

Police raid Elahi's residence

ISLAMABAD (INP): Police raided the house of the former Chief Minister and President of PTI, Pervaz Elahi, with a heavy force. According to ex-federal minister Mons Elahi tweet, the CCTV footage of the police force came to light. After breaking in, women and children were taken out and searched. The police had received information about the presence of an important person.

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ECP all set to hold ‘free and fair’ polls, CEC tells PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday reiterated that the interim government would extend all possible cooperation and ensure the provision of necessary resources to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for holding free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja who called on him at the PM House, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The chief election commissioner briefed the prime minister about the ECP preparations for the upcoming general elections in the country. He also invited the caretaker prime minister to visit ECP to review these measures.

PM stresses urgent role by int'l community to stop Gaza genocide: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar stressed the need for the international community to play an urgent role in stopping Israel's aggression against Palestinians.

He expressed these views in a meeting with the Special Representative of the Prime Minister for Religious Harmony and Pakistan diaspora in Middle East and Islamic Countries, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi here at the PM House. PM Kakar and Maulana Ashrafi strongly condemned Israel's ongoing genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza.

The meeting welcomed the upcoming meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to be held in Jeddah on the deteriorating situation of Palestine. Maulana Ashrafi paid tributes to the interim government's steps to promote inter-faith harmony. The prime minister on the occasion lauded Maulana Tahir

Ashrafi for his efforts for the welfare of Pakistanis residing in the Middle East and other Islamic countries.

PM hopeful of SIFC bringing in over \$60b investment to Pakistan in five years: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar expressed the hope that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) would help bring in over \$60 billion investment to Pakistan in the next five years.

"It is indeed. It could be probably more than that," the prime minister said in an interview with Arab News when asked whether the reports that the SIFC would bring in up to \$60 billion in investments in Pakistan in the next five years were realistic. He said the SIFC would serve as a "one-window operation" to address any concerns of foreign investors.

"Two or three areas have already been addressed, like repatriation of dollars, which is the demand of any FDI [foreign direct investment] entity, [that] it's insured, it's legally protected," the prime minister said. "Secondly, the bureaucratic red-tapism has also been addressed, the one-window opportunity on the platform of SIFC is primarily being designed for this purpose, that we need to cut off all these bureaucratic hurdles and rationalize the entire process of allowing and giving permission to any investment from outside within 15 days."

He said a dispute resolution mechanism had been agreed under the SIFC platform. "It's quite encouraging and favourable, which is acceptable to all the outside parties ... The dispute resolution mechanism has been addressed." To a question, he said the government hoped to conclude a deal by December for Saudi Arabia to buy stakes in Reko Diq, one of the world's biggest gold and copper mining projects.

"We are quite excited at the Saudi offer, and we would be very much encouraging their participation, not just in this project but otherwise also," Prime Minister Kakar said. "It is the negotiation part, which is happening between the three parties, and let's see what sort of outcome comes of that."

In August, Pakistan hosted officials from Saudi Arabia in its inaugural mining conference in Islamabad where Barrick officials were also present. Barrick and Saudi Arabia's state-owned mining company Ma'aden jointly operate a copper project in Jeddah.

Pakistan ready to replicate its unique AMA success story with developing countries: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, highlighting Pakistan's achievement through the Asaan Mobile Account (AMA) Scheme to enhance women's financial inclusion, said the country was ready to replicate its success story with the developing countries.

"Many developing countries are in touch with us directly through world organizations like the Islamic Development Bank, ADB, the AIIB, UNDP, etc. We stand ready to replicate this unique Pakistani success story with their support for the underprivileged and for the deprived women anywhere in the world," he said addressing a virtual event on "Bridging the Financial Inclusion Gap in Pakistan".

The event was organised by the World Economic Forum's Edison Alliance and the Virtual Remittance Gateway. The prime minister said that his prime objective as the head of the government was to give hope to the poor through the many-to-many platform.

(Continued on Back Page)



CHAKLALA: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Chief of the Army Staff, General Asim Munir carrying the coffin of Lt. Col. Muhammad Hassan Haider, who embraced shahadat in Tirah operation.

Tirah operation martyrs laid to rest

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: The funeral prayers of the martyrs of Tirah intelligence-based operation (IBO) were laid to rest with full military honours in their native towns on Tuesday.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Namaz-e-Janaza (funeral prayers) of Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Hassan Haider (age 42 years, resident of DHA-2, Islamabad) who embraced, shahadat, in general area of Tirah Valley, Khyber District was offered today at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi. The Shaheed (martyr) was buried with full military honour at Islamabad.

The Prime Minister, Defence Minister, CJCS, COAS and a large number of senior civil and military officers, soldiers, citizens and relatives of shaheed attended the Namaz e Janaza.

Funeral prayers of Naik Khushdil Khan (age 31 years, resident of District Lakki Marwat), Naik Rafique Khan (age 27 years, resident of District Charsadda) and Lance Naik Abdul Qadir (age 33 years, resident of District Murree) were also offered at their respective hometowns. The country's armed forces stand resolute and committed to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the motherland at all cost.

IMF demands end to subsidy for tube well users

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has demanded an end to budget subsidy for tube well users. According to media reports, the government will spend 90 billion rupees to introduce a solarization system for Pakistan's agriculture sector. The Tubewell Solarization Scheme will be submitted to the cabinet for approval. Of the 90 billion rupees, 30 billion will be provided by the federation, 30 billion by the provinces, and 30 billion by the tubewell users.

Discussions were held with the IMF to start the Tubewell Solarization Scheme in the current financial year. Sources said that the Ministry of Energy consulted with the Ministry of Finance, IMF, and the World Bank on the Tubewell Solarization Scheme. The implementation of the scheme will help tubewell consumers avoid budget subsidies in the next financial year. Nepra is making timely notifications of quarterly adjustments and fuel price adjustments for cost-recognising tariff improvements. The IMF directed cooperation between DISCOs, Ministry of Energy, and NEPRA and speedy implementation of decisions.

Two FC personnel shot dead

PANIGUR (PPI): Lance Naik of FC shot dead two personnel of FC and injured two other Sepoys of FC in Panjur area of Balochistan province on Tuesday. According to FC sources, scuffle between the Sepoys of Frontier Corps (FC) in 137 Wing Jerak check post turned unpleasant when lance Naik Amin shot dead two of his companions with Kalashnikov and injured two other personnel of FC.

Fawad remanded in police custody

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad district and sessions court on Tuesday granted police one-day physical remand of former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry in a case pertaining to financial fraud.

The ex-PTI leader was arrested from his Islamabad residence last week in a police raid and was moved to an undisclosed location, police sources had told media. His family had claimed he was "abducted by men in plainclothes".

According to a first information report, Fawad was arrested in a case registered at the Aabpara police station on August 22, 2022, under sections 109 (punishment of abetment if the Act abetted committed in consequence and where no express provision is made for its punishment), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions), 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 341 (punishment for wrongful restraint), and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Besides Fawad, AML chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, PTI leaders Murad Saeed, Faisal Javaid Khan, Asad Umer, Raja Khurram Nawaz, Ali Nawaz Khan, Faisal Vawda, Shahzad Wasim, Sadaqat Ali Abbasi, Shibli Fawad, Saifullah Khan Niazi, Shehryar Afridi, Fiazul Hassan Chohan, Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Asad Qaiser, Zahir Abbas Khokhar, Ghulam Sarwar Khan and over 1,000 unidentified people were also booked in the FIR. On Sunday, the former minister was remanded in police custody for two days.

On Tuesday Fawad was brought to court amid tight security. Footage aired on television showed his hands bound and face covered with a black sack. The hearing was attended by prosecutor Adnan Ali and defence counsels Ali Bukhari, Faisal Chaudhry and Qamar Inayat. Fawad's wife Hiba Chaudhry was also in attendance. At the outset of the proceedings, Faisal urged the court to initiate contempt proceedings against the police for covering his client's face despite orders issued at the previous hearing.

2 cops martyred, 3 injured in D I Khan terrorist attack

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: At least two policemen were martyred and three got injured in a terrorist attack that occurred at the oil and Gas Company's camp located in Dera Ismail Khan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

According to media reports, the police officials said that the terrorists attacked an oil and gas company's camp in the Darazinda area of Dera Ismail Khan. The two policemen ASI Rehmat Elahi and Khan Arif who were deployed to the security of the camp were martyred, while the three police officers Alamgir Khan, Fazalur Rehman, and Attaur Rehman got injured during an exchange of fire with the terrorists.

According to the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Asghar Ali Shah, the injured policemen were shifted to District Head Quarters (DHQ) Hospital, where the condition of one of the injured is critical. He further said that the attack

took place on Al-Haj Oil and Gas Private Drilling Company, where the terrorists targeted the policemen deployed at the security of the company's camp. Asghar Ali Shah said that more police forces had reached the spot, meanwhile, the search for the terrorists is still on.

The funeral prayer of two policemen offered at police line Dera after succumbed to injured in terrorist attack on Alhaj Oil and Gas Company midnight, on Tuesday. According to details, terrorists attacked Alhaj Oil and Gas Company Darzinda Dera Ismail Khan last night with heavy weapons. On which the policemen fought bravely and repulsed the attack of the terrorists and destroyed their nefarious intentions.

In this attack, police cops ASI Alam Sher, Fazl Ur Rehman, Ata Ur Rehman, Rehmat Elahi and Khan Arif who were injured while fighting with these men. However, Constable Rehmat Elahi and Khan Arif succumbed

to their injuries and died. The funeral prayer of Martyrs Policemen was performed with official honors at Ijaz Shaheed Police Lines Dera. In which Regional Police Officer Dera Nasir Mahmood satti, District Police Chief Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, FRP, City, Sadar, SPs of Investigation and other senior officers participated. The bodies of the martyrs were saluted by the well-armed police force.

After the funeral, the Regional Police Officer visited the policemen undergoing treatment at CMH Hospital Dera, inquire from the doctors about the treatment provided to the youth and instruct them to provide the best treatment facilities. On this occasion, he said while talking to the policemen, the way you bravely stood up and fought against the terrorists, the entire Police Force Co-op is proud of this. Your blood will not be allowed to go in vain. Inshallah soon the terrorist elements will be brought to justice.

Zardari ‘welcomes political rivals’ contesting polls

F.P. Report

GHOTKI: Following the electoral alliance between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari has said that he welcomes his opponent's intention to stand in elections.

"We will stand against our opponents that are coming in elections and we welcome them," Zardari said while addressing party workers in Ghotki's Khangarh. The former president was of the view that when people who oppose each other contest elections then the competition among them delivers the "best results". The PPP leader said that his party never says "no to anyone" and always tells everyone to do their politics while they would do

theirs. "We have our own philosophy and they have theirs."

Taking a jibe at PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif who returned to the country on October 21 after ending a four-year self-imposed exile in London, Zardari said that he was not leaving the country as he was bound by his workers. "What will I say to my worker when I look him in the eye," Zardari further said. He added that his party does its own politics whatever may be the politics of others.

Explaining his party's philosophy, Zardari said they do it for the politics which was of PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. Zardari further said that they removed Imran Khan — through a no-confidence motion in April last year — not to seek power but did it for the betterment of the country. Coming down hard on the

Pakistan Tehree-e-Insaaf (PTI) government, the PPP stalwart said: "They do not know how to do or get work done."

Zardari also fired a broadside at his opponents after the PML-N and the MQM-P announced that they would be jointly contesting the upcoming general elections — scheduled to take place on February 8, 2024. As the general elections approach, the rifts between the PML-N and the PPP have become deeper as the latter is persistently voicing concerns regarding the absence of equal opportunities to prove itself ahead of the polls. The Bilawal-led party has claimed that the PML-N has denied a level playing field in the upcoming polls. Recently, the PPP also said that it was open to forging an alliance with any political party including the PTI against the Nawaz-led party.

Death toll in Gaza above 10,000

Netanyahu says Israel will take ‘overall security responsibility’ of Gaza after war

GAZA / WASHINGTON: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that his country will take "overall responsibility" of Gaza's security for an indefinite period after its war with Hamas ends. "Israel will, for an indefinite period, will have the overall security responsibility," he said in a television interview with ABC News broadcast.

"When we don't have that security responsibility, what we have is the eruption of Hamas terror on a scale that we couldn't imagine," he added. The Israeli military has relentlessly attacked Gaza by air, land and sea since October 7, when Hamas militants launched a cross-border attack that left 1,400 dead in Israel, most of them civilians, according to Israeli authorities, and over 240 hostages taken.

The death toll in Gaza has surpassed 10,000 people, the Hamas-run health ministry said Monday, including more than 4,000 children. In interview, Netanyahu disputed the health ministry's figures, which he said likely included "several thousand" Palestinian combatants. Despite growing calls for a cease-fire from UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and other world leaders, Netanyahu said he did not support one.

"There will be no cease-fire — general cease-fire — in Gaza without the release of our hostages," he said. "As far as tactical, little pauses — an hour here, an hour there — we've had them before," he said. Israel may agree to pauses to let humanitarian goods into Gaza, or to allow for hostages to leave the besieged Palestinian territory, he added. Asked if he should take any responsibility for the October 7 attack, Netanyahu said "of course." "It's not a question and it's got to be resolved after the war," he said, adding that his government had "clearly" not met its obligation to protect its people.

A top US envoy said in Beirut Tuesday that Washington doesn't want the ongoing war in Gaza to expand to Lebanon after a Lebanese woman and her three granddaughters were killed in an Israeli strike two days ago. The comments from Amos Hochstein, a senior adviser to US

President Joe Biden come during a previously unannounced visit to Beirut to discuss the volatile situation with Lebanon's parliament speaker and caretaker prime minister. Hochstein told reporters after meeting Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri that restoring calm along Lebanon's southern border is of "utmost importance." Hochstein said he heard Berri's concerns over the tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border where fighters of the militant group Hezbollah and their allies have been exchanging fire with Israeli troops for about a month, after the Israel-Hamas war started on Oct. 7.

"The United States does not want to see conflict in Gaza escalating and expanding into Lebanon," Hochstein said in a brief statement. He did not take questions from journalists. Hochstein's comments came as the Israeli military and Hezbollah exchanged fire on Tuesday following what Israel said was the targeting of one of its posts along the Lebanese border. The clashes along the border have intensified since Israel launched a ground incursion into Gaza against Palestinian militant group Hamas, an ally of Hezbollah.

"Protecting civilians is a main pillar of the rules of engagement with the enemy," Hezbollah legislator Ali Fayad said during the funeral. Israel considers the Iran-backed Shiite militant group its most serious immediate threat and estimates that Hezbollah has around 150,000 rockets and missiles aimed at Israel. The group also has different types of drones and surface-to-sea missiles.

Hezbollah MP: group will respond ‘double’ over Lebanese civilians hurt: A Hezbollah lawmaker said on Tuesday that the Lebanese militant group would respond "double" to any Israeli attacks on civilians after a strike that killed three children and their grandmother in south Lebanon. The remarks reflect the volatile situation on the Israeli-Lebanese border, where deadly clashes between Israeli troops and Iran-backed Hezbollah fighters are fueling fears of a wider regional war while Israel invades the Gaza Strip.— Arab News

PML-N, MQM-P to contest Feb 8 polls jointly

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) on Tuesday announced that they would be jointly contesting the upcoming general elections — scheduled to take place on February 8, 2024.

The development comes following a meeting of an MQM-P delegation led by Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Farooq Sattar and Syed Mustafa Kamal with the PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif in Lahore at the party's Model Town secretariat.

Later, speaking to the media, senior PML-N leader Khawaja Saad Rafique said, "It had been decided that both parties will contest February 8 polls jointly". "Both parties have agreed to adopt a joint strategy to bring the people of Pakistan out of the current crises and to put Pakistan back on the path of development. The two parties also decided to set

up a six-member committee to prepare a comprehensive charter to address the problems of Sindh province, especially its urban areas. The committee will present the final proposals for cooperation between the two parties to the leadership within 10 days," a PML-N statement issued after the meeting stated.

As the general elections approach, the rifts between PML-N and PPP have become deeper as the latter is persistently voicing concerns regarding the absence of equal opportunities to prove itself ahead of the polls. Speaking about the political and economic conditions in the country, Sattar said that no party is in a position to steer the country out of the crisis singlehandedly.

"There is a need for broader understanding and cooperation," said the MQM-P leader, adding that a joint strategy will be adopted in the elections. Sattar also spoke about Karachi, saying that the port city generates 60% of

the revenue. "National consensus has to be reached for the solution of all the problems in Karachi," he added.

Meanwhile, Kamal said that it was the parties' political, moral, and constitutional responsibility to understand the issues of the country, stressing that Pakistan has to be taken out of crises with strong leadership. He also highlighted that the country needed strong and tough decisions to deal with the issues. "IMF cannot take Pakistan out of crises, but Karachi can," said Kamal.

Meanwhile, the PPP leader, Saeed Ghani has said that MQM proved it to be dead horse of politics by making alliance with PML-N. In a statement issued on Tuesday, he said that MQM always claimed of contesting general election at its own but now its attitude reveals that was not further in position to maintain its aver. Saeed Ghani further said that no support can now help MQM to succeed in general elections.



Exhibition showcasing products made by schoolchildren held at Children's Complex

LAHORE (APP): The Children's Library Complex wore a festive look with stalls showcasing products made by children and various projects in the playground.

The whole place was flooded with schoolchildren, teachers and visitors.

It was largely an exhibition of products made by schoolchildren with recycled materials to protect eco-system and save money. Remarkable among them were The Trust School, The Spirit School, The Punjab School and NECS Academy. Trust School stood out in some ways, and every student greeted visitors and took the initiative to explain their projects.

The many life skills such as personal hygiene, cooking, sewing, gardening, house-keeping, changing water filters and switches, being taught at school, was also showcased. The confidence with which students talked about their work, be it that of class 1, was heartening. The Trust School projects were Climate Gladiators, Trash to Treasure (recycle, reduce, reuse), Save Nature, Save Earth, Screen Time vs Green Time. Children had made functional vacuum cleaners, desert cooler, water dispenser and ATM machine among other things. There was a model of park by The Spirit School. Model of a train with recycled materials and that of a dragon made with Rs5 coins by Punjab School students were eye-catching. NECS had made models of classroom, clinic, police station and farm.

Little boys and girls in ethnic dresses presented traditional dance while the exhibition opened with the drum beats of The Trust School Children.

There was an exciting exhibition at the rear end of the Children Library Complex, that of pets.

There were variety of birds.

Interim CM, UNDP Country Chief agree to work together

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Resident Representative Samuel Rizk in their meeting at CM House decided to mark the anniversary of the Resilient Sindh: From Pledges to Reconstruction conference, they had co-hosted last year.

The Sindh government in collaboration with the UNDP had convened the conference on Resilient Sindh: From Pledges to Reconstruction in Karachi to harness international and local support for the people of Sindh.

The meeting was attended by Chairman P&D Shakil Mangnejo.

The Chief Minister appreciated the UNDP for its support to the people of the province through the Flood Recovery Programme which focuses on housing and community infrastructure; livelihoods recovery; restoring government services; and disaster resilience and environmental protection while gender equality and climate resilience.

The CM and the UNDP representatives also discussed the project Risk Governance Framework project.

The UNDP has started a pilot project Risk Governance Framework. One provincial consultant and three district consultants were being made on board for implementation support for the four-month assignment. The pilot interventions are being undertaken in three districts-

Naushehroferoze, Jamshoro and Thatta, Chairman P&D Shakil Mangnejo told the CM. The UNDP Representative said that the parameters for selecting the pilot districts were to cover the most affected districts in terms of housing damages while also considering geographical spread and rural-urban representation for replication and scaling up the programme to the entire province, especially calamity-hit districts, after generating credible evidence for effectiveness.

The CM and the UNDP country chief discussed the progress of the ongoing project. They include Support projects for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation, Youth Education, Employment, Empowerment Projects, stabilisation and Inclusive Development programmes. The CM said that the floods of 2022 have had a severe impact on the province of Sindh. He added that even before the floods occurred, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated in its report that the annual financing gap for meeting SDGs stands at \$3.72 billion nationally for 2020-2030. This wide resource gap necessitates significant grant financing from development partners and trust funds. The visiting UNDP Representative assured the chief minister that his organisation would be supporting the people of Sindh in the rehabilitation work.

FIA arrests ringleader of gang involved in illegal currency exchange

KARACHI (APP): In a significant operation, the State Banking Circle of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Karachi Zone has carried out a sweeping crackdown on illicit currency exchange activities.

According to spokesman for FIA Sindh on Tuesday, a raid, conducted by the FIA, led to the apprehension of the primary ringleader of a criminal gang involved in illegal currency exchange.

The arrested individual was taken into custody from Shaheed-e-Millat Road in Karachi. During the operation, the premier investigation agency's officials seized a substantial amount of domestic and foreign currency, exceeding 40 millions in total. The accused was found to be engaged in the unlawful exchange of both domestic and foreign currencies, including foreign cur-

rency exchange without the required license. The raid yielded a substantial quantity of various currencies, including 46,370 US dollars, 11,445 British pounds, and 6,500 euros. Additionally, 5,720 Australian Dollars, 63,985 Saudi Riyals, 52,795 UAE Dirhams, 18,528 Qatari Riyal, 36,740 Turkish Lira, and 66,890 Thai Baht were also recovered.

The authorities further discovered a significant amount of Canadian dollars, 4,200 Malaysian ringgit, 5,288 Chinese yuan, and 4,720 krona in the possession of the arrested individual. In addition, more than 6.4 million Pakistani rupees, 5.4 million Iranian rials, and 5.4 million Iraqi dinars were seized, along with various other currencies, including Swedish Krona and Indian Rupees.

and consider as an indicator of a good financial management and governance.

During the last three years, the financial resources of the university are enhanced by 85 % (highest level in the history of KUST). This is yet another achievement and validation of the Prof. Dr. Sardar Khan efforts for implementing the best financial practices at KUST that has resulted in financial sustainability of university when most of the universities in province and country and are at the verge of bankruptcy.

Other achievements of the incumbent Vice Chancellor includes Implementation of "KUST Welfare and Insurance Fund" from all the employees of the university as per statutes 2016 along with being the leading university in the province to adoption Contributory Provident Fund (CPF) upon the directives of Chancellor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at KUST through statutory bodies. The faculty member, administrative and support staff along with students have congratulated Vice Chancellor and his team and hope that the university will further excel under his leadership and will be one of the leading universities of the country.



among the 22 universities in the province with "Potential Deficits".

KUST has increased students enrollment therefore not included in the list of universities in the province having decreasing trend in enrollment at undergraduate and graduate programs. Furthermore KUST is not among the universities in the province with "Under Performing Assets" and "Asset Distribution Issues". In short good performance in academics and administrative affairs under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Sardar Khan, Vice Chancellor has enabled to be the most financially stable university of the area.

The major steps taken by the vice chancellor by optimizing resource utilization, by fostering research-driven innovations, starting new programs along with their alignment as per market demands, solarization of the whole campus, digi-

tization of the campus through indigenously developed campus management system, strengthening ORIC by activating collaboration with international entities etc.

KUST being ranked as 5th in the province by UIGreen Metric World University Ranking and at 6th in the province by TIMES World University Ranking is yet another indicator and validation for the university performing well in academics and research also. Under the leadership of incumbent Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Sardar Khan, the enrollment of the university increased up to 55% in the last three (03) years.

The step taken by the Vice Chancellor for solarization of the whole campus (840 Kilowatts of electricity generation) from university own finances has impacted the financial resources utilization for payment of electricity bills of the campus



KARACHI: Doctors and paramedics hold placards during a pro-Palestinian rally organized by Pakistan Islamic Medical Association PIMA at Jinnah hospital.

Closing ceremony of 43rd PARA Central Meet held

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Closing ceremony of 43rd Pakistan Army Rifle Association (PARA) Central Meet was held today at Army Marksmanship Unit (AMU) Jhelum.

General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) graced the occasion as chief guest. The mega shooting event was conducted from 3 October to 7 November 2023.

Over 2000 firers from Army,

Navy, Air Force, Civil Armed Forces including Rangers (Sindh & Punjab), Frontier Corps and Gilgit-Baltistan Scouts as well as civilians participated in the competition.

COAS and Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed

Baber Sidhu, NI (M), who was the guest of honor at the ceremony, awarded trophies and medals to the award winners and runners up in each category.

