



Pakistan Navy deploys ship for regional maritime security patrol



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Amidst the prevailing maritime situation in the Middle East, Pakistan Navy has deployed PNS TUGHRIL to ensure safety and security of merchant

ships carrying shipments to and from Pakistani ports passing through one of the world's busiest choke points.

Pakistan Navy is committed to ensure freedom of navigation on high seas and safety of international sea lanes of

communication besides safeguarding national maritime interests and trade through sea. Pakistan Navy is well cognizant of its national obligation with regards to maintenance of rule based order in the region. In the same spirit Pakistan Navy regularly deploys its ships on Regional Maritime Security Patrols and also contributes to collaborative maritime security efforts under the ambit of Combined Maritime Forces.

COURT NOTICE

IN the Court of Raja Badar Munir Senior Civil Judge Swabi. Suit No. 78/1, Institution 01-11-2023. Next date of hearing 05-12-2023. Cast Titled: Waqar Ali Shah Vs Chairman Board. Notice to Chairman Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Peshawar, Director General Immigration and Passport Swabi, Vice Chancellor Khyber Medical University Peshawar, Chairman Pakistan Medical and Dental Council Islamabad. President college of Physician and Surgeon Pakistan. The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 05-12-2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.

Mushaal briefs UK Parliamentarians on human right violations in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick Friday attended a meeting of cross-party British Parliamentarians, convened by Member Parliament, Chairperson APPG on Jammu & Kashmir, Debbie Abrahams at a virtual platform from London. Besides British Parliamentarians, members of the civil society and human rights organisations also participated in the virtual debate, which circled around the state of human rights affairs in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mushaal Mullick briefed

the parliamentarians about human rights abuses by the Indian government in the occupied valley. She particularly raised the issue of gross

violations of human rights against women and children in IIOJK. The special assistant urged the international community to take notice of the

treatment of minorities, particularly the forced conversions of the Christian and other minorities under the RSS ideology, inside India.

TENDER NOTICE # 01/2023

- Sealed bids are invited from the firms registered with FBR & other Govt. Departments, for supply of Stationery and General Items on FOR Atomic Energy Cancer Hospital (DINAR) D.I.Khan.
- Complete / detailed specifications and terms and conditions of the bids are available in tender documents, which will be issued upon written request & provision of NTN/GST registered firms. The tender documents can be obtained from the office of the Administrator DINAR D.I.Khan during office timings from 0800 to 1400 hours (Monday to Saturday) on payment of Rs.200/- being tender fee (non-refundable) in cash or bank draft in the name of Head LAO, DINAR, D.I.Khan.
- The sealed bids must reach the undersigned on or before **22-12-2023** upto **1130 Hrs** and will be opened at **1200 Hrs** on same day. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders.

ADMINISTRATOR, DINAR
Ph:- 0966-747125

اطلاع عام

وہ اہل امیدواران جنہوں نے ایٹا کے ذریعے ڈائریکٹوریٹ جنرل ایکسائز، ٹیکسیشن اینڈ نارکس کنٹرل خیر بختونخوا پشاور میں کمپیوٹر آپریٹر (BPS-16)، آڈٹ اینڈ اکاؤنٹ اسسٹنٹ (BPS-14)، جونیئر سیکل مینو گر (BPS-14)، اسسٹنٹ سب انسپکٹر (BPS-11)، کانسٹیبل (BPS-07) اور ڈائریکٹریٹ آف پریئر (BPS-07) کی خالی آسامیوں پر بھرتی کا ابتدائی ٹیسٹ پاس کیا ہو اور اس ضمن میں انٹرویو کیلئے مدعو کئے گئے ہوں۔ ایسے تمام اہل امیدواران کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ چند ناگزیر انتظامی وجوہات کی بناء پر مورخہ 04 دسمبر 2023 بروز پیر سے شروع ہونے والے انٹرویو تا حکم خالی ملتوی کئے جاتے ہیں۔ نئی تاریخوں کا اعلان بعد میں کیا جائیگا، اور متعلقہ امیدواران کو حسب ضابطہ مطلع کیا جائیگا۔

INF(P) 2923/23

HABIBMETRO SHIFTING OF OUR JAGAM BRANCH

We are pleased to notify that our “**Jagam Branch**” at Ownership No.675, Main Bazar Jagam, Upper Dir will be shifted to the following address w.e.f. **January 10, 2024:**

**Ownership No.16
Muhallah AziKhel
Dheri Alladhand, Tehsil Thana
Baizai, District Malakand.**

For any queries and clarifications our valued customers can contact us on the following numbers.

**Nisar Ali Khan
Branch Manager
Cell No.: 0300-9300286**



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STAY AHEAD

Lost & Found

I have lost original company invoice of my motorbike CG125, Engine # T018063, Chassis # EB709068. If anyone finds please contact M. Habib Cell # 03114279012, 03422828280



RE-NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING (Single Stage Two Envelop System)

Irrigation Department Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Irrigation Division Tribal District North Waziristan invites Technical and Financial (Electronic Bids) on the basis of single stage two envelop system from the Government Contractors/Firms enlisted with Irrigation Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who have renewed their enlistment and PEC license in relevant category for Solar (EE-11) for the year 2023-24 for the following works:

S.#	Name of Work/Sub Work	Est. Cost (M)	Earnest Money	Required Category of PEC	Period of Completion	Last Date & Time of Bid Submission
(A)	Construction of Irrigation Tube Wells / Lift Irrigation Schemes and Solarization of existing Irrigation Tube Wells in Merged Areas (AIP) ADP No.2183/210588 (2023-24)					
1	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Mirkhon Khel, Sheratala Tehsil Spinwam NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	5.164	2% of Estimated Cost	EE-11 CE-04	As Per Work Order	19-12-2023 12:00 (P.M)
2	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Azim Khel Shamin Tehsil Spinwam NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.254	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
3	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well for Mubarak Khel Khushali, Tehsil Razmak NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	5.801	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
4	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Spera Rogha Tehsil Spinwam NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	4.352	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
5	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well at Noor Khel Tabi Tool Khel Tehsil Miranshah NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.195	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
6	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Ghareeb Khel Village Eppli Tehsil Mirali NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.195	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
7	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Jamal Khel Wazir Abad Tehsil Mirali NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.195	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
8	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well at Zalol Khel Tehsil Shewa NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.727	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
9	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Gulab Khel Tabi Toll Khel, Tehsil Miranshah NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	3.657	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
10	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Napalkai Mubaraze Tehsil Shewa NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	4.567	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
11	Construction of New Solar Irrigation Tube Well Sarkhanai Alam Khel Tehsil Shewa NWTD. (Installation of Machinery & Solar System)	4.567	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Technical Design should be based on Hydraulic Parameter of the scheme provided in the bidding documents and rates should be quoted accordingly in the financial bid. Technical bid will be opened on the date and time mentioned above by the bid opening committee in the office of the undersigned in the presence of bidders. Specification and design parameter of pumping machinery are given in the bidding documents.
- Electronic bidding will be online through E-bidding system. Tender form and BOQ can be filled online and downloaded from the official website of Irrigation Department i.e. www.irrigation.gkp.kp, moreover a complete set of bid solicitation documents may be obtained on submission of written application from office of the undersigned on cash payment nonrefundable fees of 0.03% @ of estimated cost otherwise bid submitted without these documents will be considered as non-responsive.
- Electronic bidding shall be done on "above / below system" on BOQ / Engineer's estimate, based on MRS 2022. Only two digits after the decimal point shall be considered for evaluation purpose.
- All bidders are required to have valid registration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act, 2018 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act. XXI of 2013).
- The contractors quoting their bids up to a limit of 10% below Engineer estimate shall submit bid security @ 2% only of Engineer Estimate along with the stamp duty in the name of procuring entity (through courier) before closing date and time otherwise it will be considered as non-responsive.
- If the contractors quoting their bids more than 10% below upto 20% below on Engineers' Estimate shall submit along with their bids 8% Additional Security of Engineers' Estimated cost in addition to 2% bid security. If the bid is not accompanied with the required amount of additional security, then it will be considered as non-responsive and the 2% bid security shall be forfeited in favour of Government and the second lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.
- Similarly, a contractor quoting bid more than 20% below shall submit with his bid an additional security on Engineer's estimated cost equal to the differential amount of submitted bid and Engineers' Estimate along with detailed rate analysis. In case of more than 20% below bids, if the bid is not accompanied by the detailed rate analysis and / or required amount of additional security, then the said bid shall be considered as non-responsive. All the securities submitted along with such non-responsive bid shall be forfeited in favour of Government and the 2nd lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.
- The Additional Security shall be released to the contractor in four installments i.e., 1st installment of 25% to be released upon completion of 25% of the project, 2nd installment of 25% to be released upon completion of 50% of the project, 3rd installment of 25% to be released upon completion of 75% of the project and the 4th installment of 25% to be released after 100% completion of the project.
- Bid security of 1st, 2nd and 3rd lowest bidder will be retained by the procuring entity till approval of the bid by the competent authority.
- In case, no security deposit is credited, the bid shall be considered non-responsive / rejected.
- All Federal and Provincial taxes / duties shall be deducted from the bills of the contractors at prescribed rates as per Government Policy issued from time to time.
- The bidders belonging to newly merged areas of tribal districts shall require to submit exemption certificate regarding Federal & Provincial Taxes / duties etc: from the concerned Federal / Provincial tax authorities on approval of their bids.
- Any bidder who provided incorrect information shall stand disqualified as per KPRA Act Section 29 (I) rule (43).
- Successful bidders should sign the agreement with the Department within Twenty Eight (28) days after acceptance of bid.
- Electronic bids will be displayed through online E-Bidding System after 30 minutes of closing time in the presence of bidders / their representative who choose to be present.
- The procuring entity has the authority to reject any E-bid or all E-bids assigning valid reasons.
- All the prevailing KPRA rules / Act and other Govt. notifications will be applicable issued from time to time.
- The defect liability period for 02 Years (all allied accessories) & Warranty for Solar Panel for 20 Years and shall commence from the date of commissioning for each work.
- Date of opening of financial bid will be announced after approval of Technical Bid from the competent authority and will be communicated to all bidders accordingly.
- Technical and Financial bids if received to the office of the undersigned unsealed will be rejected.

Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division District North Waziristan

INF(P): 2925/2023

Directorate General
On-Farm Water Management
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

زمیندار حضرات سے درخواستیں مطلوب

خیبر پختونخوا میں جدید آبپاشی نظام (لیزر لینڈ لیولر) لگانے کا منصوبہ

خیبر پختونخوا ایریگیٹنڈ ایگریکلچر امپروومنٹ پراجیکٹ

صوبہ خیبر پختونخوا میں جدید آبپاشی زراعت کی فروغ، زمینداروں کی پیداواری صلاحیت بڑھانے اور جدید خطوط پر استوار کرنے کیلئے محمد آن فارم وائرمنجمنٹ خیبر پختونخوا نے صوبہ بھر میں مخصوص زمینداروں کے لئے 500 لیزر لینڈ لیولر پیش برائے زمین کی صوری فراہم کرنے کا پروگرام بنایا ہے۔ اس پروگرام کا منصوبہ کے تحت (نصف) یعنی 50% ادائیگی پر پیش فراہم کئے جائیں گے۔ پہلے آئے پہلے پائے کی بنیاد پر صوبہ بھر سے خواہشمند زمیندار جو اپنے ٹریکٹر کے مالک ہوں، سے درخواستیں مطلوب ہیں۔ اس کے ساتھ ساتھ ان زمینداروں کو تربیت بھی فراہم کی جائیگی۔ تاکہ زمیندار اس نظام سے بھرپور استفادہ حاصل کر سکیں۔

فوائد

پانی کی بچت تقریباً 25 فیصد تک ہوتی ہے	پیداوار میں 23 فیصد اضافہ جبکہ خرچے کو کم کرتا ہے
زمین کی تیاری آسان اور کم خرچہ میں	جدید مشینیں زمینداری اور کاشت کی طرف ایک اہم قدم
کم وقت میں زیادہ اور بہتر کام	کھادوں کی ایک جیسی فراہمی سے پیداوار میں تقریباً 11 فیصد اضافہ
فصل کی ایک جیسی بڑھوتری ممکن	مجموعی طور پر زمیندار کو 30 فیصد اضافہ

طریقہ کار: درخواست فارم متعلقہ ضلعی دفتر محکمہ اصلاح آبپاشی خیبر پختونخوا سے مفت حاصل کریں۔
درخواست فارم شعبہ اصلاح آبپاشی کی ویب سائٹ www.pk.gov.pk سے بھی ڈاؤن لوڈ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔

مزید معلومات اور رہنمائی کیلئے متعلقہ ڈسٹرکٹ ڈائریکٹر (اصلاح آبپاشی) کے دفاتر سے رابطہ کریں
ڈائریکٹر جنرل آن فارم وائرمنجمنٹ محکمہ زراعت خیبر پختونخوا جہ درود پشاور فون نمبر 091-9224307، 091-9224308

INF(P): 2931/2023



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Commerce and Industry, Tribal Affairs and Technical Education for Special NMDs Amir Abdullah addressing a gathering. —F.P. photo

16 days of activism against gender-based violence marked

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khalil George, Caretaker Minister for Human Rights, said people from all groups, religions, identities are equal citizens of Pakistan. 'Rights and inclusion of marginalised groups in Pakistan has been one of the priorities for the government, as various laws and policies are testament to its commitment for inclusion of the vulnerable groups in the country', the honourable minister commented.

The Federal Minister was speaking at the concluding session of the 2-day Aawaz II Learning Forum, organised by British Council, Peace & Justice Network and Omar Asghar Khan Foundation in Islamabad. Aawaz II launched the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (GBV) campaign by disseminating messages through radio, social media and community meetings in 37 districts of KP and Punjab.

Community members shared Aawaz II activities bringing change to people's lives through information dissemination pertaining to preventions of child marriage, facilitation of disability certificates for persons with disabilities and civil registration of women from marginalised households, religious minorities and transgender persons etc.

The Federal Ombudsperson, Ms Fauzia Viqar, remarked that the 'women and other groups in need should reach out to duty bearers not only for redressal but to make government institutions accountable to improve access to service delivery.'

Andrew Bowden, Group Head of FCDO in Pakistan, in his inaugural statement, commended the work of Aawaz II. He expressed that Aawaz II had provided a model where the government, civil society and communities can work together on important issues such as gender-based violence and interfaith harmony.



Dr. Yasmin Zaidi, Aawaz II Team Lead, highlighted that more than 40,000 Aawaz II volunteers and youth were working with local communities to address GBV, child marriage, and social exclusion.

Affan Javed, Senior Programme Manager, shared that the British Council believed in inclusive and participatory behaviour change approach for sustainable development. Other speakers included Provincial Ombudsperson KP Ms. Rukhsanda Naz, Additional Secretary, Social Welfare Special Education and Women Empowerment Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Farooq, Secretary Provincial Commission on the Status of Women Punjab Ms Nabila Javaid, Director Inclusive Registration NADRA, Ms Reema Aftab, Mr Nadeem Ashraf Member Punjab National Commission on Human Rights and experts on the rights of women, religious minorities, women with disabilities and transgender persons.

Rukhsana, a person with disability from Sahiwal said that as member of Aawaz II forum she is invited by district office of Social Welfare Department for discussions and addressing issues of PWDs in the area. Nayab Ali, a transgender rights activist applauded the inclusive

approach of Aawaz II for including transgender persons as members of Aawaz II forums and facilitating transgender persons linkages with government official for redressal of their issues. Mumtaz Mughal, renowned women rights activist said that community groups such as village forums are important for strengthening leadership of vulnerable persons including women and also useful for spreading messages of women's rights, and social cohesion.

Participants shared that Aawaz II village and district forums were being recognised by local duty bearers and issues of women, religious minorities, transgender persons, and people with disabilities were now prioritised. People from vulnerable groups are invited in meetings and government led initiatives at district level.

Representatives from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), British Council, government departments, civil society and community leaders from 37 districts of KP and Punjab attended the event and contributed significantly in the discussions around various themes of Aawaz II. Aawaz II programme is managed by the British Council with support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

Free glucometers distributed among diabetic patients at MTH

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a concerted effort to enhance diabetes management, Mercy Teaching Hospital (MTH) Peshawar organized the free distribution of glucometers among diabetic patients.

Mercy Hospital Administration said on Friday the event held on the hospital premises, witnessed the active participation of doctors, healthcare workers and patients, marking a significant initiative during the diabetes awareness month as scheduled by the hospital's Diabetes Unit.

Prominent figures in the medical field, including Dr. Faheemullah, Dr. Umer Saeed, and Dr. Sajjad Malik, graced the occasion, placing emphasis on the critical importance of glucometers and their proper usage in

effective diabetes management. The doctors highlighted the significance of regular blood glucose level checks, underscoring its role in avoiding health complications associated with irregular sugar levels and facilitating patients in maintaining comprehensive health records.

During the event, Dr. Umar provided insights into the recommended blood glucose levels, explaining that normal readings should fall within the range of 80 to 130 during fasting and 80 to 180 after two hours of consuming a meal. Understanding these benchmarks, he stressed, was crucial for individuals managing diabetes to maintain optimal health and mitigate the risk of complications.

Dr. Sajjad Malik addressed the audience, affirming that diabetes is a treatable and manageable disease. "With proper care, individuals living

with diabetes can lead a normal life," the expert asserted. He encouraged attendees to educate themselves about diabetes, be aware of associated risks, and actively manage their condition to ensure a healthy and fulfilling life.

The glucometer distribution event served as a valuable initiative by Mercy Teaching Hospital to equip diabetic patients with essential tools for self-monitoring, empowering them in their journey towards optimal health. The doctors' insights and practical advice reinforced the hospital's commitment to proactive healthcare and community well-being. As the event concluded, attendees left with not only glucometers but also a renewed understanding of diabetes management, emphasizing the hospital's dedication to fostering a healthier community through education and accessible resources.

Campaign against polio in full swing

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Afaq Wazir, the administrative officers were strictly monitoring the anti-polio campaign throughout the provincial capital to ensure vaccination of as many as 901,985 children under the age of five.

The teams of district administration visit the health centres daily to check staff attendance and review the performance of the anti-polio campaign. The health department has constituted 2,496 teams to administer polio drops to vulnerable children. DC Afaq Wazir has appealed to the parents to get their children vaccinated against poliovirus to save them from permanent disability.

NCP goods worth over Rs13.8m seized

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The district police, during a crackdown against smuggling of non custom paid (NCP) items, have seized goods worth over Rs 13.8 million in actions taken in different areas.

According to the Police spokesman, following the directions of District Police Officer Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, the operations against smugglings of NCP goods were continued across the district. A team of Mughalkot police team led by SDPO Darazinda Circle Sher Ullah Khan along with SHO Rehmat Ullah Khan stopped a truck bearing registration number (FDD-9555) coming from Quetta. During the check-

ing, the police recovered 115 sacks 'Chalia' and 10 sacks of Chinese Salt.

The estimated worth of these recovered items was around Rs 13.25 million. Similarly, the Dera Town police team led by SDPO Saddar Circle Sher Ullah Khan along with SHO Malik Sajid during routine patrol stopped a 'Datsun Dala' bearing registration number (B-1620) and recovered 17 sacks of Iranian Plastic bags after found them NCP. The estimated worth of these recovered NCP Iranian plastic bags is Rs 0.55 million. Later, all the recovered NCP goods were handed over to the customs authorities for further legal action.

Steps afoot to ensure availability of fertilizers at

fixed prices
D I KHAN, (APP - UrduPoint / Pakistan Point News - 1st Dec, 2023) The district administration is taking concrete measures to ensure availability of fertilizers at fixed prices in the market.

In this regard, Assistant Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Muhammad Faseeh Ishaq Abbasi along with the officers and field staff of the Agriculture Department here on Friday raided at different fertilizers dealers on Chashma road following the directions of Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Arshad. A shop of fertilizers dealer was sealed over a charge of selling fertilizers on higher prices while legal action was initiated against some others.

Customs inspector among 2 held F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The raiding team of FIA here on Friday arrested an organized gang involved in illegal clearance of US dollars during an intelligence-based operation at Torkham Border.

The FIA Spokesman said the action was taken on the directive of Deputy Director Anti-Corruption, Saad Ullah Khan during which two members of the gang including a Customs Inspector were arrested from Foreign Currency Declaration Point at Torkham.

