of economic cooperation between the two countries. In addition, Baradar will invite the Iranian government and private sector to invest in Afghanistan's agriculture, mining, transportation, and industry sectors, according to the statement.

Shekib advocates for returnees' capital transfer

KABUL (Agencies): Mawlawi Sardar Ahmad Shekib, the Charge d'Affaires of the Afghan Embassy in Islamabad, has addressed the issue of transferring the capital and assets of returnees with Pakistani authorities. According to a statement from the Embassy of the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan, Mr. Shekib visited the Torkham port to assess the situation of Afghan returnees. During his visit, he interacted with Afghans waiting on the Pakistan side of the crossing to return to their country and listened to their concerns. Shekib emphasized the need to streamline the return process for migrants and advocated for the



exemption of vehicles used for the transportation of refugees from any charges. He stressed that issues related to the transfer of assets, money, and belongings of Afghan migrants will be seriously discussed with the Pakistani authorities. This development follows the interim govern-

ment of Pakistan's decision a month ago to deport migrants residing in the country without legal documentation. Since the deadline ended on November 1, thousands of Afghans have been expelled from Pakistan, and the deportation process continues.

Workers to finish Salang Pass repair

KABUL (TOLOnews): The local officials of Parwan have told TOLOnews that the work inside the Salang tunnels is going on intensively and efforts are being made to complete it before the winter season. Officials, without announcing the exact date of opening the Salang highway to traffic, said that the work on the northern part of the tunnels is about to be completed. Earlier, the Ministry of Public Works said that the work inside the tunnels would take three months. "The effort is to open the highway to traffic before the winter and before the cold, and if there is a delay, it will be for the sake of the work process going well," said Mohammad Edris Anwari, deputy of the Parwan governor. "Work on this part has been completed 80 percent, if Allah wills it will be complete before winter," said Azizullah Omari, governor of Parwan.

Exam given for govt oil and gas jobs, another for night school faculty

KABUL (TOLOnews): The National Examination Authority announced examinations will be held for candidates applying to vacant positions of the Oil and Gas Company of the Ministry of Finance, and also for the central area's evening faculty for higher education. Abdul Baqi Haqqani, head of the authority, said that the process of giving the exam to recruit employees to the oil and gas company for four zones is carried out with the participation of more than three thousand volunteers. "Today there are two exams, one is for the night shift faculty, which provides education for the youth, and the other is the oil and gas company, which has launched a youth recruitment program for young people who have high talent," said Haqqani. The head of Kabul University said that twenty-two day shift faculties and eleven evening shift faculties are active at Kabul University. "Kabul University is

known to you, in general, it has twenty-two faculties and all of them are active during the day, and we have only eleven faculties in the evening," said Asama Azizi, head of Kabul University. The head of the oil and gas company said that in the near future, other vacancies will be announced. "We assure you again that in the future we will try to use professional and tal-

ented people to carry out our business affairs," said Mohammad Naseer Rahimi. Some of the participants of the exam want transparency in the process. "Our request from the examination committee is that they should announce the process clearly so that the rightful ones get their rights," said Fida Mohammad, a participant. "We hope that the

process will be transparent, and we call once again to the leader that the right should be given to the deserving," said Khalid Hotak, a participant. According to the National Examination Authority, the examination process for students and candidates has become clear compared to the past, and the authority will not allow anyone to interfere in the process.



AWCC provides free internet and telecommunication services

KABUL (Agencies): As Pakistani authorities are forcibly expelling Afghan refugees, Afghan Wireless Communication Company (AWCC) has provided free telecommunication and internet services for returnees by setting up special towers at the Spin Boldak and Torkham crossings. Afghan immigrants, who are being forcibly deported by the Pakistani government, have all their belongings left in Pakistan and complain of mistreatment by Pakistani security forces. Upon return, they have

access to little facilities. One of their most important needs is access to telecommunication services. AWCC has provided free telecommunication and internet services for the returning refugees and distributes free SIM cards to them. "Telecommunication services were activated quickly and SIM cards are provided for free to our compatriots, and our teams are present in the area and working to provide SIM cards both to men and women," said Aliullah Sarwari, Deputy Managing