In the Inter-Services matches, Pakistan Army won all four contests including CJCSC, COAS, CAS and CNS matches, while Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Air Force achieved 2nd and 3rd positions respectively. Pakistan Army secured overall Championship Trophy while Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Air force achieved 2nd and 3rd positions. The President's Cup National Challenge match trophy was awarded to Naik Waseem of Army marksmanship Unit. Pakistan Army won the Prime Minister 'Skills at Arms' Big Bore National Challenge.

Pakistan Rangers Punjab won the first prize in para firing matches (infantry squad).

The highest military shooting honor, 'The Master at Arms' Trophy was awarded to Lance Naik Banaras of 30 Frontier Force Regiment. The 'Best Shot Match Trophy' was awarded to Naik Sher Afzal of 82 (SP) Medium Regiment Artillery.

While interacting with the participants, COAS appreciated the firers for their excellent standards of marksmanship. Terming shooting skill as the hallmark of a professional soldier, he said "attaining proficiency at shooting must remain at the heart of basic military training objectives". Earlier on arrival, COAS was received by Inspector General Training and Evaluation.

Gutka worth millions seized from N Bypass

KARACHI (APP): In a successful operation, the Gulshan-e-Maymar police station of District West thwarted a major smuggling attempt, intercepting Indian gutka worth millions. Acting on a crucial tip-off, law enforcement officials apprehended the culprits on the Northern Bypass, according to police. The individuals in custody have been identified as Hafeezullah and Ali Ahmed.

Upon searching the suspect's vehicle, the authorities discovered a staggering 1,017 packets of Indian gutka concealed within 20 sacks. Furthermore, the police uncovered six different counterfeit number plates (three pairs) stashed in the vehicle, revealing a sophisticated strategy used by the accused to facilitate their illegal activities.

It has come to light that the arrested individuals frequently employed various fraudulent number plates on their vehicles to avoid detection while engaging in smuggling operations.

A case has been formally registered against the detained suspects, and further investigations are underway to delve deeper into their illegal activities. In addition to this, the police have confiscated both the vehicle used in the smuggling attempt and the fake number plates.

Notably, one of the apprehended individuals, Ali Ahmed, has a history of criminal activities and had previously been arrested for smuggling in Jamshoro and Nawabshah.

FIA arrests female on human smuggling

LAHORE (APP): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) during its ongoing anti-human trafficking operation arrested a female suspect involved in human smuggling, here on Tuesday. According to a spokesperson of the FIA, on instructions of the Director FIA Lahore, Sarfaraz Virk, a crackdown against human smugglers was ongoing where a female suspect was arrested from Ichra who was luring vulnerable women into job offers in Oman by promising them beauty salon jobs, while later forced into dancing in foreign countries. Multiple passports and travel documents were recovered from the suspect.

Further investigations was underway.

LESCO charges Rs 1.924b detection bill to 24,036 pilferers in two months

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) detected a total of 24,036 connections from where customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts- Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara during two months of grand anti-power theft campaign.

The LESCO spokesman told media here Tuesday that the company had so far submitted FIR applications against 23,796 electricity thieves, out of which 23,007 FIRs had been registered in respective police stations, while 11,924 accused had been arrested. The spokesman said that all the electricity thieves had so far been charged with 45,570,998 detection units amounting to Rs 1,924,175,510.

The grand anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are

being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider is supervising these operations. The LESCO chief vowed that the operations would continue without discrimination until the complete end of electricity theft. The electricity pilferers as well as the LESCO officers and employees who facilitate them were also being brought to justice.

On the 60th consecutive day (Nov 7) of anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, LESCO found 247 connections involved in electricity theft in all its circles and also submitted FIR application against 246 electricity thieves in the respective police stations, out of which 174 FIRs had been registered while 21 accused had been arrested.

During the operation,

he said, large agricultural and commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units. Among the seized connections, 16 were commercial, one agricultural and 230 domestic, and all these connections were disconnected and charged with a total of 276,998 units as detection bill amounting to Rs 11,434,416.

On the 60th day of anti-power theft operation, the LESCO charged 6,977 detection units worth Rs 500,000 to a connection in Satta Katla area; 4,000 units worth Rs 300,000 to another connection in Kasur; 3,850 detection units worth Rs 200,000 to a power pilferer in Mustafa Town Lahore; and Rs 309,786 to a customer stealing electricity directly from transmission line in the same area.

Job fair acts as bridge between industries, universities: VC KU

KARACHI (APP): The Vice Chancellor of the University of Karachi (KU) Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi inaugurated the KU Department of Computer Science, UBIT Career Fest 2023, in front of the Department of Computer Sciences (DCS), UBIT Building here Tuesday.

A large number of software houses, information technology companies and organizations also conducted interviews for internships and jobs during the daylong activities, and also distributed offer letters to the selected students.

Addressing the students, Vice Chancellor KU Professor Dr Khalid Iraqi urged that students should have a good command of IT products, applications, tools and software as it is one of the fastest growing industries which changes very quickly the world.

He mentioned that there were many opportunities available for the students as compared to the past and with true dedication and hard work, they could work anywhere in the world like the alumni of their department. He said that IT had revolutionized our everyday lives as it had a lot of scope and was one of the

leading revenue-generating fields around the world.

He further said that the job fair helped the students, universities and industries a lot. Such platforms give a chance to the students to get jobs on the spot and industries get the suitable person for their team, as well as the varisities, came closer to the industries.

Dr Khalid Iraqi believes that job fairs play an important part in boosting the manpower of our industries and told the audience that such activities also help in understanding the needs of the market as well as lend a hand to the students to learn about the interview process and what kind of expertise and potential they should have before stepping into the field. Earlier, the Chairman of the DCS-UBIT Dr Nadeem Mahmood shared that the department has regularly been engaging major stakeholders of the IT market to train and update their students about the recent trends of the industries. He said that with the help of software houses and IT companies, the department is planning to make changes in the curriculum and shed light on the outstanding performance of its

past and present students.

Dr Nadeem mentioned that more than 30 entrepreneur products had been introduced in the local and international markets during the last few years.

On this occasion, Director of Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) Dr Syeda Hoorulain informed the audience that the KU would have an Entrepreneur Lab by the end of this month to facilitate the students and faculty members. She shared that the ORIC and the University's Business Incubation Centre (KUBIC) were connecting the students and faculty to the market. She added that both the ORIC and KUBIC were assisting the campus in collaborating with industries and academia so that new attractive and innovative products could be available in the market.

Meanwhile, the representatives of various software houses and IT companies also expressed their views and informed the students about the market's trends and requirements of their respective companies and organizations. They also highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship in the country.



LAHORE: Artist are performing during Lahore Lahore hai Festival on stage during Musical program organized Wall City at Royal Fort on Monday late night.



Meeting discuss proposed economic development plan for merged districts

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting of the Special Steering Committee constituted for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, was held here at Civil Secretariat Peshawar, under the chairmanship of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly

corps, representatives of other relevant agencies and officers of provincial departments participated in the meeting.

On this occasion, ACS P&D department informed the forum about the new economic development plan proposed for the merged districts and gave a briefing regarding its impor-

On this occasion, the caretaker minister directed that in the development projects of the merged districts, the schemes that are due for completion and those projects that meet on objectives of the new proposed plan should be given priority in the release of funds. He directed that the concerned line departments should provide detailed reports regarding the physical progress of their development projects and their financial release status, while the details of other phases of these projects after PC.1, should also be uploaded on P&D system.

He directed that the line departments should make proper monitoring procedures of their development projects and also visit these areas to monitor them and submit evaluation reports of their projects in this regard. He directed in this regard, all the departments to complete the progress report of their important projects within a week time accordingly. The caretaker minister also directed to include alongside approved and ongoing development projects, the new feasible and important projects and present them to international donor organizations for their attraction. In this regard, the caretaker minister assigned the task to the concerned authorities for arranging a high level conference for donor agencies as well.



Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Dr. Aamer Abdullah on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the proposed new economic development plan, chalked out for the merged districts and matters regarding release of funds for the ongoing development projects were discussed. Besides Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development (P&D), Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah, members of the committee comprised by officials of 11

tance and objectives for the sustainable development of the merged districts.

During the meeting, the forum also discussed the financial status and releases of funds regarding various ADP schemes and projects under the special development package "Accelerated Implementation Program" (AIP), executed by the government for the merged districts and took deliberation upon its prioritization in funds releases issues.

Durrani acknowledges remarkable progress during visit to WSSP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister of Local Government Engineer Aamir Durrani embarked on a comprehensive inspection tour of the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP), where he lauded the significant strides in sanitation, water supply, and drainage operations here on Tuesday. The visit, aimed at evaluating the progress and compliance with directives, showcased the dedication and efforts of the WSSP staff in maintaining essential services for the region.

Minister Durrani, accompanied by Chief Executive Officer Dr. Hasan Nasir, General Manager Operation Engineer Tarab Shah, Zonal Manager Basit Khattak, and other officials, initiated the visit with a specific focus on assessing the impact of ongoing initiatives.

A pivotal aspect of this inspection was the evaluation of the manhole covering process, with Minister Durrani expressing his satisfaction with the progress achieved thus far. The visit took Minister Durrani to several key areas, including Bihari Colony, Sardar Ahmed Jan Colony,

Warsak Road, Ring Road, and their adjacent regions. During these visits, he observed the clearing of collection points and the efficient collection of garbage from neighborhood streets, a testament to the relentless efforts of WSSP in maintaining cleanliness in the region.

During his inspection, Minister Durrani identified the need for garbage bins along the bank of Hazar Khawani canal. His immediate call for action prompted the placement of these bins in designated locations, further enhancing waste management efforts in the area. Dr. Hasan Nasir, the Chief Executive Officer, provided Minister Durrani with insights into the ongoing awareness campaign designed to discourage littering in the Kabul River Canal area. The campaign, combined with regular cleaning efforts and house-to-house garbage removal initiatives, has contributed significantly to reducing waste dumping in the canals.

As part of ongoing efforts to improve sanitation and drainage, Aamir Durrani encouraged the covering of manholes, revealing that more than two hundred manholes have

already been covered, with the process continuing. An experimental introduction of RPC tanks was underway, showcasing innovative approaches to enhance service delivery.

During the visit, the Chief Executive Officer also briefed Minister Durrani on routine operations and grievance redressal procedures, underlining WSSP's commitment to delivering efficient services to the residents. In response to the dedication and commendable performance of the WSSP staff, Minister Aamir Durrani expressed his heartfelt appreciation.

He recognized the staff's unwavering ability to maintain sanitation, drainage, and water supply services, even in the face of limited resources and the challenges posed by a growing population. This visit served as an opportunity for Minister Aamir Durrani to gain a firsthand understanding of the operations and the positive impact being made by the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar, reaffirming the critical role of these essential services in the region's well-being and development.

Seminar on Thalassemia arranged

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An awareness seminar about Thalassemia disease and its prevention and also a Blood donation camp was organized by the Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services held at The Frontier College System Faqirabad Peshawar, on Tuesday.

According to details, as many as 117 healthy Students donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1474 registered Thalassemia and Hemophilia patients Kids of Hamza Foundation. It was joined by Director Frontier College System, Honorable Riaz Hussain, Chief Proctor Zia Khattak, Shah Hussain, Ateeq Ur Rehman, Ibrarullah Jan Resource Mobilization Officers of Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services Peshawar.

Their presence really highlighted the importance of the seminar, and they all applauded the joint efforts of Frontier College System and Hamza Foundation for the noble cause. Students and teachers of different classes were also invited, Ateeq Ur Rehman and Ibrarullah Jan RMOs talked about welfare services of Hamza Foundation and also about Thalassemia major disease and its prevention and motivated the students for donations of blood for saving the precious lives of 1474 registered patients of poor Thalassemia, Hemophilia patients. Shields and certificates of appreciation were distributed among teaching staff and students. Founder Chairman Hamza Foundation Ijaz Ali Khan thanked the entire management of Frontier College System Faqirabad for their sincere cooperation and help for the arrangements of such a successful blood donation camp.



PESHAWAR: Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawanan Pakistan Abdullah Gul addressing workers convention.

Preparation for re-conducting MDCAT in full swing

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Abid Majeed Additional Home Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday in connection with the preparations for re-conducting the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) organized by Khyber Medical University (KMU) to be held on November 26.

In the meeting, the preparations for the transparent conduct of MDCAT were reviewed. VC KMU Prof Dr. Zia Ul Haq, Divisional Commissioner Malakand, Swat, Peshawar, Kohat, Hazara and DI Khan, while Additional Inspector General of Police, FIA and officials of other intelligence agencies participated in this important meeting.

Specific responsibilities were assigned to the police, district administration, intel-

ligence agencies and related departments for the transparent conduct of MDCAT. Prof. Dr. Zia-ul-Haq also briefed the participants of the meeting on the proposed action plan of Khyber Medical University for conducting the test. Additional Home Secretary Abid Majeed while addressing the meeting said that it has been decided to make strict arrangements to make MDCAT clean and transparent in all respects.

Apart from security, necessary administrative and technical resources will be provided for the transparent conduct of the test. It will be ensured in all respects that the process which took place in the previous test is not repeated.

The provincial government will provide all necessary resources on priority basis for the clean and transparent conduct of MDCAT. Test centers have been estab-

lished in seven districts of the province, these districts include DI Khan, Kohat, Peshawar, Mardan, Der Lower, Swat and Abbottabad and the test will be started simultaneously in all the centers.

He added that parents are requested to avoid any illegal approach to save the future of their children. He said that apart from CCTV, walk-through gates will be installed at the entry points of all the centers and full body searching of the candidates will be done and for this purpose metal detectors, signal jammers will be installed, also every eligibility will be indicated through fingerprint of a candidate. He further added that zero tolerance policy will be followed for carrying mobile phones and other electronic devices to the hall and all arrangements have been made for this purpose.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali addressing Tehsil Mayors session on Sui Gas.

Service Tribunal upheld education dept decision

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Services Tribunal upheld decision of Directorate of Education regarding transfer of Senior Executive Clerk at District Education Office (Female) Dir Upper, on Tuesday.

In April 2023, Sahibzada Ikhtisham Ullah was transferred from DEO Female Dir upper to Lower Dir District while the position was substituted with Zahid Hussain at the office.

Senior Clerk Sahibzada Ikhtisham Ullah filed departmental appeal against the transfer which was turndown by competent authority while laterally approached Services Tribunal and obtained status quo in this regard. The lawyer Tariq Afghan advocate argued that Zahid Hussain was posted at DEO Female Dir Upper as per rules and regulations while neither interest of others hurt by the transfer orders. He requested for withdrawal status quo in the case and added that Ikhtisham Ullah had covered several facts from the court.

The lawyer further argued Election Commission of Pakistan has imposed ban on posting transfer on 10th March before the transfer of Sahibzada Ikhtisham Ullah to Dir Lower from Education Office Female Dir Upper. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Services Tribunal rejected Appeal of Sahibzada Ikhtisham Ullah and declared posting of Zahid Hussain as Senior Clerk District Education Office Female Dir Upper legal after conclusion of arguments.

Traffic personnel awarded for performance

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Traffic Officer Qamar Hayat Khan distributed certificates of appreciation and cash to the officials for their good performance, on Tuesday. City Traffic Police Peshawar organized a prize distribution ceremony at Traffic Headquarters Gulbahar in which Chief Traffic Officer Qamar Hayat Khan, traffic officers and officials participated.

During the ceremony, Chief Traffic Officer Qamar Hayat Khan appreciated the performance of the traffic staff and said that the officers and personnel of City Traffic Police Peshawar performed their duties by following the policy of first salam then kalam and to ensure the implementation of traffic rules. Use all your skills. He further said that all the officers and officials should play their role with all their energy to raise the awareness of traffic flow and road safety among the citizens.

In the same way, those who show better performance will be encouraged, while disciplinary action will be taken against those who are negligent. He directed the traffic officials and officials to continue the uninterrupted operation against those who park vehicles in the nine parking zones in the city and encroachment mafia and that no one should be lenient. He said that departmental action will be taken against those who show negligence.

KPTMA opposes gas price increase

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textile Mills Association (KPTMA) has made a resounding declaration against the proposed increase in gas prices and the supply of blended gas for the KP industry. At an urgent meeting convened at the KPTMA House here on Tuesday, all member representatives unanimously rejected the sharp hike in gas rates and the suggested implementation of blended gas for industries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Muhammad Kamran Shah, Chairman of KPTMA, expressed concerns over the significant gas price surge and recommended that the government, before finalizing any decision, engage in thorough consultations with all stakeholders. He emphasized the importance of seeking insights from gas-producing provinces. He went on to draw attention to the apparent disparities, indicating that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) had determined an estimated revenue requirement for Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) at Rs. 1,238.49/-

per MMBTU.

In contrast, the government had declared an effective rate of Rs. 2,400 per MMBTU for the KP industry, incorporating cross-subsidies to benefit the Feedstock/Fertilizer sector and the domestic sector. Furthermore, he questioned the proposal to introduce blended gas for KP at an 80:20 ratio, despite the fact that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa neither consumes Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) nor relies on it, as the province remains a net gas producer, exporting a substantial portion of its output.

Shah reiterated that the gas prices determined by OGRA were not only justifiable as the province continues to serve as a net exporter of gas and does not rely on RLNG. He earnestly urged the Federal Government to reconsider the proposed gas price increase and to consult all relevant stakeholders before its implementation. In conclusion, he appealed to the Federal Government to introduce special concessional rates for gas and electricity in the KP province. This would help alleviate the economic impact of terrorism and promote industrial development, subsequently generating employment opportunities in the terrorism-affected region.

KP task force against power defaulters recovers Rs4b

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The provincial task force formed for the recovery of dues from defaulted electricity consumers and stoppage of illegal use of electricity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has recovered more than Rs.4 billion in a short period of 2 months and also imposed a fine of Rs.240 million on power pilferers.

In the light of successful campaign, the period of load-shedding in many areas has also been reduced. After Mardan, the provincial capital Peshawar would be made a load-shedding free model city in the next two months.

A plan has also been prepared to speed up the ongoing operation in Peshawar city. For this purpose, various teams comprising of district administration, police force and PESCO are engaged conducting operations in illegal housing societies, residential areas inside the city and outside the city, important commercial centers, factories, streets and markets.

The fifth meeting of Provincial Task Force on Power was held here on

Tuesday with Additional Chief Secretary, Home & Tribal Affairs, Abid Majeed in the chair. Besides, Divisional Commissioners, Regional Police Officers, Secretary Energy & Power Nisar Ahmad Khan and a representative officer of Industries Department, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) PESCO Qazi Tahir also attended.

The meeting was informed that during the ongoing crackdown in different districts of the province from September 5 till now, in a short period of 2 months, the task force conducted more than 24,574 raids, where more than 36,246 mafia involved in kunda culture, including large commercial and residential consumers involved in illegal use of electricity, were cut off. Furthermore, cases have been registered against more than 11,452 accused in police stations and 685 accused have been arrested. The Chairman Task Force Muhammad Abid Majeed expressed that an intelligence-based operation would be carried out for recovery from the power pilferers of defaulting feeders.

He emphasized that simple procedure for provision of metering system amongst general public should be encouraged. The operation against big fish should be accelerated at commercial level. In addition to this, the recovery against non-paying consumers in Banu, Kohat, DI Khan and Mardan divisions, the operation should be speeded up.

In order to make Peshawar as load shedding free model city after Mardan, the Commissioner Peshawar Zubair Khan and CCPO Dr. Ashfaq Anwar expressed a plan of action for ongoing campaign while CEO PESCO directed to present photographic and personal witnesses at the time of registering FIR/Marshals against the culprits. At the end, the head of the task force set targets during the ongoing campaign including speeding up operations in soft areas as well as hard areas in Peshawar. He urged all the officers to devote their maximum energies to achieve targeted goals and expressed satisfaction over the recovery of billions of rupees in the ongoing campaign so far.



PESHAWAR: DG EPA Noor Khan along with CNG Association provincial Chairman Fazal Muqim Khan taking action against smoke and LPG cylinder used in rickshaws.



In brief

Pakistan Army rebuilds school
F.P. Report

TANK: Pakistan Army has rebuilt and functionalized Government Girls' Primary School in Kat Kot area of Tank district in South Waziristan, district administration said on Tuesday. After restoration of peace in the area, Pakistan Army took steps on an emergency basis for rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools in the area. After rehabilitation of the school, Pakistan Army provided all the necessary facilities to students for their studies so that girl students from this far-flung area could add their share in national progress through their abilities and education. There were around 90 girl students studying at Government Girls' Primary School Kat Kot under the supervision of graduate teachers. To encourage the girl students in their studies, Pakistan Army has also provided free of charge books, school bags and stationery to them. The area people were highly obliged to the Pakistan Army for rebuilding and functionalizing the girls' school.

Awareness session held
F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: An awareness session for the local traders was held here in Jirga hall, Landi Kotal on Tuesday. The activity was set up by the Halal Food Authority, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a large number of shopkeepers, councilors and people from different walks of life participated in it. Assistant Director Halal Food Authority Ghulam Abbas highlighted importance of cleanliness and imparted valuable knowledge pertaining to the selling of sub-standard edibles like ghee, spices, chips etc. in the local markets. He urged the local traders to discourage sellers of poor quality food items that earned a bad name for the genuine businessmen. Addressing the occasion Tehsil Chairman Haji Khalid appreciated the training session established for the shopkeepers and said it would certainly benefit them. He went on that the selling of adulterated and substandard food was on peak in local markets that not only suffered local business but also a health hazard to the residents. According to the official of the Halal Food Authority (KP) after sensitization of the shopkeepers regarding the issue, they would launch a crackdown against sellers of substandard food commodities and would bring to law those found guilty.

Smooth flow of traffic sought
F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: The elected members and chairmen Local Government condemned failure of administration, traffic police and Regional Transport Authority in ensuring smooth flow of traffic in the urban centers of Mardan district. This was condemned by LG chairmen Dr. Hafeez-ul-Wahab, Saifullah, Dr. Asghar, Khan Zada, Javed Khan along with others while talking to media personnel at Takhtbhai and claimed that Rickshaws had disturbed traffic flow due to lack stand. The elected members claimed that most of mishaps are also caused due to wrong stops and lack of proper stands in the premises as rickshaw drivers didn't obeying traffic laws. They argued that public is compelled to come to street for their safety on roads and bazaars. The speakers argued that Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, police officials and Regional Transport Authority to ensure smooth flow of traffic and establishment of bus stands otherwise they will be compel to arrange protest in favor of their demands.

Load shedding in Mardan sparks public outcry

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Residents of Mardan and its metropolitan continue to endure extended power outages, despite promises of uninterrupted electricity supply following an announcement by the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) to provide electricity with zero load shedding to Mardan. This prolonged load shedding, exceeding 14 hours in some areas, has taken a toll on the mental well-being of the affected communities.

The situation has prompted strong objections from locals, including community leaders such as Jahangir Toro and other municipal representatives. They assert that despite PESCO's commitment to grant Mardan relief from load shedding, the situation has worsened since the announcement.

The announcement by PESCO was seen as a ray of hope for the residents, especially after the region had endured power shortages throughout the scorching summer. Adding more hours of load shedding during the hot season is considered a step backward, leaving people frustrated and stressed.

Jahangir Toro among others, has repeatedly communicated the issues to relevant authorities, but no substantial action has been taken. He has issued a stern warning that if the prolonged load shedding continues, the residents will stage protests, potentially blocking roads and organizing sit-ins against PESCO and WAPDA officials.

The responsibility for resolving the situation now rests with the concerned authorities at PESCO and WAPDA. The people of Mardan hope for a swift end to the extended load shedding that has disrupted their daily lives and brought about significant discomfort. It remains to be seen whether the authorities will respond effectively to address this pressing issue and provide the relief promised earlier.

Welfare & population commits human development: Secretary Population Asghar Khan has said that the Department of Welfare and Population does not advise any citizen to have only two children, but with the consent of the husband and wife, we talk about a suitable interval in the birth of children, taking into account education, training and better care.

Local government representatives should support us in publicizing the message of the department. He was addressing a one-day seminar organized for local government representatives here in Mardan, which was attended by District Population Officer Naushirwan Khan, former DG Population Noorafazal Khan, UN FA Coordinator Matiur Rehman, Deputy District Officer Muhammad Khalid Usman, Assistant Director Kashif Khan and Deputy Demographer Imtiaz Ahmed also addressed the seminar.