The accused were identified as Customs Inspector Wajid and agent Asfandyar. Customs Inspector Wajid was deputed at Torkham Border while the other accused Wajid was involved in illegal clearance of the foreign currency at the border.

During the search, the FIA recovered 123000 US dollars from Asfandyar. The accused confessed to his involvement in smuggling of hundreds of thousands of dollars on a daily basis to Afghanistan. He said he was in contact with several agents and received his share at Customs Office, Torkham. He revealed that his share for illegally clearing US 100000 dollars was Rs 50000 per deal. The spokesman said both the accused were in custody and investigation was underway adding that raids were being conducted to arrest other members of the gang.

Cold weather to prevail in KP F.P. Report

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

It said that foggy conditions are expected over Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Peshawar, Swabi and D.I. Khan districts, as well as, over Motorway (M1) / Highways in late night & morning hours. The center advised the travelers on Motorway and highways to take precautionary measures.

During the last 24 hours cold and cloudy weather occurred in most districts of the province. However, rain occurred in Mansehra, Swat, Bajaur, Lower & Upper Dir, Abbottabad, Kohistan, Khyber and Chitral districts. Rain recorded in (mm): Balakot 24, Kalam 14, Pashat-Bajaur 16, Saidu Sharif & Malam Jabba 12 (each), Dir & Timergara 10 (each), Kakul 09, Pattan & Tirah 05(each), Chitral & Drosh 01 (each).

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar 22/10, Chitral 13/05, Timergara 19/05, Dir 16/03, Mirkhani 16/05, Kalam 05/-02, Drosh 14/05, Saidu Sharif 16/06, Pattan 15/11, Malam Jabba 07/02, Takht Bhai 22/11, Kakul 13/06, Balakot 13/08, Parachinar 18/02, Bannu 24/08, Cherat 16/07, DI Khan City 27/12. The lowest temperature recorded in the province was -02°C in Kalam and -01°C Tirah valley of Khyber district.

Four drug peddlers held F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Excise Police on Friday foiled bids to smuggle narcotics and arrested four drug peddlers including two ladies.

The Excise spokesperson said that in a joint operation conducted by Khyber Excise Police Station and Peshawar Excise Police Station, 4000 grams of high-quality heroin was recovered from a vehicle on Jamrud Road.

A case was registered against a drug peddler at Excise Police Station. In another operation conducted by Excise Intelligence Bureau EIB-1 and Excise Police Station Peshawar, an attempt to smuggle large quantities of drugs was foiled. Two lady drug smugglers along with a male accomplice arrested, said the spokesperson 1950 grams of ice and 15600 grams of hashish were recovered during the search of a rickshaw on the Main GT Road.

Minister urges provision of basic rights to tribesmen

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Interim Provincial Minister for Commerce and Industry, Tribal Affairs and Technical Education for Special NMDs Amir Abdullah has said that efforts will be made to complete unfinished development to ensure provision of all facilities being enjoyed by the citizens in other parts of the country.

He expressed the views while addressing to a gathering held here in jirga hall, Landi Kotal on Friday. Beside the Minister as chief guest, Deputy Commissioner, Khyber Sanaullah, District Police Officer, Saleem Abbas Kulachvi, Tehsil Chairman Haji Khalid, Assistant

Commissioner, Landi Kotal Irshad Mohmand, representatives of line departments, tribal elders from Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal were among the participants.

Minister Amir Abdullah said that although the merged tribal belt had been ignored for a long period, but the government was competent enough to remove a sense of deprivation among the tribesmen. He maintained that launching new development projects was not a mandate of the interim government, however initiatives would be adopted to complete the ongoing progress schemes.

Keeping in view security and international scenarios, border management was necessary to curtail

illegal penetration, he added. The Minister urged the tribal elites to join hands with the government to prevent use, smuggling and business of narcotic commodities in the area.

He announced that a scheme of interest free loans for merged districts youths had been launched to encourage them to utilize their energies in fruitful activities.

On the complaint of the tribesmen, he also directed relevant officials to deal with issues on the spot. Prior to it, the locals apprised the visiting guests of the problems being faced by them. DC, Khyber welcomed the Minister while one of the elders presented him with a turban on the occasion.

Plot allottees urged to start construction on enterprises

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC) Javed Iqbal Khattak has urged the plot allottees/leaseholders of industrial plots in the economic zones of the company to promptly commence construction on their enterprises.

He was talking to a group of industrial plots' allottees which called on here at KP-EZDMC headquarters here said a press release issued here on Friday. During meeting with the CEO KP-EZDMC, the owners of the industrial plots requested him to address their concerns related to Nowshera Economic

Zone.

In response to the concerns of the group, the CEO KP-EZDMC said that the company has already facilitated essential infrastructure and urged them to start timely constructions. Timely initiation of industrial operations is poised to generate employment opportunities and catalyze economic growth in the region, saying KP-EZDMC remains dedicated to driving industrialization in the province.

Meanwhile, Mr. Adil Salahuddin, Chief Commercial Officer at KP-EZDMC has said that the second phase of CPEC would initiate a fresh era of economic development. He was addressing a seminar on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

at the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar. The seminar was organized by the China Window in collaboration with IMSciences.

He enlightened the audience on the Government's initiatives to establish Special Economic Zones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and that the second phase of CPEC would initiate a fresh era of economic development. The seminar was also attended by Secretary Irrigation KP, Javed Marwat, Director IMSciences Professor Dr. Usman Ghani and Professor Dr. Gulzar Jalal of Edwards College, Peshawar. They delivered speeches and presentations, shedding light on various facets of CPEC, its second phase, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Power suspension for Peshawar notified

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Friday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Hayatabad Grid Station on 3rd December from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. resultantly, the consumers of 132 KV FF Steel, Sheikh Muhammadi grid connected feeders will face inconvenience.

Likewise, it said power supply will remain suspended from Hayatabad Grid Station on 3rd December from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. resultantly, consumers of 132 KV Peshawar Cantt and Peshawar University

Wood, Frontier Ceramics, Bacha Steel Mills, Pak Army, Shah Kas, Al Mezan Steel Mills feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will remain suspended from D.I. Khan Grid Station on 4th and 5th December from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. resultantly, consumers of Sheikh Yousaf 1,2, Sagu and CRBC feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will also remain suspended from Power House-Peshawar Cantt Transmission Line on 3rd December from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. resultantly consumers of 132 KV Peshawar Cantt and Peshawar University

grid Connected feeders will face inconvenience.

Moreover, it said power supply will remain suspended from Hattar- Best Way Cement Factory Transmission Line on 3rd December from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. resultantly, consumers of 132 KV BestWay Cement Factory Grid Connected feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply, it said will also remain suspended from Hattar Grid Station on 3rd December from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly, consumers of Mustahkam, Hattar 8, 9, Coca Cola, Kartas Paper Mill feeders will face inconvenience.

ATP leader calls youth a catalyst for change

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Muhammad Faiq Shah, founder and chairman of the Amun Taraqqi Party termed the youth as catalyst of change, fully capable to steer the country out from the prevailing crisis. The ATP chief stressed the need for a new way of thinking and politics in Pakistan, saying that it is essential to bury the old politics of hatred and revenge that is detrimental to the country's youth.

He vowed his party would empower the people and youth and they will be made leaders and heads to lead the country from the front. We will make them (youth) the true owners of the country. Addressing a youth convention here on Friday, Shah emphasised that his party possessed effective solutions for the issues facing the country.

He stated that his party has come into the political arena under the motto to ensure public authority, justice and facilities at people's doorstep. The ATP chief asked the former and present rulers to get ready for accountability and questions of the general public. Shah anticipated a massive caravan of youth coming soon.

He maintained that since the last 76 years, the state, people and society have been exploited by elites and a specific segment by snatching justice and authority, they become richest and people become poorest. This economic murder tendency is continuing in the country, he added. Faiq asked youth to come forward and block the way of the economic murderer and give them humiliating defeat through a democratic way.

Deficit is consistently burdening on the people and gaining support from others. He said national wealth, institutions and resources have been grabbed and for retrieval, there is desperately needed a government based on public authority and political movement. Ordinary people should be in parliament and elites must be jailed, Shah asserted, adding that those who looted national wealth with both hands are moving freely.

He said it is a matter of serious concern that a FIR of poor people wasn't registered. Courts implicate in high profile and political based cases. He said institutions instead of becoming public servants indulge in tug of war for gaining power. So who will deliver justice to people in such a situation, he added.

Traffic jam irks citizens

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Heavy traffic jam on roads especially during peak hours is creating problems for the citizen and the traffic police have been urged to take solid steps to ensure smooth flow of traffic to provide relief to the commuters in the city.

Traffic jam has become a routine matter especially on Tank Adda, Bannu Adda, Imamia gate, Kashmir Chowk, Sabzi mandi and kecheri road. Illegal parkings, massive encroachments, parking vehicles in front of shops, hotels and offices, violation of traffic

rules and increasing number of light duty vehicles particularly three-wheeler Qingqi rickshaws and loaders are some of the major reasons, which adds to mental trauma of the people delaying them from reaching their destinations. It irritates and frustrates people especially those traveling in an emergency and ironically no adequate measures have been taken to solve the long standing problem. The citizens said that they face inconvenience to reach their destinations, as traffic was not regulated properly by the traffic wardens on different routes.



In brief

Man guns down mother, brother Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: A wicked person gunned down his mother and young brother over unknown dispute. According to details, the incident took place in Nizampur area of Nowshera where accused Sabeel sprayed bullets at his family members. As a result of firing mother and younger brother of accused were killed on the spot. The culprit fled the scene after committing the dual murder. The bodies were shifted to hospital for postmortem. The police after registering a case into the incident started raids to arrest the culprit.

Two coalminers die, three rescued

DUKKI (INP): Three colliers died and three others were rescued after they were trapped in a coalmine in Dukkan district of Balochistan, reported on Friday. Two miners, Abdullah son of Gulbadin and Bakhtullah son of Taj Muhammad, residents of Afghanistan, lost their lives. Three miners including Sayed Khan, Rozuddin and Mutiullah were rescued 12 hours after the fire has broken out inside the mine. Giving details of incident, Inspector Mines Maqsood Ahmed Husni said that miners were stuck at a depth of 3,500 feet in the coal mine. He said as soon as they got the information, their team reached the affected mine and conducted a successful rescue operation.

Police arrests four outlaws F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Dera police arrested four outlaws during actions against criminal elements in the limits of Kulachi police station here. According to the police spokesman, On the direction of District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, SHO Kulachi police station Bilal Khan during operations arrested drug peddler Akhtar Parvez son of Sarfaraz resident of Muriyali and recovered 584 grams of hashish and 85 grams of heroin from his possession. Another accused Ahmad Madani, son of Muhammad Arshad was arrested and police seized a 12-bore gun with 06 cartridges from his possession. Similarly, Muhammad Muzamil, son of Fahim Qureshi, resident of Eidgah was arrested and 12 bore rifle gun with 05 cartridges from his possession. Meanwhile, accused Rahat son of Ghulam Shabir was arrested after recovering 520 grams of hashish and 30 grams of ice from his possession. The police registered separate cases against the arrested criminals and started further investigation.

Polio campaign reviewed F.P. Report

KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Dr. Azmatullah Wazir led a polio campaign performance review on Friday, urged Kohat residents to support the vaccination effort for a polio-free district. According to DC office, Dr. Azmatullah Wazir presided over a performance review meeting of the fourth day of the polio campaign. DC Dr. Wazir urged the residents of Kohat district to join the fight against polio by taking the vaccine to protect their children from permanent disability and to cooperate with the polio teams to eradicate the virus from the district. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Shahryar Qamar, Additional Assistant Commissioners, District Health Officer Kohat and other relevant health staff attended the meeting to discuss the about the campaign and the steps to be taken to ensure its success in the coming days.



HYDERABAD: Women participants in a rally in connection with upcoming Sindhi Culture Day outside Press Club.

Gujjars to back victim's family against killers

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Gujar Qaumi Movement (GQM) announced to socially boycott the family of a killer that violated a jirga's decision and killed a youth Karimullah at Badwan a week ago.

Speaking at a jirga held at Swato Banda, the GQM chief Haji Zarin Khan Gujar, Gul Zada, Haji Muhammad Nazir and others said that a jirga had resolved a feud between the families of Umar Said and Bahadar Khan Gujar.

They said the jirga had also received a fine of Rs 200,000 from the parties and had decided that any of the parties violating the decision would be fined for Rs 5 million. They said the parties had agreed and promised that they would live like brothers in future. The GQM leaders said that sons of Umar Said violated the jirga verdict and shot dead son of Bahadar Khan

on a roadside a week ago.

They said that it was considered bad manners for Pukhtuns to dishonor the jirga's decision. They said the GQM would now fully support the victim's family and the entire clan would socially boycott the killer's family. They said the local police had registered an FIR of the case. The Gujar elders demanded the administration to arrest the killers and also receive Rs 5 million as fine from them.

PhD defense: A senior lecturer of Mathematics at the University of Malakand (UoM) Bashar Khan, successfully defended his doctoral thesis under the "A Comparative Study of Abelian Distributive Abel Grossmann's groupoids".

Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad, Chairman of the Department of Mathematics UoM and Dr. Amanullah guided the scholar to embark on a scholarly endeavor that culminated in an exceptional

thesis.

According to a press release issued by the varsity the notable highlights of Mr. Bashar Khan's doctoral journey was the involvement of external examiners who evaluated his work meticulously. Prof. Dr. Siraj ul Islam, Dean of Sciences, University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar and Prof. Dr. Saeed ul Islam, Dean of Sciences at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, played crucial roles in the examination process, affirming the rigor and significance of his research.

The Department of Mathematics at UoM, led by Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad joined faculty members in extending heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Bashar Khan and his dedicated research supervisors. The defense of the thesis drew esteemed guests from the academic community and research students among others, graced the occasion.

PPP celebrates foundation day F.P. Report

BUNER: The PPP district chapter celebrated organized party 56th foundation day at Hujra Akbar Ali in Daggar.

The Party KP president Mohamad Ali Shah Bacha elder son Syed Usman Ali Shah was chief guest. The party district chapter leaders Rafiqullah Khan Dr. Parkash Dr. Imran Shah M. Ali Akbar Ali Shamsheer Bacha Sherzan Khan Yousaf Ali Khan Khazir Khan Zahir Shah Khan addressed.

The speakers highlighted PPP founder Z.A. Bhutto vision was empowered public by giving them right to one man one vote, CNIC, Passport enabling them of world wide employment besides Pakistan a nucleur status and unanimous constitution. They were proud over precious sacrifice of leaders for democracy and promised the mission would be continued under the leadership of party chairman Bilawal Bhutto and co chairman Asif Ali Zardari and to achieved the goal of Democracy in the country and supremacy of mases.

2 coalminers dead in Dara Adam Khel F.P. Report

DARA ADAM KHEL: Two more coal miners belonging to Shangla district died at Dara Adamkhel in different coal mines in one labourer was died due to cardiac arrest.

According to details, Bakht Zada resident of Dheri area of Alpuri tehsil was died due to cardiac arrest at Bazikhel coal Company while Muhammad Feroz resident of Pagori died at Ayub Coal Company.

It is worthy to mention that 65% of Shangla population directly depending on coal mining while neither they are registered with competent forum nor working in an environment established under standard procedure. The residents argued competent authorities to registered coal miner and ensure provision of benefits to locality and their children.

Five dead in mishap

SHIKARPUR (INP): At least five passengers were dead in a tragic accident when a car, en route from Quetta to Naushehro Feroze, plunged into a gorge due to dense fog on Friday. According to the local police, the overspeeding car went out of control and fell into the gorge at Southern Bypass in Shikarpur. As a result, five people lost their lives.

The ill-fated vehicle was heading to Naushehro Feroze from Quetta. The initial reports suggested that the cause of the deadly accident was overspeeding and dense fog. Rescue teams have reached the spot. Last month, seven people including a folksinger Sharafat Ali were 'dead' after the car they were travelling in fell into a canal in Mianwali. Rescue sources said seven people were travelling in the ill-fated car when it plunged into a canal near Paka Kanjhara in Mianwali. Singer Sharafat Ali was going to his home after attending a marriage ceremony when the accident took place.

Couple commit suicide after killing three daughters

FAISALABAD (PPI): In a shocking incident, a Faisalabad couple committed suicide after killing their daughters in Faisalabad over loan repayment on Friday.

According to police, the incident took place in Dajkot area of Faisalabad, where a man named Tahir and his wife Naheed committed suicide after killing their three children. The police said Tahir took a loan of about Rs300,000 from various persons and the couple took this step after failing to pay back the amount.

A letter found from the body of Tahir stated that he was committing suicide after failing to pay his loan, the police said. The bodies have been shifted to the hospital by the rescue teams for legal formalities. Last year in December, a man killed his wife and three minor daughters on the pretext of saving his honour in Muzaffargarh.

According to details, the suspect, Afzal slit the throat of his wife Azra and three daughters named Taskeen, 4 years, Misbah 3 years and an infant of 10 days in the

limits of 'satpur' police station and escaped from the scene. Later, a police party, on a tip-off, conducted a raid at a house in the area and arrested the suspect. The police sources said that the suspect doubted the character of his wife.

2 dacoits killed, 2 escape after police encounter: Two dacoits were killed and as many others escaped after a police encounter in the area of Thikriwala police station. A police spokesman said on Friday that four outlaws were looting people near Chak No 77-JB, Mullanpur, when the police received information and rushed to the spot.

The police ordered the dacoits to surrender, but they opened indiscriminate fire after hiding themselves in nearby fields. The police also returned the fire and during the encounter, two bandits received serious bullet injuries and died on-the-spot, whereas their two accomplices managed to escape from the scene under the cover of darkness and firing.

The police shifted the bodies to mortuary for post-

mortem. They were identified as Talal and Saleem, residents of Jaranwala, who were wanted to the police in a number of dacoity, robbery and other cases. The police also started investigation for arrest of the escapee, he added.

Rescue-1122 rescues 10,776 people during November: The Punjab Emergency Services (Rescue-1122) rescued 10,776 people in Faisalabad during November 2023. District Emergency Officer Zafar Iqbal, while chairing the monthly performance meeting, said Rescue-1122 had received 11,290 emergency calls including 2,537 calls about road accidents, 7,670 calls about medical emergency, 100 calls about fire incident, 233 calls about crimes, four calls about drowning incidents, 11 calls about building collapse and 735 miscellaneous calls.

Rescue-1122 responded promptly to these calls and rescued 10,776 people by providing first aid to 4,757 patients and shifted 5,524 victims to various hospitals for treatment, he added.

Former MPA, family join JUI-F in Karak

F.P. Report

KARAK: Former provincial minister and three-time MPA Mian Nisargul Kakakhel in Ghandi Mirkhankhel, dozens of families associated with the Awami National Party gave a grand welcome to Mian Nisargul, a member of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, on his arrival.

According to the details provided, the smoky entry of ex-MPA Mian Nisargul in Ghandi Mirkhankhel, which is considered as the stronghold of Awami National Party, has been tasted for a long time. Join in Mian Nisar Gul was warmly welcomed on his arrival in Ghandi Mir Khankhel and in this regard, programs will be organized in his honor at various places. Zahir Khan,

Mohammad Saeed, Zar Hakim, Umar Khan, Subidar Nurghani Khan, Tawab Ali from Mohalla Mir Alam Khel, Naveed, Zafar Nazir, Baharamin from Mohalla Jhandakhel, Zahidullah, gave full support while Subidar Astam Khan joined with his entire family.

Gul Shahid Khan, Shamsur Rahman, Adalat Khan, Benares Khan and Musam Shah from Mahalla Baki Khel, Subidar Aurangzeb from Mahalla Sikander Khel, Asal Khan, Nabibullah, Amin Badshah, Sabir Khan, Zafar, Tahsinullah, Iftikhar, Zahoore, Dilnawaz, Naem Khan, Iqbal Khan, Nur Khanan, Farmanullah and Maulana Ejaz resigned from Awami National Party. Mian Nisar Gul thanked all the families for

joining the Karwan Jamiat and welcoming them.

