

IHC orders forensic test
ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday ordered the FIA to conduct a forensic test on the 'audio leak' of former first lady Bushra Bibi and her lawyer Latif Khosa. On November 30, a new audio leak allegedly featuring Bushra Bibi, wife of the former prime minister, and her lawyer Latif Khosa surfaced on social media, suggesting all is not well in the PTI founder's family with him being behind bars.

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Wasiq Abbasi quits PTI
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: The Former Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi on Thursday decided to quit Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and politics. In his message on X, formerly Twitter, Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi wrote: "My political career aimed at serving the people but now it is unbearable to hold the burden of confrontation with the state and its institutions."

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KOHAT: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing the 58th annual parents' day ceremony in Cadet College Kohat.

Al-Azizia reference IHC to hear Nawaz's appeal on merit

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday decided to hear Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif's appeal against his conviction in the Al-Azizia reference on merit. A division bench, consisting of Chief Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb, heard the former premier's appeal.

During the case hearing, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) implored the IHC to remand back the appeal to the accountability court. However, the bench rejected the NAB's appeal and decided to hear the matter on merit. The PML-N supremo along with his legal team appeared in the court.

Nawaz had submitted an appeal against the decision of the accountability court, requesting the court to

annul the decision of imprisonment and fine. The NAB has taken the stand in the appeal that the accountability court awarded a lesser sentence and it should be enhanced.

During the hearing, Nawaz's lawyer Amjad Pervez Butt informed the court that there are 22 witnesses in this case and most of them are linked to the bank records. Two of the remaining witnesses are a NAB investigation officer and the other is the head of a joint investigation team (JIT). He said that it had been established in the last seven years that Nawaz's father had established Al Azizia mills.

"Nawaz Sharif was not linked to it in any way ever," the lawyer contended. He said that the former prime minister's "case is better than the Avenfield case in the Al Azizia matter". At this, the NAB prosecutor objected to Butt's

arguments and said that he should take their other miscellaneous pleas back. While Butt opposed the NAB prosecutor's plea for remanding the appeal back to the accountability court.

At this, Justice Farooq said that the court has two options, either to decide on merit after observing additional evidence or remand the reference back to the accountability court. Justice Hassan remarked that Nawaz would be considered an accused if the case is sent back to the accountability court and the trial court would have to decide again.

However, the bench decided to hear the appeal on merit while turning down the NAB prosecutor's request. After the completion of arguments by Nawaz's lawyer, the court adjourned the hearing till December 12. NAB prosecutor will give arguments on the next hearing.

Fazl will be next country's president', says Haideri

ISLAMABAD (INP): JUI-F senior leader Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri said on Thursday that the "presidential slot is the right of JUI-F as we have helped elect several candidates as prime minister and president in the past".

"If we can make someone prime minister and president, then it is our right to make Maulana Fazlur Rehman as president," said Ghafoor Haideri during an interaction with a private news channel. Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri said all political parties want free and fair elections without any 'intervention'. He said the delay in the release of the election schedule always creates 'doubts'.

Replying to a question, the JUI-F leader said he thinks national governments are 'weak'. Decisions can be taken easily if there is a coalition government of two or three parties, he added. Upon seat adjustment in the upcoming elections, Ghafoor Haideri said he was the chairman of the committee formed to hold talks with the political parties for seat adjustment.

We are in contact with other parties including the Pakistan People's Party for the seat adjustment in Balochistan, the JUI-F leader said, adding the talks began with the PML-N. Accusing the former COAS, Haideri said General (retired) Qamar Bajwa 'used his powers' for the victory of PTI in the 2018 GE, but after realizing the PTI founder was unable to run the government 'he took back his support'. The JUI-F leader said his party will not support revisiting of the 18th constitutional amendment as it is good for the federating units.

Feb 8 is the day of liberty, says Siraj
F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-e-Islami chief Sirajul Haq, has said that February 8 is the day to get rid of the mafia in the country. He was addressing the monthly congregation arranged by the JI Lower Dir as chief guest at Ahyia ul Uloom Balambat here on Thursday evening. The JI chief said that people should support his party for the establishment of a real Islamic welfare state.

He saidCenter that 20,000 Palestinians had been martyred so far due to Israeli brutality while millions had been displaced. He said that the JI had organized a million marches in Pakistan to motivate the Muslim Ummah but to no avail.

The JI chief claimed that Rs 1.25 billion cash handed over for the Palestinians, while 4.7 tons of relief goods had been sent to Gaza. He said that he visited several Muslim countries to convince the rulers to support the innocent Palestinians against Israel.

The Frontier Post

Parents, teachers play key role in shaping students' future: PM

— urges business community to leverage SIFC; commits conducive environment

F.P. Report

KOHAT / KARACHI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here on Thursday, said the parents and teachers were the most important partners playing key role in shaping and designing the future of students.

Addressing the 58th Parents Day of Cadet College Kohat (CCK), the prime minister upon the faculty members, who play central role in the overall education system, to pay full attention to groom and guide the future of the country by inducing a high sense of purpose in the students. Prime Minister Kakar, who is also the alumni of the college urged the parents to fulfill their responsibilities by supporting the college and imparting better training and grooming to their wards.

Recalling his student's life in the college, the prime minister said he spent a healthy and challenging routine in the college. "But all the challenges were directed solely at making us promising professionals and making better human beings to face challenges of adult life in a befitting manner," he added.

He said modern education specialty in the field of science and technology guaranteed the material prosperity of a nation. He said the educated youth imbued with high moral values could ensure a bright future for the beloved homeland. "In this age of competition we should concentrate all our energies to equip ourselves with modern education coupled with strict work ethics to enable ourselves to cope with the challenges of this ever competitive and rapidly evolving world."

The prime minister also urged the students to concentrate their focus on studies, taking full advantage of time and the facilities and fulfill the obligation made to their parents. He said he got admitted in the college in 1984 when he was a very fragile individual

coming from a backward area of Balochistan province.

PM Kakar also paid rich tribute to his teachers-some of them had passed away- saying that at what level he had reached now was totally because of his teachers and parents. He advised the students to work hard in their lives and set goals for their future. He said with their persistent hard work, honesty and sincerity, they could achieve their goals.

Principle Cadet College Kohat Brigadier (Retd) Tufail Muhammad Khan said that the college had provided the best possible education and training facilities to the students due to which the CCK students had always gave the best results. Earlier, the Prime Minister inspected the impressive parade of the students cadet and took salute. The gymnastic and horse riding show was warmly applauded. Provincial Minister Rasool Bangash, IGP Akhtar Hayat Gandapor and parents of the students attended.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar also addressed the ceremony for distribution of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Awards to top 25 companies of the country for the year 2022, reiterating the government's commitment to providing a conducive environment and streamlining regulations, urged the local business community to take advantage of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

He said the caretaker government's ultimate goal was to provide a blueprint for the next government. He said the government had sought help from the Pakistan Army to facilitate the business environment through the SIFC forum. He told the gathering that the measures taken by the government, including the crackdown on smuggling, illicit foreign currency trade and power theft, had yielded results, triggering market sentiments and propelling the Pakistan Stock

Exchange by 33% in November to the historic 60,000-point mark, besides boosting investors' confidence. Welcoming the private sector to invest and take advantage of the government's measures, he called for building and rebranding Pakistan. He said the privatization process was underway that would also have positive impacts on the economy.