Chairmen and members from various NCs and VCs participated in large numbers. Secretary Population Asghar Khan said that representatives of local bodies Guide the citizens to change the negative thinking about the welfare population while fulfilling their national responsibilities. He said that the 2020 Act is very important for the rights of married couples, we are women who repeatedly give birth to daughters and from which domes-

tic and social problems arise, and also the guidance of these families. The Secretary Population said that the violation of women's rights will never be allowed for the desire to give birth to a son. The law is very clear in this regard. Local government representatives have heavy responsibilities.

AWKUM Employees Union protests against transfer of staff: The employees union of Abdul Wali Khan University has taken a stand against the recent decision by Vice-Chancellor Dr. Zahoor-ul-Haq to transfer 350 university employees to the Timargarh campus. The move has sparked outrage among university staff, who argue that the decision is unreasonable and will only exacerbate the challenges they already face.

Speaking to the media, the employees union highlighted that Dr. Zahoor-ul-Haq's tenure as Vice-Chancellor is less than a month old, yet he is aggressively pursuing the removal of employees who are grappling with a range of essential issues. One of the primary concerns is the absence of a proper service structure for university employees, which has hindered their career progression. The university administration's policies, they claim, are unacceptable.

A meeting of the general body of the All Employees Association took place at the Central Library Garden Campus, where Chairman of the Association, Muzamil Khan, President Adnan Saeed, General Secretary Jawad Singh, Umair Ali Shah, and other speakers expressed their deep concerns. They stressed the need to halt the exploitation and financial hardship faced by university employees. Their demands include immediate ad hoc relief and salary increases. The decision to transfer over 300 employees to the Timargarh campus was criticized as ill-conceived and illegal, with a call for its immediate withdrawal, or else, strict actions will be taken in response.

The speakers pointed out that there has been no service structure in place for employees for fifteen years, causing missed opportunities for promotions. They underscored that Vice-Chancellor Dr. Zahoor-ul-Haq has less than a month remaining in his tenure, and legally and ethically, he lacks the authority to convene a syndicate meeting and make such decisions, yet he persists in pushing for employee dismissals.

Furthermore, the speakers stressed that employees play a vital role in the development of Abdul Wali Khan University, but regrettably, their challenges remain largely unheard by the university administration. They emphasized that, amid rising inflation, employee salaries are insufficient, and they have yet to receive salary increases.

During the general body meeting, a decision was made to take legal action and initiate a strike from today. The speakers called upon Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court to take notice of the illegal and unconstitutional actions and decisions of Vice-Chancellor Dr. Zahoor-ul-Haq at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. The employees are determined to stand up for their rights and seek a resolution to their grievances through legal means.



ABBOTTABAD: KP IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur giving away certificate to a participant of PASI Course Jawad-ur-Rehman Jadoon.

Education dept held awareness walk regarding smog

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: District Education Authority Hafizabad taken out a walk from Government Model Girls Higher Secondary School Hafizabad to create awareness among people about hazards of smog and to adopt preventive measures for avoiding from different diseases spread due to smog.

Deputy Commissioner Sundas Irshad led the walk while Chief Executive Officer Education Sohail Azhar Khan, DEO (SE) Talib Hussain Bajwa,

DEOs (EE) Sultan Ahmad Hanjra, DDEO (W) Nargis Arif, Amanullah, Principal Razwana Batool, teachers and students participated the walk.

The participants of the walk were carrying flexes and placards inscribed with slogans regarding preventive measures to contain spread of smog and to save from smog related diseases. While talking to mediamen on this occasion, she said that different departments were taking various steps to stop spread of smog and to create awareness among people for adopting preven-

tive measures.

She said that crackdown on smoke emitting industrial units, vehicles, and Bricks Kiln well as awareness campaign was also underway in the district. She said that the Punjab government was declared compulsory to sue facemask for students and all people also be ensured use of facemasks to prevent from smog related diseases. She said that special teams consisting of education officers were delivering special lectures to students on daily basis in this regard.



NEWSHERA: Adviser to Caretaker KP CM on Transport and Housing Zafarullah Khan Umerzai addressing a press conference.

PPP to secure representation in country
F.P. Report

HUB: Former President Asif Ali Zardari's spokesman for Balochistan, prominent tribal and political leader and People's Party Hub district president Mir Ali Hassan Zehri has said that the future of Pakistan is related to the People's Party and for political and economic stability in the country in the future. Upcoming general elections are important for the nation.

He expressed these views during his visit to Lasbela while meeting with tribal elders; Press Club Bela and addressing the offices and workers of Pakistan People's Party. He said that the party will win with a huge majority from Hub and Lasbela district. He said that Pakistan People's Party has always taken care of its poor people and we welcome those who join the People's Party and their decision is in the wider interest of the country and the province. Only the People's Party can solve the country's problems better.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the People's Party is the party of the poor people and we have always worked to solve the problems of the common people from the platform of the party, that is the reason why people trust us. They are joining the People's Party one by one and soon more important political and tribal figures will join the party under the leadership of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri further said that Pakistan People's Party will win the upcoming elections with huge majority and the workers should start preparing for the elections and deliver the party's manifesto and message from house to house. During his visit to Lasbela, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri reached Ronjho House to console the death of the father and brother of Pakistan People's Party Balochistan Vice President Nasrullah Ronjho and offered Fatiha. On this occasion, the two leaders discussed the political and social situation of Balochistan. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that Nasrullah Ronjho is our elder brother and the assents of the party and has come with the message of former President Asif Ali Zardari. PPP leader Muhammad Jan Marri, Abdul Razzaq Lasi and other dignitaries were also present on this occasion.

Meanwhile, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri visited the National Press Club Bela. President Press Club Abdul Rahim Ronjho and other journalist community welcomed Mir Ali Hassan Zehri and appreciated his services for Bela. On this occasion, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that our aim is only to serve the people and to solve their problems. He also said that for the last four decades the people of Hub and Lasbela were deprived of basic facilities for which we are making efforts with our resources and for this purpose we will use all possible resources from the platform of Pakistan People's Party.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri further said that the victory of Pakistan People's Party is certain in the upcoming elections and by succeeding under the leadership of Asif Ali Zardari and party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Pakistan, especially Balochistan, will take a new path of long-term development and prosperity.

Four killed, four injured in road accident

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Four persons were killed while four others were injured when a double cabin pickup skidded off the road and plunged into a deep ravine due to bad condition of the road in the limits of Patrak police station at Shirgah Gwaldi, Upper Dir here on Tuesday, residents and police said.

They said the vehicle went out of the driver Samiullah's control and fell into the ravine. As a result one Khanzad Gul, wife of Azmat Khan, wife of Umar Gulab and 2 months old son of Ali Rahman, all residents of Gwaldee, died on the spot.

Four others including Ali Rahman son of Azmat Khan, Samiullah son of Ameer Zaman, Taiba D/O Sabz Ali and Kashif son of Aliur Rehman, a resident of were brought to the Patrak hospital in critical condition. The Patrak police registered a case and started further investigation.

Week-long sports festi-

val arranged by FC North in Maidan Dir concludes with colourful function:

A week-long sports' festival arranged jointly by the Dir Scouts 185 Wing, district administration and sports department at Lal Qila in Maidan concluded here on Tuesday. A colourful event was held at the conclusion of the festival which was attended by former law-makers, administration officers, players and youth in a large number.

According to the organizers about 600 players and 46 different sports' clubs participated in the event during which cricket, volleyball, basketball, football, tug of war, karate, gymnastics and marathon race competitions were held. Besides others, Commandant Dir Scouts Brigadier Sanaulah, Lieutenant Colonel Sajjad Kiani, former MNA Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, former senator Zahid Khan, former MPA Saeed Gul, prominent women rights' activist Ms Shad Begum, district police officer Ziaud

Din, deputy commissioner Muhammad Fawad, AC Lal Qila Noorzali Khan and district sports' officer Ibrar Ahmad distributed trophies and shields among winner and runner up teams and best players of the tournament. Local elders presented the traditional Dir cap to Brig Sanaulah, the chief guest of the event.

Addressing the gathering Brig Sanaulah said that many talented youths had displayed their talent during the event. He said that such events portrayed a soft and positive image of the area. He said that Imran Khan junior represented the Pakistan cricket team who belonged to this area that showed that local youths had great potential in sports and other co-curricular activities. He asked the local administration to arrange and continue a series of such events in the area. Local elders thanked the Frontier Corps and administration for providing an opportunity to local youths for their engagement and entertainment.

Over 2,000 laptops distributed among students

F.P. Report

DI I KHAN: A laptop distribution ceremony under the Prime Minister Laptop Scheme was organized in Gomal University here on Tuesday. Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division Zaheer ul Islam Khattak was the chief guest of the ceremony which was presided over by Vice Chancellor Gomal University Dr Shakibullah and attended by Higher Education Commission (HEC) Islamabad Project Directors Mohsin Ali Raziq and Gohar Ali Khan besides Registrar Gomal University, Deans of all departments and administrative officers of the University.

About 2080 students of the University would be awarded with the laptops whose were shortlisted by the Scholarship Section of the Varsity from all the departments on merit basis.

Addressing the ceremony, the Commissioner said that the students who get laptops should enhance their knowledge and research work through positive use of this facility so that they could play a role for development and prosperity of the country.

Addressing the ceremony, the VC Gomal University thanked the federal government especially, the Federal Minister for Education and the HEC Islamabad for awarding laptops to his Varsity's students. He also congratulated all the students and their parents who got the laptops. He said that these laptops would be proved useful for the students in today's modern era wherein technology become need of everyone.

Speaking on the occasion, Gomal University Financial Aid and Incharge of Scholarship Section Dr. Hamid Khan informed that the Scholarship Section had

collected the list of students from all the departments on merit basis and forwarded it to the HEC Islamabad in a very short time. After that, as many as 2080 students were selected by the HEC for laptops distribution. He said the distribution process has been started today and each department has designated a specific day for the purpose so that the process could be completed in time.

He said the distribution of laptops in all departments of the University would be continued as per the scheduled day and time. He said the students could contact their department's focal person or 'financial aid and scholarship section' if face any difficulty or problem. At the end of the ceremony, Commissioner Dera Division Zaheer ul Islam Khattak and Gomal University Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Shakibullah distributed laptops among the students.

Nation stands firm against terrorism: Senator Samina

F.P. Report

QUETTA: Central Vice President Balochistan Awami Party Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri has expressed her concern over the martyrdom of 14 military personnel as a result of the terrorist attack on the military convoy in Pasni and the attack on the air base in Mianwal. In her statement of condemnation, she strongly condemned the terrorist attacks on the convoy going from Pasni to Ormara and on the Mewanwali airbase terrorist attack. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the army men who were martyred in the attacks and said that the martyrs of the Pasni incident are the heroes of the nation.

Martyrs showed their professional bravery and crushed the nefarious intentions of the terrorists and martyred themselves in the line of duty. The nation will

always remember their sacrifice. She paid tribute to the security forces for thwarting the terrorist attack on Mianwali Airbase that their timely action brought the cowardly terrorists to hell and the country was saved from major loss.

Senator Samina further said that the new wave of terrorism across the country is part of a well-thought-out plan against which the entire nation is united and is determined to thwart the cowardly acts of terrorists and kill the last terrorist. The determination of the security forces and the nation will not diminish until the end.

Samina Mumtaz Zehri expressed her concern over the recent incidents of terrorism and said that with the announcement of elections in Pakistan, the sudden breakdown in law and order situation and terrorist attacks are behind the hands of our arch enemy India and its followers those want economic and

political stability and peace in Pakistan. She said that it is an undisputed fact that anti-national elements are not tolerating the construction and development of the beloved country and the peace and order of the country and to achieve their nefarious goals, they are carrying out cowardly attacks on innocent citizens and security forces.

She also said that our brave army and other security forces have always failed the enemy's moves by showing professionalism and will continue to thwart the conspiracies against peace with the whole nation. She said that the youth Security persons sacrificed their lives for the security of the country and the nation are the heroes of the nation who sent the terrorists to hell and proved that the anti-national elements through their cowardly actions have destroyed the brave nation and security and the morale of the forces cannot be lowered.



Pro-Palestinian fervour used to push for anti-NGO law

TUNIS: The war on Gaza has granted Tunisia a rare moment of political unity, fuelling public appetite for new legislation that risks fracturing civil society groups and potentially isolating the country on the international stage. Since his July 2021 power grab, decried by the opposition as a coup, President Kais Saied has faced simmering discontent from both supporters of the former parliament and a powerful trade union, the Union Generale Tunisienne du Travail, or Tunisian General Labour Union.

For much of Tunisia's predominantly young and progressive civil society groups, Saied's presidency has provided a focal point of dissent, but many are divided between resentment of his authoritarian rule and what most see as an absence of any alternative. However, Israel's relentless bombing of the Gaza Strip after an October 7 surprise attack in southern Israel by the military wing of Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, has tugged at deep historical threads within Tunisia, drawing society together in a way that nothing else has, including the 2011 revolution. The deep public anger against Israel and its Western backers, who seem unwilling to even ask it for restraint, have given new momentum to existing proposals to curtail the work of all of the country's NGOs. They are being seen as a legislative curb on Western influence.

The proposals, put forward by a group of members of parliament, would rewrite the post-revolutionary Decree 88, hailed at the time as among the world's best legislation for free association, and could serve as a leash to pull all of country's NGOs back. The proposed curbs date back to objections by Fatma Mseddi, a lawmaker from Sfax on the Mediterranean coast, over the support offered by civil society groups to undocumented Black refugees sleeping rough on the streets of her city. She wanted the refugees deported and the NGOs helping them blocked from receiving overseas funding. The legislation would affect all NGOs operating within Tunisia. Public resentment of Western governments support for Israel - at odds with their past rhetoric on democracy building and human rights - has left many of the Tunisian NGOs that they have helped fund exposed to criticism.

"I support the president," 33-year-old Khadija Malki, who works at a nearby factory, said from a cafe in Tunis's medina. Of the NGO bill, she said her distrust of Western influence had grown since the

attacks on Gaza, telling a translator: "There are so many associations, but it is easier to side with Tunisian ones over foreign ones." Electrical engineer Yousseff Jeziri felt the same: "I don't believe in these associations anyway. They're just names. I think their presence here is suspicious." A measure of the Tunisian public mood can also be gauged by support for a bill that would criminalise normalisation with Israel. Until the president's intervention, the bill threatened prison terms for anyone communicating or dealing with any individual or entity from Israel, which would have effectively criminalised members of Tunisia's Jewish community, many of whose family members carry Israeli passports. According to many NGOs in Tunisia, the legislation would essentially demolish the country's reputation as a development hub. That reputation is already being tested by the actions of the country's headline president.

The central thrust of the proposed law focuses on permissions for NGOs to set themselves up. Instead of a simple notification process, the new system would in effect give the government the right to decide which NGOs operate in the country and, by extension, how they operate and for how long.

Since 2011, international organisations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have established offices in Tunisia. A burgeoning domestic NGO community, like parliamentary watchdog Al Bawsala and the anti-corruption NGO IWatch, has grown, all of whom compete for international grants to maintain their funding. Organisations serving victims of domestic violence, arranging legal representation for those accused of criminal activity or representing sexual minorities have all grown in number since the revolution.

According to many NGOs, should the new legislation pass, their activities will be under the control of the state. "This legislation is badly written, and badly written legislation is dangerous," Amine Kharrat of Al Bawsala said of the proposed revisions to the NGO law. "Moreover, the country's anti-Western sentiment is allowing President Saied to steer through legislation without any real oversight." In February 2022, Saied characterised civil society organisations registered overseas or receiving foreign funding as "extensions of foreign powers, which seek to control the Tunisian people through their money". — Aljazeera

Zelenskyy says war complicates plans for polls

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says discussions about the fate of scheduled 2024 elections are irresponsible as the country is locked in a war with invading Russian forces. Speaking in a video address, Zelenskyy said Ukraine must remain focused on its military challenges and stay united. "We all understand that now, in wartime, when there are many challenges, it is utterly irresponsible to engage in topics related to an election in such a frivolous manner," Zelenskyy said.

"We need to recognise that this is a time for defence, a time for battle, upon which the fate of the state and its people depend. ... I believe that elections are not appropriate at this time." Ukraine is currently under martial law as it battles Russian forces, whom Kyiv hopes to expel from its territory. But as the war drags on, Zelenskyy has considered whether a special provision could be invoked to hold elections. Over the weekend, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said the president was considering the positives and negatives of holding elections during a time when large swathes of the country remain affected by fighting. As Ukraine battles to maintain the support of Western allies such as the United States, some, such as US Senator Lindsey Graham, have called for the elections to proceed as planned to demonstrate Ukraine's commitment to democracy. Zelenskyy also played down concerns recently that the war with Russia has reached a dead-lock.

"Time has passed, people are tired, but this is not a stalemate," Zelenskyy said at a news conference in Kyiv with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. "No one among our partners is pressuring us to sit down with Russia, talk to it and give it something," he added. — Aljazeera

Trump attacks judge

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump has taken the witness stand in a civil fraud trial in New York, attacking the judge and calling the proceedings a "political witch-hunt". The former United States president was reprimanded by Judge Arthur Engoron for turning his statements into a "political rally" during his appearance in the Manhattan courtroom after testimony from two of his sons last week.

"We don't have time to waste. We have one day to do this," an exasperated Engoron said. Trump was previously placed under a narrow gag order after making disparaging remarks about court staff. The ex-president is struggling with a long list of legal woes, including four criminal trials, some related to his alleged efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, in addition to the civil trial focused on his practices as a businessman. Yet, his legal troubles have done little to damage his popularity with Republican voters, and he remains the overwhelming favourite in the race to become the party's candidate in the 2024 presidential election. — Aljazeera



GAZA STRIP: People flee following Israeli air strikes on a neighbourhood in the al-Maghazi refugee camp.

Jailed Iranian Nobel Peace laureate goes on hunger strike

TEHRAN: Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi has begun a hunger strike in her Iranian prison in protest at limits on medical care for her and other inmates, as well as the obligation for women to wear the hijab in Iran, according to her family. Veteran rights activist Mohammadi, 51, currently held in Evin Prison in the Iranian capital Tehran, was awarded the Nobel Prize in October "for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran".

"Narges Mohammadi, today, through a message from Evin Prison, has informed her family that she started a hunger strike several hours ago. We are concerned about Narges Mohammadi's physical condition and health," her family said in a statement. In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, her family said she was only consuming water, sugar, and salt, and had stopped taking her medications. Mohammadi is refusing under any circumstances to wear a hijab, the head covering that has been obligatory for women in public spaces since shortly after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution. Prison authorities, in response, have refused to transfer Mohammadi, who suffers from heart and lung conditions, to a hospital outside Evin for treatment. Her family said she was in "urgent" need of medical treatment outside prison. "Narges went on a hunger strike today in protesting two things: The Islamic republic's policy of delaying and

neglecting medical care for sick inmates... [and] the policy of 'mandatory hijab' for Iranian women," the statement said.

"The Islamic republic is responsible for anything that happens to our beloved Narges," it added. "It's been a week now that they are refusing to give her the medical aid she needs." In a strong statement of support for Mohammadi, the Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Berit Reiss-Andersen, said the body was "deeply concerned" about the 2023 laureate's health. "The requirement that female inmates must wear a hijab in order to be hospitalised is inhumane and morally unacceptable," she said. "Narges Mohammadi's initiation of a hunger strike demonstrates the seriousness of the situation. The Norwegian Nobel Committee urges the Iranian authorities to provide Narges Mohammadi, and other female inmates, with whatever medical assistance they may need," she added. PEN International, a group promoting freedom of expression, meanwhile said it was "gravely concerned" about Mohammadi and "holds Iranian authorities fully responsible for putting her life at critical risk". "Narges Mohammadi should not be in jail in the first place," it added, saying Iran should "immediately" release her and "urgently transfer her to a hospital to receive medical treatment". First arrested 22 years ago, Mohammadi has spent

much of the past two decades in and out of jail over her campaigning for human rights in Iran.

She has most recently been incarcerated since November 2021 and has not seen her children, now based in France, for eight years. Mohammadi's Nobel Prize came in the wake of months-long protests across Iran triggered by the September 2022 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, 22, who had been arrested for allegedly flouting Iran's strict dress rules for women. From prison, Mohammadi also expressed outrage over what she described as the "murder" of teenager Armita Geravand, who suffered a head injury while in the Tehran Metro without a hijab. While Geravand's parents appeared in state media footage saying a blood pressure issue, a fall or perhaps both contributed to their daughter's injury, activists alleged she may have been pushed or attacked by the morality police for not wearing a headscarf, which has been vehemently denied by the authorities. She died in October after a month in a coma. Mohammadi, in a message expressing gratitude for the prize, which was read by her daughter and posted on the Nobel website, described the mandatory hijab as a "means of control and repression imposed on society and on which the continuation and survival of this authoritarian religious regime depends". — Aljazeera

Death and displacement as floods hit East Africa

MOMBASA: Flooding throughout eastern Africa has killed dozens of people and displaced tens of thousands, underscoring intensifying climate risks in the drought-stricken region, aid agencies reported. Flooding in Kenya over the weekend uprooted scores of homes, decimated hundreds of acres of farmland, and killed at least 15 people in the country, according to the Kenya Red Cross Society.

Torrential rain swept the usually dry country, sending waters tearing through entire villages and washing through the streets. The disaster forced 4,000 families to evacuate from their homes, local media reported.

The Kenya Red Cross Society, which provides humanitarian relief in the country, also noted that 1,000 livestock animals were killed and at least 97 hectares of agricultural farmland were destroyed by the downpour. Flooding has continued to affect neighbouring east African states as well, with dozens dying in Ethiopia and Somalia.

According to Ethiopia's

regional government, more than 20 people have died and over 12,000 others have been forced out of their homes in the Somali region due to flash flooding this rainy season. In Somalia, heavy flooding during this rainy season, which runs from October to December, has displaced more than 113,000 people and "temporarily affected" hundreds of thousands, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported.

The South West and Jubbaland states are the worst hit, with a total of about 536,608 people affected, OCHA said. Earlier this year, floods forced 250,000 people out of their homes after the Shabelle River in central Somalia broke its banks and submerged the town of Beledweyne. OCHA said last month that eastern Africa would likely encounter heavier than normal rains over the October-December period because of the El Nino phenomenon. El Nino is a weather pattern associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in

some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere.

The Horn of Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, with extreme weather events growing increasingly common and intense. Since late 2020, Somalia as well as parts of Ethiopia and Kenya have been suffering the region's worst drought in 40 years. At the end of 2019, at least 265 people died and tens of thousands were displaced during two months of relentless rainfall in several countries in East Africa. The extreme weather affected close to two million people and washed away tens of thousands of livestock animals in Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. "Climate change is making floods more frequent and severe," the Kenya Red Cross Society said after the latest flash flooding. "There is an urgent need to invest in climate adaptation measures to protect communities from the devastating impacts of floods and other adverse weather conditions." — Aljazeera

Hamas's asymmetric warfare against Israel - lessons from Ukraine

GAZA: Fighting in Gaza between the Israeli army and the armed faction of Hamas is a textbook example of modern asymmetric warfare. Whenever fighting ends, it will be studied by strategists and tacticians. The term "asymmetric warfare" has been used for less than 60 years, but the concept is much older. Originally it denoted a conflict between significantly disparate enemies, often simplistically portraying it as a David vs Goliath situation.

Asymmetric wars are usually bloodier and more savage than those between regular armies: In a state versus non-state conflict, the latter's fighters are not recognised as "proper" combatants and thus not considered protected by international conventions and laws of war. The regular army will use weapons and tactics that might be legally unacceptable in a "proper war". In a chicken-and-egg situation where it is usually

impossible to say which side started with unacceptable practices, the rebels also commit acts that are blatantly illegal, often claiming to do it for not being recognised as equals. Numerous wars, civil and other, in the last half-century or so, were asymmetric: Vietnam, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. In many cases, the underdogs triumphed, often not by winning decisive battles but by wearing out their enemies, but it does not mean the smaller party always wins.