And he said that the coming era belongs to Jamiat, Jamiat will establish a strong and stable government not only in the center but also in the province and will bring the province on the track of construction and development again while maintaining its traditions. In the meantime, the billions of rupees usurped by the former PTI government in the name of oil and gas of Kohat division will be returned to the division, which will start the journey of development in the division, especially in Karak district. Over the years, irreparable damage has been done and his government walked off the opposition, stalling progress.

PPP gathering change politics in Balochistan

F.P. Report

QUETTA: The successful JALSA held on the occasion of the 56th foundation day of Pakistan People's Party proved that the people of Balochistan consider the People's Party as their Savior. District President Hub Mir Ali Hassan Zehri thanked the public for the success of the "JALSA" organized on the foundation day of the party. He said that yesterday's "JALSA" was the biggest gathering in the history of Balochistan, which is the beginning of a big change in politics in the province. Participation has dealt a big blow to Artificial, seasonal and self-interested politics.

For those who thought that Pakistan People's Party's position in Balochistan is weak, yesterday's "JALSA" is a message that Pakistan PPP is the people's party. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that after yesterday's successful

"JALSA", the zealous people of Balochistan, who love former President Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, are going to create a new history of Balochistan together with the Pakistan People's Party. As Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal assured in their speech that they would end their attachment to Balochistan and the deprivations of Balochistan, similarly the people of Balochistan should vote for the People's Party in the upcoming elections and make their beloved party successful with a huge majority.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the history of Pakistan People's Party is full of sacrifices. Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shaheed-e-Jamhuriat Bibi Benazir Bhutto and many martyrs are the capital of the party, thanks to their eternal sacrifices; the party still rules the hearts of the people. He said that the

People's Party is the party of the oppressed and down-trodden sections of Pakistan, which our leaders cultivated with their own blood. It is only because of the sacrifices of the martyrs of the People's Party that the voice of democracy is high in Pakistan because the party always spoke of democracy. Pakistan Peoples Party is still rise the voice for timely and transparent elections.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that yesterday's "JALSA" is the representative of the aspirations of Balochistan, after which there is no doubt that Balochistan province is the stronghold of People's Party and the party is the most popular party in the province. He further said in his statement that in the next few days, many prominent personalities are joining the People's Party, after which the dreams of artificial and seasonal alliances in the province will be shattered.

New patwar khana building inaugurated

HARIPUR (INP): Miss Labeqa Akram, Assistant Commissioner Haripur, formally inaugurated the newly constructed Patwar Khana building on Friday. The inauguration marks a positive step towards improving the efficiency and accessibility of revenue services in the area.

During the ceremony, Miss Akram emphasized the importance of the Patwar Khana in facilitating land record management and ensuring timely resolution of land disputes. She issued immediate instructions to the concerned revenue staff to begin the process of shifting records to the new building, ensuring a seamless

transition and minimal disruption to services.

Following the inauguration, a revenue durbar was held at the Patwar Khana. The event saw the participation of key stakeholders, including Deputy Director Database, Revenue Officers, officials, and Chairman Village Council. This provided a platform for local residents to directly interact with revenue officials and voice their concerns.

In the Revenue Court, citizens brought their land-related issues to the attention of the officers. Demonstrating responsiveness and commitment to resolving public grievances, Miss Akram promptly

issued necessary instructions to the relevant authorities for immediate action. This hands-on approach instilled a sense of confidence and trust among the attendees, assuring them of timely resolution to their problems. The inauguration of the new Patwar Khana building and the subsequent revenue durbar represent significant steps towards improving the delivery of revenue services in Haripur.

These initiatives are expected to enhance accessibility, efficiency, and transparency, ultimately benefiting the local community and ensuring a more equitable and streamlined land management system.

DC takes swift action during visit to Havelian

HAVELIAN (APP): To address pressing issues in Havelian Tehsil, Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad Khalid Iqbal Friday paid an unannounced visit to various locations to assess traffic concerns, illegal stands, and unregulated traffic control and inspected bus and wagon stands in Havelian.

During the visit, Additional Assistant Commissioner Havelian Lubna Iqbal, Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) Havelian, and DSP Traffic Havelian were also present. Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad prioritized resolving immediate traffic issues and directed

improvements in facilities for residents. He ensured strict law enforcement by coordinating efforts with the administration and police officers.

In a surprising move, Khalid Iqbal also visited the Nadra office in Havelian. Responding to public complaints, the Deputy Commissioner engaged with citizens during his visit to the Nadra office. He addressed issues, listened to the grievances of the public, and issued directives to the Nadra office administration for potential improvements in facilities.

Later in the day, Khalid

Iqbal extended his visit to the Industrial Estate in Havelian to tackle issues related to transmission lines. Additional Assistant Commissioner Havelian Lubna Iqbal provided operational insights during the visit.

Rescue 1122 Abbottabad responds to 365 emergencies: Rescue 1122 Abbottabad Friday provided emergency services in a total of 365 incidents throughout the month of November 2023. This was disclosed in a monthly performance report issued by the District Emergency Officer Muhammad Arif Khattak here Friday.



Gaza residents’ anger over steep rise in prices

GAZA STRIP: As the sounds of war quietened with the advent of the first truce between Israel and Hamas since October 7, the markets in the Gaza Strip have been flooded with shoppers, desperate to buy food supplies and winter clothes. But the cost of these products has skyrocketed, particularly for basic foodstuffs, sparking anger and resentment among shoppers who blame shopkeepers and stallholders for high prices.

Imm Abdullah, who was displaced from her home in the Nassr neighbourhood in Gaza City a month ago after Israel ordered people in northern Gaza to move south, has been staying at one of the United Nations-run schools in Deir el-Balah with her 12 children and grandchildren. She said conditions in the school have become desperate, with no water and barely any provisions. “When the Israelis threw leaflets down at us, I left with my family wearing just my prayer clothes,” she said. “At the school, we barely get food assistance. The other day we got a can of tuna. How am I supposed to sustain my family with that?”

Imm Abdullah had come to the town’s market to try to buy food and some warmer clothes for herself and her grandchildren, as the weather had turned cold. But after visiting different stalls to look for basic food products, her exasperation bubbled over. “I don’t believe the merchants when they say the prices are out of their control,” she said. “They can regulate prices and be considerate of the fact that we are going through exceptional times, which is not something they should take advantage of.”

She rattled off a list of products that are now unaffordable: Bottled water, which used to be 2 shekels (\$0.50), is now 4 or 5 shekels (\$0.80-\$1). A carton of eggs is 45 shekels (\$12). A kilo of salt, which used to be 1 shekel is now 12 (\$3.20), while sugar is 25 shekels (\$6.70). “It’s so unfair,” Imm Abdullah said. “I can’t take it any more and some days I go sit by the sea and weep because I don’t know how to feed or sustain my family. Sometimes I wish we had stayed in our home and got bombed instead of going through this.”



According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the poverty rate in the Gaza Strip has reached 53 percent, with one-third (33.7 percent) of Gaza residents living in extreme poverty. Approximately 64 percent of households in Gaza are without enough food, and unemployment is at 47 percent – one of the highest rates in the world.

According to Elhasan Bakr, an economic analyst based in Gaza, the price distortion has led to inflation of between 300 and 2,000 percent for various products. Even before October 7, a 17-year Israeli blockade on the coastal enclave had resulted in the loss of \$35bn to the Palestinian economy. “The latest Israeli aggres-

sion has been another nail in the coffin of Gaza’s economy,” Bakr told Al Jazeera. “The direct loss to the private sector has surpassed \$3bn, while the indirect losses are more than \$1.5bn.”

The agricultural sector, he added, has suffered a direct loss of \$300m. “This includes the uprooting and bulldozing of fruitful trees in the agricultural lands in the north and east near the Israeli fence, which means that it will be another few years before farmers can reap what they sow,” he explained. “We are talking about a total paralysis of economic activity in Gaza. There are 65,000 economic facilities – ranging from the agricultural to the service industries – in the private sector which

have been either destroyed or stopped working because of the war. This has resulted in a huge loss of jobs, which in turn leads to a complete lack of food security.”

Furthermore, the small amount of aid that has been allowed by Israel to enter Gaza is insufficient to cover the needs of the almost one million displaced people staying at UN schools for even one day. “From October 22 to November 12 – in those 20 days – fewer than 1,100 trucks entered the Gaza Strip,” Bakr said. “Fewer than 400 of these trucks carried food products. Barely 10 percent of Gaza’s food sector needs are met. This is nowhere near enough, especially when you consider the fact that, before October 7, at least 500 trucks

used to enter the Strip on a daily basis.”

The Gaza Strip, he added, would need 1,000 to 1,500 trucks a day to deliver the needs of the population of 2.3 million. In the Deir el-Balah market, Mohammed Yasser Abu Amra stands over the bags of spices and grains that he sells each day that the truce lasts. “The war has affected everything, from delivery costs to supplies,” the 28-year-old said. “Whatever I have now, once that is finished I won’t have the money to buy the same products because it’ll be more expensive, so that leaves me no choice but to raise prices to break even.”

The main reason for the price rises, he said, is the closure of the border crossings, which has led to wholesale merchants selling products to shopkeepers at much higher prices. “Lentils used to be 2 shekels (\$0.50) per kilo and we would sell it for 3 (\$0.80),” Abu Amra said. “Now we buy it for 8 shekels (\$2) and sell it for 10 (\$2.60).”

A bag of fava beans used to be 70 shekels (\$18) and is now priced at 150 shekels (\$40), he added, while previously a bag of cornflour would be 90 shekels (\$19) but is now 120 shekels (\$32). Abu Amra’s neighbour, also a shopkeeper, lost his home and warehouse in an Israeli attack, resulting in the loss of \$8,000 worth of produce. Another shopper, Imm Watan Muheisan, said loudly – to the chagrin of nearby shopkeepers – that the current prices are “insane”.

“If you have 1,000 shekels (\$270), you can only buy a handful of food items,” she snapped. “One kilo of potatoes is now 25 shekels (\$6.70), it used to be three kilos for 5 shekels (\$1.70).” The mother of seven, who fled her home in the Shati (Beach) refugee camp east of Gaza City four weeks ago, is sheltering at the Deir el-Balah UN school for girls where, she said, she and her family are barely surviving.

“We walked here and had to pass by the dead bodies on the street,” she said. “We used to wear our best clothes to market... we’re not here to beg.” Ahmad Abulnaja, an 18-year-old shopkeeper, began selling clothes with his older cousin Ali at the begin-

ning of the war. He agreed that wholesale merchants are behind the increase in prices. “A tracksuit used to sell for 20 to 25 shekels (\$5.30 – \$6.70) but now it’s 45 (\$12),” he said. “That is, the merchant I get my supplies from has raised the price because the supply is dwindling.”

Price hikes are more pronounced on food products rather than clothes, but the demand for clothes is also high as displaced people try to buy warm clothes with winter setting in. were forced to flee their homes in northern Gaza without bringing their possessions. Abulnaja’s cousin, Ali, said he believed the informal prices will be around for a long time because the scale of destruction in Gaza is so immense and the demand for products shows no sign of abating.

“It’ll be a while before we have a solution,” he said. “Even if more products enter the Gaza Strip, there’s nothing to stop one merchant from selling a product at the price he sets, especially since northern Gaza is cut off from the rest of the Strip.” There is also the issue of the lack of compensation for businesses, the economic analyst, Elhasan Bakr, said. He pointed to the fact that in the aftermath of previous Israeli wars on the enclave, donor aid has centred on rebuilding housing units, rather than supporting the economy.

According to UN estimates, the last four Israeli offensives on the Strip between 2009 and 2021 caused damage estimated at \$5bn, but none of the damage in the 2014 and 2021 wars had been repaired. “We are talking about the devastation of the basic infrastructure which would need months to rebuild, from roads to communications towers to electricity installations and sanitary extensions,” Bakr said. But until then, the Palestinian economy will not recover unless there is a huge international effort in aid, and poverty and unemployment levels will reach new record highs. “Gaza at its present stage is unliveable,” Bakr said, adding that more than 300,000 people have lost their homes. “We need a minimum of five years just to go back to where we were before the war started.” — Aljazeera

‘I am not an anti-Semite’: Pro-Palestine artists cancelled across Europe

GAZA: In early October, when Israel began bombing Gaza, Bangladeshi photojournalist Shahidul Alam was busy co-curating a planned photography exhibition in Germany. Feeling worried, he took a break from his work and took to social media to decry Israel’s attacks on the densely populated Palestinian enclave.

Alam is no stranger to human rights abuses and speaking his mind. In 2018, he was celebrated in Time magazine for his decades-long career documenting political unrest in Bangladesh. That year, he was detained for more than 100 days, accused of “false” statements after criticising Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in an interview. Since the onset of Israel’s war on Gaza, Alam has posted about the conflict dozens of times on Facebook to his 114,000 followers.

On October 8, one post read: “The news of semi-naked Israeli bodies being paraded is horrendous and cannot be justified ... I feel for all Palestinians and Israelis lives destroyed.” Another, on October 29, said: “This weekend’s horrific violence is the ugly reality of Israeli apartheid, the rotten fruit of decades of occupation of a stateless people divested of basic rights and freedoms.”

On November 21, the German Biennale for Contemporary Photography dropped the veteran shooter, accusing him of anti-Semitism. “Various posts by Shahidul Alam on his Facebook channel after October 7 have given a platform to content that can be read as anti-Semitic and anti-Semitic content,” it said. Alam’s two Bangladeshi co-curators, Tanzim Wahab and Munem Wasif, resigned in solidarity, prompting organisers to scrap next year’s exhibition tour of three German

cities.

They said that among the allegedly anti-Semitic posts were an “uncommented interview by Shahidul Alam with the Palestinian ambassador to Bangladesh, a comparison of the current war with the Holocaust, and accusations of genocide by the state of Israel against the Palestinian population in Gaza”. They also complained that Alam had not deleted “racist and other comparable comments” against Israelis from his page, ostensibly made by some of his followers.

Alam, Wahab and Wasif deny the allegations. “We have a moral responsibility to decide which side of history we will stand on,” they said in a statement. Alam told Al Jazeera: “I am an anti-Zionist which means I am against colonialism, settler colonialism, against racism, against apartheid and genocide. “I am not an anti-Semite, and it’s most unfortunate that Germany chooses to conflate the two, [as this] serves and furthers the white supremacist agenda.”

The episode is one of many high-profile fallout across the Western arts world in recent weeks over the Middle East war, focused on accusations of anti-Semitism. Several tense cases are focused in Germany, which has a special responsibility to Israel given its history arising from the Holocaust. However, artists, protesters and activists say Berlin’s crackdown confuses criticism of Israeli policies with anti-Jewish racism.

Israel began bombing Gaza after Hamas, which governs the densely populated Strip, attacked southern Israel, killing about 1,200 Israelis and kidnapping more than 200. To date, Israel’s strikes, officially aimed at crushing the Palestinian group, have killed more than 15,000 people, among them many children. In the

wake of the Hamas attack, the Frankfurt Book Fair “indefinitely postponed” an appearance by Palestinian author Adania Shibli, who was due to receive a prize for her novel Minor Detail on October 20.

On November 13, Haitian-born curator Anais Duplan was left “speechless” after his Afrofuturism exhibition at Germany’s Museum Folkwang was abruptly cancelled by the museum’s director Peter Gorschluter. Gorschluter said Duplan’s social media posts “do not acknowledge the terroristic attack of the Hamas and consider the Israeli military operation in Gaza a genocide”.

Meanwhile, several artists have resigned from their posts at the renowned German modern art exhibition, Documenta, in a showdown that has dominated Europe’s cultural headlines for weeks. On November 16, most of the exhibition’s six-member finding committee quit in solidarity with Ranjit Hoskote, who had quit days earlier after a German daily, Sueddeutsche Zeitung, revealed that he had signed a 2019 letter published by the Indian arm of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement.

That letter prompted German accusations of anti-Semitism against Hoskote, a writer and curator. Earlier, the managing director of Documenta, Andreas Hoffmann, publicly condemned two Indonesian artistic directors of the last Documenta in 2022 for allegedly liking, and then unliking, an Instagram post in support of Palestine. The pro-Palestinian post had been published by British artist and activist Hamja Ahsan, who took part in Documenta’s 2022 edition as a solo artist. Ahsan’s Instagram account username, realdocumenta, was later suspended. — Aljazeera

Spain: Israel complying with int’l law

MADRID: Spain’s prime minister has expressed doubts that Israel is abiding by international law in its war on Gaza, given the high number of civilian casualties there. “The footage we are seeing and the growing numbers of children dying, I have serious doubt [Israel] is complying with international humanitarian law,” Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said.

“What we are seeing in Gaza is not acceptable,” he said in an interview with Spanish state-owned broadcaster TVE. Israel responded to what it called a “shameful statement” by Sanchez, by summoning the Spanish ambassador for a reprimand and recalling its envoy to Madrid for consultations. “Israel conducts itself and will continue to conduct itself in accordance with international law,” Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen posted on X.

Eight weeks of Israeli bombardment and a ground offensive in Gaza have killed at least 15,000 Palestinians, uprooted three-quarters of the population of 2.3 million and sparked a debilitating humanitarian crisis, before a temporary truce was called on November 24. Last week Sanchez denounced Israel’s “indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians, including thousands of boys and girls” in the Gaza Strip. — Aljazeera

High-profile murders inspire calls for justice

MEXICO CITY: Felina Santiago was cutting hair in her salon when she heard that one of her oldest friends, Oscar Cazorla, had been stabbed to death at the age of 62. “I was paralysed with pain,” she recalled. “I knew we had lost a pillar of our community that day.”

Santiago and Cazorla both belong to Mexico’s muxe community, pronounced “mu-shay”, made up of people who identify as a third gender, neither male nor female. Traditionally, in Indigenous Zapotec society, muxe have been respected, even celebrated. But Cazorla’s murder in 2019 — along with the death of another prominent non-binary figure this month — has left the community shaken, fearful of further violence.

The latest high-profile incident came on November 13, when Jesus Ociel Baena, Mexico’s first openly non-binary magistrate, was found dead at home with multiple wounds. “Hatred is harming our cities, our towns and the people in our communities,” Santiago said. “When one hears about tragic deaths, like that of Jesus, who was well-known — an academic, smart and very influential — it makes us think we need even more protection.”

The news of Baena’s death broke just four days before the biggest muxe event of the year, called the “Vela de las Auténticas Intrepidas Buscadoras del Peligro”. The name loosely translates to the Vigil for the Authentic and Fearless Seekers of Danger. Taking place in Juchitán, a town in the southern state of Oaxaca, the three-day festival brings together thousands of revellers each year. But for Santiago, the president of the festival, the latest celebration was particularly poignant. It was a chance to show “no fear” in the face of the violence. “The sadness affects us all deeply, but we must show our resistance to stop the feeling of fear growing. We stand together in solidarity to show society we are one and we want justice.” Violence and threats have haunted the muxe and other members of Mexico’s LGBTQ community for

years. From 2018 through 2022, homicide claimed at least 453 LGBTQ people in the country, according to the advocacy group Letra S.

In the last year alone, the group estimated that, on average, seven LGBTQ people were murdered each month, with transgender and non-binary people at particular risk. Studies suggest the violence is a regional issue. Earlier this month, the Trans Murder Monitoring project found that 74 percent of all documented murders of transgender or gender-diverse people took place in Latin America.

In the region, Brazil registered the highest number of murders, but Mexico came in second, with 52 homicides between October 2022 and September 2023. Part of Zapotec tradition, the muxe are their own distinct community, similar to but separate from categories like “transgender”. They are often described as representing a “duality” that embodies both sides of the gender spectrum. Many are declared male at birth but embrace feminine roles and characteristics, sometimes wearing dresses and makeup.

The annual “vela” festivity was conceived in the mid-1970s as a celebration of muxe identity, full of dancing, opulent gowns and round-the-clock music. Cazorla, the muxe who was murdered in 2019, was one of a few key figures who founded the event. But Cazorla’s death — and that of Baena — cast a shadow over this year’s celebration, the 48th edition of the “vela”. Justice remains elusive: No arrests have been made in either case. Authorities have said that Baena’s partner Dorian Herrera may have killed him in a murder-suicide. But that suggestion has sparked outrage among LGBTQ leaders, who question how such a conclusion could be reached so quickly after Baena’s and Herrera’s deaths. “A huge number of crimes perpetrated against our community go unanswered,” said one muxe attendee at this year’s “vela”, Valkis Lopez. — Aljazeera

A hard, bloody winter awaits Ukrainian and Russian soldiers

MOSCOW: This winter is likely to see a long and bloody stalemate in Ukraine, with neither side backing down from offensives and counteroffensives, but may sow the seed of negotiations next year, experts tell Al Jazeera. “The winter is just going to reinforce the misery ... neither side is going to have a tactical or operational breakthrough,” retired colonel Seth Krummrich, now vice president at Global Guardian, a security consultancy, told Al Jazeera.