The prime minister, who also distributed awards among the top 25 companies, said the PSX mirrored the vibrancy of the corporate sector and highlighted the symbiotic relations between the government's policies and the prosperity of the businesses. He emphasized the inherent responsibility of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), urging businesses to adopt it as a moral obligation rather than mere rhetoric. He also urged business leaders to embrace digital evolution and collaborate with higher education institutions.

Prime Minister Kakar urged the corporate sector to explore opportunities in regions like Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Caucasus, and the unexplored around 1.3 billion African population. He emphasized the need to prepare for \$36 trillion trade activity expected to take place in China within 10-15 years. He encouraged soul-searching and improvement of approaches to envision Pakistan as the economic power of the region.

He said Pakistan, a 240 million nation with immense natural resources like four seasons, mountains, and others as well as the youth bulge was destined to rise. The prime minister said the award ceremony to recognize outstanding companies was a testament to cooperation between the government and the corporate sector. He congratulated award-winning companies on their extraordinary performance and said such ceremonies would create a culture of healthy competition to inspire more firms.

Illegal foreigners affecting Pak's security, economy

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited Peshawar. COAS was given a detailed briefing on overall security situation, ongoing counter-terrorism operations, repatriation of Illegal foreigners and socio-economic developments in the Newly Merged Districts.

COAS interacted with the officers and soldiers who have displayed gallantry actions during different counter terrorism operations. COAS lauded their heroic and exemplary feats and said "Nation takes pride and acknowledges the accomplishments of its Armed Forces. Pakistan is destined to succeed and Pakistan Army will continue to undertake its selfless and sacred duty of safeguarding every inch of the motherland till last drop of blood, InshaAllah".

COAS also had an interactive session with the participants of the First National Workshop Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (NWKP-1). While addressing the participants, COAS said "The resolute support of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Security Forces has resulted in stability in the province and materialization of progress on projects of socio-economic development". COAS remarked.

Linking prosperity of Pakistan with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, COAS emphasised that nefarious designs of the forces inimical to peace and stability of Pakistan are being foiled through a synergetic and



comprehensive strategy. COAS also highlighted the importance of economic growth and development in Newly Merged Districts. COAS also highlighted "Illegal foreigners were seriously affecting Pakistan's security and economy. Decision to repatriate them has been taken by the government in the interest of Pakistan. Illegal foreigners are being repatriated to their countries in a humane and dignified manner as per the established norms." Earlier on arrival, COAS was received by Commander Peshawar Corps.

Pak flays use of force by Israel in Gaza: FO

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan welcomes the decision of United Nations Secretary General to invoke Article-99 of the UN Charter to bring attention of the UN Security Council towards the dire security situation and the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at her weekly media briefing in Islamabad on Thursday said that this decision of the Secretary General demonstrates his conscionable assessment of the catastrophic situation in Gaza. She said Pakistan strongly and unequivocally condemns the continuous use of force by Israel and its indiscriminate acts on civilians, civilian facilities and infrastructure in a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said as the Secretary-General has underscored in his letter to the President of the UN Security Council that 'civilians throughout Gaza face grave danger' and 'nowhere is safe in Gaza.' There is a severe risk of collapse of the humanitarian lifeline essential for survival. She said the situation is fast deteriorating with potentially irreversible implications for Palestine and for peace and security in the region. Such an outcome must be avoided at all costs.

The Spokesperson said we join the UN Secretary General in his call to the international community to end the ongoing situation and avert a humanitarian catastrophe.

She said the UN Security Council must perform its primary responsibility under the UN Charter, impose an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and protect the people of Gaza from an impending genocide.

Solangi assures elections to be held on February 8

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi categorically said on Thursday that general elections in Pakistan would be held on February 8, 2024 and no one should have any doubts in that regard.

Addressing a press conference along with Provincial Information Minister Ahmed Shah here, he said the caretaker regime was fully committed to ensure free and fair elections on the date given by Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). Murtaza Solangi reaffirmed the commitment of the government that all the financial, administrative and

security needs of ECP would be met.

He said that the federal government was making all out efforts to ensure that there was no lack of communication between the federal and provincial governments. The minister said that the federal and provincial information ministers would formulate a joint strategy regarding upcoming elections.

He said it was prerogative of the people of Pakistan to decide who would rule the country. The preamble of the Constitution of Pakistan clearly stated that the country would be run by its elected representatives, he said. Murtaza Solangi said "Making major decisions is the job of the elected parlia-

ment and elected government."

The minister said it was the effort of the present government that the situation should not deteriorate in the run up to the general elections. "We will hand over the country in a better condition to the elected government," he added. Conducting free and transparent elections was the responsibility of ECP and the caretaker set up was providing all possible support and facilitation to ECP in that regard, he remarked. Replying to a question, the minister said that Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar had visited Karachi several times in a short period of two months.

CTD, police conduct information-based operation in Malir

KARACHI (APP): Authorities from the Sindh Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and local police collaborated for an intelligence-driven search operation in the Malir Labor Square vicinity and nearby regions around Madrassa Darul Quran. This operation, which took place across two locations under Sukhan police station jurisdiction, was reported by a CTD spokesperson on Thursday.

Using the Talash App, 75 individuals were screened as part of the operation, leading to the handover of two suspects to the Sukhan police station for further scrutiny.

The Counter Terrorist Force of CTD also participated in this coordinated effort. Additionally, the CTD spokesperson highlighted the intent to persist with information-based operations throughout various ranges in Sindh.

Dengue situation improving as temperature declines

LAHORE (APP): Following a decrease in temperature, the dengue outbreak in Punjab shows signs of improvement. Thursday's report indicates 64 new cases, bringing the total confirmed cases this year to 14,649 across 36 districts.

Lahore remains the hardest-hit, reporting 6,719 cases, followed by Rawalpindi with 2,643, Gujranwala with 1,555, Multan with 1,404 and Faisalabad with 871 cases.

While Lahore reported 31 new cases, Rawalpindi 2, Gujranwala 9, Multan 6, Faisalabad 6, and Sheikhupura 3. Other districts like Kasur, Attock, Khanewal, Rahimyar Khan, Khushab, Rajanpur, and Layyah each report one case in the last 24 hours.

Currently, 48 patients were getting treatment in Punjab hospitals, with 26 in Lahore. Health Secretary Ali Jaan Khan urged citizens to maintain cleanliness and cooperate with health teams. A helpline (1033) was available for information, complaints, or Dengue treatment. Vigilance and proactive measures remain crucial to curbing Dengue's spread.

CTP issue 2193 driving learning permits

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, Syed Khalid Hamdani issued 2193 driving learning permits to the applicants from three new driving learner centers set up in different areas during three days.

According to a Police spokesman, CTP had set up three new centers in Pirwadhai, New Town and Adiala Road areas to facilitate the citizens. He informed that on the instructions of the CPO, the CTP took solid steps to provide driving licensing facilities to the citizens at their nearest centers. He said that those who are eligible for driving licenses must get licenses to avoid legal action as CTP Rawalpindi were taking action in accordance with the law against underage drivers and other traffic rules violators. A special campaign had been launched against underage drivers and those driving without driving licenses, he said adding, 1838 FIRs were registered under the campaign while 173 cases were registered during last 24 hours.

All possible steps were being taken to improve the traffic situation on the city roads and facilitate the citizens, he added.

No respite from smog, Lahore continues to be most polluted city

LAHORE (APP): The escalating air pollution levels on Thursday once again thrust Lahore into unenviable position of being one of the most polluted cities globally.