For the fighting in Gaza, the most relevant cases of asymmetrical warfare are the continued skirmishes of Hezbollah with the Israeli army and the war in Ukraine. Although both Ukraine and Russia are states, there are important elements of asymmetric warfare in Kyiv's initial response to the aggression. When it gained independence in 1991, Ukraine inherited an old Soviet Union-style army and it did little to

change it. Until Russia attacked it by proxy in 2014 and occupied Crimea, Ukrainian leadership realised that to beat Russia it had to improve on tactics and strategy, so it decided to adopt NATO standards, believing them superior to Soviet-type practices. But changing a big and inert system takes time (other armies, take note, Israel included) and the leadership realised that the first step in implementing the new doctrines was to allow tactical initiative and independence as the first step. That move, I dare say, saved Ukraine from being defeated in a matter of days, as Moscow almost certainly expected.

Free of interference from higher commands and orders to unify every move, the Ukrainian army, or to be more precise, its highly independent battalion-sized or smaller units, resorted to ingenuity and innovation. One of the biggest tactical advances was the use of small, cheap commercial

drones for innovative tasks. Highly mobile squad-sized units using \$200 drones like the ones all children now seem to have, became much faster in action: they would launch a drone over the enemy several hundred metres distant, see its position and adapt the attack or defence almost immediately. Their Russian opponents were stuck with the old, cumbersome process of asking higher units for reconnaissance assets to be deployed, then having to wait for the results to trickle down the chain of command. The next step was to arm the hand-held drones. Their big cousins, weighing several hundred kilograms and operated by professional pilots, "real" aircraft just without a pilot on board, have been used for more than 20 years. The United States used missile-armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to perpetrate assassinations across the Middle East. — Aljazeera

Laos meth prices plummet as Myanmar chaos fuels trade

LAOS: Keo remembers the day he consumed so much yaba that he "lost his mind." The 37-year-old from Laos took more of the drug - a potent combination of methamphetamine and caffeine - than he had ever done before. "I took 10 pills and I was totally lost. I didn't recognise my family, I didn't even recognise my children," the father of two told Al Jazeera at the Transformation Center, a drug rehab facility 25km (16 miles) outside the Lao capital Vientiane, where he is receiving treatment.

"I couldn't sleep at all. I didn't drink, I didn't eat. I felt powerful." Drug-free for just four days, Keo cut a frail and subdued figure as he explained that yaba, which means "crazy medicine" in Thai, helps him "escape all the thoughts". He said it was his family who made him seek help. A yaba user for 17 years, he said the Southeast Asian country's drug landscape has transformed in that time. "When I started, drugs were not this common," he said. "Now there's more and more; it's everywhere now, even in Vientiane." The growing availability of methamphetamine in Laos, as witnessed by drug users like Keo, is part of a nationwide surge in

supply that has today reached "unprecedented" levels, United Nations experts told Al Jazeera.

Part of the problem is neighbouring Myanmar, where the 2021 coup has created a violent conflict and a vacuum in law and order that has allowed drug syndicates to thrive. In Laos, the poorly-resourced police are facing a deluge of narcotics as the country has become a vital trafficking corridor in Asia's drug trade. The surge has pushed prices down to record lows, with front-line workers saying pills are now being sold for as little as \$0.24 cents each - cheaper than most basic necessities like food and water and making the drug affordable to all in one of Asia's poorest countries. Boumne, the assistant director at the Transformation Center, one of only two privately-run rehabilitation centres in the country, told Al Jazeera that while "everything got more expensive" in Laos during COVID-19, "drugs got cheaper, a lot cheaper." He preferred to be identified only by one name. "Drug users tell me one piece of yaba is 5,000 to 7,000 kip [\$0.24 to \$0.34] now," said Boumne, who interviews new patients entering the clinic. "If you buy a pack of 200, you can get

it as cheap as 2,500 [\$0.12] per pill."

The Golden Triangle, the remote area in which the borders of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos meet, has long been one of the world's major drug-producing hotspots. Historically, it was notorious for opium, but recent years have seen drug syndicates turn to producing methamphetamine pills and crystal meth - a distilled, more potent and expensive variety of the drug. Groups in Myanmar are at the heart of this trade, most prominently Shan state - a war-torn region in the country's east sharing a long, porous border with Laos. For decades, the drug trade has provided vital funds for ethnic armed groups and military-aligned militias in the troubled state, with narcotics flowing across the border into China, Laos, and Thailand and onto the international market. The coup in Myanmar has only accelerated the industry's output.

The generals' removal of the democratically-elected National League for Democracy government drove widespread protests and the military's brutal response pushed the pro-democracy movement into a nationwide armed resistance. With growing lawlessness and intensified fighting across the

country, the anti-narcotics efforts of certain ethnic armed groups and the Myanmar authorities have been hampered. More militias under the command of the military have also reportedly turned to drugs to fund food and salaries for their soldiers. In Shan state, these post-coup conditions have created a "perfect storm" for drug production, according to Jeremy Douglas, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) regional representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

"You have the breakdown of security in Shan state, an acceleration [of drug production] post-coup, and a massive and very porous border along the Mekong river between Shan and Laos," he told Al Jazeera. "It's a recipe for disaster." The chaos has resulted in record flows of narcotics over the border into Laos, with Douglas saying that the country, as the "path of least resistance," has become a "major gateway" for drugs into the region. "When you look at drug supply, it's at unprecedented levels, there's no doubt about that. Laos has never seen the volumes that they see now," he said. "Traffickers are using Laos to move massive quantities of drugs from Shan

to regional and international markets, and larger volumes of chemicals back the other way."

Lao authorities have registered several high-profile wins in their battle against the traffickers. Notably, in October 2021, they conducted Asia's largest-ever drug bust, intercepting a beer truck in Boko province carrying 55 million methamphetamine tablets and 1.5 tonnes of crystal meth. A June report by UNODC also showed a second successive record-breaking year for seizures of methamphetamine tablets in Laos in 2022, with 144 million pills intercepted. In 2019 and 2020, this figure stood at just 17.7 million and 18.6 million respectively. But while large seizures make for good headlines, the criminal networks facilitating the shipments have been left untouched, according to an international observer with close knowledge of Laos. The source, who requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of his work, told Al Jazeera that "philosophical differences" with Western anti-narcotics approaches, combined with a "lack of capacity," means "there doesn't seem to be any real effort to identify drug networks". "The drug seizure is the goal [for

Lao police] and the seizures seem to be ad hoc in nature," he said. "More troubling, authorities often don't make an arrest at all; very often they don't even arrest the driver of the vehicle." The Lao government could not be reached for comment. The source said that, while collusion between officials and criminal networks does occur, he generally believes there is a "sincere" effort by Lao authorities to crack down on drug trafficking.

But he says he is concerned the current approach is misguided because the amount of drugs being seized is probably only a tiny fraction of the total entering the country. "We see a lot of seizures, but that doesn't actually give a real sense of the volume that's not being detected," the source said. "There's a clear oversupply, so whatever efforts are being made to limit the intake is not having an impact. The falling price is a great indicator of that." That price has fallen so far that Douglas said Laos now offers "close to the cheapest" meth in the world - alongside Myanmar and parts of northern Thailand. This is part of a "total price collapse" around the drug as the region has been flooded with pills. — Aljazeera

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National security versus NADRA's culpability

THE National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has cancelled over 18,000 illegal identity cards through a robust system, coordinating with other stakeholders. According to the reports, the authority has taken this step to address the issue of counterfeit identity cards and fake documents, which pose a threat to national security. As said, new measures include biometric verification of parents and relatives during the processing, SMS alerts to family heads, and two-stage verification for data access. The Agency also vowed that it has strengthened its accountability and inquiry system, leading to penalties and dismissal of those involved in illegal practices, breach of security and damage to the institution.

There have been reports of continued malpractices, issuance of fake identity cards, form-B and other registration documents to illegal migrants including Afghan nationals, Indians, Biharis and Bengalis over the past years, while scores of individuals procured Pakistani Passports and got employment abroad in the Middle East and Europe on Pakistani documents. However, the NADRA authorities not only took a lenient approach to recurrent cases of the issuance of fake identity cards to foreign nationals but the authority altered the Country's naturalization laws by devising an institutional policy and issuing National ID Cards to thousands of Pashto Speakers carrying Refugee Cards but claimed to surrender Pakistani NICs in greed of cash/ financial assistance that was previously disbursed to Afghan refugees by foreign donors in the past. Such self-coined policies of former high-ups of the agency and the traditional slackness of the bureaucracy have badly spoiled the magnificent national institution and caused irreparable damage to national prestige and security.

Historically, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) was created by the government of Pakistan about 3 decades ago for the sole purpose of computerizing all citizenry data, streamlining records, facilitating the National Planning Commission, and weeding out anomalies from the registration/naturalization process of the country. It was a magnificent project that not only earned great fame at home but also gained landmark appreciation at the international level. The authority assisted several foreign countries in establishing such a comprehensive and well-regulated national database in their nations but gradually could not maintain its institutional standards like the PIA and plunged itself into the deep ditch of institutional corruption, a lack of discipline and accountability.

A fewer number of fraud and counterfeit cases have been highlighted by the authorities in the past and 43 staffers were terminated due to their involvement in the illegal processing of Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) over the past year. Despite recurrent cases of irregularities/fraud and open reports of massive malfunction by the department officials regarding the issuance of NICs to Afghan refugees, no concrete steps had been initiated by the NADRA at the institutional level to permanently block loopholes in its system through the introduction of new regulations, technological advancement along with bringing improvements in recruitment, training and monitoring process. Awfully, once a model institution, is now turned into a hub of corruption, nepotism, and abuse of authority at all levels and in all aspects.

After foreign countries informed the government of Pakistan about bulk cases of Pakistan's identity documents illegally procured by foreign nationals and a nationwide crackdown was launched against criminals, the prudent bureaucrats cancelled thousands of fake identity cards to save their skin and forestall accountability for the criminal negligence in the past. In fact, thousands of national identity cards have been issued in contradiction to the law by the authorities in the past years that need to be reversed along with strict disciplinary action against the defaulters, setting clear rules to curb these heinous crimes permanently. Such harsh measures have now become inevitable. So, neither foreign nationals nor local crooks ever dare to abuse our national prestige and damage the country's security at any time in the future.

High morals of South Africans

ACCORDING to the media, South Africa has recently recalled its ambassador and diplomatic mission to Israel in condemnation of the bombardment of the Gaza Strip, calling it a genocide and collective punishment of innocent and unarmed civilians. The Republic of South Africa also threatened action against the Israeli ambassador over his recent remarks on Peritoria's stance on the Israel-Hamas war. South Africa's Foreign Minister told the newsmen that the South African cabinet has taken serious notice of the disparaging remarks of the Israeli ambassador to South Africa about those who are opposing the atrocities and genocide of the Israeli government and the Department of International Relations has been instructed to take the necessary measures within the diplomatic channels and protocols to deal with such undiplomatic conduct of Israeli envoy.

Israel's invasion of Gaza has entered its fifth week as a total war broke out after the Palestinian militant group Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, leaving nearly 1,400 people dead. More than 10,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's military offensive in Gaza, besides injuries to thousands of others, implementing a tight blockade of the Palestinian territory. The Jewish Army blatantly targets the civilian population, while hospitals, ambulances, schools and refugee camps are the favourite targets of Israeli troops and inhumane airstrikes, which is a blatant violation of all global laws including the Geneva Convention of War, the International Humanitarian law and multiple codes relating to war, peace and fundamental human rights.

The inhumane and vicious war strategy of the Jewish state has now crossed all records and limits of brutalities, the so-called ploy of the right to self-defence of the Israeli regime has now been exposed to the world. Israel's actions in Gaza and the West Bank mount to warcrimes against humanity, all-out genocide and collective punishment of Palestinians. There have been massive pro-Palestinian protests across the world and huge rallies were staged by the South Africans in support of Palestine in front of the US Consulate in Johannesburg and Israeli embassies in Pretoria and Cape Town, demanding the expulsion of the Israeli envoy from the country. Nelson Mandela's followers have categorically rejected apartheid doctrine in their nation and now they stand up against apartheid policies and racial discrimination of the Jewish state. If an African nation displays such high morality in support of poor Palestinians, it has now become essential for Arabs and other Muslim countries to abandon their self-assumed economic and diplomatic hitches and wholeheartedly support unarmed Palestinians so they can get true freedom from the clutches of Jewish occupiers forever.

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ICC must investigate the crime of genocide in Gaza

Jeremy Corbyn

MY last visit to Al-Shati refugee camp was early 2013. Located on the Mediterranean coast in the north of Gaza, Al-Shati was otherwise known as "Beach Camp". Vendors sold fruit under multi-coloured parasols. Cats slept in the middle of narrow alleys. Children jostled over skipping rope in the shade.

Beach Camp was established in 1948 after 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced in the Nakba. Initially, the camp accommodated around 23,000 refugees. In the following seven decades, that number grew to 90,000, cramped inside 0.5 square kilometres (0.2 square miles) of land - 70 times more populated than London's city centre. People in Gaza have been living under a blockade for the past 16 years and the Israeli occupation controls most of what goes in and out of Gaza. Beach Camp was no different - and people there largely relied on aid and services from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to survive, including a health centre, a food distribution centre and several school buildings.

Beach Camp Primary School was beautifully maintained. I was allowed up onto the roof, where I could see the fence with Israel on one side. Out to sea were several Israeli patrol boats keeping Palestinian fishermen from sailing more than six nautical miles out. The school was run by inspiring and hard-working teachers, whose philosophy was to create a calm atmosphere for discovery, music, theatre and art. Some of the students showed me their work. Many were drawings of planes, fences and bombs. But there were other drawings too: of their parents, their brothers, their sisters and their friends. All of the children, obviously, had underlying trauma, but they also had a desire to learn, share and play.

On October 9, two days after the deplorable attack by Hamas in southern Israel, there were reports of an Israeli air strike on Beach Camp. This wasn't the first strike on the camp. In May 2021, at least 10 Palestinians, eight of whom were children, were killed

in an air strike. Nor was it the last. Beach Camp has been repeatedly targeted in the past three weeks. When I hear news of bombardment in Gaza, I think about that school at Beach Camp. I don't know if it is still there. I don't know if those children and teachers are still alive. I don't know.

The Israeli army has dropped 25,000 tonnes of bombs onto a tiny strip of land, populated by 2.3 million people. There is no meaningful sense whatsoever that they are trying to avoid civilian deaths. More than 9,900 people in Gaza have been killed, including more than 4,800 children. Survivors still under siege are running out of the basic means of survival: water, fuel, food and medical supplies. Doctors are performing surgery without anaesthesia. Mothers are watching their babies fight for survival in incubators running out of electricity. People are being forced to drink seawater. More than 1 million people have been displaced from their homes.

The attack by Hamas, which killed 1,400 Israelis and took 200 hostages, was utterly appalling and must be condemned. The victims and hostages are young people who wanted to listen to music. They are nieces and nephews. They are jewellery designers. They are factory workers. They are peace campaigners. The pain and anguish that their families feel will last forever. This cannot justify the indiscriminate bombing and starvation of the Palestinian people, who are being punished for a heinous crime they did not commit. In the aftermath of horror, we need voices for de-escalation and peace. Instead, politicians around the world continue to give the Israeli government the green light to starve and slaughter the Palestinian people in the name of self-defence.

Every person in Gaza has a name and a face; we grieve for babies in incubators just as deeply as we grieve for middle-aged men killed crossing the road. In any case, we are mourning the theft of beautiful, creative lives. Artists whose paintings we will never see. Singers whose songs we will never sing. Authors whose books we will never

read. Chefs whose kunafa we will never eat. Teachers whose lessons we will never learn. For as long as I can remember, Gaza has been reduced on our TV screens to a site of debris and despair, but underneath the rubble are the quiet, unremarkable foundations of our shared humanity. Morning coffee rounds, hot showers, shopping trips, card games and bedtime stories. Friendship, heartbreak, love, disappointment, boredom and suspense. Schools, mosques, theatres, universities, libraries, playgrounds and hospitals. Hopes, dreams, fears, cares and joys. We are not just witnessing mass death. We are witnessing the erasure of an entire culture, an identity and a people.

The International Criminal Court defines genocide according to several criteria. Genocide can be committed by killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction, imposing measures intended to prevent births, or by forcibly transferring children. In each case, there must be an intention to destroy, in whole or in part, a particular national, ethnic, racial or religious group. On November 2, seven UN Special Rapporteurs said they "remain convinced that the Palestinian people are at grave risk of genocide". This followed the resignation of Craig Mokhiber, the Director of the UN's office in New York, who characterised the horrors in Gaza as a "text-book case of genocide" aimed toward "the expedited destruction of the last remnants of indigenous life in Palestine".

In his resignation letter, he referenced the "wholesale slaughter of the Palestinian people...based entirely upon their status as Arabs", as well as the continuing seizure of homes in the West Bank. He highlighted the "explicit statements of intent by leaders in the Israeli government and military". He did not cite a specific statement, perhaps because there are too many to fit in one letter. He could have been referring to Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir

who posted that "as long as Hamas does not release the hostages in its hands - the only thing that needs to enter Gaza are hundreds of tons of explosives from the Air Force, not an ounce of humanitarian aid". Or perhaps he was referring to Galit Distel Atbaryan, an MP from Israel's ruling Likud party, who called for Gaza to be "erased from the face of the earth".

Genocide is a term that should be used carefully. There are many horrors in history that are hideous enough on their own terms without warranting that label. The term has a legal definition, a legal basis and legal implications. That is why, when international experts in this field warn us about genocide, we should sit up and listen. And that is why we need an immediate ceasefire, followed by an urgent investigation by the International Criminal Court. The ICC should not just investigate the crime of genocide, but every single war crime committed by all parties over the past month. The UK government has the authority and responsibility to call for this investigation. So far, it has refused to call out the atrocities unfolding before our very eyes. Blackouts in Gaza may be temporary, but impunity is permanent and our government continues to give the Israeli army the cover it needs to commit its crimes in darkness.

We will carry on demonstrating as long as it takes to bring about a ceasefire. To secure the release of hostages. To stop the siege of Gaza. And to end the occupation. We make these demands because we know what is at stake: the curiosity, creativity and kindness of the Palestinian people. I remember, on our way home from the school, we passed a food-growing project. The project had purchased 50 hectares of a former Israeli settlement. All the buildings had been destroyed by those who had since departed - and Palestinians had turned the debris into a cooperative farm. Soon, I was told, olives and fruits would grow.

I will never give up hope that these olives and fruits will grow. The people of Gaza have lent me their joy, empathy and humanity. One day, I hope I can give it back to them - in a free and independent Palestine.

Hamas and American crossing

Ghassan Charbel

HORRORS are not new to the sick Middle East. Its blood has been shed in many wars and across many maps. The wars often end in a settlement that goes against the ambitions of those who fired the first bullet. There remains one endless war: the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It often lies in embers under the ashes before rising again in fierce flames. The current horrors in Gaza are unprecedented. The losses are unimaginable and the images pouring in from the enclave are horrific. Schools, hospitals and ambulances have not been spared the wrath of airstrikes.

The war is playing out on screens and mobile phones. It is as if the casualties are dying in our own homes and offices. It is as if we are living among the corpses and rubble. This is why ending the war is the most pressing demand.

But who can end this vicious conflict, which is operating at its full terrifying might? What can Vladimir Putin offer the people of Gaza? What can Xi Jinping offer? What role can Europe play when the conflict has dashed its objective stances and constant preaching about human rights? Who can stop this horrifying killing machine that has exploited the West's talk about the "right to self-defence" to launch a war to kill scores of innocent people?

What more can Iran offer the people of Gaza other than "terrible consequences" for the continuation of the war? The attacks on US bases in Iraq and Syria may lead Washington to take up an even more biased position toward Israel. The plan to expel America from this corner of the Middle East may lead it to become more committed to its guaranteed ally. The Hamas leadership finds itself in a position reminiscent of the one the Palestine Liberation Organization was in when the Israeli army besieged Beirut in 1982. The occupation bloodied the Lebanese capital, killing people and destroying everything in sight. Ariel Sharon cut off the water and electricity. Beirut found itself confronted with only one crossing toward restoring the water and power, and also toward a ceasefire.

Who could possibly arrange a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza? Who could pressure Israel to agree to aid and to allow the evacuation of the wounded? Who is capable of arranging a ceasefire later? More than four decades since the invasion of Beirut, the answer seems obvious: the US, regardless of its biased policies. During his tour of the region, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken heard blunt Arab statements demanding that he pressure Israel to agree to a ceasefire. Hamas' Al-Aqsa Flood operation on Oct. 7 dealt a powerful blow to Israel's image and its deterrence power. Benjamin Netanyahu retaliated by waging a bloody war that has been a calamity for the people,

setting Hamas' annihilation as his goal.

The fact that this is likely his final war only compounds concerns. He realizes that declaring a ceasefire now would mark the end of his long and dangerous career. The opposition against Netanyahu views this as an existential battle. The Israeli generals are aware that destroying Gaza is easier than destroying Hamas and its tunnels. They have turned the war into the collective punishment of civilians, blaming Hamas for the hefty price being paid. The current Nakba in Gaza demands a ceasefire, which is only possible through the US. Another obstacle, however, is that Washington itself wants Hamas out of the Gaza equation. It believes that a ceasefire now would pave the way for the situation in Gaza to return to the way it was before. It is a very difficult crisis.

Hamas did not wage its largest ever operation only to be taken out of the equation, even if an agreement were reached to pave the way to a two-state solution. Moreover, managing Gaza over the remains of Hamas will not be an easy task. President Mahmoud Abbas was blunt about that. The role of Hamas and the Palestinian Authority is tied to a comprehensive political solution. How could Hamas possibly accept a solution that would eliminate it after it incurred massive losses in its ranks and among the people? There appears to be no option on the horizon except for the Blinken crossing. But taking this route has a price. Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas' political leader, cannot be a partner in a peace process that would stipulate the need to recognize Israel. He cannot, but what other option is there? Is it the continuation of the war to demonstrate that Hamas cannot be taken out of the equation? Is Hamas banking on the conflict spilling over to the region to allow members of its regional axis to join a major, fateful battle? Are its calculations aligned with those of its allies?

We are obviously unlikely to witness a ceasefire any time soon. The war machine needs more strikes and corpses to impose or withdraw some of its conditions. However, the continuation of the war will be fraught with dangers and the possibility that it will gradually spill over into the region. Did Hamas, when it launched its operation last month, predict that it would lead to the current scenario? Is it prepared to offer the hostages as the price of stopping the fighting? What about its role after the fighting ends? The PLO paid a price for opting for the American crossing. Will Hamas pay a certain price even though it is not the same as the PLO? And does a ceasefire mean ending the Sunni and Palestinian role in the "resistance axis"? Will the Arabs succeed in easing the conditions for a ceasefire needed to access the American crossing?

China-Pakistan Health Corridor on bilateral healthcare

Muhammad Shahbaz

THE China-Pakistan Health Corridor (CPHC), an integral component of the CPEC, stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and visionary leadership in times of health crises. In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, I, as an eyewitness, experienced the remarkable courage and cooperation of the Chinese nation in preventing and controlling this deadly virus. The rapid establishment of hospitals and health infrastructure, accomplished within days, highlighted the effectiveness of China's response.

In 2006, when I was a student at Shandong University, the idea was conceived by me to establish the CPHC to make a significant contribution to the health sector in both China and Pakistan. Fast forward to 2013, this idea saw an opportunity to bring about transformative change in healthcare. The result was the establishment of the CPHC, a multidisciplinary collaboration aimed at bol-

stering healthcare infrastructure, knowledge exchange and mutual cooperation between the two nations.

The CPHC comprises a diverse array of stakeholders, including hospitals, nursing and auxiliary medical institutions, research and training centers, IT firms, and pharmaceutical industries. This comprehensive approach reflects a commitment to addressing various aspects of healthcare, from service delivery to research and technological innovation. Key initiatives include mobile hospitals, which allow for the extension of medical services to remote and underserved areas, addressing one of the critical challenges in Pakistan's healthcare system. This initiative brings healthcare closer to the people, improving accessibility and promoting preventive care. Next is technology integration which leverages cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and big data. The CPHC is at the forefront of innovation,

enhancing diagnostic capabilities, streamlining data management and facilitating efficient healthcare delivery. The other key initiative is pharmaceutical collaboration, promoting the exchange of knowledge and resources, fostering the development of high-quality and affordable medications. This initiative contributes not only to the well-being of the population but also to the economic growth of both nations.