Director of AWCC. The company's officials added that in addition to telecommunication services, Bayat Foundation has also distributed food to hundreds of returning families and provided health services. The committee for dealing with returnees in Torkham has expressed its gratitude for the assistance of AWCC and Bayat Foundation. "We are grateful to the Afghan Wireless Communication Company that acted in a critical situation and provided telecommuni-

cation facilities," said Sayed Ahmad Mustaqim, the general director of the government committee for processing returnees in Torkham. Meanwhile, the immigrants who have just returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan express their satisfaction with the services of the AWCC, saying that these services have enabled them to contact their relatives. "If we don't have a SIM card, we lose connection with our families, and through SIM cards, we can find our families and contact our relatives in Afghanistan. We thank the Afghan Wireless Communication Company for this move," said Abdul Mutalib, a returnee. "We have very good leaders, and I have been provided with an AWCC SIM card after I arrived here," said Habibullah, another returnee. Afghan Wireless Communication Company and Bayat Foundation have always rushed to help people in critical and emergency situations, and according to the company's officials, their services will continue.

Educational opportunities to be provided for returnees: MoHE

KABUL (TOLOnews): With the return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan, the Ministry of Higher Education said that they will provide education opportunities for the returnee students in government and private universities. The spokesman for the ministry said that among the students, they will also provide teaching opportunities to scholars in various provinces. "All students who have not finished their studies, with an evaluation of their educational documents, the education opportunity in the universities will be provided for them, and for the teachers who have high talent and competence, opportunities will be provided for them," said Ziaullah Hashemi, the spokesman of the Ministry of Higher Education. Some of the teachers

said they considered specialized and experienced cadres in the country's educational institutions a positive step. "These cadres that are out of the country, if they return back to the country and can provide services for the people of the community, I think it will play an important role in the development of the country," said Kahled Habibi, a university professor. At the same time, the Ministry of Education said that this ministry is ready to provide facilities in the educational sector to returnee students from Pakistan. According to the ministry's spokesman, a committee has also been set up

to better deal with the issue. "To educate Afghan returnees' children and to ease their problems, the Ministry of Education has been set up for basic and secondary subjects, including the head of a five member committee with the authority to provide care for returnees' children in different provinces and schools," said Mansour Ahmad Hamza, Director of Publications and Public Relations of the Education Ministry. This comes with the arrival of the deadline of Pakistan's interim government, and as thousands of refugees are returning to the country and seeking help from the Islamic Emirate.



Earthquake survivors grappling with unsanitary conditions in open spaces

HERAT (Khaama Press): The WHO has expressed concern over the situation of earthquake survivors in Herat province. The Organization stated that many people are still living in unsanitary conditions and lack access to basic life necessities. This organization, in a report published on Saturday, has emphasized that earthquake survivors in

Herat are exposed to increasing health risks, exceptionally infectious and waterborne diseases, mental health issues, and social and psychological challenges, as well as potential risks of physical and sexual violence. The report further highlights the urgent need for humanitarian assistance and support to address these critical health and

well-being concerns faced by the earthquake-affected population in Herat. The devastating earthquakes in Herat have resulted in 2,000 fatalities, thousands of injuries, and extensive destruction. According to assessments by WHO, an estimated \$7.9 million is required to provide immediate healthcare assistance to earthquake survivors for the next six months.

These survivors are currently living in inadequate conditions, in open spaces, and without access to basic life necessities. With the approaching winter season, concerns are escalating due to both physical and mental health issues faced by these individuals. The need for humanitarian aid and support is urgent to address their critical needs.

Afghan envoy hails facilities at Holding Center

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Afghan Ambassador in Pakistan Sardar Ahmad Khan Shukaib expressed his satisfaction over the facilities, provided to repatriate Afghan families at Holding Center, Landi Kotal and asked the Pak government to brief the verification and data collection process as it multiples miseries of the returning back Afghans.

He expressed the views while talking to the local media persons during his visit to Torkham border on Friday evening. The Ambassador said that the Pak government took the decision of sending back illegal Afghan families in hurry and without consultation with the Afghan government, which was a violation of international law. "Returning of such a large number of immigrants to Afghanistan is a human crisis but the Afghan government is competent enough to deal satisfactorily with it, in spite of limited sources", he opined.

He went on that the repatriation of Afghans complaints of certain troubles while verifying them in Holding Center, scanning their households, loaded in vehicles beside slow pace of clearing process at the Pak-Afghan crossing, Torkham, that was injustice and would be taken up with the authorities.