Concerns regarding the adverse impact of toxic smog on the health of Lahore's residents have reverberated across all segments of society, with the hazardous conditions persisting for weeks. In response, the government has undertaken various measures to mitigate air pollutants.

The district authorities in the province have implemented a series of actions, including school closures, lockdowns, adjustments to business market hours, and stringent measures against smoke-emitting vehicles and industries. Notably, all 1,190 kilns in the Lahore division have been transitioned to zigzag technology. Furthermore, 118 kilns have been shuttered, and legal actions have been initiated for violations, resulting in fines amounting to Rs 1.8 million.

A recently released report detailing a 40-day anti-smog operation in Lahore division reveals that 304 cases were filed for burning crop residue, with fines totaling Rs. 87 lakh. The report indicates that 2,898 farmers received notices for crop residue burning, 1,406 submitted affidavits, and 4572 vehicles emitting smoke

faced penalties amounting to Rs 32 lakh, with 1,158 vehicles being taken off the roads. The report also discloses that, thus far, 2,689 industrial units in Lahore division have undergone inspections, leading to the closure of 362 units. Ninety-four FIRs were registered against entities violating emission control regulations.

The district administration sources emphasize actions taken to combat the deliberate burning of garbage and green waste throughout the city. Efforts include the continuous deployment of mist vehicles from LWMC, WASA, and MCL for water spraying.

In parallel, meteorological reports from the department reveal that on Thursday, the pollution levels in the provincial metropolis were measured at 229, with specific locations like main city areas registering 445, The Mall road and the US Consulate both recording 411, and DHA registering 282. The city's current minimum temperature stands at 12 degrees Celsius. The atypical warmth in Lahore during December, a month historically characterized by severe cold, is attributed to the influence of the El Nino system on the city's weather. Experts caution that temperatures exceeding normal levels may persist due to this climatic anomaly.

Jirga in Bajaur appraises measures implemented to enhance overall law and order

F.P. Report

BAJAUR: In a significant jirga convened at the Civil Colony Jirga Hall Garden in the merged district of Bajaur, community elders and leaders actively engaged in discussions pertaining to the law and order situation within the district. Attended by a substantial number of local dignitaries, the Jirga focused on appraising measures implemented to enhance the overall peace in Bajaur.

During the deliberations, participants expressed contentment with the steps taken to improve the district's security landscape. Emphasizing the collaborative responsibility of both public and state institutions, the Jirga underscored the necessity for joint efforts to perpetuate and enhance law and order. Acknowledging the sacrifices of Pakistan Army and police martyrs, the Jirga resolved to prevent these sacrifices from



being in vain and pledged to thwart elements that threaten peace.

The Jirga, in a united stance, committed to reinforcing local and national institutions, vowing to actively contribute to the preservation of peace. The proceedings culminated with a solemn pledge and prayer, affirming a commitment to sustained cooperation and mutual agreement at all levels to uphold peace and order.

Meanwhile, the caretaker provincial government lauded the proactive stance

taken by Bajaur's local elders and leaders, deeming it a commendable initiative. Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel, the Caretaker Minister of Information and Public Relations for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stressed the imperative role of public support and cooperation for enduring peace. He highlighted the positive impact of such initiatives on the morale of the soldiers and affirmed that concrete steps have been taken to address matters of law and order in Bajaur and other merged districts.

Al-Turk; Director General PNCA Ayub Jamali.

Jamal Shah urges to invest on youth for providing education and ample opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah on Thursday urged to make investment on youth for providing education, ample opportunities, and cultural engagement as youth are Pakistan's most valuable asset and the key to the nation's future. Addressing a prize distribution ceremony for the "Pechan Pakistan" contest held under the theme "Celebrating Biodiversity of Pakistan at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA), Jamal Shah emphasized the critical need to invest in education, provide ample opportunities, and foster meaningful cultural engagement for the young generation.

The "Pechan Pakistan" contest, organized by the Community Development Council in collaboration with the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA), aimed to inspire young minds and celebrate their understanding of national identity. The event welcomed a distinguished audience, including Deputy Head of the Palestine Embassy in Pakistan, Nader

‘2000 Kashmiri children maimed and physically disabled by Indian forces’

RAWALPINDI (APP): Special Assistant to the caretaker Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, emphasized the invaluable contributions of persons with special needs, stating that they are the gems of the society. Speaking at an event organized by the Punjab Council of Arts, Rawalpindi, in collaboration with the Government Degree College for Special Education in connection with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Mushaal underscored the importance of adopting an inclusive approach to fully utilize the true capabilities of persons with special needs, said a press release issued here Thursday.

Focal Person to SAPM Ms. Sabien Hussein Mullick, Principal of the Government College for Special Education Kashif Mehmood, President Mughal Welfare Society Mirza Muzammil Mukhtar, Founder of Spring Association Raja Imran



Hussain and Director Punjab Arts Council, Rawalpindi Waqar Ahmed participated in the event. Students from various special education institutions showcased their talents by performing national anthem, patriotic songs, Kalam-e-Iqbal, and paying tribute to the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Mushaal expressed that with a little support, persons with special needs could become productive members of the society. Addressing the students of

the Degree College of Special Education, she affirmed that they were among the strongest individuals and as capable of achieving wonders as anyone else. She urged civil society and organizations not to marginalize persons with special needs, emphasizing the necessity to empower them through accessibility, supportive policies and legislations, provision of adequate facilities and the development of support services, rehabilitation and counseling centers. Highlighting the plight of

the people, especially children, in Palestine and Kashmir, Mushaal shared alarming statistics, noting that more than two thousand children in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) had been maimed and physically disabled by Indian forces in less than two years. She also spoke about her husband, Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik, who has lost sight in one eye and is suffering from partial paralysis due to the brutal torture inflicted by Indian occupation forces.


Mushaal also informed the audience about special provisions for persons with special needs in the ongoing 100-day plan by the Ministry of Human Rights. Some of these provisions include free transport and healthcare, tax concessions/exemptions, concessions in utility bills, increased quotas, and vocational training to promote employment. She emphasized that the input and help of people with special needs were considered in preparing the 100-day plan.

Crack down on illegal hydrants continues

KARACHI (APP): The joint efforts of Pakistan Rangers Sindh and the Water and Sewerage Board in their ongoing crackdown against illegal hydrants remain active, as stated by a spokesperson for Sindh Rangers. Multiple operations were carried out across various Karachi towns, including Liaquatabad Town, Jamshed Town, and Nazimabad Town, with the primary objective of dismantling unauthorized water connections. This concerted effort aimed at eradicating 29 illegal connections involved in water theft, masquerading as illicit hydrants and subsoil bores. Resulting from these operations, four suspects were apprehended and handed over to the police. Furthermore, 12 First Information Reports (FIRs) were filed based on complaints filed by the Water and Sewerage Board. The operations led to the restoration of 20.8 million gallons of daily water supply.

Ombudsman resolves 46 public problems


LAHORE (APP): Ombudsman Punjab Maj (ret'd) Azam Suleman Khan, taking notice on 91 applications in October, provided relief to the general public by resolving collective public problems due to which the administration of respective districts spent more than Rs 100 million to resolve 46 diverse problems.