The Chinese experience in managing and controlling health crises, exemplified by their response to COVID-19, provides invaluable insights for Pakistan as it strives to strengthen its own healthcare system. The coordinated and swift response became a hallmark of China's success in preventing and controlling the spread of the coronavirus, showcasing the nation's resilience and commitment to public health. The CPHC aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which emphasizes the importance

of good health and well-being. By sharing expertise and adopting best practices, this initiative contributes significantly to building a resilient healthcare infrastructure that can withstand current and future challenges. The CPHC is not just a one-way transfer of knowledge; it represents mutual cooperation and a win-win situation for both nations. As China shares its advancements in healthcare, Pakistan reciprocates with its unique insights and experiences, fostering a collaborative environment that benefits both countries.

The success of China's coordinated response to the coronavirus can be attributed to the collective efforts of its people, backed by a government that prioritized the health and well-being of its citizens. The rapid construction of hospitals, implementation of stringent measures, and the mobilization of resources demonstrated the efficiency and effectiveness of China's pandemic response

strategy. The experience of China in managing health crises can be invaluable for other countries, especially those involved in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The CPHC, an extension of the CPEC, provides a unique opportunity for collaboration in health diplomacy. By leveraging Chinese expertise and resources, BRI countries can enhance their capacity for epidemic prevention, control and healthcare infrastructure development. The CPHC facilitates the exchange of knowledge, technology and resources, paving the way for a collective effort in addressing health challenges within the BRI framework. BRI countries can benefit from China's experience by sharing expertise in epidemic prevention, control measures and healthcare infrastructure development. Collaborative efforts through the CPHC can contribute to the capacity building of healthcare professionals, equipping them with the skills needed to tackle health crises effectively. The collaboration can lead to the

development of robust healthcare infrastructure, ensuring that BRI countries are better prepared to handle emergencies and provide quality healthcare to their citizens. Joint efforts in research and development can accelerate the discovery of vaccines, treatments and diagnostic tools, fostering innovation in the field of public health.

The CPHC is not just a physical link but a pathway towards health diplomacy, demonstrating the potential for collaboration in addressing global health challenges. It also stands as a testament to the power of visionary thinking and international collaboration in addressing crucial issues such as healthcare. This initiative not only enhances the healthcare landscape in Pakistan but also strengthens the bonds of friendship and cooperation between China and Pakistan. As the corridor continues to evolve, its impact on the health sector and beyond is poised to be a beacon of success in Sino-Pak relations.

The China Daily

Israel’s psychological operation in Gaza

IN 2014, nine years prior to Israel's current annihilative efforts in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army undertook what it dubbed "Operation Protective Edge" in the same territory. The 51-day campaign extinguished 2,251 Palestinian lives, among them 551 children. Not long after the 2014 killing spree, a psychoanalyst acquaintance of mine in Barcelona sent me some photographs that he had acquired from a colleague in Gaza. The photos were of drawings by children in the town of Khuzaa in the southern Gaza governorate of Khan Yunis, close to the border with Israel.

At first glance, many of the drawings appear to be your standard children's artwork, featuring colourful houses, smiling stick figures, grass, clouds, sun and so forth. Stylistic similarities aside, however, the illustrations depict a troublingly distinct landscape - one in which missiles, tanks, bulldozers and jets have clearly come to occupy central positions in the respective universes of the young artists. In one drawing, for example, a projectile descending from the sky is about to impact an orange house with a red roof and a Palestinian flag flying overhead. In another, missiles from an aircraft are bound for a smiling stick-figure group. In offering a glimpse of the world as seen through Palestinian children's eyes, the artwork also constitutes yet further proof of the psychologically depraved nature of Israel's operations in the Gaza Strip.

The children who drew those drawings are now teenagers - provided, that is, that they have survived the latest ongoing round of Israeli-induced carnage in Gaza, which has killed close to 10,000 people including more than 4,800 children. There is not a single safe place in the entire territory, as Israel proceeds to target homes, schools and hospitals alike with abandon. Israeli

military officers have admitted to dispensing with pretences to "surgical" precision. Obviously, the conversion of daily existence in Gaza into a literal nightmare means that, even if the Israeli bombs stop falling, psychological trauma will remain the name of the game - presumably to a greater degree than it was already. Five years ago, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) reported severe "mental health issues and psychological deterioration" among Gaza's youth. In 2020, the majority of children in the besieged enclave were found to suffer from PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder. And in May 2021 - in a quintessential can't-make-this-up episode of savage irony - twelve of the more than 60 children killed by Israeli air strikes on Gaza in one week were participating in an NRC psychosocial programme for victims of war trauma.

In addition to the physical slaughter, then, there appears to be a calculated effort to inflict psychological devastation in Gaza as well. The English term "psyops" is not quite sufficient to describe what Israel is doing. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, psyops is a plural noun denoting "military operations usually aimed at influencing the enemy's state of mind through noncombative means (such as distribution of leaflets)."

To be sure, Israel has long excelled at the practice of dropping leaflets from aircraft onto civilian populations in Palestine as well as in Lebanon, often with instructions to evacuate a given area; nowadays, such psyops are also easily conducted by cellular phone. However, given Israel's habit of bombing people as they comply with evacuation orders, none of this really qualifies as "noncombative means". In the case of the blockaded Gaza Strip, from which there are currently

Belén Fernández

exactly zero evacuation routes, this sort of psychological warfare becomes even more mentally disturbing.

Of course, there is nothing terribly psychologically reassuring about living trapped in an overcrowded sliver of land, even at times when Israel is not conducting an all-out war. Back in 2005, the year of Israel's withdrawal that wasn't from Gaza, the late Dr Eyad El-Sarraj - founder of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme - condemned Israel for endeavouring to induce "learned helplessness to the Palestinians in Gaza with the aim of making the whole population captive to fear and paralysis". In the 2009 documentary On Gaza's Mind, El-Sarraj blamed the ongoing Israeli occupation for the "disintegration" of society in the Gaza Strip and for "generational problems" owing to "the accumulated toxic kind of trauma over the years and years". And the mental health crisis only deepened over the ensuing years, with increasing rates of depression and suicide.

The psychological effects of the illegal Israeli siege of Gaza, now going on 17 years, cannot be overstated - nor can its contributions to crippling unemployment and poverty, factors which in turn further fuel general anxiety and depression. The attendant lack of adequate food, water and electricity in Gaza only exacerbates feelings of powerlessness and precludes mental stability. Meanwhile, Israel simultaneously inflicts mass psychological trauma on the people of Gaza and blocks the import into the territory of critical medications including psychiatric drugs. It naturally also does not help when Israel bombs hospitals and other healthcare infrastructure in the Gaza Strip.

But what sort of future awaits Gaza, in the end, when Israel insists on killing and traumatising its children? In 2018, when

the Israeli army killed hundreds of Palestinians in Gaza in the context of the Great March of Return, the Washington Post reported on the mental health disaster in the enclave, highlighting the case of 14-year-old Mohammad Ayyoub. As the Post noted, at his young age Ayyoub had already lived through no fewer than three wars, which had left him "deeply traumatised". The United States' decision that year to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem made him "upset", the article explained, and, after telling his mother that he would be willing to sacrifice his life for the city, he "slipped away to a demonstration" on the Gaza-Israel border on April 20, "where an Israeli sniper shot him through the head".

Now that US complicity in physical and psychological devastation in Gaza has reached transparently genocidal proportions - with the Israeli military systematically wiping out entire Palestinian families - it will be less than surprising, perhaps, if more Palestinian youth pursue the path of martyrdom. As Dr El-Sarraj once commented to PBS, people are a "product of the environment"; if you impose an environment of total "hopelessness and despair" on someone - like a young Palestinian in Gaza who has "seen so much of bombing, of killing, of murder, of blood, of humiliation" - you might just end up with "a martyr, somebody who thinks death is the beginning of life".

Indeed, not only does the Gaza Strip serve as an on-site laboratory for Israel to test out its weaponry, it also serves as a testing ground for sick mind games. And as Israel continues to preside over an unprecedented killing spree that can only be described as utterly psychotic, the question remains: What will the children of Gaza draw from now on? Will there still be houses and sun, or will there just be blood and rubble?

Aljazeera

Why Israel wants to erase context, history in war on Gaza

Ilan Pappé

ON October 24, a statement by United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres caused a sharp reaction by Israel. While addressing the UN Security Council, the UN chief said that while he condemned in the strongest terms the massacre committed by Hamas on October 7, he wished to remind the world that it did not take place in a vacuum. He explained that one cannot dissociate 56 years of occupation from our engagement with the tragedy that unfolded on that day.

The Israeli government was quick to condemn the statement. Israeli officials demanded Guterres's resignation, claiming that he supported Hamas and justified the massacre it carried out. The Israeli media also jumped on the bandwagon, asserting among other things that the UN chief "has demonstrated a stunning degree of moral bankruptcy".

This reaction suggests that a new type of allegation of anti-Semitism may now be on the table. Until October 7, Israel had pushed for the definition of anti-Semitism to be expanded to include criticism of the Israeli state and questioning the moral basis of Zionism. Now, contextualising and historicising what is going on could also trigger an accusation of anti-Semitism.

The dehistoricisation of these events aids Israel and governments in the West in pursuing policies they shunned in the past due to either ethical, tactical, or strategic considerations. Thus, the October 7 attack is used by Israel as a pretext to pursue genocidal policies in the Gaza Strip. It is also a pretext for the United States to try and reassert its presence in the Middle East. And it is a pretext for some European countries to violate and limit democratic freedoms in the name of a new "war on terror".

But there are several historical contexts for what is going on now in Israel-Palestine that cannot be ignored. The wider historical context goes back to the mid-19th century, when evangelical Christianity in the West turned the idea of the "return of the Jews" into a religious millennial imperative and advocated the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine as part of the steps that would lead to the resurrection of the dead, the return of the Messiah, and the end of time. Theology became policy toward the end of the 19th century and in the years leading up to World War I for two reasons.

First, it worked in the interest of those in Britain wishing to dismantle the Ottoman Empire and incorporate parts of it into the British Empire. Second, it resonated with those within the British aristocracy, both Jews and Christians, who became enchanted with the

idea of Zionism as a panacea for the problem of anti-Semitism in Central and Eastern Europe, which had produced an unwelcome wave of Jewish immigration to Britain. When these two interests fused, they propelled the British government to issue the famous - or infamous - Balfour Declaration in 1917.

Jewish thinkers and activists who redefined Judaism as nationalism hoped this definition would protect Jewish communities from existential danger in Europe by homing in on Palestine as the desired space for "rebirth of the Jewish nation". In the process, the cultural and intellectual Zionist project transformed into a settler colonial one - which aimed at Judaising historical Palestine, disregarding the fact that it was inhabited by an Indigenous population.

In turn, the Palestinian society, quite pastoral at that time and in its early stage of modernisation and construction of a national identity, produced its own anti-colonial movement. Its first significant action against the Zionist colonisation project came with al-Buraq Uprising of 1929, and it has not ceased since then. Another historical context relevant to the present crisis is the 1948 ethnic cleansing of Palestine that included the forceful expulsion of Palestinians into the Gaza Strip from villages on whose ruins some of the Israeli settlements attacked on October 7 were built. These uprooted Palestinians were part of the 750,000 Palestinians who lost their homes and became refugees.

This ethnic cleansing was noted by the world but not condemned. As a result, Israel continued to resort to ethnic cleansing as part of its effort to ensure that it had complete control over historical Palestine with as few of the native Palestinians remaining as possible. This included the expulsion of 300,000 Palestinians during and in the aftermath of the 1967 war, and the expulsion of more than 600,000 from the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip ever since. There is also the context of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Over the past 50 years, the occupational forces have inflicted persistent collective punishment on the Palestinians in these territories, exposing them to constant harassment by Israeli settlers and security forces and imprisoning hundreds of thousands of them.

Since the election of the present fundamentalist messianic Israeli government in November 2022, all these harsh policies reached unprecedented levels. The number of Palestinians killed, wounded and arrested in the occupied West Bank skyrocketed. On top of that, Israeli government policies

towards Christian and Muslim holy places in Jerusalem became even more aggressive. Finally, there is also the historical context of the 16-year-long siege on Gaza, where almost half of the population are children. In 2018, the UN was already warning that the Gaza Strip would become a place unfit for humans by 2020.

It is important to remember that the siege was imposed in response to democratic elections won by Hamas after the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the territory. Even more important is to go back to the 1990s, when the Gaza Strip was encircled by barbed wire and disconnected from the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords. The isolation of Gaza, the fence around it, and the increased Judaisation of the West Bank were a clear indication that Oslo in the eyes of the Israelis meant an occupation by other means, not a path to genuine peace.

Israel controlled the exit and entry points to the Gaza ghetto, monitoring even the kind of food that entered - at times limiting it to a certain calorie count. Hamas reacted to this debilitating siege by launching rockets on civilian areas in Israel. The Israeli government claimed these attacks were motivated by the movement's ideological wish to kill Jews - a new form of Nazim - disregarding the context of both the Nakba and the inhuman and barbaric siege imposed on two million people and the oppression of their compatriots in other parts of historical Palestine. Hamas, in many ways, was the only Palestinian group that promised to avenge or respond to these policies. The way it decided to respond, however, may bring its own demise, at least in the Gaza Strip, and may also provide a pretext for further oppression of the Palestinian people. The savageness of its attack cannot be justified in any way, but that does not mean it cannot be explained and contextualised. As horrific as it was, the bad news is that it is not a game-changing event, despite the huge human cost on both sides. What does this mean for the future?

Israel will continue to be an apartheid state - as declared by a number of human rights organisations - however the situation in Gaza unfolds. The Palestinians will not disappear and will continue their struggle for liberation, with many civil societies siding with them and their governments backing Israel and providing it with an exceptional immunity. The way out remains the same: a change of regime in Israel that brings equal rights for everyone from the river to the sea and allows for the return of Palestinian refugees. Otherwise, the cycle of bloodshed will not end.

Supreme Court may make America’s gun violence problem even worse

LAST month saw one of the deadliest weeks America has seen in a long time. Eighteen people were gunned down in Lewiston, Maine. The following weekend, 12 more mass shootings left at least 11 people dead and scores more injured. Yet, as our nation grieves the loss of so much life, the US Supreme Court could be poised to make it even easier for troubled people to access guns. On November 7, justices will hear United States v. Rahimi, a case that will decide if governments can continue to prevent those accused of domestic violence from possessing firearms. The fact that there can be any question about how the Court would rule in a case on whether accused domestic abusers can arm themselves reveals just how broken the Court has become. It's also a clear sign that the gun safety movement needs to get to work reforming the Supreme Court.

Rahimi is a direct consequence of the Supreme Court's radical decision last year in New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen to overturn a more than 100-year-old law and for the first time in American history, limit the rights of states to regulate guns in public. It was arguably the most expansive pro-guns decision ever, made possible by the supermajority of hardline conservative justices that the gun lobby advocated aggressively to create. Predictably, the Bruen decision has wreaked havoc on laws designed to keep the public safe from guns. Lower courts have used it to rule against more than a dozen gun safety laws - not just the prohibitions on domestic abusers at issue in the Rahimi case, but also bans on assault weapons and gun safety requirements for young adults. Regardless

of how Rahimi is decided, the Supreme Court has already done enormous damage to our ability to keep Americans safe from gun violence.

The radical decision in Bruen and the extreme threat of Rahimi are the culmination of years of work by the gun lobby. Groups like the National Rifle Association and the National Shooting Sports Foundation have deployed campaign contributions, million-dollar ad campaigns, and shadowy backdoor legal maneuvers. As a result, we have a Supreme Court that is radically out of touch with safety-minded Americans on this and other issues, and that has lost the trust of a huge swath of the American public.

Just within the past few days, the Supreme Court said it also plans to take up laws against bump stocks - measures that aim to reduce the lethality of semi-automatic weapons that are so frequently deployed by perpetrators of mass shootings. It also agreed to hear an appeal brought by the NRA in which the gun lobby group alleges that the former head of New York's Department of Financial Services tried to persuade banks and insurance companies to sever ties with it. It's now clearer than ever: There has been a pronounced pro-gun shift at the Supreme Court, and it places the welfare of millions of Americans in jeopardy. It also runs counter to the urgent demands from millions of us for increased gun safety.

After the Sandy Hook school shooting in 2012, I started a Facebook group urging parents to mobilize and fight to prevent more senseless violence. As a mom of five, my heart broke for the families who had suffered such unimaginable loss, and I knew we could

all do much more. What began as a plaintive rallying cry became Moms Demand Action - a grassroots movement with chapters in every state. Thanks to the tireless work of advocates and activists across the country, in the decade since founding Moms Demand Action, we demonstrated that Americans of every stripe want common sense gun reforms. Since our movement took off, states have signed over 500 new gun safety measures into law, including extreme risk protection orders, safe storage requirements, and background checks. In 2022, over 3,000 local, state, and federal candidates championed gun safety in their elections. And last summer, the US Congress broke through a 30-year logjam to pass the first federal gun safety bill since President Bill Clinton was in office.

Now, we need to channel the energy of gun safety advocates into fixing our broken Supreme Court. We need Supreme Court expansion to restore balance and sanity to the Court. By passing a law to add more justices, we can give the president an opportunity to appoint four new justices who will help restore balance to the institution. This change would not guarantee the outcome in any particular case - but it would help counterbalance the extreme-right supermajority that has made the Court such a reliable ally for the gun lobby. Fortunately, Supreme Court expansion is clearly constitutional: Congress has done it multiple times throughout American history and we can do it again.

While no one expects us to achieve Supreme Court expansion while Republicans control the House of Representatives, there is growing support for it across the country, and it is a sensible long-

term goal. A growing group of advocates within the gun violence prevention, reproductive rights and racial justice movements are calling for expansion. In Congress, expansion is supported by leaders like Sens. Ed Markey (Democrat-Massachusetts), Elizabeth Warren (Democrat-Massachusetts), and Tina Smith (Democrat-Minnesota). It has also earned the backing of House members like Rep. Jamie Raskin (Democrat-Maryland), Rep. Jerrold Nadler (Democrat-New York) Rep. Hank Johnson (Democrat-Georgia) and many others.

Meanwhile, prominent legal experts including former members of President Biden's commission on the Supreme Court say expansion "may be the only thing that will save our democracy for the next generation" and call it "the only hope for a cure" for the problems at the Court. We will not win this fight overnight, but taking on the gun lobby has taught me that it is possible to build a movement to take on powerful opponents who at first look unbeatable. The battle for gun safety will need to be waged on many fronts. Expanding the Supreme Court would be yet another way we can fight the war against senseless gun violence. And while we engage in the long-term battle to structurally reform the Supreme Court, we need to continue to support gun safety candidates and demand new laws.

Increasing the number of justices will not be easy. But when it comes to protecting our kids from the scourge of gun violence, we do not have the luxury of opting out of the tough fights. It's time for the gun safety movement to take a stand on the fight for fair courts - because lives depend on us winning.

CNN

Isabel Oakeshott

Burnham's patch for Conservative Party conference last month, Braverman cannot have failed to notice the number of hobos huddled on pavements in dirty duvets - a stark reminder that this is not just a London crisis. Moreover, the Home Secretary knows that many Conservative voters will be full square behind her plan to restrict the use of tents on British streets.

These shabby shelters are a shameful symbol of policy failure, blighting our city centres and tourist hot spots. As the Home Secretary suggests, they also risk entrenching rough sleeping by making it very fractionally more bearable. In one of the richest countries in the world, the only place for grungy one man tents - which in any case offer minimal protection from the elements and none from drunks, druggies, dogs and other dangers - is at summer

festivals. What the Home Secretary didn't acknowledge is that it is perfectly within her existing powers to at least reduce the number of tents by deporting some of their occupants. According to some recent reports, as many as half of rough sleepers in London are from outside the UK.

A few years ago, Braverman's own government introduced a new immigration rule enabling the Home Office to send them back from whence they came. Under the changes, rough sleeping became grounds for refusal of applications for the right to remain in Britain. It also became grounds for revoking visas already granted to those seeking a new life here and who have ended up on the streets. Why is this legislation so rarely used? I think we all know the answer: the usual dismal mix of loopholes, weak leadership, hand wringers and

human rights lawyers.

The statistics speak for themselves. This time last year, the Government's annual snapshot of rough sleeping revealed a 34 per cent increase in the number of people on the streets in the capital, to 858. Across the country, the single largest percentage increase was among those from outside the UK and the EU. In a figure that says everything about control of our borders, the nationality of 143 individuals in London - 17 per cent of the total - was "not known". Here's an idea, Home Secretary, and it's nothing radical: why not find out where they're from and send them home? Self-evidently, they are having a miserable time here in the UK. As winter approaches, living in a tent on the frozen streets of Britain becomes ever more wretched and dangerous. At least some of those deported might be heading to a warmer place.

The Telegraph

AS a seasoned political operator, Suella Braverman must have known what a fuss there would be when she described rough sleeping as a "lifestyle choice". The righteous indignation from homelessness charities and the "be kind" brigade was entirely predictable. Nor will it bother her. She is right, after all: a small number of troubled people resolutely refuse to be helped off the streets into proper accommodation, or deliberately behave in such a way as to ensure that they are thrown out of shelters and social housing.

Pretty much anyone involved in tackling rough sleeping can attest to this. Just ask Andy Burnham, who as mayor of Manchester has poured heart and soul into ending rough sleeping in his city, with admirable results. Yet still its centre is dotted with hollow-eyed down-and-outs. Visiting

War in Gaza is testing UN’s limits

Nidhi Razdan

THE world has watched with horror the tensions that have escalated in the Middle East over the last few weeks. From Hamas' attack on Israeli citizens to Israel's bombing of the civilians of Gaza, the cycle of violence has been numbing.

Last week, a United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire, divided the world further. Even though the resolution was adopted with 120 countries voting in favour, the real story lay in those who voted against it, like the US and UK, and those who abstained, like India. It is astounding that a resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire should not be overwhelmingly approved but here we are.

Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu called the resolution "deeply flawed" and by all accounts, it has not swayed his government from carrying out a ground assault of Gaza. Which begs the question: what is the role of the United Nations today, especially in crisis management? This is not the first time this question is being asked. During the Russia-Ukraine conflict too, similar concerns were raised. A resolution was passed demanding that Russia withdraw its forces from Ukraine, but it barely made a blip. The United Nations appears to be stuck in the geopolitics of 1945, the year it was founded.

Since then, the world has changed drastically and the balance of power has dramatically altered. But the UN is struggling to expand and change in a meaningful way. One of the most fundamental flaws with the

UN is the veto power that is with the five permanent members: the United States, Russia, China, France and the United Kingdom.

This basically means that any meaningful move can be struck down by any one of these countries, as China has repeatedly done to India over resolutions on terror designations over the years. Political differences have nearly paralysed the UN over the years. This has prompted new global bodies to take shape, where countries are now finding it easier to talk and do business in different ways whether it is through the G20, which was originally founded during the financial crisis of the 2000s, or formations like the BRICS and SCO which appear to be wielding more influence or even Nato

The G20 too can become a new global high table. But there is a fundamental difference. The smaller groupings lack the moral authority the UN once had. A UN Security Council resolution used to mean something. It mattered. And even with all its flaws, the United Nations is still the only really pan global body which can broker peace, especially in the Middle East. India has been pushing for UN reform for years now, with Prime Minister Modi stressing on the need to make global systems in accordance with the "realities of the present".

Taking the example of the United Nations Security Council during his recent speech to the G20 leaders, Mr. Modi said "when the UN was established, the

world at that time was completely different from today. At that time there were 51 founding members in the UN. Today the number of countries included in the UN is around 200. Despite this, the permanent members in UNSC are still the same". India's Foreign Minister has been more blunt, saying just last month that the resistance of the United Nations to reform its structure, will eventually lead to the body being "anachronistic" and people will start finding solutions outside. Talking about the UN Security Council, he said "there has to be pressure. Over the last few years, a large part of the world feels this is something that needs to be done. There are 54 countries in Africa, but they don't have a single member. There is not a single Latin American member. The most populous country is not there, the fifth largest economy is not there." He added, "So how long would you continue that? What happens if you do not reform, people will find solutions outside. This is a message that the UN has to understand. They will become anachronistic, and develop the danger of heading towards not extinction, but a little bit of irrelevance".

There seems to be no end to crisis facing the world. From the pandemic to today's conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine, there is no time like now for countries to be able to sit across a table and find solutions. The UN system as it exists today is deeply flawed but with some structural changes, it is the only meaningful platform to make a difference.