He urged the government to revise its policy for repatriating Afghan citizens pertaining to the restriction of carrying cash money until fifty thousand. The Afghan diplomat maintained that as the returning Afghans had sold their movable and immovable properties in Pakistan and without a banking channel (ban from international community) how would they transfer their capital to Afghanistan.

Earlier, flanked by District Police Officer, Khyber Saleen Abbas Kulachvi, Additional Deputy Commissioner (relief) Numan Ali Shah and other officials, the Afghan envoy visited Holding Center, Landi Kotal and met with repatriation of Afghan nationals who

appraised him of their hardships.

He also went to Torkham, observed the scanning process where he was briefed by the concerned official pertaining clearance system. He urged them to facilitate the repatriated Afghan families as much as possible.

Meanwhile according to official information 1089 illegal Afghan families returned back to Afghanistan last night. Approximately 587 families from different parts of the country arrived at the Holding Center, Landi Kotal from where they were transported to Torkham while 502 Afghan families directly reached Torkham and after necessary process they were let to move across the border.

Court sends Asad Qaiser to prison

ISLAMABAD (INP): A judicial magistrate in the federal capital on Saturday ordered to house senior PTI leader Asad Qaiser, who was arrested a day earlier, in prison after which the Islamabad Police shifted him to Rawalpindi's Adiala jail.

Earlier, an Anti-Corruption Establishment Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's team had taken the former speaker of National Assembly into custody over embezzlement charges. The magistrate, Qudratullah, also directed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's top anti-graft department to complete the legal requirements within a week.

On Friday, Qaiser was shifted to Bani Gala Police Station for further interrogation in connection with his alleged involvement in corruption scandal of Gajju Khan Medical College, Swabi. The latest arrest comes as another setback for the party, which is already embroiled in legal battles with party's top leadership behind bars in different cases.

Last week, Qaiser and Ali Muhammad Khan held a meeting with JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman to condole with him on the sad demise of his mother-in-law while also discussing the prevailing political situation in the country.

Meanwhile, four workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf have been released from Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi on Saturday. According to jail sources, four PTI workers were released on the orders of anti-terrorism court.

Sources said that the workers were arrested in cases registered against them in connection with violent incidents that broke out on May 9 following the arrest of PTI Chairman Imran Khan inside the Islamabad High Court.

The Lahore High Court has fixed November 7 as the date for hearing the bail application of PTI leader Alia Hamza in connection with a case related to May 9 vandalism. A two-judge bench of the LHC will take up the bail application.

Dengue outbreak continues

LAHORE (INP): Dengue fever continues to grip Punjab, with 190 new cases reported on a single Saturday. According to the latest data from the Health Department reveals that total of 10,052 confirmed Dengue cases across 36 districts in Punjab this year. Lahore leads with 4,316 cases, Rawalpindi with 2,339, Multan with 1,012, Faisalabad with 458, Gujranwala with 859 cases. The situation remains critical as Lahore reports an additional 101 new Dengue cases, Rawalpindi 21, Multan 11, Gujranwala 28, and Faisalabad 12.

Sheikhupura, Kasur, Sargodha, and Toba Tek Singh each recorded 02 new cases in the same time frame.

Meanwhile, Sahiwal, Okara, Gujrat, Rahimyar Khan, Sialkot, Nankana Sahib, Bahawalpur, and Vehari each reported 01 new case of Dengue within 24 hours.

Currently, 160 Dengue patients are receiving treatment in various hospitals across Punjab, with 92 of them in Lahore district hospitals. For those in need of Dengue treatment, information, or wanting to register complaints, a free helpline is available through the health department at 1033.

PTI ex-MPA Musavir held

F.P. Report

MALAKAND: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's former MPA and party district president Pir Musavir Khan has been arrested from Malakand. According to media reports, the Levies officials arrested the former member of the provincial assembly from his house and took him to the Levies post in Malakand.

Reportedly, a large contingent of Levies officials raided the Hujra of the former MPA and arrested him. Insaf Youth Wing has given a call for rally in tehsil Dargai today and former MNA Junaid Akbar and ex-MPA Musavir Khan were supposed to lead the rally.



KHATMANDU: Damaged houses lie in ruins in the aftermath of an earthquake at Pipaldanda village in Jajarkot district, Nepal.