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

NATIONAL DATABASE AND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

(Regional Head Office Peshawar - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)



RENTAL OFFICE SPACE REQUIRED

FOR NADRA Offices, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WILL HAVE FOLLOWING FEATURES:

- Office Accommodation should be in the below mentioned locations:-

S#	NADRA Registration Center	Required Covered Area
1.	Amazo Ghari (Tehsil Ghari Kapoora, District Mardan)	2000-3500 sq ft
2.	Ambar (Tehsil Utmankhel, District Mohmand)	2000-3500 sq ft
3.	Salarzai (Tehsil Salarzai, District Bajaur)	2000-3500 sq ft

- Space measuring of total covered area mentioned against each with public and staff washrooms.
- Prominent, having independent entrance and proposed building should not be in residential area.
- Security wise viable location and easily accessible by public transport.
- Dedicated 3 Phase Electrical Meter / Connection.
- Preference will be given to the building in which dedicated transformer is installed.
- Tap Water facility along with overhead tank.
- Ramp for wheel chair for disable citizens.
- Space, NOC for installation of direction board, sign board and heavy generator.
- Roof top for satellite dish antenna installation.
- Sufficient space for maintaining the public queue & parking area.
- Tenancy for a longer period (Preferably 10 years).

Note:- Interested parties / owners can purchase the bidding documents on submission of a written application at a cost of Rs.100/- from below mentioned address or from concerned offices between 09:00 am – 03:00 pm hours (except gazette holidays). The bids / proposal should be submitted duly completed in all respects by 27th Dec, 2023 at 11:00 am hours (under Single Stage-Two Envelope bidding procedure). The envelopes shall be clearly marked as **Technical and Financial** proposals. Technical bids / proposals will be Opened on 27th Dec, 2023 at 11:30 am hours at NADRA Regional Head Office, EOBI Building, Plot No. 31 Sector B-1, Phase-V Hayatabad Peshawar in presence of bidders/their nominated representatives. Bid/proposals must include the following documents in addition to any other information that the bidder may find necessary:-

Technical Bid (Separate Envelope):

- Photocopy of property ownership documents [Fard-e-Jaidad/Allotment letter/Relevant Certificate by concerned authority (where settled revenue record is not available)].
- Photocopy of valid CNIC.
- Completion and Fitness Certificate of the building
- Undertaking on Non-judicial stamp paper of Rs.100/- certifying that owner / building is not temporary / permanently debarrd from any Government agency / authority / department (without bearing any responsibility on NADRA whatsoever in this regard).
- Pictures of the building offered for lease.
- Valid Site Plan / Map of the building duly approved from concerned authority.
- In case of absence of owner, authority letter for representative duly signed by property owner, permitting him to attend tender process.

Financial Bid (Separate Envelope):

- Owner's consent showing monthly rent & offered area of the building
- Quoted price shall be inclusive of all taxes.
- No brokerage / service charges will be paid in case of real estate agent.
- Opening date / time of Financial Proposal will be informed to all successful bidders of General Proposal Evaluation.
- Bidding documents received after submission of due date / time mentioned above, will not be entertained.
- NADRA reserves the right to reject all bids / proposals under PPRA Rule 33 and can cancel the bidding process before acceptance of bid or proposal.
- Bid can also be rejected if owner of selected building fail to produce acceptable required / property documents.
- This advertisement is also available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk

For any query contact on following address:

Director (Admin)

PID(I) 3494/23

NADRA Regional Head Office, Peshawar - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

EOBI Building, Plot No. 31 B-1, Phase-V Hayatabad Peshawar, Telephone: 091-9217840

نوش (مشتري هوشيار باش)

بذير فوس بذا مشتير كيا جا تا ہے۔ جائيداد سرے نمبر 542/45/D واقع ٹيپو سلطان روڈ پشاور ليکٹ جو کے ليونمٹ بورڈ کے ريكارڈ ميں هي، شاميديس/الهيمن کے نام پر موجود ہے۔ يہ كير شي شاميديس الهيمن نے بذير ميختر عام كي عرلي مذکورہ بالا جائيداد ميں سے كرو نمبر TF-01 (خبر و نقل) كي شيراز خان ولد محمد عالم پر بذير رينڈر شدہ دستاويز نمبر 1269 يہ نمبر اجله نمبر 221 مورخه 18/02/2021 اوريج نامدر رينڈر شدہ دستاويز نمبر 2429 يہ نمبر اجله نمبر 371 مورخه 16/10/2023 فروت كردي راب كي شيراز خان ولد محمد عالم نے مذکورہ بالا كروكو ايستے نام پر منتقل كرنے کے ليے ايک عدود درخواست بمعده رينڈر پتر پرايش كراي ہے۔ اگر كي هيمن بيگ، يا ادارے كو مذکورہ بالا كرو كي منتقلي پر كوئي اعتراض ہو تو اشتير بذا كي اشاعت کے پندرہ (15) دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض بمعده رينڈر پتر پرايش كي كراوئي مندرجہ بالا درخواست گزار کے نام پر عمل لائي جائے كي اور كي عدود رينڈر پتر پرايش كرديو۔

المشتري: كيستون نمٹ ايگزيكيشو آفيسر پشاور



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PAKHTUNKHWA ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATON,

GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

Applications are invited from suitable dynamic and competent professional candidates for appointment against the following Project Positions on Contract/Project basis for Hydropower Projects of PEDO i.e. "World Bank PMO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hydropower & Renewable Energy Development Program" and "300 MW Balakot Hydropower Project".

Requisite Qualification and Experience for the posts are as under:-

S. No.	Position	No. of posts	Qualification, Experience & Age
1	Director Procurement & Contracts (BPS-19) World Bank PMO	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Masters Degree in Procurement Management/Contract Management/Project Management/ MBA/B.Sc. Engineering from HEC recognized or well reputed International University.Should have 12 years of post-qualification experience in procurement / Contracts Management with minimum 5 years experience in a similar role (BPS-18 & above or Equivalent) preferably working in projects financed by multilateral development agencies.Prior experience of working in donor funded and public sector projects will be accorded due weightage.Should possess proven skills in procurement procedures, evaluation, tendering, estimation, contract negotiation, claims handling.Preference will be given to candidates having knowledge of FIDIC contract conditions and World Bank or other multilateral financing organizations procurement guidelines.Maximum Age limit is 55 years
2	Deputy Director Civil (BPS-18) World Bank PMO	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none">B.Sc Degree in Civil Engineering (16 years education) from HEC recognized University/registered with PEC.Should have at least 6 years of post-qualification relevant experience in Engineering/Project Management with 3 years specific experience in BPS 17 or equivalent level in Construction Projects preferably in Hydropower.Preference will be given to candidates having knowledge of project management fundamentals, GoKP & GOP Planning and Management procedures and experience of projects financed by World Bank or other multilateral financing organization.Maximum Age limit is 40 years
3	Deputy Director (Electro Mechanical) (BPS-18) 300 MW Balakot HPP	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bachelor's Degree in Engineering (Electrical/Electronic/Mechanical) from HEC recognized university/registered with PEC.Should have at least 6 years of post-qualification relevant experience in Engineering/Project Management with 3 years specific experience in BPS 17 or equivalent level in Construction Projects preferably in Hydropower.Preference will be given to candidates having knowledge of project management fundamentals, GoKP & GOP Planning and Management procedures and experience of projects financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) or other multilateral financing organization.Maximum Age limit is 40 years
4	Deputy Director Finance (BPS-18) World Bank PMO	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none">CA Finalist/ACMA/ACCA/MBA (Finance)/ Master in Commerce/Accounting/Finance from HEC recognized university/institution.Should have at least 6 years of post-qualification professional work experience in relevant field i.e. Accounts and Financial Management with 03 years specific experience in BPS-17 or equivalent level.Preference will be given to candidates having knowledge of working in provincial Finance Department, Auditor General of Pakistan Office, Office of Accountant General, planning Department/Commission and experience of projects financed by World Bank or other multilateral financing organization.Maximum Age limit is 40 years

Instructions & General Conditions

Applicants are advised to read the following instructions carefully before filling the "PEDO Applicant Data Form" available in the Download Section of PEDO website i.e. www.pedo.pk.