Gulf News

PSX loses 124 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 124.64 points, a negative change of 0.23 per cent, closing at 53,735.73 points against 53,860.37 points the previous day.

A total of 506,075,439 shares valued at Rs18,259 billion were traded during the day as compared to 546,547,257 shares valued at Rs17,905 billion the previous day.

As many as 365 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 125 of them recorded gains and 220 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 20 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Cnergyico Pk with 50,458,922 shares at Rs.4.15 per share, Pak Refinery with 36,253,663 shares at Rs.21.67 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 34,754,500 shares at Rs.2.33 per share.

Colgate Palm witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.67.96 per share price, closing at Rs.1,601.78, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Fiber XD with a Rs.63.72 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,230.61.

Rafhan MaizeXD witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.100.00 per share closing at Rs7,950.00, followed by Pak Tobacco XD with a Rs.45.00 decline to close at Rs.895.00.

‘Govt making all-out efforts to provide energy to people, industries through LNG’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum, Muhammad Ali on Tuesday said that to ease the lives of people and businesses, the government was making all-out efforts to provide energy to the people and industries through imported LNG, especially during winters.

He was addressing the 29th edition of the Annual Technical Conference (ATC) jointly organized by the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and the Pakistan Association of Petroleum Geo-scientists (PAPG). The conference was attended by Faheem Haider, Chairman ATC and Chairperson SPE Pakistan Section, Mr Mohamed Al Marzouqi SPE Middle East & North Africa (MENA) Regional Director and EVP Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), Respectable Chief Executives and Country Heads of Oil & Gas companies, Geo-scientist, Petroleum Engineers.

Speaking on the occasion, this gathering of Geo-scientists and Engineers with vast experience will enable a new thought horizon that may lead to new ideas in the exploration of indigenous oil and gas in the county, he hoped.

He lauded the Theme of the Conference "Exploring the Unexplored: High-Risk Plays and Economic Challenges" stating that it is a pertinent focus area under the present circumstances. The Minister was confident that this conference will provide wide opportunities to address current challenges and future strategy for the development of Energy Resources particularly in the area of oil & gas exploration. "Allah has blessed us with a huge sedimentary basin, national and multinational companies are pursuing exploration in various parts of Pakistan, and still nearly 60-70 percent area is "unexplored" and needs to be evaluated for the exploration of oil and gas to reduce impact of fuel. We are trying to attract FDI in the field of oil and gas and expect that learnings from this technical conference and the efforts of the professionals and their links with professionals outside Pakistan will help foreign investors become interested in investing in Pakistan's Oil and gas Sector," he said. He went on to say that International Oil Companies (IOC) look at the assessment of "access" to the geography and technology, local communities engagement, operational doability, security and long-term sustainability of the business.

This is where the recent discoveries of Mari Petroleum and OGDCL will give confidence to the IOC on the technical and commercial success. However, security continues to be a challenge and this requires special focus from the Government so that the professionals can focus on "exploring" and discovering hydrocarbons in "High-Risk" Plays.

Minister Muhammad Ali said that the country is energy deficient and our challenge is how to cope with the situation in the present economic conditions. Fossil fuel contributes about 70-80 percent to energy mix.

"It is very challenging to move away from the exploration of oil and gas in the world particularly in Pakistan. With the increase in global oil prices and the pressures on oil prices due to war and other factors is increasing the cost of importing energy more" he informed.

Locally, the minister said that oil and gas constitute about 70% of the energy mix and the challenge is how to meet the energy requirement of the country through indigenous resources as importing energy with the increasing import bill is becoming an economic challenge for the country. He asked the participants that Technical, economic and regulatory challenges to reduce the energy import bill should be discussed during the next two days. It would be useful to hear the views of local and international experts on steps which may be taken to address these challenges.

"We are certain that this conference will be a good platform which will provide you with unlimited benefits and will open new plays for exploring the unexplored and addressing the economic challenges. We look forward to seeing conference proceedings and recommendations that may generate remarkable initiatives in driving the industry forward" he said.

Illicit cigarettes causing loss of billions rupees to national exchequer: PTC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) on Tuesday said increase in illicit cigarettes could potentially cause a revenue loss of approximately Rs 310 billion to the national exchequer during the current fiscal year (2023-24).

Briefing the media, Area Head of Legal and External Affairs, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (WEST) at BAT Group Mona Iskandarani highlighted the importance of fast implementation of on the efficacy of the Track and Trace (TT) System in the tobacco sector, said a news release here.

"In order to ensure that the quantum of illicit trade is controlled within the country, it must be coupled with strong enforcement and fiscal measures.

"We acknowledge the recent enforcement initiatives undertaken by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in Pakistan but we need sustained enforcement efforts across the supply chain to curb the menace of illicit cigarette trade in Pakistan," she concluded.

Al Baraka Bank Limited hosts a dinner for the bank’s brand ambassador, Hamza Khan

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited hosted a dinner at the Peshawar Club on November 03, 2023, to celebrate the 18th birthday of their brand ambassador, Hamza Khan, World Junior Squash Champion. Squash legend Mr. Jahangir Khan sent a special video message wishing the young champion. Mr. Qamar Zaman and Mr. Jansher Khan graced the event as the guests of honor. The event was attended by dignitaries from KP and Al Baraka Pakistan's customers from the North Region.

On this occasion, Mr. Muhammad Atif Hanif, CEO of Al Baraka Bank, said, "Our brand ambassador, Mr. Hamza Khan, represents the youth of Pakistan. His ambition to raise Pakistan's stature once again in the mainstream squash world is highly valued by Al Baraka Bank Pakistan. He has today turned 18 years of age. We wish and pray for his great success as he embarks on a new era of professional senior-level tournaments."

He also presented to him Al Baraka Bank's Platinum Master Debit Card, as his bank account was opened on his 18th birthday.



RAWALPINDI: A vendor displaying fig (anjeer) on his handcart to attract the customers at Murree Road.



ISLAMABAD: Women busy in selecting and purchasing second hand warm clothes from vendor at Shakraiyal.

Speakers call for independent state of Palestine to ensure world peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with Civil Society Alliance, Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists and National Press Club Islamabad Tuesday organized a protest rally against the ongoing atrocities being committed by Israel on the Palestinian people. The rally started from National Press Club Islamabad and ended at D Chowk.

Chairman of Senate Standing Committee on Defense Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Former President and Secretary General UBG Pakistan Zafar Bakhtawari, President of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists Afzal Butt, President of National Press Club Anwar Raza, Abid Abbasi, President, Rawalpindi Union of Journalists, Secretary General CDA Labor Union Chaudhry Yasin, Convener of Civil Society Alliance Mustafa Haider Syed, Patron-in-Chief of Pakistan Sweet Homes Zamurd Khan, President of Anjuman Tajaran Pakistan Ajmal Baloch, and a large number of businessmen, journalists, lawyers and civil society persons joined the rally and expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Speaking on this occasion, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed said that it was impossible to establish lasting peace in the world without resolving the conflicts of Palestine and Kashmir. He strongly demanded the United Nations and the international community to play a role in solving these long-standing problems. He said that Israel had crossed all limits of brutality in Gaza by martyring over 10,000 Palestinians, out of which over 4,000 were children.

He said that the silence of world powers against Israeli atrocities was a reflection of double standards in the world which was very sad. He said that those who consider themselves as the champion of human rights in the world were currently silent spectators to the massacre of the Palestinian people by Israel, while it was the need of the hour that all should play an active role to stop the atrocities of Israel on the Palestinian people.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI said that the establishment of a free and independent state was the fundamental right of the Palestinian people, which they had been deprived of until now.

He said that Israel was committing serious war crimes in Palestine, but it was a pity that no one in the world was going to stop it from these atrocities. He said that the Muslim world should now realize that until they unite and build their strength, no one would save them from the atrocities of aggression. He said that the GDP of 57 Muslim countries was about US\$ 24 to 30 trillion, but the defence power of Islamic countries except Pakistan and Turkey was still very weak due to which Muslim countries were given no importance in the world.

China Unicom, Huawei help deploy commercial 5G-Advanced production line

BEIJING (APP): China Unicom and Huawei began to help the Baoding Automation Technology Branch of Exquisite Automotive Systems Co., Ltd. ("EA") deploy a commercial 5G-Advanced flexible production line that features ultra-high reliability and ultra-low latency.

At Great Wall Motor's factory in Baoding, Hebei, 5G-Advanced equipment is being used in the car roof production line. Traditional industrial control relies on wired networks to realize the serial connection and control of terminal equipment.

However, after a certain period of operations, wire abrasions in mobile application scenarios, such as robot arms, slide units, and swiveling tables, often results in production interruptions, causing an average of about 60 hours of downtime a year.

5G-Advanced networks provide ultra-high reliability and ultra-low latency, making them the perfect choice for high-end core manufacturing processes that require high response speeds. Wireless industrial networks can completely eliminate the constraints of wires. Compared to wired networks, the 5G-Advanced solution facilitates easier network deployment and can better support flexible manufacturing. 5G-Advanced networks also boost efficiency by integrating multiple functions, such as data collection (IT) and industrial control (OT) functions that are provided by two separate private lines in wired networks.

Located in Baoding, Hebei, EA is a subsidiary of Great Wall Motor Co., Ltd. (GWM), and has an annual turnover of more than CNY2 billion. EA is responsible for the development of intelligent equipment and the design and integration of automated production lines for GWM and other auto companies.

At the press conference, Yuan Zhanjiang, Deputy General Manager of EA's Industry Intelligence Department, stated, "Digitalization is a must for the transformation and upgrade of manufacturing enterprises. 5G-Advanced features ultra-high reliability, low latency, and easy deployment. These features have been verified in EA's 5G-Advanced industrial Internet lab, and will soon start supporting our commercial production lines. We will seize the opportunity presented by enterprise transformation and upgrade, and leverage digital technologies to continuously improve our smart manufacturing capabilities, and contribute to the transformation and upgrade of GWM and the wider manufacturing industry."

Today, many countries view industrial digital transformation as a new driver of economic growth. Therefore, they are striving to make manufacturing increasingly digital, connected, and intelligent. Digital operation capabilities are now a must for manufacturing enterprises, and flexible smart manufacturing is continuously gaining traction.

Fan Ji'an, Chief Big Data Scientist of China Unicom, pointed out that China Unicom is accelerating the construction of digital infrastructure and deepening integrated innovation in digital technologies.

"We are working with all industry partners to build a 5G-powered industrial Internet that will help enterprises address pain points during their transformations, and ultimately facilitate upgrades to smart manufacturing," Fan said. "Powered by 5G-Advanced, industrial applications are moving from auxiliary production to core production systems. We are seeing more typical 5G-Advanced applications appear in key scenarios, further driving the manufacturing industry to go digital."

China Unicom believes that 5G-Advanced applications can create greater value for enterprises. "We are willing to work with all sectors to create new momentum for innovation, and promote high-quality development by integrating the digital and real economies," Fan continued. Together, we want to begin a new chapter in China's modernization journey." The global industry is actively promoting the development of 5G-Advanced. During the Global Mobile Broadband Forum that concluded last month, 13 global operators, including China Unicom, jointly launched the first wave of 5G-Advanced networks, marking the transition of 5G-Advanced from technical verification to commercial deployment. 2024 will mark the first year of 5G-Advanced's commercial use.

Asian markets take a breather after Fed rate pause rally

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Asian markets turned negative Tuesday after their latest rally as high hopes the US Federal Reserve has finished hiking rates gave way to profit-taking.

Investors were unable to maintain the momentum seen after US officials hinted that the era of rising borrowing costs was over, while a jump in Treasury yields Monday revived jitters that there could still be one more lift to come.

Speeches by a number of decision-makers this week including governor Jerome Powell will be analysed for clues about the outlook, with some officials still reluctant to call an end to the tightening cycle.

That comes even as a string of figures in recent weeks have indicated that while it remained resilient, the world's number two economy was showing signs of slowing, and a jobs report Friday suggested the labour market was also softening. On Monday, Minneapolis Fed chief Neel Kashkari said: "Before we declare that 'we're absolutely done, we've solved the problem', let's get more data and see how the economy evolves."

He told Fox News that "we need to let the data keep coming to us to see if we really have got the inflation genie back in the bottle so to speak".

Still, markets are betting on a number of rate cuts next year totalling more than 100 basis points.

All three main indexes on Wall Street ended slightly higher Monday, though the gains were tempered by a pick-up in 10-year Treasury yields, which came as a large amount of US debt hits the market.

Asian equities were on the back foot, with Hong Kong among the biggest losers after a three-day rally worth more than four percent, while Tokyo, Shanghai, Sydney, Seoul, Singapore, Wellington and Jakarta were also down.

Seoul was off more than two percent, having soared more than five percent in reaction to the reimposition of a ban on short selling.

Taipei and Manila bucked the trend.

"We're in a trading range probably for the next month or so until we get clear indications on what inflation's going to really do, core inflation, and what the Fed's going to do," Max Wasserman at Miramar Capital told Bloomberg Television. "We'll find out either way though. We're through the majority, if not all, the Fed tightening."

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No.174/1.Institution.28/1/2022. Date of hearing. 27/11/2023.Mohamad Amin VS Amer Zada etc.Notice to no 2.Sher Zada s/o Ashanor.4.Mst Mumro d/o Adash. 6.Mst Bacha Zarena.8.Mst Aysha d/o Jephury residents of Anghapur thesl Daggar Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 27/11/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

نوٹس اشتہار

بعد از تحریر خبریں نوٹس اشتہار: جج سیماء عیسیٰ جج II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No.174/1. Institution. 28/1/2022. Date of hearing. 27/11/2023. Mohamad Amin VS Amer Zada etc. Notice to no 2. Sher Zada s/o Ashanor. 4. Mst Mumro d/o Adash. 6. Mst Bacha Zarena. 8. Mst Aysha d/o Jephury residents of Anghapur thesl Daggar Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 27/11/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.



In brief

FIFA qualifier tickets up for grabs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The tickets for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifier, Round 2, being hosted in Pakistan, are officially up for grabs and can be purchased at bookme.pk. In a bid to make the event accessible to all football enthusiasts, ticket prices have been thoughtfully set at budget-friendly rates. For the Premium enclosures, tickets are priced at a mere Rs 500, while the general enclosures offer an even more affordable rate of Rs 250, said a press release. This was an exciting opportunity for football fans and fraternity to witness and enjoy the enthralling match between Pakistan and Tajikistan on November 21, at Jinnah Stadium, Islamabad, with the kick-off scheduled for 2 pm.

Pakistan for int'l sports events

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign taekwondo players believe Pakistan has the leasing to be a prominent destination for international sports events. The foreign players and officials who participated in the recently concluded 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship have returned to their respective countries. Before departure, the international players expressed their desire to visit Pakistan again, describing their stay in Pakistan as ideal. Cansel Deniz, who secured victory in the women's +73 category, took the opportunity to commend the Pakistan Taekwondo Federation for their proficient organization of the event. Deniz's recognition of the remarkable talent exhibited by Pakistani players reflects the growing prowess of the country in the field of taekwondo at an international level. Gold medalist, Nadja from Serbia declared Pakistan as her favourite country in terms of sports participation. The amicable atmosphere and memorable experiences during their time in the country were lifetime remembering. Geon-Woo Seo, who won the gold medal in the -80 kg from Korea, expressed his intent to revisit Pakistan and reminisce about the beautiful memories made. He further said Pakistan has the potential to be a prominent destination for international sports events.

Anamul Haque approved

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 has approved Anamul Haque Bijoy as a replacement for Shakib Al Hasan in the Bangladesh squad. Anamul Haque who has played 45 ODIs, was named as a replacement after Shakib was ruled out due to a fracture of the index finger of his left-hand sustained during Bangladesh's match against Sri Lanka on Tuesday, said a press release. The replacement of a player requires the approval of the Event Technical Committee before the replacement player can be officially added to the squad. The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 consists of Wasim Khan (ICC General Manager - Cricket & ETC Chair), Chris Tetley (ICC Head of Events), Hemang Amin (Acting CEO - BCCI), Gaurav Saxena (General Manager - Operations, BCCI), Russell Arnold (Independent Representative), Simon Doull (Independent Representative).



MUMBAI: Glenn Maxwell of Australia plays a shot as Ikram Alikhil of Afghanistan keeps during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup India 2023 between Australia and Afghanistan.

Sensational Maxwell leads Australia to semi-finals

MUMBAI (Agencies): Glenn Maxwell battled through injury to hit a sensational double century against Afghanistan and guide Australia into the World Cup semi-finals.

Maxwell arrived at the crease to face a hat-trick ball after Australia slumped to 91-7 in pursuit of 292 in Mumbai. He was dropped twice and struggled with a back injury and cramp but played a remarkable innings, often on one leg post century, to finish 201 not out.

He shared 202 with Pat Cummins (12*) as Australia won with 19 balls to spare. Afghanistan, who had earlier made 291-5 with Ibrahim Zadran hitting their first World Cup century, were well set to join Australia in the current top four after a rampant start in the field before Maxwell produced one of the all-time great innings.

He had already hit the fastest World Cup century earlier in the tournament

against the Netherlands and returned to the Australia side for this game after missing Saturday's win over England because of a concussion sustained after falling off the back of a golf buggy.

It was a truly breathtaking innings, with remarkable reverse sweeps for six, flicks and whips over the leg side on one leg, which will also be remembered as an incredible show of grit and determination.

He is the first Australian to hit a double century in a one-day international and was mobbed by his ecstatic team-mates, who could barely believe what they had seen. The win sees Australia join India and South Africa in the final four.

One of New Zealand, Pakistan and Afghanistan will claim the final knock-out spot - all three sides are currently on eight points - with the group stage finishing on Sunday.

Maxwell produces all-time great innings

At the interval a tight game felt likely, though Afghanistan were favourites, with no side completing a chase of more than 281 at the Wankhede Stadium and Australia also needing to pull off their highest chase in World Cups.

After Afghanistan's rampant start, where Australia were guilty of loose strokeplay and lacking a calm head, it looked certain Jonathan Trott's side would pull off their first win over Australia.

Yet Afghanistan let the game slip when Maxwell was dropped in the covers on 24, before Mujeeb Ur Rahman put down an easy chance at short fine leg with Maxwell on 33.

He was also halfway off the pitch after reviewing when given out lbw on 27, only to return in shock when the technology showed it was going over the stumps.

The 35-year-old is one

of the most destructive batters in the game and this was another example of his game-changing talent.

He struck 10 fours and three sixes in his first century, which came up off 76 balls, before the back struggles and cramp left him hobbling.

He received treatment on numerous occasions, while Adam Zampa, the next man in, came down prepared to bat twice.

But Maxwell persevered, his second century taking 54 balls, with most boundaries followed by a grime or stretch of the leg or back.

The all-rounder showed a nerveless ability to clear the ropes and find the gaps, but also calmly turned down singles and twos he knew he could not make, while never letting the require run rate spiral.

He finished the game with a monstrous flick over the leg side to bring up his double century off 128 balls, including 21 fours and 10 sixes.

Babar Masih down UAE's cueist in World Snooker C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani cueists Babar Masih downed Andulrahman Saif of UAE in the IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship 2023 at Doha, Qatar.

Babar beat Andulrahman by 4-0 (88-0(88), 67-50, 94-04(93), 102-37(91)).

Meanwhile Seyang Heo of South Korea defeated Ahsan Ramzan of Pakistan by 4-0 (68-37, 60-10, 73-33, 67-41) and ShriKrishna Suryanarayanan of India outplayed Pakistan's Muhammad Naseem Akhtar by 4-2 (115-26(56), 79-20, 22-74(52), 81-0(80), 44-76, 79-5(54)).

The last round and semi-finals of the championship would be played on November 9 while final on November 10.

Trials to form Inter-Regional teams continued across KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The trials of Peshawar Region for the forthcoming Inter-Regional Volleyball Championship have been completed like other regions including Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Mardan, Swat, Hazara, Peshawar and Kohat.

The trials of Peshawar Region have been completed for the U20 Inter-Regional Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Volleyball Championship. The players participated in large numbers, while talking to the media on this occasion.

Regional Sports Officer Peshawar Zakirullah told the media that a volleyball talent hunt program has been organized with the cooperation of Pakistan Army and Provincial Sports Directorate in which teams from all regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including tribal districts will participate. In this regard, the trials of Peshawar region were held in which a large number of players participated. On this occasion, the trials were held under the supervision of Provincial Volleyball Association President Khalid Waqar Chamkani, Director Sports Mir Bashir, Peshawar Region Team Manager Kashif Farhan and coach Hidayatullah.

PPC Fighters qualified for the finals of the RMI Media Cricket League

PESHAWAR (APP): PPC Fighters defeated PPC Cobra by 29 runs and qualified for the final of the ongoing RMI Media Cricket League being played under the auspices of Peshawar Press Club Sports Committee here at Karnal Sher Khan Army Stadium on Tuesday.

The second semi-final will be played on November 8 (Wednesday) between PPC Markhor and Zalmi. The first semi-final of the ongoing RMI Media Cricket League was played between PPC Cobra and PPC Fighter at the Colonel Sher Khan Army Stadium wherein both the teams played well.

Playing first, PC Fighters scored 169 runs for the loss of four wickets in the allotted overs. Shah Faissal stood out with 66 including five towering sixes and three boundaries, Naem Babar 18 with three boundaries, and Kamran smashed an elegant knock of 45 runs with four sixes and as many boundaries. On behalf of PPP Cobra, Qari dismissed two and Ahsan dismissed one player. In reply, PPC Cobra failed to chase the required runs target for victory and scored 140 runs for the loss of four wickets in the allotted overs. Rafat scored 16 with three boundaries, Kamran made a vital innings of 37 runs including five boundaries all around the ground, Asad scored 29 with four boundaries and one six and Mehmood made 19 with three boundaries.

PPC Fighters team Bilal and Shah Faissal took one wicket each while Shahid, the right-arm pacer, claimed three wickets and played a key role in his team's victory. Shah Faissal was declared the man of the match for his best all-round performance.

Bangladesh beat Pakistan Women in a super over thriller

DHAKA (Monitoring Desk): Bangladesh won the second ODI against Pakistan in the Super Over after the match at Shere Bangla National Stadium ended in a dramatic tie with the three-match series now squared at 1-1.

Pakistan made seven runs for the loss of two wickets (Iram Javed and Bismah Maroof) in five balls of the one-over eliminator before Bangladesh reached the target on the final delivery of the Super Over, making 10-1 in reply.

Pakistan were 153-6 in the 47th over in pursuit of the 170-run target before a collapse left them needing three in the last over with one wicket in hand. Nashra Sundhu, who came out to bat No.10, was run out on the penultimate ball with the scores level.

Pakistan's opening pair of Sidra Amin and Sadaf Shamas provided a 41-run start to the innings. After the departure of Sidra (22, 43b, 3x4s), Bismah was the next batter to return back to the pavilion for nought off three balls.

Sadaf was joined by Aliya Riaz and the pair added 23 runs for the third wicket before Sadaf departed for 29 off 83 balls, which included three fours. Aliya was next to go not before scoring a 28-ball 21, hitting two boundaries.

At that stage of the innings, captain Nida Dar was joined by Iram Javed and the pair stitched another 25 runs. Right-handed batter Iram, who was

included in the side in today's game in place of injured Muneeba Ali, scored 15 runs off 31 balls, smashing two boundaries.

With 70 runs required and five wickets in hand, wicket-keeper-batter Najiha Alvi joined Nida and the pair added 28 runs in the 10th before Nida got out for 27 off 47 balls, hitting a four. Najiha and Diana later added a vital 25 runs for the seventh wicket before a flurry of wickets deterred the charge.

Earlier, after Bangladesh opted to bat first for the second time in as many games, Pakistan bowlers restricted them to 169 for nine in their 50 overs. Captain Nigar Sultana top-scored for her side with a 104-ball 54, which included three fours.

The wicketkeeper-batter added a 49-run partnership for the third wicket with opening batter Fargana Hoque (40, 88b, 3x4s).

For Pakistan Women, left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal, who bagged four wickets in the first ODI, took two for 32 in 10 overs today. Fellow left-arm spinner Nashra bagged two wickets for 27 in her quota of 10 overs.