132 killed in Nepal earthquake

KHATMANDU (AFP): At least 132 people have been killed in a 5.6-magnitude earthquake that struck a remote area of Nepal, according to officials. Meanwhile, caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of lives and property in the earthquake.

The quake, with a depth of only 18 kilometres, hit the far west of the Himalayan country, causing significant damage to homes and buildings, as per the US Geological Survey. Videos and images circulated on social media depicted locals bravely engaging in nighttime rescue efforts, digging through rubble of collapsed homes and buildings to extract survivors. Mud houses were either flattened or severely damaged, forcing survivors to seek refuge outside amidst the wailing sirens of emergency vehicles.

The impact of the earthquake was felt as far away as India's capital, New Delhi, nearly 500 kilometres from the epicentre, the located 42 kilometres south of Jumla. "Ninety-two people died in Jajarkot and 40 in Rukum," Nepalese home ministry spokesman Narayan Prasad Bhattarai told reporters, referring to

the two districts hit worst by the quake. National police spokesman Kuber Kathayat reported over 100 individuals injured across both affected districts.

Security forces have been mobilized to aid in search and rescue operations, with Karnali Province police spokesman Gopal Chandra Bhattarai confirming their deployment to media. "The remoteness of the districts makes it difficult for information to get through," he added. "Some roads had been blocked by damage, but we are trying to reach the area through alternate routes." The district hospital is overwhelmed with residents bringing in injured victims for medical attention.

Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal arrived at the site of the quake on Saturday after expressing "his deep sorrow over the human and physical damage caused by the earthquake". In neighbouring India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "deeply saddened" by the loss of lives. "India stands in solidarity with the people of Nepal and is ready to extend all possible assistance," he added.

Nepal, situated on a major geological faultline,

frequently experiences earthquakes due to the convergence of the Indian tectonic plate and the Eurasian plate, forming the Himalayas. In 2015, a devastating 7.8-magnitude quake resulted in nearly 9,000 casualties and over 22,000 injuries, leaving more than half a million homes destroyed. The aftermath also saw extensive damage to schools, affecting almost one million children.

This recent earthquake follows a similar event in November of the previous year, where six lives were lost due to a 5.6-magnitude quake in Doti district, near Jajarkot. Social media users in northern Indian cities such as Lucknow and Patna reported feeling the tremors. The initial quake was succeeded by an after-shock in the same region, measuring 4.0 on the magnitude scale, according to the US Geological Survey.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar on Saturday expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of lives and property in the Nepal earthquake. "Pakistan stands with Nepal during this difficult time and is ready to extend whatever assistance is required," Kakar wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Dar to lead PML-N election cell

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif has named Senator Ishaq Dar to head the election cell of the party for the upcoming polls. A notification in this regard was issued on Saturday by PML-N secretary general Ahsan Iqbal with the approval of Shehbaz Sharif.

"With the approval of the President PML-N, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar is hereby appointed as Chairman, Election Cell PML-N, for General Elections 2024," read the notification. Taking to X, formerly Twitter, PML-N's spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the party's election related activities will further expedite after the latest appointment.

"All the polls related activities including the process of applications to get the party ticket will be completed soon," said Marriyum Aurangzeb. Dar has also headed the parliamentary committee which made the Election Act 2017 that was later passed by the parliament. It merits mention here that the PML-N has already invited applications from the interested candidates to contest the general elections.

The party has issued a form for both the National and provincial assembly seats for the aspiring candidates. The form can be obtained from Nov 1 to 10. PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif would address the public rallies across the country soon once the tickets are announced.

Jammu Martyrs' Day tomorrow

SRINAGAR (PPI): Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and across the world will observe Jammu Martyrs' Day, marking a solemn occasion to reiterate their unwavering commitment to the mission of their martyrs in the pursuit of their inalienable right to self-determination.

According to KMS, the day is dedicated to remembering the tragic events of November 1947, during which thousands of Kashmiris martyred in different parts of the Jammu region. These victims perished at the hands of various forces, including the forces of Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh, the Indian Army, and Hindu fanatics. The date, November 6, is annually observed by Kashmiris to pay homage to the victims of what is known as the Jammu massacre.

From his confinement in New Delhi's Tihar jail, senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), Shabbir Ahmed Shah, expressed his reverence for the sacrifices of the Jammu martyrs. He characterized the Jammu massacre of 1947 as one of the most horrendous incidents in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at altering the demographic composition of the region.