- Duly filled & signed "PEDO Applicant Data Form" (available in Download section of PEDO Website i.e. www.pedo.pk) along with attested copies of all the documents/ testimonials, experience certificates updated CV/resume, copy of CNIC, 02 Passport size photographs and other supporting documents to be sent to Director HR/Admin PEDO at the address mentioned before the closing date of application.
- Applications complete in all respects must reach the office of the undersigned not later than December 25, 2023.
- The PEDO Applicant Data Form along with mention documents to be sent by registered courier company. By hand Applications, those received after due date and applications with incomplete information & lack of testimonials will not be considered at all.
- Unclaimed qualification and experience will not be accepted/ counted. Claimed Qualification and experience without supporting documents/ documented proofs will also be not accepted/ counted.
- Clearly mark the position applied for in the Subject line/Envelope and shall send separate application/envelope for each post.
- Relevant experience with the Government/Semi-Government or Reputable Private Sector organizations will be considered.
- Only Eligible/Shortlisted candidates will be called for Interview. Shortlisting shall be carried out on the basis of selection criteria duly approved by the PEDO Board.
- Government/Semi Government employees shall send their applications through proper channel
- Selection of Project/Contractual and regular employees already working in PEDO in the ongoing developmental projects or against regular positions shall be subject to No Objection Certificate (NOC) from CEO PEDO.
- Appointment will be on contract basis extendable on yearly basis till the completion of the project, subject to satisfactory performance. In case of unsatisfactory performance, service can be terminated by the organization with 30 days' prior notice.
- The posts are project posts and will automatically abolished on completion of the projects.
- Applicants should have domicile of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/ merged areas (Erstwhile FATA).
- All appointments will be subject to approval of PC-1 and availability of fund.
- Salaries will be as per Project Policy 2022 (as amended from time to time).
- Females are strongly encouraged to apply.
- PEDO reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of posts or cancel any/all posts at any time during the recruitment process.
- Candidates are instructed to mention correct information while filling the application form. Candidates mentioning wrong information including domicile or Age or qualification or experience while submitting application and documents will be declared as "Concealment of fact" and will be strictly dropped out at any stage of the recruitment and selection process.

(Director Admin/HR)

Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO)

Room No. 315, Sector 38/B-2, Phase-V, Hayatabad, Peshawar, PAKISTAN

Phone No. 091-9219579

INF(P) 2953/23



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah addressing a seminar jointly organized by NAB KP and Provincial Anti-corruption Establishment.

National Voter's Day celebrated by ECP



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The purpose of celebrating National Voter's Day is to highlight the importance of vote, Provincial Election Commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shamshad Khan said while addressing a provincial level ceremony

regarding National Voter's Day on Thursday.

Election Commission's officers and staff participated in large numbers and the national anthem was presented.

He said that the Election Commission of Pakistan is a constitutional and independent body whose main

responsibility is to conduct transparent, free and impartial elections in the country.

He further said that the Election Commission has released the final list of constituencies. While preparations are being made for the general elections, Shamshad Khan further said that on the occasion of National Voter's Day, seminars and ceremonies have been organized under the supervision of Regional Election Commissioners and District Election Commissioners has been started, the aim of which is to make the youth recognize the importance of voting and their power, so that the turnout in the upcoming general elections will increase significantly.

He said that the turnout in the last general elections was about 44 percent, in which there is scope for

growth.

The Provincial Election Commissioner further said that the facilities in all the polling stations have been reviewed in the general elections.

He said that a total of 20,821,301 voters are registered in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in which the number of male voters is 11,436,241 and the number of female voters. 9,385,060. He said, trying to reduce the gender gap.

He said that it is a legal offense to prevent women from voting.

The Provincial Election Commissioner said that the role of the administration and the police in conducting the elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been commendable, it is expected that this cooperation will continue in the next general elections as well.

CS questioned why PTI not giving level playing field

PESHAWAR (INP): During a contempt of court hearing regarding the alleged restriction on PTI rallies, Justice Ijaz Anwar of the Peshawar High Court expressed concern over the unequal treatment of political parties. A two member's bench heard the case.

He inquired from the Chief Secretary and the Election Commission why PTI rallies were being tar-

geted, while other parties were allowed to hold meetings without restrictions.

Justice Anwar pointed out that a crackdown was initiated whenever PTI attempted to organize a meeting, while other parties faced no such hurdles. He questioned the rationale behind this disparity, asking if there was a specific ban on PTI's political activities.

In response, the Chief Secretary assured the court that equal opportunities would be provided to all parties. He explained that while PTI's workers' convention was allowed to proceed due to compliance with SOPs and placement, ANP and JUI were denied permission for failing to adhere to the guidelines.

Justice SM Atiq Shah

noted that without the court's intervention, the permission for rallies was often denied. Justice Anwar further questioned the Election Commission, asking if their sole responsibility was conducting elections. He expressed concern that despite reports of targeted actions against a specific party, the district officers remained silent.

The court also noted the appointment of caretaker ministers who were now actively participating in the elections, raising concerns about potential bias. The Election Commission lawyer assured the court that they would take action against any violation of the law, including those involving the caretaker ministers. Justice Anwar emphasized the importance of

ensuring a level playing field for all parties, urging both the Chief Secretary and the Election Commission to address any requests for rallies with this principle in mind. He stressed that the concerns raised in national and international media regarding unequal treatment needed to be addressed by the Election Commission.

Following the assurances of the Chief Secretary regarding providing a level playing field, the court disposed of the contempt petition. However, the court's intervention highlights the ongoing concerns about potential bias and the importance of ensuring fair and equal treatment for all political parties during the election period.

Traffic police imposed fine for violations

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: City Traffic Police Peshawar has arrested 380 people and imposed fines on them during the last one week while conducting operations against the encroachment mafia.

On the direction of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan, under the supervision of the Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Zahidullah, City Traffic Police Peshawar officers from all over the city have voluntarily informed the encroachment mafia about the damage of the encroachment.

The details shared by media wing of traffic police say the order was not being implemented, on which the city traffic police officers of Peshawar conducted operations on Bacha Khan Chowk, Hayatabad, Khushal Bazar and Namak Mandi Road and arrested 380 people and imposed fines on them. It added 900 motorcycles were stopped in the terminal for parking motorcycles in the no parking zone in Khushal Bazar or Namak Mandi area.

CTO Dr. Zahidullah has said that City Traffic Police Peshawar first issues notices to encroachment mafia while fulfilling the legal requirements, and after that conduct an operation to arrest the perpetrators of encroachment and take possession of the goods and transfer them to the terminal. It is done so that the owners are fined.