Ukraine launched a major counteroffensive in early June that by some estimates took back half the land Russia had seized earlier in the year. But it failed in its strategic objective of cutting Russian forces in two, isolating Kherson, Zaporizhia and Crimea from Luhansk, Donetsk and Kharkiv. Ukrainian senior commanders have said the counteroffensive will continue through the winter. Last month Russia attempted to answer with a new set of offensives in the east — headed towards the cities of Kupiansk, Lyman, Avdiivka and Mariinka. None has succeeded, but Russia has continued the assaults despite snow and frost, as evidenced near Kupiansk on November 21.

“I think they’re going to try to push through in the winter,” said

Krummrich. “The ground freezes, [they’ll] try to make some moves because they’re desperate. I don’t mean the Ukrainians. I mean the Russians. The soldiers won’t want to do it. It will be a disaster. There will be more dead bodies,” he said. That is already evident. Ukraine’s armed forces estimate 6,260 Russian deaths in the week of November 20-26, an average of almost 1,000 a day — the result of relentless Russian attacks in the east.

“This is a war that lacks high strategy,” Konstantinos Grivas, who teaches weapons systems and geopolitics at the Hellenic Army Academy, told Al Jazeera. “Russia became trapped in an attrition war, which has its own logic ... it’s a war on autopilot.” Both sides have failed to come up with a technological or tactical advantage that would produce a breakthrough because defence is dominant, said Grivas.

“Firepower and passive defences — minefields, trenches for instance — seem to have neutralised the capabilities of mechanised and airborne forces,” said Grivas. “If there is a critical development it will be a collapse due to exhaustion — like a boxing match where one fighter simply can’t take the blows, but not from a knock-

out punch.” Both sides have had strategies for success, but all have so far been parried.

Russia had hoped for a quick collapse of the Ukrainian armed forces when it invaded in February 2022. When that failed, it rained down some 10,000 missiles on Ukraine’s cities to break the country’s will to fight. Last winter Russia targeted power stations, causing outages, and in July it started targeting port infrastructure to stop the export of Ukrainian grain.

Ukraine’s Western allies responded with air defence systems, spare parts and emergency generators to keep Ukraine’s power flowing. They provided medium-range missiles Ukraine combined with its domestically manufactured drones to drive Russian naval power back to its own shores, creating a safe passage for merchant shipping. Ukraine tried its own offensive strategies. It used these ranged weapons to strike deep in the Russian rear to disrupt the supply of weapons to the front, but Russia moved its stockpiles out of range and found delivery byways. Ukraine has sent drones to attack Russian missile manufacturing sites and Moscow itself, but their payloads were too small to do much damage. Ukraine

has most recently asked for F-16 fighter planes, which some NATO members have agreed to supply, but it is doubtful these will be a stalemate-breaker either, say experts.

“Even if they get F-16s, they won’t be able to use them effectively because these planes need thousands of hours [of training] in flight to become operational,” Andreas Iliopoulos, a former deputy commander of the Hellenic Army, told Al Jazeera. “They won’t be effective until 2025.” “I think all this is a Ukrainian effort to continue to claim Western help and stave off fatigue and the pressure to negotiate,” said Grivas.

Ukraine’s allies banned Russian oil, gold, diamonds, lumber and other lucrative exports to starve the Russian economy, but Russia sold its oil at discounted rates to China, India and other markets. Sanctions also attempted to stop the flow of capital and sensitive technologies to Russia. But Russia has been manufacturing weapons and buying artillery shells and drones from pariah states that share its hatred of the United States — Iran and North Korea.

Last August, Ukrainian intelligence estimated Russia had about 585 missiles of various types left, but

planned to build more than 100 a month. This month, the Ukrainian military said, Russia had stockpiled more than 800 missiles in Crimea alone and was preparing to fire them. Russia’s ability to keep up its stockpiles and to draw on large reserves of manpower has led some observers to suggest that time is on its side.

“Ukraine was likely to lose in a protracted war of attrition, because it would be an unfair fight,” wrote John Mearnsheimer, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, in a recent opinion piece entitled “Bound to Lose”. “I keep hearing people say, he’s going to wear out the Ukrainians. That’s not going to happen with a conscript army that doesn’t want to be there,” said Krummrich, who has fought in special operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and believes Russian soldier morale is breaking down.

“Every single wave of soldiers that somehow survives and goes home, they’re telling everybody they can, ‘for the love of God, do not get pulled out to Ukraine’,” said Krummrich. Recent reports suggest a growing number of Russian soldiers want to go home. While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has forsworn any negotiations while Russia sits on

Ukrainian soil, Russia has been more nuanced.

“Russia has never refused peace talks with Ukraine,” Russian President Vladimir Putin told the Group of 20 on November 21. “Of course, we should think about how to stop this tragedy.” “I think he is messaging again, ‘Hey, I need a way out’. When he got involved in this ... he did not have a plan for this situation,” Krummrich said.

“I think the secret desire of both is how to get out and who is going to negotiations first,” Grivas said. But it is likely to happen this winter? Both sides are demonstrating a will to fight, for now. Putin may be looking for a symbolic victory ahead of an election next April, and other fissures in the Western alliance, say experts, particularly if former President Donald Trump seems likely to win the US presidential election.

“What’s going to happen to the American election ... Trump and what the Republicans represent does not help Ukraine, and could potentially make things easier for Russia,” said Krummrich. Congressional Republicans loyal to Trump have led an effort this year to staunch the flow of military aid to Ukraine, saying the US deficit is too high. — Aljazeera

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FOUNDER
Rehmat Shah Afridi
JALIL AFRIDI
Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,
Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

COP28 and historic compensation fund

THE UN's COP28 Summit, on its first day of talks, approved a draft plan for a fund to help vulnerable countries hit by climate disasters, which are made worse by pollution spewed by wealthy nations. According to the details, the representatives from more than 200 countries okayed the long-awaited demands of the developing nations for compensation from wealthier, more industrialized countries to help with the costs of destructive storms, heat waves and droughts fueled by global warming. The fund has been widely viewed as a positive sign for the two-week summit currently underway in Dubai, UAE. The initial pledges add up to about \$549 million, and climate-related damages are expected to cost developing countries between \$280 billion and \$580 billion per year by 2030. As said the Loss and Damage fund is expected to be up and functional this year to meet the biting needs of the poor nations relating to the worst climate impact prevention, mitigation and reconstruction as well. According to the details, the UAE and Germany each pledged \$100 million, the UK pledged about \$76 million, Japan owes \$10 million and the EU climate commissioner announced \$245 million to the global cause. Interestingly, the US government promised \$17.5 million, an amount that climate activists criticized as too small as a peanut for the world's largest economy and major environmental polluter in the world.

The compensation or the Loss and Damage Funds typically refer to financial resources or mechanisms set up to assist communities, or countries affected by the impacts of climate change. Over the past three decades, compensation has been a major demand of the least developing and under-developed nations in Asia, Africa, and other regions, which have no contribution to the creation of greenhouse gasses but remained the biggest victims of climate-induced events throughout the past. These funds aim to address the costs associated with irreversible losses, damages, or the inability to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change, particularly in vulnerable regions. The funds will be sourced from various channels, including international agreements, donor contributions, or national budgets, to support recovery and mitigation efforts in areas experiencing severe environmental impacts.

Several countries and regions around the globe are seriously vulnerable to the worst impacts of global warming due to multiple factors such as geographical location, socioeconomic conditions, limited resources, and the slow pace of climate adaptation. Coastal nations and regions, Small Land Developing States (SLDC), and Least Developed Countries (LDC) in Asia and Africa have been the victims of climate actions over the past decades. Pakistan is one of the biggest sufferers of Climate-related events including superfoods, droughts, landslides, and galicermelts which pose serious economic and survival risks to the South Asia nation. Pakistan along with other developing nations and Group 77 made concerted efforts to the creation of Loss and Damage Fund under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the COP27 held in January last year, which fundamentally paved the way for the passage of recently approved compensation mechanism at the COP28.

Historically, there had been a bullfight between the developed world whose reckless industrialization immensely polluted the global environment with the poor and least developing nations, who paid a heavy price for the growth and prosperity of their adjoining states due to grave impacts of pollution-driven global warming. It is a historic moment because the global community successfully overcame their mutual difference and progressed toward their collective goals concerning the climate change phenomenon that poses serious risks to the survival of the entire universe. In this graceful movement, the nations with diverging interests including the United States, India, China and Russia must overcome their mutual distrust and launch sincere and meaningful efforts to fulfil their curial obligations regarding global warming so, the world nations can be able to grasp their Climate Change agenda set for 2030 and 2050 through teamwork and cooperation.

Election campaign and development work

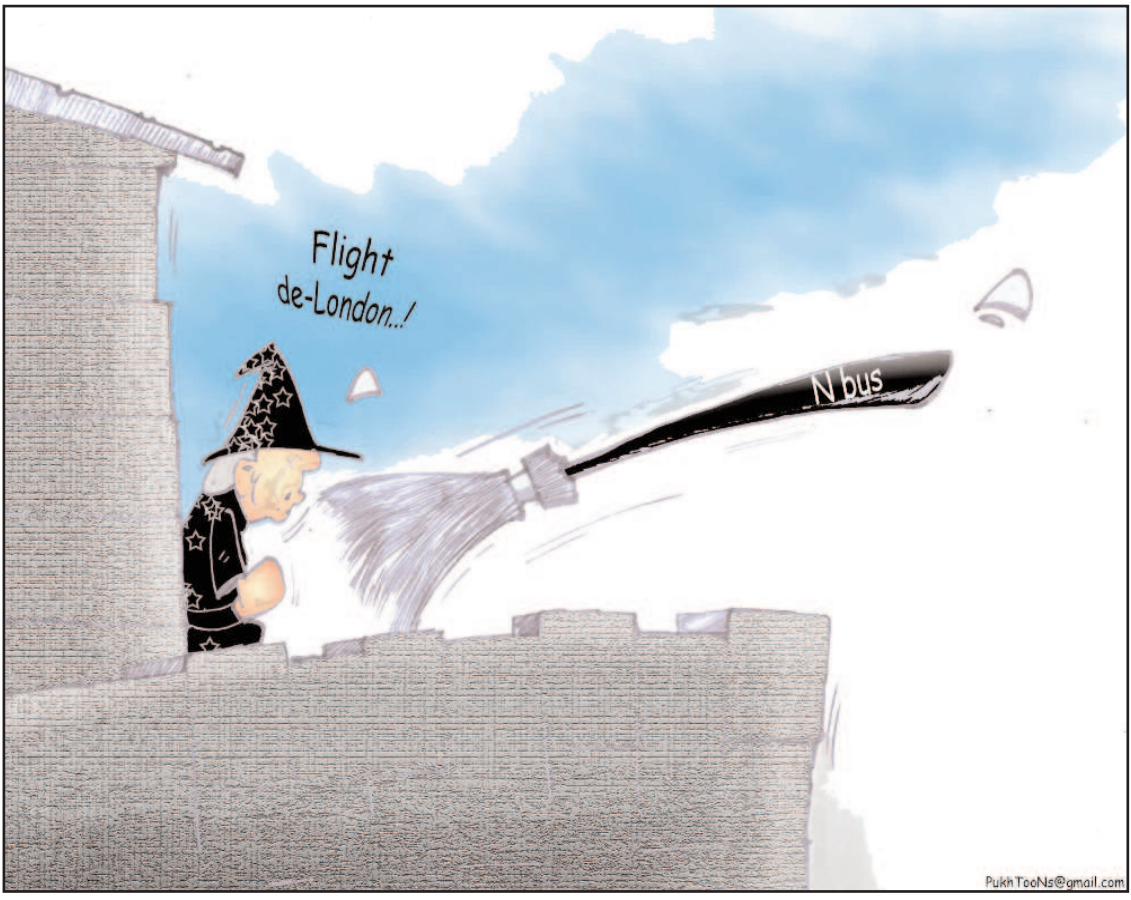
A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) has stopped all the ongoing developmental works in the province till general elections over and ordered respondents for submission of reply in this regard. The court declared that the caretaker government has jurisdiction over day-to-day matters as well as ensuring free and fair elections, so why are interim leaders in the centre as well as province so interested in development work despite the fact that the ECP has announced the nationwide polls in the country.

The announcement of the polls schedule heated up the election activities and lobbying by the civic groups to garner support from the masses through corner meetings, political rallies and door to door campaigns. Historically, the development work plays an important role in shaping election results in Pakistan, as it does in many other countries in the world. The initiation of development work, such as improvements in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities, significantly influence the voters, owing to the positive impacts of these activities on their lives and livelihood. These initiatives improve public perception about the performance of political parties or candidates. With regards to Pakistan's peculiar politico-social environment, voters often assess the performance of political parties or candidates based on the development work undertaken in their constituencies. Hence, Political parties, candidates, and policymakers often focus on development as a means to garner support and address the needs of the population, particularly during/ahead of election campaigns to give an instant boost to their popularity/ public approval, while this phenomenon significantly influences electoral outcomes.

Interestingly, the PTI government during its three and a half years rule in the country, held back all development activities to support its budgetary needs/ fiscal spending aiming at launching a nationwide development campaign during the last one and half years to put a strong impact on people's lives and seize the next polls. The PTI leaders failed to implement their strategy due to an early ouster from the power. The PDM coalition government massively invested in development projects despite severe economic challenges to attract public support in the upcoming elections. Although the court has stopped the development works in the province, yet the outcome of the upcoming election will prove the worth/impact of this political legacy in the days to come.

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Don't forget the people Russia weaponizes in Finland border crisis

Joshua Askew

ANOTHER migration crisis is rumbling on Europe's borders. After a weeks-long trickle, the number of people trying to enter Finland and Estonia illegally suddenly spiked this month, prompting Finland to close its eastern border entirely. Blame has been placed squarely on one country's shoulders: Russia.

Last week, Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur described a "fully state-orchestrated" operation by Moscow, which he said was weaponizing immigration. Latvia's Defense Minister, Andris Spr?ds, took it a step further, accusing President Vladimir Putin of acting as the "puppet master" behind it all. The reasons why Moscow is doing this are clear. Amid soaring tensions with the West over Ukraine, it is delivering on its threat of retaliation against Finland for joining NATO, while Estonia is in the firing line for its staunch support of Kyiv. This looming instability on the EU's eastern frontier will likely be felt in capitals across the continent, as well as in the European Parliament.

Russia's strategy is to both overwhelm and destabilize its "unfriendly" neighbors. Pushing refugees and other vulnerable people to their borders heaps pressure on Finland and Estonia's border forces, immigration systems and social services, straining their resources. Importantly, it could inflame social tensions. In Finland, where surging nativist sentiment has turned far-right politicians into power players in government, an influx of undocumented people from the Middle East and Africa could deepen polarization and political division - something Moscow would be eager to exploit. This is not the first time Russia has resorted to such a harmful and unethical tactic. In 2016, Finnish officials accused Russian authorities of transporting 1,000 people to a border crossing in the Arctic, even providing hotel accommodation along the way. The event was widely considered Russia's first, and most successful,

hybrid attack of this kind on an EU member state to date - though Finnish politicians balked at calling it that at the time. Of course, despite its denials, Moscow is entirely to blame for this crisis. As it is impossible to enter Russia's border zone without permission from the authorities, it is clearly no accident that hundreds of people have arrived at Finland's doorstep on brand-new bicycles.

Such tactics speak volumes about how Russia's

illegal immigration. Instead of people, they are weapons and tools to create chaos. Their humanity and basic needs for food, shelter or healthcare are disregarded - as are human rights or dignity.

This ignores that many people are duped into coming by unscrupulous smugglers promising quick and easy entry into the EU. Others are blinded by desperation, or simply unaware of what they are getting themselves into.

In the words of Pevkur last week: "These are not asylum seekers; this is weaponized illegal immigration. Instead of people, they are weapons and tools to create chaos. Their humanity and basic needs for food, shelter or healthcare are disregarded - as are human rights or dignity.

leadership views people of color, who already face discrimination and racist violence inside the country. Indeed, it shows their callous disregard for human life and well-being in general and readiness to treat people as pawns in a geopolitical game, though the bloodshed in Ukraine already made this clear. Despite the Kremlin's weaponization of migration, we still cannot ignore the humanitarian dimension of this issue. Security concerns should not negate the fact that these are human beings often fleeing war, poverty and oppression. They are people with pasts, fears, hopes, families and dreams - just like you and me.

Right now the opposite is happening. Declaring that it was in a "hybrid war," Finland dispatched its soldiers to its 1,300-kilometer border with Russia, hastily laying barbed wire and erecting concrete barriers. Europe's border agency Frontex also beefed up its presence, deploying more guards and equipment. On Tuesday, Finland announced it would close the border entirely. In the words of Pevkur last week: "These are not asylum seekers; this is weaponized

Even if someone came for non-humanitarian reasons, when stranded on the border without money, food, or proper winter gear in a region famous for its bitter winters, they become akin to a refugee nonetheless. Past examples show what could be in store. In what has been called "Europe's forgotten migration crisis," Belarus has been pushing people into Poland and Lithuania since 2020. Lithuanian authorities claim that Minsk sends people during the harsh winter months barefoot or without jackets to ramp up the pressure. Several have lost limbs to frostbite or died trying to cross into the EU.

And these are just the cases we know about. NGOs in Lithuania warn the cold, swampy border area is littered with the bodies of missing migrants. Their loved ones back home may never know what happened to them. There is now a risk these tragedies will be repeated. Meanwhile, Helsinki has responded just as Moscow wanted. The more the tactic appears to ruffle feathers, the more powerful it is. It doesn't matter that the numbers concerned - around 800 people since August -

are comparatively very small. A rich country like Finland with a well-developed welfare state can handle it. What matters is putting up a strong show against Russia.

In turn, the spectacle of a securitized response and scuffles between migrants and Finnish border guards actually helps create and perpetuate the notion that these people are a security threat. Ordinary citizens will then believe that their country is under attack, and demand that their governments implement more violent and harsh measures at the border. In contrast, Ukrainians were largely welcomed with open arms. This shows the importance of government framing and policy in shaping public attitudes toward refugees. With more countermeasures around the corner, Finland's Interior Minister Mari Rantanen has vowed to ensure security "in all situations," suggesting that protecting human rights is an afterthought. A sensible solution would be for Finland to cool its rhetoric, treat people humanely and process asylum applications quickly to show Moscow the resilience of Europe's democratic systems.

Elsewhere in Europe, there are grim examples of what could happen if the opposite measures are carried out. Amid escalating tensions on its border, Lithuanian authorities have been widely accused of violently pushing people back into Belarus, while subjecting thousands to inhumane conditions and torture in detention camps. In January, Vilnius controversially legalized this push-back policy, allowing immediate expulsion without the right to claim asylum. The fact this violates international and EU law does not seem to matter. Completely closing borders with Russia is unlikely to solve any of these problems. European governments must ensure they don't resort to the very policies antithetical human life and the laws designed to protect it that would put them closer to the very thing they are standing against - the Kremlin.

The Moscow Times

Malaysia's Prime Minister gets mixed reviews after one year in power

Dave Grunebaum

LITTLE more than a year after becoming Malaysia's prime minister in late-November 2022, Anwar Ibrahim is getting mixed reviews from political analysts. As the country's fifth prime minister in less than five years, some credit his sustained grasp on power with bringing political stability to the country.

"When Anwar formed the government last November, a lot of pundits or the general population think it will only last two months or three months [until] the government will collapse because the government consisted of 19 different [parties]," said Azmi Hassan, a senior fellow at the Nusantara Academy for Strategic Research in Kuala Lumpur. "But it has already lasted for one year. 'It brings stability,' he added. "What the people want basi-

cally is stability so that the government can function and do what the government is supposed to do."