Najiha, playing her second ODI, enacted four stumpings becoming only the second Pakistan wicket-keeper to do this in an ODI innings. Batool Fatima achieved this feat in 2004 against the West Indies in Karachi. Pakistan Women and Bangladesh will now play the third and final ODI of the series on Friday, 10 November.



Nigar Sultana was the only batter in the match to get to a half-century.

Tauseef Ahmed appointed Pakistan's interim chief selector



LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Former Test cricketer Tauseef Ahmed has been appointed as chief selector for Pakistan cricket team following Inzamam-ul-Haq's resignation over allegations of "conflict of interest".

According to the cricket governing body, former cricketer Wajahatullah Wasti has been appointed as the head of the junior selection committee.

The first assignment for the selection committee under Tauseef Ahmed will be the selection of the national squad for the upcoming Australia tour for the three-match Test series after the ongoing World Cup 2023.

It is pertinent to mention here that both the new appointees are members of the existing selection committee. Inzamam-ul-Haq resigned as the chairman of the national men's selection committee and junior selection committee. He is accused of being a stakeholder in a certain players' agent firm. It was also said that he selected the World Cup 2023 squad keeping in view the firm's interests.

"I am stepping down from the post to offer the PCB the opportunity to conduct a transparent inquiry about the conflict-of-interest allegations raised in the media. If the committee finds me not guilty, I will resume my role as the chief selector" Inzamam-ul-Haq said in a statement.

While talking to a private

TV channel, Inzamam-ul-Haq said that he is ready for any inquiry that the Pakistan Cricket Board wants to conduct regarding his days as chief selector but is resigning for questions were raised about the transparency in the selection process for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 amid the team's failing campaign.

"Inzamam-ul-Haq kept PCB unaware of agent's identification"

Earlier in the day, PCB's media head Aalia Rasheed - while talking to ARY News - said that Inzamam-ul-Haq kept the board unaware of the agent's identification. "If Pakistan players and Inzamam-ul-Haq's agent are the same, then there is a conflict of interest. He can also influence a lot of players," said the board's media director.

She believed that Inzamam had the responsibility to inform the cricket body about any potential conflict of interest. "No cricket board wants to create controversy during a World Cup and get ridiculed in the media," she added. Aalia Rasheed further said that PCB has formed a fact-finding committee to assess whether there was a conflict of interest but it didn't remove Inzamam as chief selector.

She added that the board has not yet accepted the resignation of Inzamam-ul-Haq, and he can resume working for PCB if the "committee clears him".



F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI : The fourth round of Pakistan Cup 2023-24, played at four venues across Rawalpindi, AJK and Abbottabad saw Karachi Whites, Peshawar, Rawalpindi and FATA emerge victorious. Shan Masood hit an unbeaten century to take Karachi Whites to an eight-wicket victory over Lahore Whites. On the back of half-centuries by Kamran Ghulam and Adil Amin, Peshawar defeated Lahore Blues by six wickets. Heroics by Mubasir Khan awarded Rawalpindi a seven-wicket win over Faisalabad while FATA secured a 60-run victory over Multan.

Karachi Whites v Lahore Whites at Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi

Lahore Whites scored 249-5 in the allotted 45 overs after being put into bat first by Karachi Whites at Pindi Cricket Stadium. Tayyab Tahir top-scored for the side, hitting an undefeated 92 from 93 balls, including eight fours and a six. He was supported by Umar Akmal, who chipped in with 45 from 35 including two boundaries and as many sixes. Left-arm spinner Noman Ali and pacer Anwar Ali bagged two wickets each.

Karachi Whites got to 250-2 in 34.4 overs owing to extraordinary batting by left-handed opener Shan Masood. He scored an unbeaten century (121 not out, 99b, 12x6s, 2x6s), which placed the game completely in Karachi Whites' favor. His efforts were complemented by veteran Asad Shafiq (86 not out, 89b, 9x4s). Ahmed Bashir was the solitary wicket-taker for Lahore Whites, accounting for the two wickets to fall.

Peshawar v Lahore Blues at Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi

After winning the toss, Peshawar

invited Lahore Blues to bat first at Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium. The Imran Butt-led side were dismissed for 173 in 42 overs. The skipper scored bulk of the runs, hitting 94 from 129, including 10 boundaries and a maximum. The second-best score of the innings came from Rizwan Hussain's bat, who produced 22 from 17, including four boundaries. Left-arm spinner Azam Khan returned with a four-wicket haul. Off-spinner Sajid Khan and fast bowler Mohammad Imran got two wickets each.

It took Peshawar 35.4 overs to complete the target of 174, losing only four wickets in the chase. Kamran Ghulam (54, 49b, 8x4s, 1x6) and Adil Amin (50 not out, 74b, 5x4s, 1x6) ensured that the chase remained comfortably in their control. Ali Shafique took two wickets while Hunain Shah Ibtisam-ul-Haq had one each.

Faisalabad v Rawalpindi at Abbottabad Cricket Stadium, Abbottabad

Rawalpindi opted to bowl first after winning the toss against Faisalabad at Abbottabad Cricket Stadium. Faheem Ashraf-led Faisalabad managed to score 197 in 39.5 overs. Mohammad Saleem (41, 55b, 5x4s, 1x6) and Ali Shan (37, 42b, 5x4s) were the notable run-getters for the side. Mehran Mumtaz, Mohammad Awais Anwar and Jahandad Khan grabbed two wickets each.

After losing three early wickets in the chase, an unbroken 179-run stand between Mubasir Khan and Umar Amin turned the game in Rawalpindi's favor, who got over the line in 38.5 overs. Mubasir remained one short of his century, hitting an undefeated 99 from 105, including seven fours and four sixes. Umar also

hit a crucial half-century (65 not out, 98b, 7x4s). Khurram Shahzad grabbed two wickets while Waqas Maqsood bagged a wicket as well.

FATA v Multan at Mirpur Cricket Stadium, AJK

Multan suffered a heavy defeat by 60 runs against FATA at Mirpur Cricket Stadium. The side could only manage to get to 129 while chasing 190. FATA impressed with the ball while defending a low target; skipper Khushdil Shah accounted for three scalps and Asif Afridi and Irfanullah Shah bagged two wickets each. Fighting knocks by Sharoon Siraj (58, 82b, 3x4s, 4x6s) and Sharjeel Khan (38, 32b, 5x4s, 1x6) went in vain.

Earlier, after being asked to bat first, FATA got to 189 in 42.5 overs, on the backs of gritty batting efforts by Mohammad Sarwar Afridi (53, 79b, 4x4s, 2x6s), Khushdil (33, 50b, 2x4s) and Mohammad Farooq (32, 30b, 6x4s, 1x6). Leg-spinner Zahid Mehmood had three wickets to his name, while Tahir Hussain, Waseem Akram and Faisal Akram claimed two wickets each.

Scores in brief: Karachi Whites beat Lahore Whites by eight wickets

Lahore Whites 249-5, 45 overs (Tayyab Tahir 92 not out, Umar Akmal 45; Noman Ali 2-36, Anwar Ali 2-64)

Karachi Whites 250-2, 34.4 overs (Shan Masood 121 not out, Asad Shafiq 86 not out; Ahmed Bashir 2-45)

Peshawar beat Lahore Blues by six wickets

Lahore Blues 173 all out, 42 overs (Imran Butt 94, Rizwan Hussain 22; Azam Khan 4-41, Sajid Khan 2-19, Mohammad Imran 2-47)

Peshawar 174-4, 35.3 overs (Kamran Ghulam 54, Adil Amin 50 not out; Ali Shafique 2-46, Hunain Shah 1-21, Ibtisam ul Haq 1-27)

Rawalpindi beat Faisalabad by seven wickets

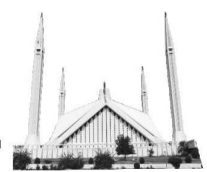
Faisalabad 197 all out, 39.5 overs (Mohammad Saleem 41, Ali Shan 37; Mehran Mumtaz 2-22, Mohammad Awais Anwar 2-51, Jahandad Khan 2-53)

Rawalpindi 198-3, 38.5 overs (Mubasir Khan 99 not out, Umar Amin 65 not out; Khurram Shahzad 2-32, Waqas Maqsood 1-26)

FATA beat Multan by 60 runs

FATA 189 all out, 42.5 overs (Mohammad Sarwar Afridi 53, Khushdil Shah 33, Mohammad Farooq 32; Zahid Mehmood 3-21, Tahir Hussain 2-27, Waseem Akram 2-37, Faisal Akram 2-41)

Multan 129 all out, 33.1 overs (Sharoon Siraj 58, Sharjeel Khan 38; Khushdil Shah 3-23, Irfanullah Shah 2-21, Asif Afridi 2-22)



In brief

IRSA releases 112,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 112,800 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 50,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1518.03 feet and was 120.03 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 26,100 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1196.30 feet, which was 146.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded 6,700 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 63,000, 38,900, 38,700 and 7,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

IESCO recovers over Rs 260 mln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has recovered a sum of over Rs 260 million from 22,618 running defaulters during the ongoing drive against power theft and recovery across all the circles of the company. The IESCO spokesman said that the IESCO teams also recovered over Rs 290 million from 9,961 dead defaulters. He said that collectively, a sum of over Rs 560 million has been recovered from over 32,000 defaulters so far during the ongoing drive. Moreover, meters and transformers of defaulters have also been removed, he added. He said the drive would continue vigorously till the complete elimination of power theft and recovery from the defaulters.

Nine drug peddlers netted with charras

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up nine accused on recovery of over 11 kg charras and 600 grams heroin. According to a police spokesman, New Town police managed to net a drug peddler namely Rehman for having 1320 grams charras and Waqas for possessing 600 grams heroin. Saddam Wah police rounded up Zahid on recovery of 1305 grams charras and Ali Raza with 1260 grams charras. Cantt, R.A.Bazar, Waris Khan, Naseerabad and Airport police arrested Ali, Haris, Bilal Ahmed, Saifullah and Waqas and seized over seven kg charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.

Police net three car lifters

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi District Police have arrested three car lifters and recovered a stolen car from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that Taxila police conducted a raid and arrested three car lifters namely Zahid, Saeed and Waqar and recovered a stolen Toyota Car from their possession. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Muhammad Waqas Khan appreciated the police team and directed them to accelerate the operation against car and bike lifters.



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the house in the Senate, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar presenting souvenir to Charge'd Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Ms. Pang Chunxue, at Parliament House.

NAB encourages student activism against corruption

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan organized an inter-university competition in Urdu speech and writing at Government Girls College Quetta Cantt with the goal of promoting an anti-corruption mindset and raising awareness and hatred against corruption among students. Numerous university students from Balochistan participated in these contests. Professor Dr. Humira Sadouzai, Associate Professor Abdul Rasool, Professor Gulnaz Rasheed, Associate Professor Tahir Shaoood, Associate Professor Shamaila Azmat, and Lecturer Saima Nagi acted as judges and evaluators for the events.

In their speeches and essays, the students characterized corruption as a

pervasive issue and stressed the collective responsibility to combat it. They pointed out that corruption has deeply infiltrated our society and daily lives, underlining the need for a national effort to eliminate it. The competitions were observed by Director NAB Dr. Mohammad Rashad, Principal of Government Girls College Raheela Ramzan, Deputy Director NAB Khurram Shahzad, along with faculty members and a significant turnout of students from the host college. Addressing the audience, Director NAB, Dr. Muhammad Rashid, underscored the importance of eradicating corruption. He urged students to be vigilant and ensure that their parents refrain from engaging in corrupt practices to meet their needs.

He also pointed out that

our religious teachings counsel us to distance ourselves from corruption and to play a role in its eradication. Following the event, the judges/evaluators announced the victors of the declamation contests, with Ms. Mahzeb Baloch of BUITEMS University claiming the top position in the Declamation competition. The Essay Writing competition results will be announced at a later date. The upcoming inter-university Declamation (English) event is set for November 8, 2023, at BUITEMS, where students from Balochistan's universities will participate and share their anti-corruption views. It's worth mentioning that NAB Balochistan arranged inter-university Poster and Calligraphy competitions at SBK University, and this took place on November 6, 2023.

Launch of Azerbaijan Airlines in Pakistan boosts people-to-people contacts: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday lauded the recent launch of Azerbaijan's national airlines in Pakistan which would further increase people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

Addressing the ceremony of the Victory Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the minister said, "It is heartening to note that recently Azerbaijan's national carrier AZAL has commenced its operations between the two countries. This would definitely contribute in further bringing our people closer." He said more than 50,000 tourists from Pakistan had visited Azerbaijan in the year 2022 which showed a tremendous potential not only in the economic realm but also in the domain of people-to-people contacts.

Solangi said the people of Pakistan and Azerbaijan shared common historical, cultural and religious affinities. "The brotherly ties go far beyond our exist-

tence as modern independent nation states.

"The multifaceted relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have been expanding and deepening in recent years," he said while highlighting the increased economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts between the two countries that further cemented the bilateral relations.

During the last year, he said the bilateral trade between Pakistan and Azerbaijan had increased and was expected to multiply in the near future.

"Azerbaijan has emerged as a hub for connectivity projects being the central part of North-South and East-West transport corridors including the creation of the Trans-Caspian International Route and the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway communication system," he remarked.

He said, "Azerbaijan is also the initiator of major energy projects. These are comprehensive connecti-

ty corridors that would significantly contribute to the development of the entire region." The minister expressed the hope that the bilateral relations would grow and strengthen further in the years to come.

On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, the minister also felicitated the Government and the people of Azerbaijan on their Victory Day. On the historic day, he said, Azerbaijan succeeded in liberating its territories that had been under Armenian occupation for more than 30 years.

"This great feat has been achieved under the dynamic leadership of President H.E. Ilham Aliyev who has transformed Republic of Azerbaijan into a regional hub and economic power that is recognized across the region and beyond," he noted. Lauding the development of the recently liberated territories, he said it was evident from construction of airports, modern infrastructure, restoration of cities and villages damaged in those areas.

26 more dengue cases reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 26 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 2,454 in the district.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood on Tuesday said that among the new cases, 13 cases had arrived from Potohar town urban, seven from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi, three from Rawalpindi Cantonment and one from Chaklala Cantonment area.

He added that 55 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 39 were confirmed cases while 2,414 were discharged after treatment.

Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 16 FIRs, issued tickets to eight and a fine of Rs 8,000 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. During indoor surveillance, in the last 24 hours, the teams checked 9,096 houses and larvae were found in 135 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 4,597 places, the teams found larvae at 22 sites during outdoor surveillance.

'Over 500 countrywide 'primary health center's upgradation starts'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan Tuesday disclosed that the government has planned to strengthen primary and secondary level health facilities and introducing a project to provide 'uniform health services packages for citizen' where over 500 countrywide primary health center (PHC) hospitals' upgradation has started.

In an interview with a private news channel, he said that the renovated emergency room, intensive care units and other state-of art health facilities for patient in various hospitals will be inaugurated in January 2024. The hospital is being upgraded to provide state-of-the-art, high quality care to the patients, especially the underprivileged, he added.

The main purpose of upgrading these community centers is to ensure that the public receives basic health care at their doorstep, he said, adding, community awareness drives for patients to avail quality services will also be part of this project.

He said we are trying our best to come up with a universal health insurance scheme after consultations with the provinces, adding, present government was improving the quality of public healthcare services with latest technologies. He said this will restore public confidence on the public health facilities, adding, strengthening the Universal Health Coverage is our top agenda.

Replying a question, he said that with upgradation of primary health care system we will strengthened and overcome the burden of patients on the major hospitals.

To another question about outbreak of Congo Virus in Balochistan, the minister said that government is taking preventive measures on war-footings and transporting the serious patients to Karachi via Air Ambulances and patients with mild symptoms through road.

He said strict implementation of SOPs would be ensured at all levels to control the spread of Congo Virus, adding that the health department's monitoring mechanism was also being made effective to continuously review the situation not just in Balochistan but other provinces.

Minister emphasized the need to raise public awareness to clean surroundings and particularly among individuals involved in the buying and selling of livestock, and to implement precautionary measures to combat the virus.

He also urged public for promptly seek medical attention if they experienced high fever, severe body pain, or other symptoms associated with the Congo virus.

He said with the collaboration with the provincial health department we have organized the seminars and conferences to educate health practitioners and the general public on any possible outbreak of Congo fever in the city.

He said that the nursing staff and doctors should wear gloves, protective goggles, caps, shoe covers and gowns (all disposable) with hand washing facilities with sanitizer in the anteroom.

"In case of symptoms of Congo Virus, the patient should be provided emergency medical guidance", he added.

Sochi Youth Festival to nurture future youth leaders; speakers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Amarlar Adv, who is also the Coordinator of the National Preparatory Committee of Pakistan, Pashtoon Students Council, in collaboration with the Progressive Writers Associations (Intellectual Wing), organized a ceremony at Rawalpindi Arts Council to highlight the importance of upcoming "Youth Festival" in Sochi, Russia, scheduled for March 2024.

The theme of the festival is "Let's Shape the Future of World Youth Together: A Multipolar World for Peace, Prosperity, Sovereignty, Mutual Assistance, and Shared Global Values."

On the occasion, President of Progressive,

Amarlar Adv, who is also the Coordinator of the National Preparatory Committee (NPC), said that the main objective of the festival was to cultivate future youth leaders worldwide.

He added that the festival would promote unity and collaboration between global youth, Pakistani student delegations, and youth leaders.

Amarlar further mentioned that the festival would welcome not only student delegations but also active youth leaders and experts.

This significant event would gather hundreds of thousands of young people from various countries,

featuring diverse cultural artists, entertainers, and speakers, all coming together to celebrate unity, love, and peace.

Farhat Fatima, the General Secretary of the Progressive Writers Associations (PWA) Intellectual Wing, in collaboration with the Preparatory Committee, announced plans to organize meetings and cultural programs across the country related to the "Youth Festival."

More than thousand students from National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Arid Agricultural University and different universities participated in the event.

Final Round of World Space Week activities to be held at IST from Nov 08-09

ISLAMABAD (APP): The final round of activities to mark the World Space Week will be held at Institute of Space Technology (IST) from November 08-10 with an aim to educate young students and the general public about the benefits of space technology and its applications. The preliminary round of World Space Week was arranged virtually by IST from October 6-10 through arranging a number of exciting activities. The World Space Week celebrations were arranged by the Space Education Research Lab, National Center of GIS and Space Applications, IST, highlighting this year's theme "Space and Entrepreneurship".

According to an official of IST, World Space Week is the annual week of celebrating achievements and contributions of Space Science, technology, and its applications. The United Nations General Assembly has declared October 4-10 as World Space Week to educate young students and the general public about the bounties of space technology and its applications.

The UN General Assembly selected October 4 to commemorate the launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, Sputnik 1, on October 4, 1957, and the signing of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the

Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on October 10, 1967. World Space Week Association (www.worldspaceweek.org), a non-government, non-profit international organization, coordinates this celebratory week worldwide through National Coordinators appointed in each country. In Pakistan, the event is coordinated by the country's national coordinator, the Secretary of the National Space Agency of Pakistan, SUPARCO, through the Space Education and Awareness Drive (SEAD). The week is celebrated around the globe in more than 96 countries with 8000+ participants worldwide, organized by different space agencies, aerospace companies, schools, planetaria, museums, and astronomy clubs, all synchronized for effectual public awareness. Every year, the World Space Week Association (WSWA) declares a theme to highlight a specific aspect of space. National coordinators then plan and organize events around this theme. The official highlighted that World Space Week's theme, "Space and Entrepreneurship," recognizes the growing significance of the commercial space industry in space, the increasing opportunities for space entrepreneurship, and the new benefits of space developed by space entrepreneurs.

With miniaturization and decreasing launch costs, it is now possible for a small business to build and launch a small satellite and for entrepreneurs to create valuable new data products for governments and industry. Following the theme of space and entrepreneurship, NCGSA aims to promote career options and raise space awareness among school and college students through space-related activities and competitions.

With 75 modules for students in grades 6 to 12, participants took part in a diverse range of fun learning activities during the preliminary round. The overall ten categories covering different domains were designed to include students with different interests and skills, the official said. The World Space Week celebrations offers a learning opportunity, especially for space enthusiasts who want to pursue a career in space technology. About the categories and modules, the official informed that World Space Week 2023 organized 75 modules in 10 major categories for students in Grades 6 to 12, including Space Recitations, Space Quiz, Space Creative Writing, Space Applications, Space Technology Demonstration, Space Models and Collectibles, Space Fine Arts, Space Performing Arts, Space Life, and Space Entrepreneurship.



ISLAMABAD: A worker showering water on plants to keep them fresh at a local plant nursery.

Citizens urged to take precautions measures, wear face mask amid heavy smog in Punjab

ISLAMABAD (APP): Environmentalists Tuesday called for urgent measures to reduce air pollution and advised citizens to diligently adhere to precautionary measures to shield themselves from the threat of smog engulfing Punjab as the alarming increase in pollution with the change of weather poses a heightened risk of infections. Talking to PTV news channel, Environmentalist Dr Rukhsana Tariq explained that the air quality in Lahore city has relentlessly deteriorated to dangerous levels and become a critical health concern in recent months.

Pakistan must learn from experiences of the other countries in controlling smog and air pollution, she said, adding, that it is high time to revise our national standards for emissions and ensure compliance with laws in line with prevailing international

standards. She further said that people of all ages are affected by smog, with children and the elderly being more susceptible to diseases caused by air pollution, adding, that smog is a kind of air pollution which was originally named after smoke and fog mixed in the air.

It affects visibility, human health and crops, she mentioned.

Replying to a question, she elaborates on health hazards that smog can irritate the eyes and the nose as it dries out the protective membranes and interferes with the body's ability to fight infections. Experts underlined the need for ensuring inter-departmental and regional cooperation in air pollution mitigation strategies, adding, that all stakeholders need to take practical steps to overcome the smog issue.

30 people returned to country

KABUL (Agencies): The commission for the "Return of and Communications with Former Afghan Officials and Political Figures" said that in the past month, more than 30 members of the previous government have returned to the country. Ahmadullah Wassiq, a spokesman for the commission, said that since the establishment of the commission, immunity cards have been distributed to more than 700 personalities who have returned to the country.

UAE extends assistance

KABUL (Agencies): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations of Afghanistan has announced that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has assisted in the form of 20,000 tents to migrants recently expelled from Pakistan. On Tuesday, the Ministry, in a newsletter, stated that the aid shipment from the United Arab Emirates, comprising 20,000 tents, arrived at Kabul International Airport last night.

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

Strengthening agricultural ties: Deputy Prime Minister meets Iran's agriculture minister



KABUL (BNA): Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, has met with Iran's Minister of Agriculture, Mohammad Ali Nikbakht, during his official visit to Iran. The meeting underscored the historical political, economic, and trade relations between Afghanistan and Iran, with a particular emphasis on the potential for enhancing these ties.

Mullah Baradar Akhund stressed the need for joint efforts to strengthen bilateral relations. The two sides explored various facets of agricultural cooperation, including the mechanization of agriculture in Afghanistan, support for alternative crops to replace poppy cultivation, investments in fundamental agricultural products and fruit trees, capacity-building in Afghan agriculture, irrigation, and livestock. The idea of organizing

joint exhibitions to market agricultural products was also discussed. The officials considered increasing agricultural investments in Afghanistan by Iranian investors, enhancing cooperation in importing and exporting agricultural goods, reducing tariffs on Afghan agricultural products, and facilitating the transportation of Afghan agricultural products through Iran to various destinations. Minister Mohammad

Ali Nikbakht and his accompanying Iranian officials assured Mullah Baradar Akhund's delegation of comprehensive collaboration in the mentioned areas. They affirmed that the relevant agencies of both countries would work closely together to advance economic and trade cooperation. This meeting signifies a promising step towards strengthening the agricultural ties between Afghanistan and Iran.

Deadly bus explosion in Kabul kills seven: Police

KABUL (Agencies): Seven people died, and 20 others were injured in a bus explosion in the Afghan capital on Tuesday, as reported by the police. According to Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadran, the explosion took place in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighbourhood of the capital. This area is known for being home to the historically marginalized Shia Hazara community.

An explosion occurred in a bus carrying civilian passengers in the Dasht-e-Barchi area of Kabul, resulting in the unfortunate loss of seven lives and injuries to 20 others, according to Zadran shared on social media X.