He said that the trespassing mafia should not exceed their limits while taking special care of the beauty of the city and avoid creating any kind of problems for the citizens. He further said that due to encroachment, the beauty of the city is affected, which is not acceptable in any case. He further stated that the strictest legal action will be taken against the perpetrators of encroachment and no one will be treated lightly.

Meeting discusses BRT project

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor Planning and Development to caretaker Chief Minister, Dr. Syed Sarfaraz Ali Shah here on Thursday held a high-level meeting on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project with the Asian Development Bank Mission.

The meeting, attended by Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah and representatives from the BRT project, focused on enhancing and finalizing the ongoing initiatives related to the Bus Rapid Transit system. The Asian Development Bank mission played a crucial role in the discussions, providing insights and collaboration opportunities.

The meeting discussed strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the BRT system, ensuring a top-quality service for all commuters. The meeting emphasized the need for collaboration between stakeholders to address the challenges and expedite the progress of the BRT project.

Dr. Syed Sarfaraz Ali Shah expressed the government's commitment to providing modern and efficient public transportation infrastructure. He highlighted the importance of aligning the project with international standards to ensure its success and positive impact on the community.

Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah underscored the significance of effective coordination among all involved parties to streamline the BRT initiatives.



PESHAWAR: Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Zakir Ullah presenting a shield to SP Shazia Shahid.

Govt launches 2nd phase of professional courses

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government formally launched the second training phase of free technical training, skills and professional courses for the youth of merged districts under Accelerated Skills Development Programme (ASDP).

Under the same important project, training of 302 male and female of merged districts has been completed in the first phase with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Merged Areas Governance Programme (MAGP) and now in the second phase, another batch of 445 people is being trained with a monthly stipend of 5,000.

Similarly, about 5500 people will be equipped with necessary skills and technical training in this three-year project initiated for the development of the merged districts.

The second phase of the project was formally launched on Thursday, at a local hotel here in Peshawar in a one-day workshop on the Accelerated Skills Development Program in which the project director

of the program Khalid Usman, officials of the Department of Industries and Commerce, UNDP representatives of MAGP program, industrial experts, journalists and people from other walks of life participated.

Speaking at the workshop, Project Director of the Programme, Khalid Usman said that the aim of this three-year project is to train the youth of the merged districts according to international standards in the best training institutions of the country and the province.

He said that we are also giving monthly stipend to the trainees under this program and about 5577 applications of the aspirants for the second phase were received by the project unit.

On this occasion, the representatives of UNDP expressed their views and said that this important project started for the merged districts was considered necessary for the real development of these areas after the merger, which was started after a proper research survey.

He said that this is a very useful and important project

to make the youth of the merged districts employable.

He said that many more programmes are under consideration under UNDP's MAGP project for merged districts under the Department of Industries.

On this occasion, industrial expert, Muhammad Umair expressed his views and said that the ASDP programme is a successful project for the development of the entire merged districts.

He said that the employment rate of people trained from such training programs in foreign countries is 70 percent.

Although 40% rate has been considered as a base for starting employment under this program, but here it is expected that, the rate of starting employment of people trained from this program will also be 70%.

During the workshop, a question and answer session was also held and a documentary film was also displayed regarding showcasing the newly merged districts youth who started employment after training in the first phase of the programme.

Power suspension on grids notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Thursday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Jamrud grid station on 9th and 12th December from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Consequently, it said consumers of Hayatabad 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, New Hayatabad, Health Care Center Hospital,

Excellence, North West Hospital, Kidney Center, RMI, Kacha Garhi, Karkhano, Gul Abad, PIC, Hayatabad Surgical, Peshawar General, Foundation Hospital, Cell Wood, Northern Bottling, PCB, Alhaj, BSF, Olympia, Omrokh, Industrial Estate, Mohmand Steel, Alhafiz, Frontier Teak Wood, PPI, Mika Steel, Express 1, 2, 3 and PHA feeders will face inconvenience.

Likewise, it said power supply will remain suspended from Peshawar City Grid Station on 9th and 12th December from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly, consumers of Sikandar Pura, Lala, Hashtnaghari, Chugulpura, Chamkani, Jaghra, Radio Pakistan, Sethi Town, Gulbhar, Zaryab, Pandho Road, City Homes, Baghbanan, Urmir, Islamabad, Faqir Abad, Shiekh Abad, Molve Je, Nishtar Abad and NHA feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will also remain suspended from Warak-Power House-RMT Transmission Line on 10th December from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. resultantly consumers of 132 KV Jamrud, RMT grid connected feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from Haripur-Hattar Transmission Line on 10th December from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. resultantly, the consumers of Hattar 1, 2, Hattar Special Economic Zone, Khanpur, Haripur, Kholian Bala and 66 KV Haripur and Havelian grid connected feeders will face inconvenience.



PESHAWAR: Advocate Nasir Ghilzai receiving certificate at eve International Lawyer Convention.

KPCSW vows to continue struggle against gender-based violence

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW) on Thursday vowed to continue its efforts to combat gender-based violence by raising awareness among masses.

The Commission announced to continue its efforts, dedication and activism against gender-based violence, during the concluding ceremony of a 16-day global campaign against gender-based violence held here at the College of Home Economics.

The event was started on November 27 at Frontier College for Women and University.

The overarching theme for this year's campaign was "UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls," underscoring the imperative for collective action and investment in preventive strategies.

The culminating event brought together esteemed academic officials, government representatives, and NGO delegates who united to support this crucial cause.

During the campaign a series of educational programs and workshops were organized by the KPCSW with an aim to promote understanding, address the root causes of gender-based violence, and cultivate a culture of respect and equality.

In addition to educational programs, the KPCSW also collaborated with local communities and hosted events, seminars, and outreach programs throughout the 16-day campaign and fostered a sense of unity and shared responsibility in the fight against gender-based violence, ensuring active participation in

building safer and more equitable communities.

On the occasion the Secretary of KPCSW Robin Haider Bokhari emphasized that this year's theme aligned with the commission's mandate to eliminate violence against women and girls through investments in awareness, training of government officials, community advocacy, and proposing new laws and policies in the province.

The Principal of the College of Home Economics Dr. Shahnaz Khattak expressed gratitude for the collaboration with the KPCSW and the honor of

hosting the campaign's closing event.

She emphasized the importance of awareness for young girls and women regarding their rights and the institutions supporting women's empowerment and also highlighted the significance of combating violence against women.

Prof Dr Gohar Ali, former Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar was the Chief guest of the concluding ceremony. He appreciated the organizers of the event and said that sensitization of the stakeholders was imperative to curb violence against women.



PESHAWAR: Secretary of KPCSW Robin Haider Bokhari with commission members and students participating in an awareness walk.

'Hujra Meetings' held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: USAID-funded Land Registration in Merged Areas Activity (LRMA) held the first of its seven "Hujra Meetings" in Peshawar on Thursday, bringing together over 100 government officials, community People attended. Elders, representatives of local organizations participated. "These meetings will encourage local people and key community members to participate in the land settlement process," said Muhammad Shoaib, Chief of Party, LRMA. "These meetings will help build trust, raise awareness and encourage people to work together. It is important to create a better and fairer land registration system in the region." Focusing the people of the areas to consider and accept land registration. This effort is a joint work between LRMA and various actors of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, such as Settlement and Digitization of Land Record Project Unit, Settlement Offices, and the Office of the Additional Commissioner

General. USAID is assisting the KP government in streamlining land registration in annexed areas, which is a major cause of individual and tribal conflicts.