Survey results released by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research, however, say Anwar's approval rating dropped to 50% compared to 68% a year ago. It also showed substantially increased dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the economy. Maria Chin, 37, a local accountant who voted for Anwar's coalition last year, complained to VOA about rising costs of living. "Our family's grocery bills have gone way up," said the married mother of two children. But Azmi says the prime minister has limited control over this issue. "Food prices going up and ordinary things [costing more] is not unique to Malaysia," Azmi said. "What Anwar has done is to give cash aid to the

people who need it most. Not only giving cash aid to a wider section of the community, but he [increased] the amount."

Political analyst Wong Chin-Huat credited Anwar with cutting red tape to help speed up the approval process for privately funded projects. "Anwar's administration is looking for ways to make Malaysia more attractive to foreign companies," Wong said. Anwar's administration says one of its goals is to make Malaysia a regional hub for the electric vehicle industry. Several months ago, Tesla announced that it would set up its first Southeast Asian office in Malaysia. Anwar's swearing in capped an incredible comeback for the long-time opposition leader who served two jail terms totaling almost a decade for

sodomy and corruption, charges he says were politically motivated. Always maintaining his innocence, Anwar has pledged to fight corruption. But critics say the prime minister hasn't followed through on many of the reforms he has long advocated, including the separation of politics from the justice system and softening the quota system for admission to public universities that heavily favors the country's ethnic Malays. Leading a multi-ethnic coalition that has traditionally enjoyed strong support from liberal ethnic Malays as well as the country's minorities. Anwar, says Wong, is trying to satisfy conservative voters but dis-appointing some long-time supporters.

The majority of Malaysians are ethnic

France could be on the brink of civil war

Anne-Elisabeth Moutet

TWO years ago, after yet another couple of nights of rioting in the banlieues, twenty retired French generals wrote an open letter to Emmanuel Macron, then about to run for a second term, warning that the divisions between communities and increasing "violence and nihilism" in France would eventually cause a social breakdown, with a risk of "chaos" leading to a "civil war" that would then "require" a military "intervention... in a dangerous mission to protect our civilisational values and safeguard our compatriots".

Strong stuff, co-signed by some 100 senior officers and about a thousand other members of the military, in a country where the Army is known as "the Great Mute", i.e. never expressing a preference in national politics. In the one instance, during the Algerian independence war, when four generals attempted a putsch against President Charles de Gaulle on April 21, 1961 to protest the projected departure of France from her rebellious colony, they were followed by a pitiful number of the military, and the coup petered out within three days. Six decades later, the Lettre des généraux was received with contempt, with most commentators calling its authors "irrelevant", reading its apocalyptic predictions as a "threat" against the Republic.

Yet this week Olivier Véran, the cabinet spokesman, seemed to share those conclusions as, on a visit to the village of Crépol, south of Lyon, he warned that France might be at a "tipping point" after the fatal stabbing of a local 16-year-old boy. Condemning both the knife attacks during a Saturday evening dance and the subsequent march by right-wing activists intent on a fight into the neighbourhood where the suspects live, the minister vowed that the government would stand with the bereaved family and called for a harsh sentencing, "up to a life sentence [with] no mitigating circumstances", for the culprits. He reportedly added that the government is "clearly" aware that violence from "packs" is ratcheting up "tensions... you can't stand these gangs any more... neither can we", promising the "full mobilisation" of the state to "guarantee the safety of all citizens".

Too little, too late: the minister's well-meaning words were badly received. One of the villagers reportedly shouted to Véran: "You've done much more for them than you do for the hard-working people in the countryside, who get no benefits and raise their children with values." "Them" means the problem groups in council housing, many of whom are children or grandchildren of Muslim immigrants, like the Crépol knife-wielding attackers who disrupted the Saturday evening dance, allegedly shouting "we've come to get whites". The Valence judiciary refused, against general custom, to give first names for the suspects they arrested. The entire country suspects why the names were not given: in the well-meaning aim not to "stigmatise" an entire community whose immense majority is law-abiding.

This time, several news-

papers chose to question that decision (the centre-left Le Parisien, which belongs to Bernard Arnault, the luxury magnate, printed the Arabic first name of the suspected killer). To say the French public are getting fractious is understating the current perception, supported by many sociologists and statisticians, that the country has failed badly in assimilating all citizens. To use a word coined by novelist Michel Houellebecq, France is increasingly "atomised". France's top pollster and political analyst, Jérôme Fourquet, talks of the "French archipelago", a country of discrete islands, each inward-looking.

For almost three decades, government after government chose not to look too closely at a worsening situation. France was for centuries a land of successful assimilation. Italians, Spaniards, Russian Jews, Poles came and became French. But sheer numbers, as well as the change from a requirement to "assimilate" to the easier one of "integrate", mean the French model is broken. Each separate failure concurs to the general breakdown of the national compact. The long-admired French education system is no longer fit for purpose: our schools have slid from the top to the bottom of the PISA rankings in just a few years, especially in those areas where non-French-speaking children account for the majority in most classes. School teachers are less and less respected by both the body politic - which allowed their salaries to fall by half in real terms - and by their pupils, disruptive and often violent. In some areas, the history of the 20th century, especially of the Holocaust, has been near-impossible to teach for years: inroads by Islamism in the classrooms, long denied, have contributed to the murder of two teachers in three years.

The police, meanwhile, are badly paid, badly considered, often afraid for their lives in the areas where they must keep order, they resign in droves. (The profession has one of the highest suicide rates in France.) As a result, training time has been reduced from a year to eight months, so bad is the need for boots on the ground. As a result, trust between the ruling classes and the people has declined in lockstep with France's economic and cultural decline. (If you live in the centre of Paris or Lyon, even Marseille, you can send your children to good private schools and Grandes Écoles, almost guaranteeing good jobs that will enable them to keep living where the crisis is not felt.)

Like his predecessors, Emmanuel Macron first displayed indifference towards the chaotic immigration system: the new Immigration Bill, about to be debated by the National Assembly, tries to correct the laxist trends of recent years, but it will neither address the problem of French-born citizens who profess hate for their country, nor the rising arrivals from troubled areas. It may not take much for the next round of riots, or for an equally violent blowback from a hard-right deciding to take matters into their hands. That civil war the generals prophesied two years ago may be around the corner.

The Telegraph

tion MPs recently shifted their support and backed Anwar as prime minister. Several of them said they needed to take this step to help their constituencies get more federal funding.

"This is the [Malaysian] equivalent of pork barrel politics in America," Wong said, describing the style of politics that Anwar had long battled as an opposition leader. "Anwar is showing that he's not a full reformist." But Azmi defended this maneuver. There are "a lot of things Anwar said during his opposition days that cannot be fulfilled when they are in the government because when you are in the government you are in a different position," Azmi said. "There are certain political realities that he has to deal with in order to keep his government stable."

VOA

Biden is not getting the credit he deserves on foreign policy

David A. Andelman

CRITICS claim that President Joe Biden has failed in his efforts to project American power effectively for the American people and their allies around the world. But I am confident he will go down in history, as he should, for being one of the rare presidents who has accomplished something quite extraordinary: He has carefully defined and quite successfully defended democracy and democratic values before a host of existential challenges.

Former Presidents Donald Trump, Barack Obama and George W. Bush wound up ping-ponging from crisis to crisis with no clear sense of what shape the horizon might take, frequently updating their worldviews to match the moment. Bush was against nation-building until he was for it in Afghanistan and Iraq; Obama was against foreign intervention until he was for it in Libya; Trump was for sweet-talking global adversaries until he was against it. Biden, in contrast, has been operating on the basis of a real weltanschauung (or worldview). Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told me and other students in his class at Harvard that few leaders, especially presidents of the United States, operated on the world stage with a clear-eyed sense of where they want the world to be at the end of their four or eight years and then worked to get there.

And indeed, few have defined and embraced democracy as a doctrine, viewed crises and partners through such a prism and worked so effectively to further these essential values more than Biden, who spent decades on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and eight years as vice president before becoming the leader of the Free World. Biden's latest challenge, of course, is in Israel and Gaza. In the face of a barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel

and the unrelenting response of the government under Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Biden has stood squarely by Israel, defined by The Economist's Democracy Index as the only democracy in the Middle East and North Africa.

In contrast to George W. Bush, Biden has modeled how diplomacy as well as force can support efforts to shore up democracy. The US reportedly played a crucial role in getting many Israeli hostages released from Hamas. But the US also quickly dispatched two aircraft carrier strike groups and 900 additional troops to the Middle East to back up his warning to Iran and Hezbollah not to broaden the conflict. Those moves not only safeguard Israel but help secure American interests in the region and show that a democratic power can constrain fundamentalist ones.

Biden is similar to other presidents in getting little credit for what doesn't happen. Beyond containing the Israel-Hamas conflict (so far), he also hasn't been properly recognized for avoiding a direct US-Russia confrontation - and likely conflagration - by tempering the delivery of advanced weapons to Ukraine and restraining its efforts to join NATO, even as the US has slowly but steadily ratcheted up the levels of military support for Ukraine. Ukraine, of course, is trying desperately to retain its democratic orientation in the face of Moscow's violent and autocratic challenge. Though now facing obstacles in Congress, there's no question that the Biden administration's support has been essential to Ukraine's impressive - and, to many, unexpected - success in its continued fight against Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression.

Then there's Taiwan. Chinese President Xi Jinping has redoubled efforts to build pressure to force

the island nation's absorption into mainland China, sending warships and warplanes ever closer to Taiwan - even into and through its airspace. But a still-independent government in Taipei is planning a democratic presidential election on January 13, a robust three-way race in which voters consider an outcome that could well define the island's future. This is happening with determined American political, diplomatic and military support, including Biden being clearer than previous presidents that the US will defend Taiwan. Despite GOP foot-dragging in Congress, Biden has included funding for Taiwan as well as Ukraine and Israel in a new aid package - an all-but-unprecedented effort at American assistance to democracies under threat.

But while he's minced no words in continuing to call Xi "a dictator," Biden has managed the relationship with Beijing rather than rupturing it in ways that could be dangerous. Just this fall, he succeeded in reopening military-to-military channels of communication with China for the first time since Beijing severed them after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August 2022. Those who see Biden's abrupt and chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan as a failure that damages his record on democracy have themselves failed to recognize a reality that Biden had earlier come to appreciate.

In Afghanistan, democracy never really took root at all. Its ill-conceived and improbable "elections" were little more than window dressing on a deeply flawed and corrupt kleptocracy that America had been backing with the bodies of thousands of its troops. As Sarah Chayes, once a special assistant in the Pentagon, wrote in Foreign Affairs, "Joe Biden was outspoken about his

opposition to the intervention." That underscores the point that Biden's success isn't just his principled view of democracies (George W. Bush also prominently called for democratization) but shrewdness in knowing when and where to promote them most effectively.

One could ask what happens when Biden finds himself facing a leader with anti-democratic tendencies like India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who presides over what close observers have called "an electoral autocracy" in what was long a model democratic nation. There, it would appear, Biden has shown steadiness in waiting for the forces that propelled other truly democratic leaders of India's past to harness the will of the people to return them to power. It has been and will require a most delicate balance that I am persuaded Biden has been adept in implementing. Biden's determination to defend democracy wherever it manages to gain a foothold and help it to survive, then prosper, is something that makes him tick and remain appealing to others, as I've seen in so many parts of the world. Political leaders and other officials from Paris to Riga that I've come in contact with during the Biden years have suggested repeatedly how imperative it is that America retain the values Biden holds so close.

"Democracies are more than a form of government," Biden told the world on November 2, 2022, in a speech the White House titled "Remarks by President Biden on Standing up for Democracy." "They're a way of being, a way of seeing the world - a way that defines who we are, what we believe, why we do what we do," he explained. "We must, in this moment, dig deep within ourselves and recognize that we can't take democracy for granted any longer."

CNN

Kremlin criminalizing LGBT lives. The world must step up

Anna-Maria Tesfaye

RUSSIA'S Justice Ministry is seeking to ban the so-called "international LGBT public movement" as extremist, a move that could criminalize all LGBT activism. Intriguingly, no such movement actually exists as an organization. This vague targeting increases the likelihood that, in the worst-case scenario, ordinary LGBT people may find themselves falling into the authorities' net by simply trying to live their lives.

In Russia and beyond, numerous charities and NGOs tirelessly advocate for and support the country's LGBT community. Yet their efforts have faced mounting challenges for years. The recent expansion of the LGBT propaganda law to encompass anything that could "promote" LGBT topics to any age group, coupled with the introduction of the transgender ban this summer, has significantly complicated the work of these vital organizations as the ability to disclose the nature of their assistance openly is severely restricted.

As the number of individuals seeking aid continues to rise, the resources available to these groups remain unchanged or even decrease, creating a challenging environment for both the organizations and those in need of support. As legal barriers mount, the number of individuals in urgent need of relocation advice, legal aid, psychological help and financial assistance surges. This evolving situation underscores the crucial need for sustained, robust support for LGBT advocacy and aid efforts within Russia.

Although the exact consequences of the impending Supreme Court decision are currently unclear, two stark outcomes are evident. First, this ruling will further marginalize the queer com-

munity, especially its most vulnerable members such as transgender individuals and queer people of color. Second, by labeling the LGBT community as extremist, Russia will be compounding its track record of human rights violations, deepening Russia's international isolation from countries that value norms of equality and inclusivity. The impending court decision is set to cast a long, ominous shadow over the LGBT community. This ruling will not only intensify the sense of insecurity that compels many queer people to hide their identities, but it is also likely to encourage hate crimes and forced outings. Moreover, even a queer person who is not involved in activism might be considered an extremist if, for example, they are stopped by the police and found to have a queer-themed Telegram chat with their friends.

Activist groups and charities face the grim prospect of operating in secrecy, as any association with an extremist organization could lead to imprisonment. The situation for these groups is becoming increasingly perilous. LGBT support initiatives and activists operating within Russia are being forced underground. This is compounded by shrinking financial support from international donors, leaving organizations with far fewer resources to do their vital work. Another alarming consequence of this judicial shift is the potential reclassification of cases initially deemed mere administrative offenses for so-called LGBT propaganda. These cases, previously subject to fines, may now be escalated to criminal offenses, often resulting in imprisonment.

Furthermore, lawyers are expected to become far less willing to represent LGBT people.

Representing someone accused of extremism, even when such accusations stem from baseless claims of LGBT propaganda, carries the risk of being declared an extremist yourself. This reluctance is understandable, even if lawyers themselves recognize the absurdity of the situation. This chilling effect further increases the vulnerability of the LGBT community in Russia, as they face ever harsher penalties with diminishing access to legal defense. This unfolding crisis will undoubtedly lead many queer individuals in Russia to consider leaving the country in the hope of finding safety and acceptance elsewhere. Currently, there are insufficient initiatives that could help them do this. LGBT-friendly countries are not providing the amount of support they should. It is crucial that these nations provide a route to safety by simplifying asylum processes and providing temporary humanitarian visas for people fleeing repression.

However, it's important to remember that a significant number of queer people will remain in Russia, as evidenced in other countries with similarly repressive laws. Emigrating requires a level of resources and privilege that many queer people do not have. Within these communities, individuals often suppress their identities in the face of acute marginalization. Their lives are focused on survival.

Their continued existence is a testament to the enduring spirit and solidarity queer individuals show even in the face of overwhelming adversity. This constant reminder of the importance of global support and advocacy for LGBT rights, not just in providing a way out, but also in sustaining and empowering those who con-

tinue to live in challenging environments. In conservative societies like Russia, the most vulnerable groups are often the first to bear the brunt of the state's increasingly oppressive measures. Underprivileged communities are disproportionately affected by the war in Ukraine. Russian regions with non-Slavic majorities are suffering higher mobilization and death rates than wealthy metropolises like Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The recent anti-trans law, which stripped transgender people of the right to access gender-affirming care and change their gender markers on official documents, further illustrates this worrying trend. History shows such actions are often a prelude to broader oppressive measures. Recent restrictions on abortion rights in Russia, for example, appear to be a logical expansion of societal control mechanisms beyond LGBT issues. Amid these developments, it's vital to remember that nothing the Kremlin can do will stop queer people from existing in Russia. They deserve the fundamental right to safely live as themselves. The escalating crisis underscores the urgent need for effective, discreet, and compassionate support for Russia's LGBT community.

This systematic oppression, while increasingly isolating Russia on the global stage, also indicates a growing need for assistance and support to affected communities. As their situation deteriorates, it's likely that more individuals will seek help both domestically and internationally. The trend underscores the importance of the international community's vigilance and the support of activist organizations in countering these oppressive actions and providing aid to those most in need.

The Moscow Times

were even worse. Just last month she spent several days online trying to plan our 10-day tour to Gansu province. After all there were dozens of flights, hundreds of hotels and numerous travel agencies to choose from. And there were numerous online suggestions on where to go, where to eat and where to shop.

After going through the entire range of choices she broke down, confessing that it is much better to have fewer choices. She then solemnly passed the family's shopping torch on to me. We together recalled the good old days when it was so easy to order in a restaurant because it served no more than 10 dishes. Also, whenever out shopping, we took home whatever we could lay our hands on because there weren't too many things to choose from in the market three decades ago. This walk-down memory lane helped her get back her shopping mood. Choosing from too many things might be painful, but sometimes that is also something to be endured, or even enjoyed.

How Harris can prove her worth as vice president

Dalia Al-Aqidi

BACK on Aug. 11, 2020, in a moment that would go down in history, then-Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden announced his nomination of California Sen. Kamala Harris as his running mate. It was a decision that sparked hope and enthusiasm among many Democrats, as it symbolized a step toward a more inclusive America, with Harris destined to become the first female, first African American and first Asian American vice president.

In his announcement, Biden spoke passionately about the country's challenges, emphasizing that Harris understood that they were in a battle for the soul of the nation. He highlighted the need for unity when confronting the crises plaguing America and working toward a better future. It was a message that resonated with many, especially those who thought that having a female vice president would empower women at every level. Harris' historic nomination was a moment of pride for many, especially those who longed to see greater diversity and representation in the highest echelons of power. Her journey to the nomination was marked by years of public service, including stints as California's attorney general and San Francisco's district attorney. Her roots in Oakland, California, and her background as a child of Jamaican and Indian immigrants added to the richness of her story. Harris' decision to attend law school after participating in civil rights protests with her mother spoke volumes about her commitment to justice and equality.

According to Biden's campaign, the selection of Harris came after weeks of careful consideration, during which several other highly qualified women were considered for the role. Former National Security Adviser Susan Rice, Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer were among the top contenders. Ultimately, Harris' unique combination of experience, identity and vision for a more united America won her the nomination. Before examining Harris' performance as vice president over the past three years, it is crucial to understand the key factors that led to her selection. Her nomination was not a mere coincidence; it was a calculated decision driven by a combination of factors that spoke to both Biden's strategy and the changing

landscape of American politics.

First and foremost, age was a significant consideration. Aged 55 at the time of her nomination, Harris represents a younger generation of politicians, in stark contrast to Biden, who was inaugurated as president at the age of 78. During his campaign, Biden's age was a prominent subject of discussion and it was predicted that it could become a weakness as his presidency progressed. This prediction appears to be playing out, with concerns about his health and stamina growing as he enters the final year of his term. Harris' relative youth offered a reassuring counterbalance to those concerns and suggested she would bring a fresh perspective to the administration. Identity also played a pivotal role in Harris' selection. She is a Black and South Asian American woman, making her a trailblazer in US politics. Her historic nomination sent a powerful message about diversity and representation at the highest levels of government. In an unprecedentedly divided era, Harris' identity resonated with a broad spectrum of the American population, providing Biden with a bridge to communities that claim to have been underrepresented in previous administrations.

Additionally, California, with its vast electoral votes and influential donors, has always been a coveted prize for Democratic candidates. It was no surprise when Biden selected a running mate from this political behemoth. Choosing someone from California was a strategic move, tapping into the state's considerable resources and leveraging its electoral weight. Moreover, Harris emerged as an outspoken advocate on race matters and the imperative for police reform. She was prominent in the wake of George Floyd's tragic death and the ensuing nationwide protests. Her stance resonated with the far left, the progressive movement and many other liberal Americans who demanded change and accountability in the face of racism.

However, Harris' time in office so far has been marked by a series of notable difficulties and uncertainties. One area where the vice president has faced criticism is her communication. Her tenure has been punctuated by a series of rhetorical blunders that have raised questions about her ability to effectively convey the

administration's message. Whether it was her choice of words or her delivery, there have been instances where her statements have drawn scrutiny or even attracted a backlash. Effective communication is a cornerstone of leadership and a crucial aspect of her role.