Security personnel were present at the scene and had initiated an investigation into the incident, as Zadran added. It's worth noting that a deadly explosion occurred in a sports club in



the same neighbourhood, which ISIS claimed in late October. In that previous incident, Taliban authorities confirmed four fatalities

and seven injuries. Since the Taliban assumed power in August 2021, there has been a significant reduction in the

number of bomb blasts and suicide attacks. However, various armed groups, including ISIS, continue to pose a threat in the country.

Afghans complain of intensifying deportations from Iran

KABUL (Agencies): Afghan refugees in Iran complain of the intensifying deportation of refugees. Some of these refugees said the increase in arrests and harassment by police has presented them with challenges.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Emirate has once again called on neighboring countries not to deport Afghan refugees. Deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan has now intensified, with the forced deportation of Afghan refugees from Iran.

A number of refugees expressed concern over their return to the country, saying harassment and deportation of Afghan refugees has increased in the past few days. "There is forced deportation of Afghan refugees from Iran, who entered Iran illegally. It's been going on before and these days the process is progressing more quickly," said Enayatullah Alokozay, a member of the defenders of Afghan



refugees in Iran. Afghan refugee representatives in Iran criticized the coldness of the government and the international community, and called for them to address their challenges. "Afghan refugees are being deported from Iran, he Iranian people and government are very oppressive to refugees. Iran pushes out refugees ahead of winter when it is not

right," said Spogmai Jabbarkhil, an Afghan refugees' representative in Iran. "Afghan refugees in Iran face various challenges in the employment market, with housing and the lack of identity documents," said Asefa Stanikzai, a refugee affairs analyst. Meanwhile, the Islamic Emirate says neighboring countries should not deport Afghan refugees by force.

"Do not deport refugees by force and do not treat them illegally. Our message to Iran and Pakistan is to be tolerant of the migrants, not to be oppressive and stop the persecution," said Zabihullah. According to the Herat Department of Refugees and Repatriations, more than 20,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran in the past week.

Comprehensive Cultural Programs Planned for Panjshir Province: Khairkhwah

KABUL (BNA): Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwah, the Acting Minister of Information and Culture, has announced a comprehensive plan for the implementation of cultural programs in Panjshir province during a meeting with Mawlawi Nasrullah Malekzada, the Director of Information and Culture of Panjshir. Malekzada shared information about the functions and achievements of the relevant department with the Acting Minister and also highlighted some of the challenges faced by the department. He requested the cooperation of the Ministry of Information and Culture's leadership in addressing these issues.



Mullah Khairkhwah expressed his views on enhancing cultural affairs in Panjshir and pledged to expand cultural programs in the province. He expressed satisfac-

tion with the cultural programs organized by the Department of Information and Culture in Panjshir in coordination with the ministry and praised a recent religious educational program as very fruitful.

Mawlawi Zia-ul-Haq Haqmal, the Director of Bakhtar News Agency and Acting Deputy of Publications of the Ministry of Information and Culture, also met with Malekzada to discuss the development of publications and cultural affairs in the province.

Balkh women grumble about lack of jobs, low wages



MAZAR-I-SHARIF (Pajhwok): A number of working women in the capital of northern Balkh province complain of a shortage of jobs and low wages. They urge the government to provide permanent employment opportunities for them so that they can overcome their financial problems. In the Yalmarb area, located in limits of the 5th police district of Mazar-i-Sharif, dozens of women

mostly breadwinners for their families — gather daily in quest of work. Fatima, one of the working women, told Pajhwok Afghan News she visited the place every day but barely found work for one or two days a week. "Our situation is not good. I have seven children and my husband is jobless, I come here in the hope of finding work," she said. According to Fatima, the daily wage of a working

woman is 150 afghanis which they can only buy bread with it. Mahtab, another woman, also grumbled about the lack of work, saying she came to this spot early in the morning. Still, she mostly she does not get any work until dusk. "Both legs of my husband are paralysed. I earn only 150afs a day. Life is so hard. With this daily wage, I cannot meet my needs," she said, asking the govern-

ment for support. Jamila, another working woman, shared a similar view, appealing to the government for financial support. Naseer Ahmad Abu Khalid, director of work and social affairs, said the Islamic Emirate was striving to provide employment for working women. He said a commission had been formed recently to provide job opportunities to workers, widows and poor women.

Women's Chamber of Commerce And Industry planning exhibition

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Women held a meeting regarding the holding of a national and international exhibition to support the "child and mother support week." "We want to support mothers first so that their children can benefit from the support, and when the mother can find her support in society, then she can present her children to society in the right way," said Salma Yosifi, head of the chamber. Meanwhile, the head of the ASOW organization, which supports the Women's Chamber of Commerce in the exhibition, said that they are try-

ing to create more job opportunities for the women of the country by holding the exhibition. "In these seven days of the exhibition, children from different vulnerable groups will be present, we have different programs for them, and special booths have been set up for them..." said Masoud Ayobi, head of the organization. Some economists consider holding such exhibitions and supporting women and children to be effective for the economic development of the country and creating job opportunities for the country. "Holding such exhibitions and

supporting families through the channel can have a positive effect on the economy," said Abdul Zahur, an economist. "It is very important for these exhibitions to be a point of connection with other countries in order to attract investment and also create a connection between domestic and foreign businesses," said Seyar Qureshi, an economist. Based on the statements of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the exhibition will begin on the 14th of the month and will continue for seven days, and 800 booths will be placed in the exhibition for the support of children and mothers.

Badghis residents want electricity extended to districts

QALA-I-NAW (Pajhwok): Some residents of western Badghis province have criticized the previous government for negligence to provide electricity to districts and have urged the Islamic Emirate to pay attention to this problem. Haseebullah, a resident of Qados district, slammed the previous government for not extending power supply to districts of the province. He told Pajhwok Afghan News despite the fact that electricity was imported from Turkmenistan at a high capacity into Badghis, its districts remained deprived of the facility.

He said: "Our request from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is to extend electricity to districts so that people can use it as it will help increase the income of the government." Meanwhile, Mohammad Shafiq, a resident of Aab Kamari district, made similar complaint, saying the past government had failed to pay attention to districts. He said Badghis had enough electricity which should be extended to districts as well in order people could benefit from it. Safiullah Safa Afzali, a professor at Badghis University, said electricity was an important necessity and its extension to districts would bring about prosperity and economic development. He said if electricity was provided to districts, it would create employment opportunities and would



generate income for the government as well. "Since all work and activities depend on power, so electricity can be one of the most useful energies in production, processing and services sector in society," he added. Khairullah Khairkhwa, provincial director of the power utility, acknowledged only Qala-i-Naw city was provided electricity. He said they planned to extend electricity to districts in the future.

He said so far preliminary surveys had been conducted in Qados, Maqur, Dar-i-Bam, Aab Kamari and Sang Atash districts to stretch electricity lines to these districts. "Currently, five districts have been surveyed, we have decided to extend electricity to districts." Afghanistan imports 430MW of electricity from Uzbekistan, 440 MW from Tajikistan, 202 MW from Turkmenistan and 102 MW from Iran.

Mushaal reiterates Pak's support to rights of Kashmiri, Palestinian people

JEDDAH (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick Tuesday said that Pakistan remained committed to supporting the legitimate freedom struggle of the Kashmiris and call for immediate resolution of Kashmir dispute as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Simultaneously Pakistan also strongly condemned the Israeli crimes against humanity and against innocent Palestinians children, women and men, she said this while addressing an international conference on 'Women in Islam: Status and Empowerment' jointly organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Mushaal Mullick further demanded an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, an end to blockade, full access to the international humanitarian organisations, medicine, food and water supplies to the beleaguered people. The SAPM is leading the Pakistan delegation at the conference and she is being accompanied by the Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) Nilofar Bakhtiar and the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the OIC, Ambassador Fawad Sher.

The three-day conference being held on November 6-8 is aimed at holding broad-based discussions on the role of women in an Islamic society. It focuses on the rights and responsibilities of women in Islam. In addition to Islamic scholars and official delegations from the OIC Member States, a large number of female heads of State, Ministers, and representatives from various international and regional organizations are participating.

The SAPM in her address, called upon the leadership of OIC to take practical steps to save her incarcerated husband Yasin Malik's life and all the oppressed Kashmiris and Palestinians. She explaining her viewpoint said that her family was at the forefront of Kashmir's struggle for the right to self determination against Indian Occupation.

"India has gifted our family with enormous titles, I am practically a half widow, my husband locked in a death cell of Tihar jail is a half father and our 11 year old daughter is a half orphan. We have not seen him since 9 years," she added. Mushaal further said that India had left them homeless, besides they witnessed various incidents of sexual harassment, tortures, arrests, attacks and threats, even her daughter was not spared, she was sexually harassed and body searched when she visited her jailed father in central jail when she was in her tender age of two years.

The SAPM said that Kashmiri people were paying high price for their right to freedom struggle as they were being held hostage, locked up, kidnapped by a tyrant occupation force that was committing genocide through body bags and meticulously manipulating demographic changes in blatant violations of Geneva Conventions, international law and UNSC resolutions. Mushaal said that the world should witness, as RSS-inspired Narendra Modi wanted to hang Yasin because he wanted to silence one of the biggest and powerful voices of freedom which was the basic right of every human being.

"Yasin Malik is innocent along with thousands of other Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders and political prisoners locked up in countless jails of India, if anything happens to him, Modi will be solely responsible for

this murder," she added. Mushaal stressed upon the world to take notice of such situation. Referring to the horrors of Palestine conflict, she said if the democratic voices of peace and non violence were killed, hanged, jailed, banned, if the voices of pacifism were suffocated then, they left these oppressed and cornered people with no choice but to choose violence to make their voices heard.

She questioned the criminal silence of the world for not stopping war crimes. "We are leading the world order towards a collapse as global peace, economies and security are directly linked to a peaceful settlement of Kashmir and Palestine issues," she maintained. The SAPM said that Muslim women and children of Kashmir and Palestine were facing gender-based violence including sexual harassment, rape as a weapon of war, post traumatic stress disorder, arbitrary detentions, trafficking of women, forced disappearances, socio economic burdens, legal issues, high ratios of suicide and depression, threats, malnourishment, lack of reporting and all defined as war crimes.

Mushaal appreciated the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for their dynamic role in enhancing the role of women's uplift according to the Vision 2030 policy under which Saudi women witnessed enhancement in their status in the field of sustained development.

She said Pakistan took pride as one of the staunchest supporters of women rights and women leadership." At the OIC, Pakistan had spearheaded various initiatives for women's rights and convened ministerial conference on women in Islam as the chair of the 48th CFM in New York, she added.



GAZA STRIP: People searching their loved ones under the damaged building after Israeli airstrikes in Khan Younus.

Sanam's remand extended

LAHORE (INP): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Tuesday extended the judicial remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist Sanam Javed till November 20 in a case pertaining to the burning of the office of Muslim League (N). Judge Abhar Gul heard the petition filed by the police against Sanam Javed, who was produced in court after the completion of her judicial remand.

During the hearing, the investigating officer requested the court to extend Javed's remand as the challan (chargesheet) had been prepared. The court, after hearing the arguments, accepted the police's plea and extended Javed's judicial remand till November 20. A case was registered against Javed at Model Town Police Station for her alleged involvement in the burning of the PML-N office.

IHC adjourns Qureshi's bail plea

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has adjourned the bail application hearing of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Vice Chairman, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, in the cipher case till tomorrow Wednesday.

The IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq heard the bail application on Tuesday and adjourned the case due to absence of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) prosecutor Shah Khawar. The FIA prosecutor's assistant appeared before the court and informed the judge that Mr Khawar is busy in the Supreme Court. Advocate Ali Bukhari, counsel of Mr Qureshi requested the court to reschedule the case hearing for 2 o'clock, however, the judge turned down his request and adjourned the case for tomorrow.

Pak-Korean FMs pledge to intensify coop

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Pakistan and Korea on Tuesday commemorated the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. To mark the occasion, Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and Foreign Minister of Republic of the Korea Park Jin exchanged messages of felicitations through diplomatic channels, according to a Radio Pakistan's report.

The relationship between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea is marked by characteristic warmth and candour and features mutually beneficial cooperation in diverse fields. Foreign Ministers of both countries reviewed the rich history of Pakistan-ROK relations, socio-cultural ties, development and economic cooperation and the contribution of respective diasporas, which act as a bridge of friendship between the two countries.

Underscoring the strong potential for future collaboration, the Foreign Ministers pledged to intensify cooperation in all fields, including political, economic, cultural and people-to-people contacts.

Solangi clarifies role, authority of CLCC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi clarified on Tuesday that the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC) does not wield more power than the Supreme Court and the Parliament.

In response to a calling attention notice regarding the issuance of a notification on August 23, 2023, which led to the establishment of the CLCC, the minister said, that Senator Raza Rabbani's concerns on the committee have no reality. Highlighting the legal framework behind the committee's formation, he said that the committee has been formed as per section 17 (2) of the Rules of Business 1973. According to this subsection, Committees of the Cabinet may be constituted, and their terms of reference and membership laid down by the Cabinet or the Prime Minister. Such Committees may be standing or special committees; accordingly, as they are appointed to deal with a class of cases or a specific case.

He said that the CCLC's purpose did not involve making the bills or primary legislation. Instead, it was established for subsidiary rule-making and the facilitation of extreme and emergency government-required legislation as authorized by the law. He said that neither the Constitution nor the law prohibits the issuance of ordinances, citing Article 89 of the Constitution, which permits emergency legislation. He also clarified that the primary role of the committee is to support the functions of the Cabinet Secretariat.

Govt to accept decision of Senate over Motion Pictures (Amendment) Bill 2023: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said that the government has great respect for the Senate and would accept the decision of this august house on the introduction of the Motion Pictures (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

Responding to a point of order raised by Mian Raza Rabbani, the minister said he had always firmly stood with the constitution, law and democracy adding that

there was no possibility of change in the said principles. He said that every bill took sufficient time in the process of preparation and the past government did the necessary work on it. The law ministry and respective legal branch had advised him to present the said bill in the House, the minister said.

Deferring the bill, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that he would give his opinion in this regard besides taking the Attorney General's point of view. Earlier, on a point of order, Mian Raza Rabbani questioned the legality of introducing a bill by the caretaker minister. Citing section 230 of the Election Act 2017, he maintained that the caretaker government could not do legislation as it was only the job of the elected representatives. He urged the chair not to allow the minister to introduce the bill and remove it from the agenda.

Earlier, speaking in the Senate during question hour, Murtaza Solangi assured the House that all questions of honorable senators would properly be responded to after getting detailed answers from the respective ministries and departments. He said that he had been assigned the charge of Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs yesterday and it was his responsibility to give satisfactory answers to the questions raised by the Senators.

Solangi assumes additional charge of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday assumed additional charge of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

On his arrival at Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Secretary of Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Malik Ghauri and other officials met the caretaker federal minister. On this occasion, Murtaza Solangi was briefed about the working of the Parliamentary Affairs Ministry. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar had assigned the additional charge of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi yesterday.

ECP all set to hold

(Continued from Page 1)

He thanked the World Economic Forum's Edison Alliance and its head Claude Dyer for recognising Pakistan's amazing success story of the Asaan Mobile Account (AMA) Scheme on the World Bank's Financial Inclusion and Women Empowerment Project.

He said under the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS), the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) collaborated with various branchless banking providers, banks and telecom operators to introduce Third Party Provider Services in Pakistan to facilitate the unbanked and underbanked population.

"The slogan is banking the unbanked. Before the launch of the AMA Scheme, 80% of the population was unbanked, whereas after the soft launch in December 2021 the ratio has improved by 10%. Unfortunately, of the 30% having bank accounts, only 18% (less than 5% of the total banking population) are women. With the launch of the AMA accounts 38% are women," he told the participants.

He said any Pakistani holding a valid National ID Card could open a bank account digitally anywhere without any hassle in less than two minutes in a swift, easy and affordable manner in any AMA participating bank from a smart or a feature phone using a short code of *2262#. "The account holders can then make transactions without the need for internet connectivity. Already more than 8.5 million Pakistanis

without internet facilities have bank accounts and this number is growing by 4000-5000 a day," he added.

"I believe Pakistan is leading in the opening of bank accounts in Edison Alliance's 1 Billion Lives Challenge by 2030. The platform's task is two-fold. The first is to open bank accounts without hassle and the second for the "many-to-many" model to help government and commercial organizations in social welfare and relief programmes, digital lending both Micro and Nano loans, as well as digital insurance to the masses."

Highlighting other innovative services being provided by Pakistan's banking sector, he said the home remittances being processed in a transparent and swift manner with the transaction of funds through legal financial channels was of particular importance. "The AMA Platform is conducting a pilot project with a number of banks where the recipient gets the fund directly from the donor abroad which can then be encashed directly at any one of the participating banks on the State Bank's PTA's innovative "agent interoperability" method," he added.

Calling the AMA Scheme a "shining example" of public-private partnership, he congratulated VRG, a member of the Pathfinder Group, a long-term member of the World Economic Forum (WEF), for the remarkable achievement. Finance Minister Dr Shamsad Akhtar, Deputy Governor of State Bank of Pakistan Saleem Ullah Khan and Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority Maj Gen

Hafeez ur Rehman Khan also addressed the event.

Dr Amjad Saqib, Head of the Benazir Income Support Programme - one of the most successful social welfare schemes in the world, also explained how BISP and AMA were going to work together to force-multiply the financial access to the deprived. Chairman of Pathfinder Group and VRG Zarrar Sehgal and Chief Executive Officer of Virtual Remittance Gateway Muhammad Salman Ali were also among the prominent speakers.

PM to attend ECO Summit: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday will embark on an official visit to Tashkent, Uzbekistan to participate in the 16th Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Summit being held on November 8-9. "At the Summit, the Prime Minister will reaffirm Pakistan's commitment to ECO Vision 2025 and to promotion of regional cooperation in the areas of trade, transport, connectivity, energy, tourism and economic growth and productivity," Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press statement on Tuesday.

The prime minister will present Pakistan's vision for the future work of the organization and for promotion of regional connectivity and mutual prosperity and would also engage in bilateral discussions with the leadership of Uzbekistan and other participating leaders. As a founding member of ECO, Pakistan remained committed to the goals of connectivity and mutual prosperity of the ECO region, it was added.

NDMA dispatches aid for Palestine

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, National Disaster Management Authority has arranged second tranche of relief assistance for the People of Palestine from People of Pakistan in wake of ongoing aggression, siege and attack on Palestine and specially Gaza.

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Mr. Khalil George and Palestine Ambassador in Pakistan, Ahmed Rabei, representatives of NGOs, senior officers of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NDMA attended the send-off ceremony at Islamabad International Airport today. The second consignment consisted of 89.6 ton including 40 ton food packs from Government of Pakistan whereas 3 ton food bags, 10.8 ton medicines, 26 ton hygiene & baby kits with support of NGOs in Pakistan. These relief items will be sent to Al Arish, Egypt from Islamabad via a special chartered plane. The consignment will be handed over to Red Crescent Society in Egypt for onward delivery in Gaza.

Earlier, NDMA has sent relief consignment comprising of 1,000 Special Winterized Tents, 4,000 Blankets and over 3 Tons of Medicines for distressed people of Gaza. Pakistan is standing with Palestinian brothers and sisters in the time of need and will continue to support them.

AC seeks help on Shehbaz's plea

LAHORE (INP): An accountability court of Lahore on Tuesday sought more help on pleas filed by former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif and others for their exoneration in Ashiana reference.

Accountability court conducted hearing of the reference against Shehbaz Sharif and others on Tuesday. The court remarked that the Supreme Court had barred the accountability court from issuing any final ruling. Lawyers of the accused said they would produce a copy of the apex court's order thereby clearing the matter.

The NAB lawyer said the case had been heard on merit and the Supreme Court's decision could not affect the case. The judge said that court was bound to comply with the Supreme Court's order. The court, seeking copy of the apex court's order, adjourned the hearing for a short time.

Steps underway to boost industrial sector of KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Tuesday said that federal and provincial government was making incessant efforts to strengthen industrial sector of KP and to promote business and trade activities.

He was talking to a delegation of Industrialist Association Peshawar at Governor House. The delegation was led by Ayub Khan Zakori and included former President Sarhad Chamber, Riaz Arshad, Ahsan Malik, Junaid Altaf, Faisal Safi and Wasiullah. The delegation informed governor about the concerns of industrialists relating to labor department, export difficulties of phar-

maceutical companies and gas and electricity charges. They also urged governor to take steps for establishing a police post in Hayatabad Industrial Estate and said that it PC I has been completed but practical work has not started due to unavailability of funds.

Governor said that resolution of problems confronted by industrial sector is among priorities of government and all the needed steps would be taken to facilitate stakeholders for augmentation of country's economy.

He said export problems relating to export of pharmaceutical companies of Peshawar to Afghanistan would be discussed with Afghan Consul General and Regional Office of

Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He also highlighted contribution of industrial sector to support economy of country and assured delegation all the needed assistance and cooperation.

Governor condole demise of father of journalist: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali here Tuesday condoled demise of the father of journalist, Sajjad Haider of SAMAA TV. The Governor also attended funeral prayer of the deceased at Kohati and prayed for eternal of the departed soul. He expressed confidence with the journalist over his father death and offered Fateha.

Returning Afghans receive sustenance, health services

FP Report

PESHAWAR: Alkhidmat Foundation remains resolute in its steadfast commitment to facilitating the dignified return of Afghan refugees. At the Torkham border, thousands of refugees have been receiving three meals daily and essential mobile health clinic services for the past week.

These Afghan refugees, who have resided in Pakistan for over four decades following their displacement from their own country, are now being supported in their return with respect and care.

Under the guidance of Khalid Waqas, Provincial President AKF, the organization has established a mobile health unit at the government registration camp in Torkham Lindi Kotal area at the Pak-Afghan border. Over the past week, the unit has been providing essential health services, including medical examinations, free laboratory tests, and consistent access to free medicines.

Dedicated volunteers of Alkhidmat Foundation,

under the supervision of Haji Muqtadar Afridi and Murad Hussain Shinwari, have been diligently ensuring that thousands of Afghan refugees returning home receive breakfast and two meals daily. Furthermore, clean drinking water has been made available through strategically placed water tanks within the camp, established by the government of Pakistan. The camp is also receiving a continuous supply of water through these tanks.

Alkhidmat volunteers are equally engaged in providing relief to Afghan families returning to their homeland from various parts of the country, particularly in government reception camps in Nowshera and Kacha Garhi, Peshawar.

The Ambassador of Afghanistan, Sardar Ahmed Shakib, stationed in Islamabad, paid a visit to the Central Reception and Registration Camp organized by the Government of Pakistan in Landi Kotal. During his visit, he inspected the mobile health unit setup and operated by

Alkhidmat Foundation. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the high-quality medical facilities provided to Afghan refugees and acknowledged the invaluable aid efforts undertaken by Alkhidmat Foundation in Pakistan.

In collaboration with local philanthropists, Alkhidmat volunteers have extended their support by providing lunch boxes, water, juice, biscuits, and other essential food items to these returning families through trucks and passenger vehicles, spanning from Nowshera to Peshawar and further to Landi Kotal.

Meanwhile, as per Muhammad Waseem, senior manager of the Disaster Department of Alkhidmat Foundation, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the collaborative efforts with Afghan families transiting through Angor Ada persist. Furthermore, a second mobile health unit, furnished with medical equipment, medicines, and laboratory facilities, has recently reached Afghanistan. This additional unit is set to commence providing medical services to the returning refugees.

NAB's meddling in politics not a good omen: Abbasi

KARACHI (INP): Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Tuesday once again called for the abolition of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to 'keep the country moving'.

Speaking to the media in Karachi after attending the accountability court on Tuesday, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi alleged that NAB was meddling in politics which was not a good omen. After years of proceedings, in the end, one comes to know

that there was nothing in the NAB allegations, he said, adding that the bureau had paralyzed the country. He lashed out at the former NAB chief Justice (retired) Javed Iqbal for 'fixing' political leadership in corruption cases.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said he met former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo Nawaz Sharif in London. "I have a relation of respect with Nawaz Sharif,

which will remain intact." The former premier said though he has resigned from the party position in the PML-N, but he will go and meet Nawaz Sharif if he is called.

Earlier, talking to media outside the accountability court, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi revealed that he was no longer a senior leader of the party and he did not find it necessary to attend the event of Nawaz Sharif's return to Pakistan.