Other APHC leaders, including Khawaja Firdous, Syed Bashir Andrabi, Muhammad Shafi Lone, Devinder Singh Behl, Abdul Samad Inqilabi, Muhammad Yousuf Naqash, and Shafiq-ur-Rehman, joined in expressing their dismay at the continued loss of innocent Kashmiri Muslim lives in the region, despite over seven decades having passed since the Jammu massacre.

PHC declares detention of ex-KP minister null & void

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) ordered release of former provincial minister Anwar Zaib Khan on two personal sureties along with Rs1 lac bond and declared Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bajaur detention orders under Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) null and void. The judgement stated that DC Bajaur has issued detention order of Anwar Zaib Khan on 20 October under Section-3 MPO for period of 30 days. However, District Police Officer (DPO) reported that Anwar Zaib is found involved in holding protest gathering and inciting the public for taking part in the protest gatherings against the Government and State institutions and damaging Govt/State infrastructure in different parts of Bajaur.

His activities are posing grave threat to public safety which may create disturbance of public tranquility, danger to human life, health, safety and public properties and challenging writ of the State, DPO submitted in court.

Due to this act of Anwar

Zaib, the situation is snowballing into serious law and order situations in Bajaur. DPO Bajaur has made a request for issuance of warrant of arrested under 3-MPO against Anwar Zaib Khan in order to prevent his unlawful activities, the judgement stated.

PHC's Justice Shahid authored the judgement stated that the record made available before this court would divulge that the DC Bajaur has issued detention orders of Anwar Zaib under 3MPO on the request of DPO, however, sufficient material has neither been collected nor brought before him, against the petitioner. The decision stated that it can be concluded safely that satisfaction can only be based on same evidence or record justifying the detention order which is badly lacking in this case.

Deputy Attorney General stated that sufficient evidence has been collected but nobody knows where is that evidence, what is the nature of sensitivity and why it could not be brought before learned judge in chamber, judgement stated.

The contention of Deputy Attorney General that the said material could only be shown to Review Board is not understandable for the reason that if it could be shown to Review Board how it could be withheld from High Court and at the best precautionary measure as mentioned herein above. In the light of what has been before court and produced before court, we are of the considered opinion that the conclusion as arrived at by the learned High Court being well based does not warrant interference and the detention order could not be justified.

The right of freedom and liberty of the petitioner has been abridged, so guaranteed under Article 9 of the Constitution of Pakistan, as such, interference of this court is inevitable in the matter for ensuring that such person enjoys exercise of such fundamental rights. PHC's Justice Shahid Khan ordered release of former provincial minister Anwar Zaib Khan on bail over two personal sureties along with Rs1 lac surety bond while declaring DC Bajaur detention under 3MPO as null and void.

Pemra issues guidelines for election coverage by media

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) issued a directive to all the TV channels regarding the coverage of General Elections 2024. The directive was issued to all the satellite-based news, current affairs and regional channels for the upcoming polls.

The code of ethics during the news coverage and analysis must be ensured, it said. The directive added that the speculation and 'negative reporting' regarding the general elections must be avoided. "It is responsibility of all the citi-

zens and institutions to assist the election commission in ensuring free and fair elections," said Pemra. According to the directive issued by Pemra, the channels cannot air statements of banned organisations or their representatives.

"Electronic media has a pivotal role in educating masses, building and shaping fair opinion and strengthening democratic process required for establishment of democratic government in the country," the directive said. "Airing of any such news or content was a violation of PEMRA laws, including the Code of Conduct 2015,

in general," Pemra said. The channel and its representative must stop the participant if a hate speech is made by any guest.

The new directive of Pemra said that the channels cannot air anything indecent, obscene or pornographic, abusive comment against any individual or group of persons, based on race, caste, nationality, ethnic or linguistic origin, colour, religion, sect, gender, age, mental or physical disability. The authority warned to take strict action against satellite TV channel licensees in case of any such violation.

Zelenskyy denies war with Russia at 'stalemate'

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has denied that Ukraine's war with Russia had reached a "stalemate", pushing back at suggestions Western leaders were lobbying for peace talks. The sprawling front line between the two warring sides has barely moved in almost a year, with one senior Ukrainian official warning this week that the conflict was deadlocked.