Another significant challenge has been the high turnover in her staff. A revolving door of personnel within her team has not gone unnoticed, prompting questions about leadership and management within her office. Consistency and stability in staffing are vital for any leader to accomplish their goals. Politically, Harris has encountered missteps that have invited criticism. Whether it was the handling of specific policy issues or navigating the complexities of the political landscape, there have been instances where her decisions have been criticized. Clarity and coherence in policymaking are crucial to building public trust and support.

Furthermore, even among her allies, there has been a sense of uncertainty about the precise scope and focus of her portfolio as vice president. Defining one's role and responsibilities is vital in any leadership position and there has been a lack of clarity about Harris' specific areas of influence and the initiatives she has been spearheading. This ambiguity has created uncertainty about her role within the administration.

In the quest for true gender equality and representation, the hope was that Harris' ascent to the vice presidency would help women across party lines, propelling them to the forefront of leadership in all sectors and ultimately positioning them to take the highest office in the land. However, the reality has been somewhat disappointing. The lesson to be drawn from this experience is clear: women should not be chosen or evaluated based on their gender or ethnicity. Instead, they should be judged by their work content, achievements and unwavering commitment to their goals. True empowerment and equality come from recognizing and celebrating women for their merit and abilities.

Achieving true equality requires prioritizing substance, merit-based opportunities and an equitable environment for everyone. Only under these conditions can we expect women to rise to the most senior positions of power, free from the burdens of unmet expectations and the limitations imposed by identity politics.

Truce in Gaza has been more painful than 50 days that preceded it

Afaf Al-Najjar

MANY of us did not dare go out on the first day of the temporary truce in Gaza. We were too afraid it would not hold. On the second day, we gathered our courage and stepped out. The daylight illuminated the destruction caused by Israel's non-stop bombardment of Gaza over the past seven weeks. We did not recognise our neighbourhoods and streets.

There are whole stretches of land where there is not a single building standing. Nothing has been spared: houses, residential towers, shops, bakeries, cafes, schools, universities, libraries, children's centres, mosques, churches. The destruction was the first thing we saw. Then came the pain.

Amid the panic, alarm and scurrying to survive the bombs, many of us did not fully grasp the loss of loved ones, the wounds sustained, the lives, bodies and dreams shattered and destroyed. Many could not bury their dead. Many could not grieve. As Sabri Farra, a medical student from Gaza, wrote in a post on social media: "The word catastrophe is insufficient to describe this. It is a collective inferno of extermination against the Palestinian people." I left my home in Gaza City during the first week of the war. I was lucky to have made it.

On the same day, the Israeli army bombed a convoy of evacuees, killing at least 70 people. The road that Israel designated as a "safe route" for people to evacuate from the north to

the south has been anything but safe. Throughout the past seven weeks, people who made it south reported seeing harrowing scenes of bodies of civilians lying everywhere. The horror was documented on videos circulated on social media.

When the truce came into effect, more Palestinians decided to evacuate from the north, hoping it would be safe to do so. But as they made their way south, they encountered Israeli army checkpoints, where they were stopped and searched and their belongings confiscated. Women in my family and friends told me that Israeli soldiers even took their gold. They were forced to walk with their hands in the air, carrying nothing but their IDs. Those who made it through were lucky, as Israeli soldiers have also been systematically abducting evacuees.

I have friends with siblings who were taken and are still missing after trying to evacuate through the designated "safe route". The Israelis arrested even Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha. He was let go only after a massive international campaign for his release. We still don't know the true number of those who have been abducted.

The walk from the north to the south is almost eight hours if you don't stop. This is a trip many Palestinians are struggling to make as they are too old, too young, too tired, too starved and dehydrated, injured or disabled.

While going north to

south can be risky and could lead to abduction, going in the opposite direction can cost you your life. The Israeli army dropped leaflets on us warning us not to attempt that trip. Israeli soldiers killed at least two people trying to go back to the north on the first day of the truce. I, like hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, am banned from returning to my home in Gaza City. I am heartbroken that I cannot go and check on my house to see if it is still standing. Many others who have family and friends shot in the streets or stuck under the rubble cannot go retrieve their bodies and give them a proper burial.

Israel controls everything: where we go, what we do, how much we eat or drink, whether we can save the wounded or those stuck under the rubble for days. It even decides how we tend to our dead. Its army is forcing more and more of us into an ever-shrinking space before it resumes the indiscriminate bombardment and the genocide.

The trucks of humanitarian aid Israel is allowing to enter Gaza cannot alleviate the humanitarian disaster. We are barely surviving. If the bombs don't kill us, the hunger, the thirst, the lack of medicine, the cold will. This pause has been more painful than the 50 days before it. It is the first time the people of Gaza were able to look at their open wounds, martyred children, slaughtered families, destroyed homes and shattered lives. Just imagine living for six days just to prepare and wait for your death on the seventh.

When selection phobia makes you recall the good old shopping days

Kang Bing

BY the time this year's Double 11 online shopping gala ended, people were divided into two camps, arguing whether or not it had been a success. Those saying it was cited the record sale of goods worth more than 1.13 trillion yuan (\$159.84 billion) by the major online platforms - up 2.1 percent year-on-year.

Those against argued that the increase was insignificant, and, in fact, so small that it can be regarded as the beginning of the end of the shopping festival movement. Ever since the festival was inaugurated in 2009, by an influential Chinese online platform, sales volume had been rising at double digits until this Nov 11. Market observers are trying to find out what changed this year. Some concluded that the economy was slowing down and unemployment was going up, making people hesitate before reaching for their wallets. Others said that with so many online promotions happening, people could not decide which one to take serious-

ly. Yet others say that, with some localities relaxing controls on real estate, people might be saving for housing.

They might all be true, though I must confess that too many options, a phenomenon known as selection phobia, are frustrating my family - possibly many other families too - from buying more. Shopping used to be a pleasure once upon a time. There used to be a sense of accomplishment when one returned after a day's shopping, carrying bags, big smiles and exhaustion. It was also a simple thing about two decades ago. There were not many choices on the shelves of stores those days. All we had to do was find what we were looking for, pay and take it.

All that changed with China becoming the world's biggest manufacturing factory. Today there are so many varieties of everything at shopping malls that shoppers spend a lot of time looking for something they feel is the best deal

for the money they are spending. I have hated shopping ever since I was young. To me, walking in a shopping mall for 20 minutes is equivalent to hiking outdoors for 10 kilometers. Unfortunately, I married a woman who was crazy about shopping, and liked window shopping when she was short of cash. To keep our relationship strong, we made a pre-marital agreement that while out shopping with her, I could take a seat inside or outside the store, waiting to carry the shopping bags for her once she was done with her shopping.

In recent years, our shopping outings have decreased. I attributed this to the rise of online shopping until one day she told me she suffering from a certain degree of selection phobia at malls. "There are so many choices that very often I am exhausted before I can make up my mind," she confessed. "I think I have had enough of offline shopping." However, she turned to online shopping to find that things



Pakistan's exports to China increase by 40.36% in 4 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 40.36 per cent during the first four months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to China were recorded at US

\$952.216 million during July-October (2023-24) against exports of US \$678.386 million during July- October (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year basis, the exports to China also surged by 79.74 per cent from \$177.386 million in October 2022, against the exports of \$318.842 million in October 2023.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to China rose by 12.63 per cent during October 2023 as compared to the exports of \$283.077 million in September 2023, the SBP data revealed.

Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 1.13 per cent in the first four months, from US

\$9.666 billion to US \$9.776 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from China into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$3737.818 million against US \$4139.263 million last year, showing a decline of 10.74 per cent in July-October (2023-24).

Webinar on "Export Prospects and the Potential Markets of NARCH-HG1 Garlic" conducted

F.P. Report

KARACHI: In pursuance of annual Work Plan for the year 2023-24, PHDEC planned to hold a series of product specific and capacity building webinars. In this context, a webinar on "Export Prospects and the Potential Markets of NARCH-HG1 Garlic" was conducted on 30th November, 2023. The primary objective of the webinar was the capacity building of garlic growers/farmers on appraising them about the potential export destinations and countering the challenges while exporting their final product.

Garlic holds a significant place in Pakistan's culinary landscape and is cherished for enhancing the flavor of diverse dishes. Garlic is cultivated on 13,347 hectares, primarily in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with a production volume of 127,463 tonnes. Garlic is globally recognised as a remedy for diverse ailments and physiological conditions. HG-1 Garlic is a latest produced by the scientists and researchers of NARC (National Agricultural

Research Council). There is a great potential to expand and enhance the production and export of HG-1 Garlic. Garlic is considered as a rich source of carbohydrates, protein, phosphorus and ascorbic acid.

Mr. Jafar Ali, Assistant Manager (Agri-products) welcomed all the participants and informed the participants about the purpose of webinar. Mr. Zaka added that PHDEC has been emphasizing now on product development under its mandate. He also gave a short presentation about the vision, mission, mandate and objectives of PHDEC.

Mr. Athar Hussain Khokhar, the CEO of PHDEC, extended a warm welcome to the participants, providing valuable context on PHDEC's instrumental role in the horticulture sector and its expansive mandate. Mr. Khokhar emphasized that PHDEC's commitment remains steadfast in supporting initiatives that bolster the prosperity and well-being of horticulture cultivators and farmers.

Raja Mohsin Ali, President of Punjab Farmers Associatio and a

progressive grower of HG-1 Garlic provided an overview of the potential export destinations, common challenges faced while producing and exporting and the targeted areas where the final product can be sold.

Mr. Mohsin stated that the potential export destinations include the Gulf countries, Central Asian Reublics, Indonesia, Vietnam, Germany and Brazil. Indonesia is the top importer of Garlic worth \$485 million and majority of that is imported from China. Other top importers of garlic include Vientnam, US and Russia. He also further explained that the major challenges faced by grower and exporter include the usage of right pesticide, seed availability, soil grading and quality, labour-intensive harvest and plantation, packaging techniques, drying methods and the lack of cold storages. In addition to this, garlic can also be sold in wholesale markets, grocery stores, restaurants and also in the form of value-added products.

'PNSC is not a loss making institution'

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The spokesman of Pakistan National Shipping Corporation has denied reports published in local press that PNSC is among the companies that are suffering from losses, the spokesman that are suffering since the last decade PNSC has been a profitable organization in the last financial year, the company earned net profit of Rs.30 billion which is a record income. The spokesman further stated that the explanation is being issued for the correctness of the record.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships, BD Pioneer-1, Seaspan Beacon and Hafnia Tagus scheduled to load/offload Rice, Containers and Gas oil, berthed at Multi-purpose Terminal, Container Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively on Thursday. Meanwhile three more ships, MSC Damla, Big Breezy and Red Cosmos carrying Containers and Coal also arrived at outer anchorage of the port on Friday morning.



LAHORE: A vendor busy in arranging and displaying clay Golak (money boxes) to attract the customers at his roadside setup in Provincial Capital.

NBP will continue to accept Hajj applications till 12th December

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) has started accepting applications for Hajj 2024 at all NBP branches from November 27 till December 12, 2023.

In the Long Hajj Package, the regular Hajj scheme, which spans 38

to 42 days, including 8 days in Madinah, is priced at PKR 1,065,000 per person for the Southern Region (Karachi, Quetta, Sukkur) and PKR 1,075,000 per person for the Northern Region (other cities). The Sponsored Hajj Scheme for the Southern Region is priced at \$3,765 per per-

son, while the Northern Region is set at \$3,800 per person.

For the Short Hajj Package, covering 20 to 25 days, with 3 to 5 days in Madinah, the regular Hajj scheme is priced at PKR 1,140,000 per person for the Southern Region and PKR 1,150,000 per person for

the Northern Region. The Sponsored Hajj Scheme for the Southern Region is set at \$4,015 per person, and for the Northern Region, it is \$4,050 per person. For further information, the nearest NBP branch may be contacted, whereas NBP Helpline 021-111-627-627 is also available for assistance.

ICMA organized a mega Job Fair 2023 in Faisalabad

F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Pakistan ICMA organized a mega Job Fair 2023 in Faisalabad on Thursday, 30th November at the

Zoom Executive Marquee, Faisalabad.

ICMA is a professional accounting body that excels in delivering high-standard education, professional training, and research & development activities that are aimed at improving

business efficiency.

Over 60 companies participated in the Job Fair representing all major industrial sectors of Faisalabad in particular. The Job Fair proved to be a hallmark in the nation's job market catering to audiences from all walks of life. The event bridged the gap between academia & the job market. The event was ideally positioned as a networking platform and aimed at facilitating professionals to best-suited job opportunities. Professionals from all walks of life and spanning diverse industries were in attendance. Job Fair was attended by over 3,000 students representing different educational institutions of Faisalabad.

The event was attended

by Mr. Shehzad Ahmed Malik, President ICMA, Mr. Zia Mustafa, Chairman MARCOM Committee, Mr. Awais Yaseen, Honorary Treasurer, ICMA, Mr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmad Naz, Chairman Faisalabad Branch Council, Shahid R. Bhatti, President Islamabad Rotary Club, Chaudhary Muhammad Yousaf, Regional Director Superior Group of Colleges Faisalabad, Dr Sajjad Arshad, Senior Vice president FCCI, Mr. Aslam Bhalli, Vice president FCCI.

This has completed a series of Corporate Job Fair successfully held in 2023 organized by ICMA Pakistan.



Hamdard Pakistan's ultimate aim is to follow Hakim Mohammed Said's vision: "Love Pakistan, Build Pakistan"

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Hamdard Pakistan's ultimate aim is to follow Hakim Mohammed Said's vision: "Love Pakistan, Build Pakistan". Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said was a patriot, an exemplary Muslim, a physician par excellence, and a strong proponent of national unity.

In his lifetime, he encouraged all those fellow remarkable Pakistanis who used to brighten the name of the country with their exceptional services to the nation in various fields. These views were expressed by Ms. Sadia Rashid, President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. She was addressing the gathering of Shura Hamdard Karachi titled: "Respecting The Masses" held yesterday at a local hotel.

The occasion also included the distribution of the Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said Awards followed by the annual dinner reception in honour of Shura Hamdard members.

While congratulating the awardees, she said: "Congratulations to Musarrat Misbah, Shabina Mustafa, Police Constables Saleem Brohi, Khalil Jatoi, and Rafiq Soomro. It's essential to recognize that this achievement belongs not just to you but to all of us as a nation. Hamdard Pakistan extends its tribute to you, expressing the expectation that you will persist in your commendable efforts to serve the country and the nation in the future."

Masarrat Misbah is a beautician turned philanthropist who caters to

women who are victims of acid attack violence. She aids them in regaining their confidence and turns these girls' lives around. Shabina Mustafa is a social entrepreneur and the founder of

The Garage School located in Neelum Colony, Karachi which educates underprivileged children in Karachi who cannot afford education. Police constables Saleem Brohi, Khalil Jatoi and Rafiq Soomro

fought valiantly against terrorists during the Pakistan Stock Exchange terror attack and killed all four terrorists. Recognizing their valuable services to the nation, Ms. Sadia Rashid conferred the Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said Awards to these individuals.

Special guest SSP Ali Raza thanked Ms. Sadia Rashid and Hamdard Pakistan and discussed the PSX attack in detail. He also highlighted the fact that Hamdard University provides free education to the children of Police martyrs.

Earlier, Speaker of Hamdard Shura, Gen (r) Moinuddin Haider presided over the Shura Hamdard meeting and said: "Respecting The Masses" involves the peaceful transfer of power and decentralization of authority to local governance levels. Overcoming our national challenges requires establishing a balance of power and authority among institutions progressively. The primary cause of public uneasiness is the lack of training among the general population as the people are unaware of their responsibilities toward the state. In the Chinese political



model, the transfer of power is conducted transparently. The political structure in China also prioritizes the well-being of the people and ensures the provision of basic needs.

Zubaida Mustafa said that when democracy is discussed, there's a common assumption that the Western democratic model is the standard. However, democracy is an adaptable system that nations can tailor to their requirements by incorporating their cultural, social and historical values and aspects.

Ibn-ul-Hassan Rizvi said that democracy is the best form of governance for a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse country like Pakistan. Only through democracy can all communities find adequate representation within the system. Pakistan came into existence after a long peaceful democratic struggle.

Prof. Dr. Hakim Abdul Hannan said that there exists a significant lack of mutual trust between the elite, the ruling class, and the general population. Political parties should gain insight into the issues and hardships faced by the people through local meetings.

In this regard, it is crucial to provide opportunities to educated individuals from the middle class who directly experience these challenges in their everyday lives.

Usman Damohi said that democracy is essential for the survival of Pakistan. Despite this, the country has experienced four martial laws in the last seven decades. Simultaneously, instances of military dictatorship, interference, and authoritarian behavior persist even during democratic administrations. Unfortunately, even knowing the significance of democracy for a diverse country like Pakistan, an unproductive debate persists among political leaders, the ruling class, the mass media, and the public regarding which system Pakistan should embrace.

Dr. Rizwana Ansari, Dr. Amir Tauseen, Cdre(r) Sadeed Anwar Malik, Pervaz Sadiq, Dr. Abubakr Shaikh, Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, Deputy Speaker Shura Hamdard - Col (r) Mukhtar Ahmed Butt, Engr. Anwar-ul-Haq Siddiqui and Prof. Mohammad Rafi also spoke on the occasion.

Gold rates decrease by Rs.500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed a decrease of Rs.500 on Friday and was sold at Rs.220,500 against its sale at Rs.221,000 the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs429 to Rs.189,043 from Rs.189,472 whereas that of and 10 gram 22 Karat gold declined to Rs.173,290 from Rs.173,683.

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

However, the price of gold in the international market decreased by \$4 to \$2,060 from \$2,064, the Association reported.

Export of items used for making weapons being checked

FAISALABAD (APP): Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV) Deputy Director Hafiz Wasif Mehmood has said the federal government had taken measures to check export of gadgets, chemicals and software programmes, which could possibly be used in development of weapons.

In a meeting with the office-bearers of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here on Friday, he said some parts were also used in the industrial sector and hence the government had not outright banned its exports, but the process had been regulated by the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs through SECDIV.

He said Pakistan was strictly following the steps taken at the global level to control production of weapons of mass destruction. "In this connection, every country has been directed to establish its own control system," he said and added that no one could unintentionally export such items. He said that most of these controlled items are also used in the industrial sector and hence a system has been evolved to keep check on it, without clamping complete ban on its exports.

He said that SECDIV is organising the awareness sessions all over the country to sensitise the con-

cerned sectors to avoid the export of items which could also be used in the production of weapons of mass destruction. He said that industries are sprawling all over the country and SECDIV could not reach all of them, hence we are using the platform of chambers to inform them about their national obligation.

He said that he already had a similar meeting with customs and dry port officials. He said that the comprehensive list of controlled items is available on the website of SECDIV but he would also provide a list of such items specifically used in textile, chemicals, pharmaceutical and other related sectors.



In brief

Pak karate team reaches Nepal

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan national karate team Friday reached Nepal to participate in the 7th South Asian Cadet, Junior U21 and Senior Championship to be starting from December 3, 2023. Talking to APP, international qualified coach and Administrator sports Complex Shah Faisal, who is with the team as manager, said that they had a good team and would win back medals. He disclosed that the team had services of Muhammad Anwar and Quratul Ain as referee while Naseem Qureshi and Imtiaz Ali were performing the duties of officiating referees. As usual, President Pakistan Karate Federation Muhammad Jahangir is also with the team. The other members of the team include Asif, Shoaib Ahmed Khan, Muhammad Abdul Hadi, Aneel Ali Khan, Shehbaz Ahmed, Muhammad Shahbaz, Nazia Ali, Anahita, Fatima, Ayra Faisal, Arzoo, Laiba Zia, Farta, Mah Gul, Shoaib Akhtar, Muhammad Farhan Rasheed, Shamsuddin, Danish Gulfam, Aurangzeb, Aamir Sultan, Shamis Iftikhar and Usman Shafiq.