Speaking, Secretary Revenue Khalid Khan said that land registration and records will help to solve the problems. Land registration is also very important for solving tribal conflicts, for which USAID's

support is commendable.

A drama was also presented in the event for public awareness, for which a special stage was prepared in Peshawar. The stage was given the shape of a Pashtun chamber and the costumes of the actors in the drama were also arranged in the context of Pashtun culture. In this event, a presentation on USAID's land registration project was also organized.

Power pilferer lawyer fires at PESCO team

PESHAWAR (APP): An enraged lawyer who was caught red-handed while pilfering electricity through a tempered meter, fired at a PESCO team and threatened the officials of dire consequences in case of any action against him. PESCO Spokesman said on Thursday the incident occurred in Momin Town at Dillazak Road where a lawyer, identified as Abrar Hussain was found guilty of pilfering power through a tempered electricity meter. The lawyer came out of his house with a weapon in his hands and after using abusive language and threatening remarks, started firing at the PESCO team. The spokesman said luckily no PESCO official was harmed in the incident however, a two-year-old child was injured during the ransacking. The PESCO spokesman further said that the lawyer also called in his friends to join him, however upon arrival of the police, the lawyer and his accomplices escaped the area. A case of firing at PESCO team, power pilferage and interference in official affairs was registered against the accused.



In brief

Influenza vaccine vital
F.P. Report

BUNER: The district specialist in charge chest unite at DHQ hospital Daggar Dr. Nisar Khan has suggested every individual age 6 year onward should and those mostly exposed to seasonal diseases must administer influenza vaccine in winter season so as to keep himself protected against seasonal diseases. Dr Nisar Khan flanked by his team Dr. Tahir Iqbal and Dr. Sher Umar Khan told media this special care chest unite was equipped with latest modern equipments required for chest patients. He assured all out services by specialist health team in OPD and ward as well. He added those were victims of cold winter seasonal diseases must keep themselves warm by wearing warm cloths and confined to heated rooms especially the kids women and elders and suggested administering influenza vaccine for all especially the women kids and elders besides those most exposed to diseases like cold fever nasal and chest congestion and already asthmatic, he concluded.

'Illam Tolo Da Para Funfair'
F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Frontier Corps North, in its commitment to fostering education in Malakand, organized the 'Illam Tolo Da Para Funfair Festival 2023' at Frontier Corps Public School Timergera, on Thursday. The event held to engage youth in constructive and healthy activities, welcomed parents and teachers from various schools and colleges. A total of 18 schools and colleges participated in the festival, where prizes and trophies were distributed to acknowledge the achievements of position holders and outstanding teachers. Officials from Frontier Corps North addressed the gathering, emphasizing the pivotal role parents and teachers play in children's education. The focus was on encouraging the return of children to schools for a brighter future. Students expressed their gratitude to Frontier Corps North for organizing such a significant festival, highlighting the positive impact on educational motivation and community engagement.

DC visits
DHQ Bannu
F.P. Report

BANNU: In an unannounced visit to District Headquarters Hospital Bannu, Deputy Commissioner Bannu Shah Saud, accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Bannu Syed Abrar Ali Shah, scrutinized various hospital wards, assessed cleanliness standards, and issued necessary directives. During the inspection, Deputy Commissioner Saud prioritized the provision of basic medical facilities, emphasizing that no resource shortages would be tolerated. Engaging with patients and their attendants, Deputy Commissioner Saud informed them about the available hospital facilities. The doctors and management of DHQ Hospital Bannu briefed him on existing facilities and challenges. Deputy Commissioner Saud underscored the importance of treating patients as a primary duty and urged doctors to consider it a form of worship, fostering a sense of brotherhood. To ensure the efficiency of services, Deputy Commissioner Saud, along with Assistant Commissioner Syed Abrar Ali Shah, personally conducted blood tests in the laboratory, verifying satisfactory results.



QUETTA: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi being received by Balochistan Minister for Information Jan Achakzai at airport.

Probe into irregularities in govt depts demanded

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamiat Ulema Islam local leaders on Thursday announced the JUI-F would contest next general elections in Dir in all constituencies and it would form the next government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking at a news conference at the Timergara press club the JUI-F provincial leader Qazi Ayazud Din, district deputy chief Muhammad Huzaifa, Balambat tehsil chief Haji Shakirullah and others alleged that the international establishment in 2018 imposed its agent under a plan to destabilize the country and its institutions.

The JUI-F leaders said the Pakistan Tahreek Insaaf chief Imran Khan destroyed economy, politics and morality during his three and a half year government and pushed the country toward chaos and uncertainty. The JUI-F leaders expressed anger and dissatisfaction at the performance of government departments in the Lower Dir district and alleged that corruption and irregularities were on the rise.

They said the female education office had become a hub of corruption and female teachers were being bribed on their transfer and posting. The JUI-F leaders also raised fingers on the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and alleged that workers of a specific party were being

facilitated. They demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to initiate proper inquiries against the irregularities and malpractices in the Lower Dir government departments and take action against the officials involved in it.

Markazi Muslim League: The Pakistan Markazi Muslim League on Thursday announced its candidate for four provincial assembly seats in Lower Dir. The provincial president of the party Khalid Masood Sindho told local journalists that Abdul Wahid had been nominated for PK 14, Wasiullah for PK 15, Ubaid Aman Rughani for PK 16 and the party district president Muhammad Yasin had been nominated for PK 17.

He said the PMML believed in good governance and rule of law. He said the party would contest elections in the majority of the KP seats. The PMML provincial chief said that they wanted a stable and developed nation and they would work hard for it.

Open kutcheri: The Lower Dir administration on Thursday arranged an open 'kutcheri' for religious minorities, persons with disability (PWDs) and transgender at the deputy commissioner hall Balambat. The additional deputy commissioner Abdul Wali Khan chaired the event. Besides representatives of the minorities, PWDs and transgen-

der, the Timergara assistant commissioner Dr Nida Iqbal, additional assistant commissioner Tariq Khan, representatives of social welfare, local government, education, health, population welfare, communication and works, technical education, friends of paraplegic and nongovernmental organizations were also in attendance.

The participants informed the officials about their issues and asked the administration to take practical steps for its resolution. The minorities demanded a separate graveyard, increase in job quota, allotment of official residences for minority employees, construction of a community hall, approval of Christmas package and repair of churches in the district.

The PWDs also demanded smooth and easy access to all government buildings, wheelchair ramps at hospitals' OPDs and wards, special washrooms and job quota for them. Speaking on the occasion the ADC Abdul Wali said that a job quota for minorities was being implemented in each government department. He said the issue of a separate graveyard would be solved on priority basis. The Akhunkhel Foundation chief Rahim Shah announced construction of a boundary wall of the Christian graveyard and additional rooms and cash prizes on the eve of Christmas this year.

Explosive planted near police station Bannu defused

F.P. Report

BANNU: The Bannu police on Thursday foiled a terror bid by recovering at least 10 kg explosive planted near the Cantt police station by unknown miscreants.

Police said 10 kg explosive material including ball bearings were recovered that were planted near the Cantt police station. The explosive planted for carrying out a subversive activity was later defused by the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS).

Police said if the explosive material, God forbid, had exploded, a big scale destruction could have taken place. After the recovery, police cordoned off the area and started a search operation to arrest the perpetrators involved.