"Time has passed, peo-

ple are tired ... But this is not a stalemate," Zelenskyy told a news conference on Saturday in Kyiv with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. The Ukrainian leader also rejected the idea that Western countries were putting pressure on Kyiv to enter negotiations with Russia, amid reports US and EU officials had discussed what such talks would entail.

"No one among our part-

ners is pressuring us to sit down with Russia, talk to it, and give it something," he said. Such pressure existed before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and at the beginning of the fighting, but "today, none of the EU leaders or the US are putting pressure on me to sit down with Russia, negotiate and give Russia anything. There will be no such thing," he added. — Agencies

Five doctors among 8 new cases of Congo virus

F.P. Report

QUETTA: Eight more cases of Congo virus have been reported in Quetta, out of which five are doctors.

On the other hand, an outbreak of unknown pathogens has spread in the intensive care unit of a government hospital in the Balochistan capital.

According to a spokesperson for the Balochistan Health Department Integrated Health Monitoring and Emergency Response Unit, sixteen medical staff members have been affected due to the outbreak of the pathogens in the ICU of the Civil Sandeman Hospital in Quetta. Those affected are being treated after being shifted to a separate ward.

According to the spokesman, the symptoms of the pathogen include the sudden onset of severe pain in the body. A high fever with stiffness and chills are also among its symptoms.

In addition, mild respiratory symptoms, decreased platelet count, and lymphopenia are also among its symptoms. According to the spokesman, the pathogen is highly contagious, and teams from the health directorate are working to control the situation, and samples are being tested in labs to identify the pathogens. All arrangements for prevention and testing have been made.

In a directive issued by the Health Department of the Government of Balochistan on Saturday, all patients diagnosed with C r i m e a n - C o n g o Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) will be relocated to the designated isolation unit at the Fatima Jinnah Institute of Chest Diseases (FIJICD) in Quetta.

The official notification cites the need to contain the spread of CCHF, which has been reported at the

Sandeman Provincial Hospital (SPH) in Quetta. The Fatima Jinnah Institute of Chest Diseases is recognized as a specialized medical facility with the requisite infrastructure and expertise for the management of CCHF cases.

The isolation unit at the institute is equipped with essential medical equipment and supplies to ensure the safe and effective treatment of CCHF patients. Additionally, the notification emphasizes the importance of staff training on CCHF infection prevention and control measures. A dedicated team of experienced doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals will be on hand to provide specialized care for CCHF patients. These measures are aimed at curbing the spread of CCHF and ensuring the well-being of both patients and healthcare workers.

Re-conduct of MD CAT for admissions in medical colleges

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Re-conduct of MD CAT for admissions in Medical and Dental Colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa wherein the decision in this connection was taken in a meeting Chaired by caretaker

Chief Minister KP Muhammad Azam Khan here on Saturday.

In the meeting, the preparations for conducting the MD CAT under the management of Khyber Medical University were reviewed. Advisor to the Chief Minister on Health, Chief Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary Home besides the respective Secretaries, VC KMU, Police and participation of intelligence agency officials and divisional commissioners were also present.

Briefing the participants of the meeting on the proposed action plan of Khyber Medical University for conducting the test. In the meet-

ing, it was decided to make strict arrangements to make MD CAT clean and transparent in all respects. Approval in principle of the proposed action plan of Khyber Medical University for this purpose in the meeting.

Decision to set up a committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary Interior to implement the action plan and decide the details. It was decided to assign specific responsibilities to the police, district administration, intelligence agencies and related departments for conducting the MD CAT.

Fool proof arrangements should be ensured for clean and transparent conduct of MD CAT, Azam Khan directed the officials. It should be ensured in all respects that the process that happened in the previous test does not happen again. Caretaker Chief Minister said. Copying in exams is a scourge and

strict measures are needed to eliminate it, Muhammad Azam Khan said, adding, the provincial government will provide all the necessary resources on a priority basis for the clean and transparent conduct of the MD CAT.

Administrative and technical resources should be provided in addition to security for the transparent conduct of the test. The Chief Minister instructed. MD CAT for admissions in medical and dental colleges across the province will be held on November 26, it was decided. For this purpose, examination centers will be established in seven districts of the province and these districts include Dera Ismail Khan, Kohat, Peshawar, Mardan, Dir Lower, Swat and Abbottabad wherein a 46,220 registered candidates will participate in MD CAT and 219 candidates involved in cheating during the last test have been blacklisted.