Shane announces retirement

BARBADOS (INP): West Indies wicket-keeper-batter Shane Dowrich has retired from international cricket with immediate effect. This means the 32-year-old, who was originally picked for West Indies' upcoming home ODIs against England, has withdrawn from the squad. The CWI selection panel will not name a replacement for Dowrich for the three-match series, which begins on Sunday in Antigua. Dowrich, whose sole previous ODI cap came against Bangladesh in 2019, had earned a recall on a back of strong returns in the Super50 Cup: 234 runs in five innings at an average of 78 and strike rate of 91.76. In the absence of Dowrich, Shai Hope will have to juggle captaincy and keeping, with Nicholas Pooran currently unavailable for selection for ODIs.

Ronaldo tells referee to overturn penalty

PARIS (INP): Cristiano Ronaldo convinced the referee to change his mind after awarding him a penalty in Al Nassr's AFC Champions League 0-0 draw with Iran's Persepolis. The 38-year-old former Manchester United and Real Madrid great appeared to have been brought down by Soroush Rafiei inside the box and Chinese referee Ma Ning pointed to the spot. Ronaldo leapt to his feet and approached the referee, wagging his finger, shaking his head and telling him there had been no foul. After consulting VAR, the referee was sent to the pitch-side monitor and reversed his decision in the Group E clash in Riyadh. The Saudi Pro League side had to play most of the match with 10 men after Ali Lajami was given a straight red card for a shin-raking challenge in the 17th minute. They also lost Ronaldo to a neck injury with 13 minutes remaining, caused by Persepolis goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand landing on the Portuguese star when claiming a high ball. But the 2018 and 2020 Champions League runners-up from Iran were unable to capitalise, the point proving enough for Al Nassr to seal their place in the knockout stages as group winners.

PCB appoints ex-cricketers Salman Butt, Kamran Akmal consultants to chief selector

ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday said it had appointed former cricketers Salman Butt, Kamran Akmal and Rao Iftikhar Anjum consultants to Chief Selector Wahab Riaz, amid a reshuffle in the national side and the board's management.

The reshuffle began amid Pakistan's poor show at the World Cup that saw the national side crashing out of the showpiece tournament even before the semi-final stage.

Former fast bowler Wahab Riaz was appointed Pakistan's chief selector last month, after Inzamam-ul-Haq stepped down in October following allegations of a conflict of interests. On Friday, the PCB confirmed the appointment of Akmal, Anjum and Butt as consultant members to Riaz.

"The three have assumed their responsibilities in the selection panel with immediate effect. Their first assignment as consultant members to the chief selector includes

the upcoming five-match T20I series against New Zealand, set to commence on 12 January 2024 following the conclusion of the Test tour to Australia," the PCB said in a statement.

"When not engaged in selection duties, the consultant members may be assigned additional tasks such as conducting skills camps." Pakistan finished fifth in the 10-team World Cup tournament that culminated last month, with Australia lifting the trophy for a record sixth time.

Babar Azam resigned from the captaincy in all formats and Shan Masood was made test captain. Shaheen Afridi was appointed as skipper of T20 side while former captain Mohammad Hafeez was named as team director, who will also be the head coach of the team on the twin tours of Australia and New Zealand. The PCB last month also appointed former international players Umar Gul and Saeed Aimal as bowling coaches for the national team.

Pakistan U19 squad announced for ACC U19 Asia Cup 2023

PESHAWAR (APP): The junior selection committee, headed by Sohail Tanvir, has finalised the 15-member squad for the eight-team tournament scheduled from December 8-17 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Saad Baig, who captained the Pakistan U19 team in the home series against Sri Lanka and the tour to Bangladesh earlier this year, will continue to lead the side in the tournament. Pakistan U19 are placed in Group-A along-

side Afghanistan U19, India U19 and Nepal U19.

They will play their first match of the tournament against Nepal on December 8 followed by games against India and Afghanistan on December 10 and 12, respectively.

Prior to the selection of the squad, the Pakistan U19 probably had assembled for a training camp at the Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre, Karachi since November 24. The 15-member squad will now depart to Dubai on

December 6.

Pakistan U19 squad is as under: Saad Baig (captain and wicket-keeper), Ahmad Hussain, Ali Asfand, Amir Hassan, Arafat Minhas (vice-captain), Azan Awais, Khubaib Khalil, Najab Khan, Naveed Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Riazullah, Mohammad Tayyab Arif, Mohammad Zeeshan, Shahzaib Khan, Shamyul Hussain and Ubaid Shah. Non-Travelling Reserves – Ahmad Hassan, Aimal Khan, Obaid Shahid and Mohammad Zulkifal.



ISLAMABAD: Players in action as Pakistan Squash Federation in collaboration with PAF & Serena Hotels is organizing Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship for Men & Women at Mushaf Squash Complex.

Bangladesh leave New Zealand in deep trouble in 332-run chase

SYLHET (AFP): Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam claimed 4-40 to put Bangladesh within three wickets of a famous win over New Zealand in the first Test in Sylhet on Friday.

Set a target of 332 runs, New Zealand stuttered to reach 113-7 at stumps on the fourth day, still needing 219 runs for what looked like an improbable win.

Daryl Mitchell dragged the match into the fifth day with an unbeaten 44, remaining New Zealand's only hope to produce a miracle.

Ish Sodhi was with him on seven, but not before he was reprimanded by the third umpire after initially being given out two overs before stumps.

Bangladesh will be looking to wrap up the New Zealand innings quickly on the fifth and final day for what they hope will be their second

Test win against New Zealand and their first at home.

"It's fun to beat a big team," Taijul said. "We haven't won yet but, inshallah (God willing), we are trying our best."

'Still fight' New Zealand's Ajaz Patel said the Kiwis had "obviously a lot of batting to do" but insisted the battle was not over.

"We'll come out there and still fight and see where we get to," he said. "We've got Dazzler (Mitchell) there who's batted quite nicely today."

Pacer Shoriful Islam and spinners Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Nayeem Hasan complemented Taijul with a wicket each to put them firmly on course.

The Kiwis lost opener Tom Latham to Shoriful for a duck before the scoreboard was moved and never appeared to recover

from the early blow.

Taijul swiftly removed danger man Kane Williamson leg-before for 11 and Mehidy got rid of Henry Nicholls for two to leave New Zealand struggling at 37-3 at tea.

Devon Conway fell to Taijul for 22, giving a catch to close-in fielder Shahadat Hossain soon after the resumption.

Taijul then knocked over Tom Blundell for six to put New Zealand in further trouble.

Mitchell and Glenn Phillips added 21 runs for the sixth wicket to momentarily halt Bangladesh's victory push.

Nayeem hit Phillips in front of the wicket on 12 before Taijul removed Kyle Jamieson for nine.

Mushfiquar Rahim and Mehidy earlier added a half-century each after skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto's ton.

Int'l Squash Series quarterfinals on Saturday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The quarterfinals of men and women events of the International Men & Women Squash Series 2023 would be played here at Mushaf Squash Complex on Saturday.

In men's event matches played on Friday, Ong Sai Hung (MAS) beat Duncan Lee (MAS) 12-10, 11-5, 11-9 (37 min), Ibrahim Elkabbani (EGY) beat Ziad Ibrahim (EGY) 11-7, 9-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-6 (125 min), Mohamed Nasser (EGY) beat Muhammad Abdul Qadir (PAK) 11-5, 2-11, 11-6, 11-5 (31 min), Noor Zaman (PAK) beat Farhan Mehboob (PAK) 4-11, 11-2, 11-9, 10-12, 11-9 (48 min), Nasir Iqbal (PAK) beat Seif El-Shenawy (EGY) 11-3, 11-3, 11-1 (16 min), Amaad Fareed (PAK) beat Wee Ming Hock (MAS) 11-8, 11-9, 11-4 (32 min), Muhammad Asim Khan (PAK) beat Yassin Shohdy (EGY) 11-2, 11-3, 11-6 (24 min), Khaled Labib (EGY) beat Abdullah Nawaz (PAK) 11-8, 8-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-9 (66 min).

In women event, Chan Yiwen (MAS) beat Rushna Mehboob (PAK) 11-7, 11-3, 11-5 (12 min), Nadien Elhammy (EGY) beat Mehwish Ali (PAK) 11-2, 11-3, 11-8 (19 min), Sana Bahadar (PAK) beat Anam Mustafa Aziz (PAK) 9-11, 11-8, 12-10, 11-8 (25 min), Nour Ramy (EGY) beat Sadia Gul (PAK) 11-3, 11-5, 11-3 (18 min), Amina el rihany (EGY) beat Saima Shoukat (PAK) 11-1, 11-1, 11-1 (11 min), Malak Samir (EGY) beat Thanusaa Uthrihan (MAS) 9-11, 12-10, 13-11, 12-10 (37 min), Wong Po Yui Kirstie (HKG) beat Komal Khan (PAK) 11-4, 11-6, 11-2 (12 min), Nour Khafagy (EGY) beat Sarah Soudan (PAK) 11-7, 11-6, 11-2 (24 min).

Australian PM invites Pakistan cricket team to PM house



LAHORE: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese invited the Pakistan cricket team to the PM House on December 5 after the Green Shirts reached Canberra via Sydney on Friday for the Test series.

Pakistan's 18-man squad led by newly-appointed captain Shan Masood will go to the PM house on December 5 in Canberra. Cricket Australia (CA) has also invited the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee, Zaka Ashraf.

Ashraf is expected to watch the second Test which starts on December 26 — also known as Boxing Day — at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). Ashraf will talk to the CA members on important matters as well during his stay at Down Under.

It must be noted that Pakistan will play a four-day First Class match against the Australian PM XI for the third time in history after matches in 1990 and 2005. The first PM's XI fixture was played in 1951, whereas this will be the second under PM Albanese after a two-year hiatus before 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prime Minister XI Nathan McSweeney (c),

Cameron Bancroft, Cameron Green, Marcus Harris, Nathan McAndrew, Todd Murphy, Michael Neser, Jimmy Peirson, Matthew Renshaw, Mark Steketee, Beau Webster.

The playing XI will be supported throughout the match by the ATC Premier players who will have the chance to learn and train with the best domestic players available in the country.

Pakistan squad for Australia Tests

Shan Masood (captain), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Khuram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel and Shaheen Shah Afridi

Australia tour schedule Four-day match: PM's XI vs Pakistan – December 6-9: Manuka Oval, Canberra

1st Test – Australia vs Pakistan – December 14-18: Perth Stadium

2nd Test – Australia vs Pakistan – December 26-30: Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG)

3rd Test – Australia vs Pakistan – January 3-7: Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG)

Nawaz heroics, Sahibzada Farhan blitz light up the start of Super Eight stage

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): The Super Eight stage of AH Group Presents Jazz Super 4G National T20 Cup 2023-24 got underway in Karachi today. The first three games were action-packed as Rawalpindi, Sialkot and Peshawar won their games.

Match 4 of Day 1 of the Super Eight stage set to begin at 2000 PKT between Lahore Blues and Karachi Whites at National Bank Stadium, Karachi. The toss will take place at 1930 PKT.

Rawalpindi vs Abbottabad at UBL Sports Complex, Karachi

Shadab Khan-led Rawalpindi hit the ground running on Day 1 of the Super 8 stage as they beat Abbottabad by 32 runs.

Rawalpindi, on the way to a total of 179, were reduced to 26 for 4 after opting to bat first. Mohammad Nawaz walked in to bat at No. 6 and scored a breezy knock of 72 runs from 36 balls laced with 5 fours and as many sixes.

Skipper Shadab Khan also chipped in with the bat and contributed with a vital knock of 42. Abbottabad's Adil Naz bagged three wickets.

In reply Abbottabad scrambled to 147 in the allotted 20 overs as Shadab Khan and Mohammad Nawaz took two wickets apiece.

Star batter Fakhar Zaman, opening for Abbottabad, only managed to score 30 from 29 balls as he fell prey to Shadab Khan. Abbottabad fell 32



runs short despite having five wickets in the bag.

Sialkot vs FATA at NBP Sports Complex, Karachi

Sialkot took FATA by storm at NBP Sports Complex after winning the toss and electing to bowl first. FATA were bundled out for 103 runs in 16.5 overs. Sialkot's Sohaibullah and Mohammad Ali took three wickets each while captain Shoaib Malik bagged two scalps.

In reply, Sialkot lost two early wickets but then Salman Khan (48 not out, 38b, 1x6s, 3x4s) and Mohammad Huraira (47 not out, 38b, 5x4s) joined forces to take Sialkot home. Sohaibullah was named player of the match for his three-wicket haul.

Peshawar vs Lahore Whites at National Bank Stadium, Karachi

Peshawar and Lahore Whites locked horns in match 3 of Day 1 of the Super Eight stage. Lahore Whites posted a total of 136 for the loss of six wickets. Ahmed Shehzad (53, 35b, 3x6s, 5x4s), who hit his fourth successive half-century, and Umar Akmal (49, 46b, 1x6, 5x4s) top-scored for Lahore Whites while no one else crossed the score of 13.

Peshawar batters Mohammad Haris (52, 28b, 6x6s, 1x4s) and Sahibzada Farhan (64, 31b, 4x6s, 8x4s) came out all guns blazing as they stitched an opening partnership of 102 runs. Lahore Whites' bowlers struck thrice but the damage was already done as Peshawar cruised home with 41 balls to spare. Sahibzada Farhan was declared player of the match for his brilliant knock.

Scores in brief: Rawalpindi beat

Abbottabad by 32 runs at UBL Sports Complex Rawalpindi 179-7, 20 overs (Mohammad Nawaz 72, Shadab Khan 42; Adil Naz 3-45, Kamran Chulham 1-14, Atizaz Habib Khan 1-24)

Abbottabad 147-5, 20 overs (Fakhar Zaman 30, Afaq Ahmed 30; Mohammad Nawaz 2-19, Shadab Khan 2-27, Mubasir Khan 1-27)

Player of the match – Mohammad Nawaz (Rawalpindi)

Sialkot beat FATA by 8 wickets at NBP Sports Complex

FATA 103 all out, 16.5 overs (Salman Khan Jnr 23, Akif Javed 22; Sohaibullah 3-8, Mohammad Ali 3-9, Shoaib Malik 2-36, Shoaib Akhtar 1-9, Usman Khalid 1-14)

Sialkot 106-2, 14.1 overs (Salman Khan 48 not out, Mohammad Huraira 47 not out; Akif Javed 2-31)

Player of the match – Sohaibullah (Sialkot)

Peshawar beat Lahore whites by 7 wickets at National Bank Stadium

Lahore Whites 136-6, 20 overs (Ahmed Shahzad 53, Umar Akmal 49; Azam Khan 2-21, Mohammad Imran 1-15, Iftikhar Ahmed 1-22, Mohammad Abbas Afridi 1-32, Niaz Khan 1-40)

Peshawar 142-3, 13.1 overs (Sahibzada Farhan 64, Mohammad Haris 52; Saad Nasim 2-15, Ahmed Daniyal 1-44)

Player of the match – Sahibzada Farhan (Peshawar).



In brief

IRSA releases 89,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 89,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 44,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1496.93 feet and was 96.93 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 22,400 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1175.35 feet, which was 125.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 6,100 cusecs and 28,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 58,400, 45,000, 39,900 and 10,800 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 7,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

IESCO catches 3,121 power thieves

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) caught 3,121 power pilferers in various circles of the company in November during the ongoing anti-power theft and recovery drive. Sharing the details, IESCO Chief Dr Muhammad Amjad told that detection teams checked over 151,000 meters during November. Out of total checked meters, 2,939 were found slow and 14 tampered while 14 consumers were getting direct illegal power supply, he said. He said fine of Rs 120.90 million has also been imposed on the power thieves besides registering FIRs against 149 consumers. The Police has also arrested 70 power pilferers, he said. The IESCO Chief said that some 5,962 power pilferers have been arrested since September 7 besides imposing over Rs 300.42 million fine on them. He requested the consumer to report power theft on toll free number 118 or concerned SDO office.

AIOU to hold Int'l moot on Arabic

ISLAMABAD (APP): A two-day international conference on "Modern Trends in The Arabic Novel in the 2nd Half of the 20th Century" is being held in connection with the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). According to AIOU, the conference will take place on December 13 and 14, and more than 50 international scholars have submitted their papers to participate. Out of these, 13 papers have been selected for presentation. The opening session of the conference will commence at 10:00 a.m. on December 13, and it will be presided over by the Vice Chancellor of AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi, will explain the aims and objectives of the conference. There will be two parallel sessions held simultaneously on both days. Dr. Hashmi believes that this conference will be a milestone in the promotion of Arabic. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, has emphasized that Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran and it is very broad and sweet. Therefore, every Pakistani should learn it.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary of Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani writing on Media Wall on the occasion of World Aids Day.

CM Punjab lays foundation stone of Dadocha Dam

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister (CM) Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi here on Friday laid the foundation stone of the Dadocha Dam, and also inspected the site of the project. He said that the construction work of the dam, which was stalled for 13 years, had finally started. The CM said that Rawalpindi city was facing a severe water shortage. The water supply situation

deteriorates in summer as the shortfall reaches up to 60 MGD, he added.

Emergency work had been started on Dadocha Dam to meet the water shortage, said Mohsin Naqvi. The Dadocha dam project which would be completed at a cost of 14 billion, would help meet the water shortage issue, he added. After its completion, this dam would provide 35 million gallons of clean

drinking water per day to Rawalpindi city, the CM informed. The construction of Dadocha Dam would address the long-standing water problem being faced by the citizens, he said and appreciated the efforts and hard work done by the Chief Secretary Punjab and Commissioner Rawalpindi Division. Mohsin Naqvi said that Dadocha Dam would be completed in two years period.

Naval Headquarters delegation explores Safe City Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Naval Headquarters recently visited Safe City Islamabad, where they received a comprehensive briefing on its operational functions and its crucial role in upholding law and order.

The officials from Naval Headquarters were warmly welcomed by the SSP Safe City. During their visit, the delegation toured key facilities, including the command and control center, the data hub unit, state-of-the-art cameras, and the Police Operations Center hall. The SSP Safe City provided a detailed

overview of the Safe City procedures. The delegation learned about Safe City Islamabad's significant contributions across various departments, leveraging modern techniques such as the Police Operations Center, Emergency Control Center, Data Hub Unit, Dispatch Control Center, e-Challan System, and the "Pucar-15" helpline.

Additionally, the delegation gained insights into the functionality and advantages of Safe City cameras deployed throughout the city. These advanced cameras play a pivotal role in enhancing city safety, preventing crimes,

and ensuring the well-being of citizens. Notably, 42 percent of resolved crime cases were attributed to the Safe City Command and Control Center. Emphasizing security measures, the delegation was informed about the installation of face recognition cameras at city entry and exit points, effectively identifying suspicious elements.

The Naval Headquarters delegation acknowledged the modern technical systems employed by the Islamabad Capital Police and expressed gratitude to ICCPO and the entire team for a successful and informative visit.

CCP aims to construct a state of the art headquarter

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Design Vetting Committee of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has officially granted approval for the building plan of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP). This development marks a new era in the progression of CCP.

The cost of rent, utilities, and staff hire has risen with inflation. The construction of new building will enable CCP to expand its operations within its current

budget across other cities.

In 2018, the CDA allocated plots spanning 5.5 kanals in Sector G-10/4, Mauve Area, Islamabad.

The building plan encountered roadblocks delaying the entire project for the last two years. The proposed building plan reflects a forward-thinking design, encompassing state-of-the-art office spaces. This includes a dedicated hearing room, an information resource centre, and a creche facility tailored for female

employees—an embodiment of CCP's commitment to fostering a modern and inclusive workspace. Under the current CCP management, focused efforts are underway to address outstanding challenges faced by the organization. This includes the resolution of pending court cases, recovery of penalties, the streamlining of various procedural aspects, and, significantly, creating a level playing field for all businesses leading to prosperity across the country.

ANF seizes 142 kg drugs in 13 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in a crackdown against drug smugglers managed to recover 142 kg of drugs and arrested 16 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that in an operation, 474 grams of Ice drug was recovered from the possession of a passenger netted at Islamabad International Airport. The accused, a resident of Peshawar, was leaving for Jeddah by flight number PA-270.

In another operation, a passenger travelling to Qatar by flight number QR-0621 was arrested at Allama Iqbal International Airport. In the third operation, 940 grams of Ice drug was recovered from the trolley bag of an accused, resident of Sargodha.

In an operation at Allama Iqbal Airport, 950 grams of Ice drug were recovered from a trolley bag of a passenger. The accused, a resident of Kasur, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-765.

842 grams of heroin hidden in a passenger's shoes was recovered at Faisalabad International Airport. The accused, a resident of Muzaffargarh, was leaving for Saudi Arabia by flight number FZ-392.

During an operation, 3 kg heroin was recovered at the Cargo Services Office located near Railway Station Lahore.

5 kg Ice drug was recovered from a parcel booked for Australia at a courier office

in Rawalpindi.

3 kg Ice drug was recovered from the possession of a passenger, a resident of Abbottabad, arrested near Faizabad, Islamabad.

One kg of cocaine was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near Chungi No. 26 Islamabad.

100 intoxicated tablets (ecstasy) were recovered from the possession of a motorcycle rider nabbed from the Chungi Amar Sadhu area in Lahore.

97.2 kg hashish was recovered from a truck intercepted near Sidhar bypass, Faisalabad while two accused were also arrested. 6 kg heroin and 1 kg Ice drug were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Satyana Road Faisalabad while two accused were arrested.

In the 12th operation, 13.2 kg opium and 6 kg hashish were recovered from a house in Mohalla Bakhtewala, Gujranullah. Two suspects were netted during the raid.

In the 13th operation, 3 kg heroin was recovered from a vehicle near Kamil pur Interchange, Sargodha while three accused were arrested.

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

Three held for possessing fireworks items

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi District Police under an ongoing operation against fireworks dealers and illegal Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) agencies conducted raids and arrested three accused.

According to the police spokesman, Gungmandi police rounded up two accused namely Abdul Latif and Sikandar, recovered fireworks items from their possession.

In another raid, Civil Line police in their ongoing operation against illegal LPG agencies conducted a raid and netted an accused, Rab Nawaz.

Police also confiscated LPG cylinders, refilling gadgets from his possession and registered separate cases against the accused, he added. He said the police would continue their operation against the rules violators and the illegal petrol and LPG agencies would be sealed.

Six drug peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers and bootleggers here on Friday arrested six accused besides recovering over two kg charras, 11 liters liquors and other items from their possession. A police spokesman said that Rattaamral police arrested Farooq for having 900 grams charras and Race Course police seized 600 grams charras from the possession of Muzafar.

Rawat police held Qasim with 580 grams charras and Civil Lines police rounded up Bilal for having 60 grams charras.

Civil Lines police arrested an accused namely Harrison for possessing 10 liters liquor while Dharmial police held Taimoor on recovery of a liquor bottle.

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.

Pakistan-Uzbekistan connected by centuries-old cultural ties: Jamal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah on Friday said that Uzbekistan and Pakistan are connected by centuries-old cultural relationship, which has strong roots in history.

He said this while addressing the opening ceremony of the Photo Exhibition on Joint Cultural Heritage, along with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Pakistan, Oybek Arif Usmanov, organized by the patronage of Federal Minister for Culture and National Heritage, Syed Jamal Shah.

The minister said that 30 years after the independence of Uzbekistan is a small part of mutual modern cultural history, the two countries have been engaged in a mutual venture of literature, music and architecture for centuries, which is moving forward and strengthening after each passing day. Jamal Shah said that the folklore in Pakistan literature has been adopted from the literature of Samarkand and Bokhara, the influence of which is still present in our folk literature.

He said that the literary and cultural heritage of both countries is common and the writers and poets of both countries are equally popular on both sides.

He said that Pashto literature is closely

related to the literature and culture of Uzbekistan, like Pashto Sufi poet Rehman Baba is also influenced by the culture and literature of Samarkand and Bokhara.

The minister said that Uzbekistan's ambassador to Pakistan understands Pashto and other regional languages very eloquently. He said that Uzbekistan is a significant part of the ancient silk route, from here there was trade between the countries of the region and other continents as well. Jamal Shah said that Samarkand Bukhara is famous in the world for carpets and spices since ancient times and the commercial goods made by them are very popular here.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Pakistan, Oybek Arif Usmanov said that today, "we are able to show to Pakistani public and Diplomatic representatives the retrospective and historical photos demonstrating the very active dynamic interaction of Uzbek and Pakistani leaders – Presidents, Prime Ministers and federal ministers. He said that after 3 decades of our active interaction let's focus on the connectivity strategy of our two regions South Asia and Central Asia – implementation of the projects for boosting trade and economics, transport linkages and cultural and people-to-people re-connectivity.

World Aids Day observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Like other parts of the globe, the World AIDS Day was also commemorated in Pakistan on Friday with determination and hope for a HIV Aids free country.

In this regard, the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, in collaboration with the Common Management Unit (CMU) for AIDS, TB, and Malaria, the UN family, the Association of People Living with HIV (APLHV) and other community partners, marked World AIDS Day 2023 with a resolute commitment to the global theme, "Let Communities Lead."

Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan said that the government of Pakistan was firmly committed to eradicating the AIDS epidemic by 2030, aligning with the global HIV milestones. He said that it was crucial to address healthcare and societal imbalances to ensure that no one was marginalized or left behind.

On the occasion, Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Federal Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination said that the world can end AIDS, with communities leading the way.

Communities living with, at risk of, or affected by HIV have a greater role to play and need to join the frontline forces to halt the upward trend of the HIV epidemic, he said and added, we all need to join hands and connect for providing person-centered public health services, build trust, innovate, monitor implementation of policies and services, and hold providers accountable. Speaking to the occasion, Dr. Razia Kaniz Fatima, National Coordination for Coordination Management Unit, AIDS,

TB and Malaria, emphasized the need to empower and trust communities to take the lead in designing, implementing and evaluating programs that address the unique needs of their members.

Julien Harnais Resident Coordinator of United Nations in Pakistan said despite investment and efforts of the government and partners, HIV infections are still rising in Pakistan.

To stop the disease, he added we must get better at listening to marginalized people and giving them the support.

Ms. Yuki Takemoto, Country Director UNAIDS Pakistan said World AIDS Day 2023 highlights the full potential of community leadership to help end AIDS as a public health threat in Pakistan.

At the end of the event, a panel discussion between UN partners, government and donors also took place.

Dr. Razia Kaniz Fatima from the Government, Ms. Kate Somvongsiri Mission Director USAID, Dr. Samuel Rizk Resident Representative of UNDP in Pakistan, Dr. Luay Shabaneh Representative UNFPA Pakistan, Dr. Youssef Filali-Meknassi Director and Representative to Pakistan, Asghar Satti National Coordinator APLHIV and Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam, a law enforcement specialist graced the event as panelists.

The panel talk was facilitated by Ms. Yuki Takemoto Country Director UNAIDS Pakistan. In the end, the participants went through the Community Informational Booths set up by the communities and partners. The booths were comprised of educational and community outreach materials.

HEC, NDF to collaborate for success of green youth movement

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the National Dialogue Forum (NDF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on one of the development projects of HEC, "Green Youth Movement (GYM)-Prime Minister's Youth Programme."

According to the terms outlined in the MoU held here the other day, the NDF will actively engage with university students, offering both technical guidance and financial support for capacity-building training and social action projects.

These initiatives are designed to address environmental challenges and instigate positive transformations within local communities.

The collaborative efforts underscore a shared commitment to fostering environmental awareness, education, and tangible solutions for a more sustainable future.

Executive Director HEC Dr. Zia Ul

Qayyum and Executive Director NDF officially sealed the partnership by signing the MoU. Advisor (Planning and Development) HEC Dr. Mazhar, Project Director GYM Irfan Ullah and the Project Management Unit attended the ceremony.

On this occasion, Dr. Zia Ul Qayyum said that climate change was an imminent threat that demands a collective attention and action. "The collaboration through the GYM project holds the promise of mobilizing Green Youth Movement Clubs to actively combat climate challenges," he said. Dr. Zia emphasized the importance of engaging the youth in environmental initiatives and stated, "The future belongs to our youth and their involvement is crucial in finding sustainable solutions. The GYM club, fostered by this MoU, will play a pivotal role in empowering students to combat climate change through education, awareness, and hands-on projects."



RAWALPINDI: Heavy machinery being used to build Chak Beli Link Road in the outskirts of the city.

Central Bank raises withdrawal limits

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Central Bank of Afghanistan said that the withdrawal limit from banks has increased to 70,000 Afs one time a week or 250,000 Afs a month. Hasibullah Noori said that in order to make it easier for the citizens of the country, they are trying to increase the limit of withdrawing money from banks. "Our countrymen who have accounts in commercial banks of the country can withdraw 70,000 Afs a week or 250,000 Afs a month," the spokesman of the Central Bank said.

Germany provides 60 million

KABUL (Agencies): The German Embassy has announced a contribution of 60 million euros for humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. The embassy announced via its social media platform X this Thursday, specifying that the funds will assist earthquake victims in Herat province and Afghan returnees from Pakistan. Germany has entrusted this aid to the World Food Programme and will disburse it through this organization.

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

6 killed, 3 injured in attack on clerics in Herat, Afghanistan



JIBRIL (Agencies): According to reports, in an attack by unidentified armed individuals on the passengers of a three-wheeler, at least six people, including two clerics, were killed, and three others were wounded in Jibril district of Herat province on Friday.

These individuals were returning from a memorial ceremony for a Hazara cleric in the Khoshroud area of Anjil Herat when they were attacked. The incident occurred at approximately 2 PM on Friday, around 10 kilometres from the city centre, in the vicinity of the Shaheedan and Kuh-e

Melli districts within the Jibril district of Herat. Witnessed that the armed individual stopped the victims' vehicle, a Toyota Corolla, in the Kuh-e Melli area and then proceeded to open fire on the passengers. The attackers targeted Mohammad Taqi Sadeghi, the imam of the Rasoul-e

Azam Mosque, and Mohammad Mohsen Hamidi, the imam of the Hazrat Abolfazl Mosque in Herat's Jibril district, as they were attending a memorial ceremony for Mohammad Etemadi, who had been assassinated by unidentified armed individuals in the Khoshroud area of Anjil Herat. According to reports, during the past one and half months, at least four Hazara clerics or religious leaders have been killed in Herat. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights for Afghanistan had previously stated that they were investigating the "very concerning" assassination of two Shia clerics in Herat. Richard Bent, the UN official, had called for an independent investigation following international morals into this incident and the punishment of the perpetrators. Despite the Taliban's assurances about security, there is a growing rise in security threats, particularly for the Hazara community.

Karimi presents credentials in Beijing as Ambassador to China



KABUL (TOLOnews): Foreign Ministry spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi said on X that Bilal Karimi presented his credentials to the Director-General of the Protocol Department of the Foreign Ministry of China, Hong Lei, as the Islamic Emirate's ambassador in Beijing. According to Balkhi, Karimi arrived in Beijing on November 24 and was welcomed by the Chinese special envoy for Afghanistan, Yue Xiaoyong, and acting diplomats of the Afghanistan embassy in China. Bilal Karimi worked in various posi-

tions of the Islamic Emirate, including as deputy spokesman of the Islamic Emirate. "He has been introduced officially as the Islamic Emirate's ambassador in Beijing and he will inshallah provide good service. This will be a good step in recognition of the Islamic Emirate," Mujahid told TOLOnews. China has not said yet whether it regards the move as a step towards official recognition. Political analysts believe that the acceptance of the Islamic Emirate's ambassador by China is beneficial for the improvement of relations between Kabul and the international community. "The relations between the Islamic Emirate and China have become better. China wants to extend these relations," said Wahid Faqiri, a political analyst. "China is practically taking all actions for political engagement but it is not officially announcing this issue," said Mehdi Manadi, former diplomat. Meanwhile Balkhi quoted Karimi during his meeting with Lei as saying that it is time for the improvement of relations between China and Afghanistan. Karimi also pledged

that the Afghan soil will not be used against any country. According to Balkhi, the Director-General of the Protocol Department of the Foreign Ministry of China said that China does not intend to interfere in the internal affairs of any country and that it wants to help improve Afghanistan's economy and infrastructure through the Belt and Road initiative. In September, China became the first country to formally name a new ambassador to Afghanistan since the Islamic Emirate takeover, after its envoy presented credentials at a ceremony in Kabul.

Begum: Online education platform for girls deprived of school

KABUL (Agencies): A new online educational platform named 'Begum Academy' has recently started its activities to educate girls beyond the sixth grade, fill the educational gap in the country, and inspire girls deprived of education. This academy operates in France and educates girls from the sixth to the twelfth grades. According to the officials of this institution, a graduation certificate is also awarded upon completing the twelfth grade. Ziauddin Bakhtiar, one of the officials of 'Begum Academy,' stated in an interview with Khaama Press that they initiated this activity in response to the two-year deprivation of girls from education in Afghanistan. These girls, according to him, are now facing an uncertain future and depression due to educational deprivation. Mr. Bakhtiar mentioned that one week has passed since the inception of this institution, and so far, more than 2,500 female students have joined it. In the educational structure of this institution, course materials for grades 7 to 12 are arranged in a classroom-like visual format and placed on the website. Anisa, an eleventh-grade student deprived of schooling for two years,



has joined this academy from a remote village in Badakhshan province. Although she describes the cost of the internet and

access to the antenna area as challenging, she believes that distance learning is valuable and hopeful for her. About 800 days have

passed since the deprivation of girls' education, but no action has been taken to reopen girls' schools by the Taliban administration.

Afghan Embassy in India reopened, say Consuls

The Afghanistan Embassy in New Delhi was reopened by the two top Consuls of Afghanistan in India on Thursday. The acting Consul General of Afghanistan in Mumbai, Sayed Mohammad Ibrahimkhil, said in a video that he and the Consul General of Afghanistan in Hyderabad, Zakia Wardak, have taken the responsibility for the consulate services of Afghanistan's embassy in New Delhi based on requests of the Indian government. "After we arrived at the Ministry of External Affairs [of India], they said that they had promised two months ago that the embassy of Afghanistan in New Delhi would not be closed. They [Indian officials] asked us to take charge of consulate services of the embassy," Ibrahimkhil said. Earlier, the Afghan embassy announced in a statement the permanent closing of its diplomatic mission in New Delhi, effective Nov 23, owing to "persistent challenges from the Indian government." The Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, said that there has been a breakthrough in addressing the problems of the Afghan embassy in India. "There has been some breakthroughs but due to the political circumstances it is not good to announce now but some



steps will be made and then the Foreign Ministry will announce it," Mujahid said. Some former Afghan diplomats said that the reopening of the embassy will play an effective role in addressing problems of Afghans in India. "There should be a relationship so that India will not be away from regional and Afghanistan issues. This also benefits Afghanistan, Afghan refugees and the

Afghan traders," said Aziz Maarij, a former diplomat. "The Indians are trying to continue their presence in Afghanistan and extend their engagement with the Taliban," said Noorullah Raghi, a former diplomat. Earlier, the deputy Foreign Minister, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, also stressed that the Afghan consulates in Mumbai and Hyderabad cities of India are active.

UN, EU participates in Swedish committee for Afghanistan meeting

KABUL (Agencies): The UN Rapporteur for Afghanistan's human rights situation and Chargee d'affaires of the EU for Afghanistan have expressed concerns about the humanitarian situation and the situation of women in the country. They emphasized that during the last two years, access to education, work and many parts of public life, even going to parks, has been limited. In a program arranged by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, Richard Bennett said that in the past two years, women's rights have been limited in the fields of education and work. But the Islamic Emirate emphasized that women's rights are currently secure. "The de facto authorities tell me 'listen, we know very well nobody is going to channel money through us, but we really don't want 80 percent of the money that you are putting in, I don't know, Herat reconstruction, wherever, (to go) through all layers of payments, and double payments, triple payments...', and I can relate to that ...," said Raffaella Iodice, the EU Chargee d'Affaires for Afghanistan. "The situation for women and girls has worsened drastically over the past two years in a step by step manner. Access to education, work, many other areas of public life, even to parks and public baths, has been restricted," said Richard Bennett, the



UN special rapporteur for Afghanistan. "The decision of the UN to stay and deliver was a correct decision, it is essential to stand with the women and girls of this country, not to abandon them, but also to ensure that the people of Afghanistan who have been suffering from four decades of hardship could continue to have access to the basic services and not suffer because of a government that they have not elected," said Stephen Rodrigues, the UNDP country director in Afghanistan. The secretary of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan has also pledged that they will continue

to help solve the challenges of Afghan citizens. "From the Islamic Emirate's point of view there is no shortage or deficiency in granting the rights of individuals in the society from the Shariah point of view, some requests that have not yet been completed require some work that must be done to reach the stages that are the subject of women's education and work," Zabiullah Mujahid said. After the Islamic Emirate took over Afghanistan, women's rights have been among the issues over which the Islamic Emirate and the international community have disagreed.

Afghan women highlighted during intl campaign against gender-based violence

KABUL (TOLOnews): The United Nations on November 25 launched "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence," intended to bring attention to the need to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. The campaign comes amid high concerns over violations of human rights in Afghanistan, with international human rights watchdogs stating that the "Taliban" failed to fulfill what they pledged regarding women's rights in Afghanistan. "The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicked off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day," UN Women said in a statement. According to the UN, the campaign was started by activists at the inaugu-

ration of the Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991. The statement said that the campaign is aimed to provide an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. After the Islamic Emirate came to power, girls and women have been systematically deprived of education, work, and the right to visit parks and cinemas as well as other forms of recreation in public areas. The United Nations Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in an earlier statement that Afghanistan was already one of the world's most difficult countries to be a woman, both personally and professionally, even before the "Taliban's" take over of the country.





On December 2 we get ready to celebrate the UAE National Day! This year, let's remember the historic relevance of the occasion and honor those who were the masterminds behind forming the UAE. Let's take a look at the significance of the date.

HISTORY OF UAE NATIONAL DAY

On 2nd December 1971, after Britain's exit from the scenario, the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Al-Ain, Sharjah, and Umm al-Quwain decided to unite. On December 2, 1971, the emirates announced their independence from Britain and became the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Later on, Ras Al Khaimah – the seventh emirate – also joined this union. Do you know what the best part is? This merger and their freedom from the colonial rule were achieved without any violence! To mark the unity of the seven emirates and the declaration of the

United Arab Emirates, the flag of UAE as we know it today was raised, and the first president of UAE was selected — Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Sheikh Zayed was the Emir of Abu Dhabi and was the richest amongst the seven emirates. Today, UAE is recognized as a middle power and an influential nation with a flourishing economy, oil reserves, ample tourists, and some of the tallest buildings in the world. However, all the citizens of the UAE acknowledge that the power they possess today exists only because the seven emirates decided to unite in 1971.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT UAE NATIONAL DAY

A joyful celebration of the unification of seven states, and a glittering annual spectacle across the Emirates

Every year United Arab Emirates National Day is marked on 2nd December. Dubbed the Spirit of the Union, the date marks the unification of all seven Emirates into one

nation. From dazzling firework displays to elaborate parades and glittering ceremonies, UAE National Day is a time when locals and expatriates gather together to celebrate.



Unifying origins

It was on 2 December 1971 that the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Al-Ain, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain agreed to unite as one country. Under the guidance of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the nation's first president, the

United Arab Emirates emerged. Later in February 1972, Ras Al Khaimah decided to join and become the seventh Emirate. Each year since, UAE National Day has been celebrated across the Gulf nation in a riot of joyful festivities.

A time to celebrate

From homes and streets to people and cars, the colours of the national flag are everywhere you turn in the run up to UAE National Day. Shades of red, white, black and green bedeck every aspect of Emirati life, while flags flutter from atop landmarks across the nation. Being a public holiday, UAE National Day brings families and friends together in a day of celebration and contemplation.

In each Emirate the local corniche is always at the heart of the action. Vibrant carnivals wind their way along the waterfront as colourful floats resplendent with images and effigies of Sheikh Zayed draw cheers. Often,

beaches turn into outdoor galleries for the day with sand sculptures. To round up a day of celebrations, locals take to the streets to watch fireworks light up cities across the Emirates.

Taking place annually in Abu Dhabi at Zayed Sports City Stadium, the official UAE National Day celebration is a theatrical extravaganza. A powerful show complete with aerobatic displays, rousing performances and inspirational speeches; all imbued with a sense of national pride and courage. Underpinning the immersive event is the legacy of the UAE's founders, and their spirit that endures still today.



PARCO extends warm felicitations on UAE National Day. Our enduring partnership, a cornerstone of shared success and unwavering commitment, plays a pivotal role in shaping our collective future. We stand together with pride, in pursuit of new milestones.



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