DRC setup for provision of speedy justice

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) is the best choice to decide disputes of tribesmen as per their traditions and norms. Since long tribal jirga settle all issues being faced by the tribesmen therefore under a legal frame DRC has been functioned in merged districts to deliver speedy justice. Positive result to be produced by the initiative.

The views were expressed by the District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber Saleem Abbas Kulachvi while addressing an opening ceremony of first ever DRC center held here in tehsil compound, Landi Kotal on Thursday.

Besides DPO, Khyber, Saleem Abbas Kulachvi, Superintendent Police (SP) investigation Kamal Hussain, Deputy SP circle Mazhar Afridi, Station House Officer (SHO) Akbar Afridi, tribal elders, councillors were among the participants. He said that traditional tribal jirga had been granted a legal status in the form of DRC and local elders who were well aware of the rites of the tribe had been appointed in the council to settle the disputes.

National voter's day celebrated with enthusiasm

Anees Takar

MARDAN: The civil society witnessed a vibrant celebration of National Voters Day, creating awareness about the importance and inclusion of voting rights. The Election Commission office in Mardan organized an event attended by men, women, school children, lawyers, and representatives from civil society.

Addressing the gathering, former Provincial Election Commissioner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pir Maqbool Ahmed, Regional Election Commissioner Rahim Zada, District Election Officer Zia-ul-Rehman, District Conciliation Committee member and women's social worker Nasrat Ara, Muhammad Arif from Saiban Development Organization, Deputy Commissioner Pir Ibrar, Mubashir Hassan, and Hasan Nabi highlighted that the Election Commission of Pakistan is not only working to complete the electoral system but is also playing a crucial role in creating awareness about the importance of voting rights and their inclusion through social organizations and media forums.

They stated that the Election Commission is not only completing the country's electoral system but is also actively involved in using social organizations, civil society, and media forums to raise awareness about the significance and inclusion of voting rights in urban areas. They stressed the pivotal role of the education department in the electoral process.

Pir Maqbool Ahmed urged the importance of providing awareness to the public about becoming a part of the electoral process, emphasizing that the National Voters Day serves this purpose by making people aware of the significance of their votes. He emphasized that it is crucial to provide information gained from such events to more people so that the real purpose of celebrating this day is achieved.

He said that the positive program of the Election Commission is enlightening the public about the importance, power, and inclusion of votes. The speakers shed light on the fact that it is time to utilize our vote wisely, as it is through voting that we can choose our correct leaders and representatives. They encouraged the audience to ensure 100% inclusion of their votes, as through proper voting, the destiny of the country can be changed.

The organizers illuminated the importance of voting and asserted that the proper use of votes can bring about a positive change in the country. They concluded by saying that National Voters Day serves as a reminder to the people that the power to shape the future of the nation lies in their hands through the responsible use of their voting rights.

SMBR presides Revenue officers meeting: The Senior Member Board of Revenue Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ikramullah Khan visited Mardan. Arriving at the Commissioner's office, Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai welcomed SMBR. He presided over the meeting of the revenue officers of Mardan division in the light of the orders of the High Court and the provincial government in the commissioner's office and regarding the transfer of house cultivation to house ownership in the public interest.

Member Board of Revenue Adeel Shah and Secretary Board of Revenue Tariq Khan were also with him. The meeting was

attended by Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai, Deputy Commissioner Mardan Wasil Khan, DC Swabi Dr Tariqullah, ADCs of Mardan and Swabi and all revenue officers. Additional Commissioner Naem Akhtar, while giving a briefing, informed about the progress made so far regarding home cultivation in Mardan and Swabi. He said that in this regard, in Mardan district, problems were found in 7600 accounts in 153 places in which 688 accounts have been cleared, which benefited 65962 people, while in Swabi there were problems in 7653 accounts of 87 places.

Out of 149 accounts are cleared. Senior Member Board of Revenue Ikramullah Khan directed the revenue officers to take immediate steps to remove the deficiencies related to home cultivation as per government orders and court judgments and ensure that the right holder gets his right and no Do not abuse. He said that sometimes the rights of the weak, orphans and widows are killed due to this issue. He said that necessary training should also be given to revenue officials in this regard. He said that according to the decision of the Supreme Court, there is a complete ban on deaths in house cultivation, so the court orders should be followed in this regard.

SMBR appreciated the performance of the administration and revenue officers in Mardan division and hoped that they would also show good performance in achieving the set targets in this regard. Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Mardan Division Shaukat Ali Yousafzai directed the revenue officers to ensure the implementation of government orders regarding house cultivation. He asked the Deputy Commissioners of Mardan and Swabi to play a central role in this regard. So that revenue related complaints can be redressed.

Excise dept seizes drug: Excise Police thwarted a major drug smuggling attempt. The authorities, acting on intelligence, seized a total of 26 kilograms of charas (cannabis) during two separate raids. Two suspects were apprehended during the operation.

According to details provided by the spokesperson of the Excise and Anti-Narcotics Department, the law enforcement team intercepted an Alto car with registration number LOP 8635 on Ring Road. The search led to the discovery of 24 kilograms of charas. Nazeer Ali, a resident of Islamabad, was promptly arrested at the scene.

Simultaneously, on another front, during an operation involving car number FDM 3839 on Ring Road Mardan, authorities confiscated an additional 2,400 grams of charas. The suspect, identified as Akhtar Ali, resident of Manduzai, Peshawar, was taken into custody.

The Excise Department's spokesperson highlighted the ongoing efforts against drug trafficking and emphasized the commitment to further investigations and legal actions. The seized narcotics have been logged as evidence, and the Excise Police in Mardan Region have initiated legal proceedings for thorough scrutiny. This operation underscores the dedication of law enforcement agencies in curbing the menace of drug smuggling in the region. The authorities remain vigilant to ensure the safety and well-being of the community, reinforcing their commitment to combating the illicit drug trade.

National voters' day observed

F.P. Report

BARA: To encourage citizens to take part in the upcoming election, national voters' days were commemorated in Bara, district Khyber on Thursday.

In this connection under the auspices of district election commission, a gathering was organized in Afridi model school and college that was attended by deputy district education officer, Misrey Khan as chief guest, election commissioner, Khyber Shaid Ali, assistant district officer Musharraf Khan, score of teachers, students and members of

the civil society.

Addressing the occasion, the chief guest highlighted the importance of the vote and said it was a power in the hand of the layman to elect his / her representative to run functions of the government. Vote is a national deposit that must be utilized with responsibility, he added and said the job of voters is much more important than the election commission to elect honest leadership.

District election commissioner, Shahid Ali said that the core purpose of observing the day was to underline significance of the vote

among the masses aimed to enhance turnout in the upcoming general election. He maintained that all arrangements had been finalized and scheduled for the election to be announced in a few days. He urged the voters (male, female) to cast their votes and elect their best choice, keeping in view the future of their generation.

Earlier, students of the institutions presented tableaux, drama sketches, national songs and speeches that amused the audience. At the end appreciated certificates were given away to the best performers.

52 years of heroic action of PNS Hangor

Ali Basit

SUBMARINES have always been recognized as a key factor in maintaining a powerful military. Historically it has proved impossible for a country to keep global military status without dominance at sea. Since World War I, it has also been impossible for surface ships to hold dominance at sea without the use of submarines. Even before a conflict arises, a submarines' ability to deploy military strengths to an area without being detected is strategically invaluable.

This cutting edge capability of submarine service was rightly recognized by the leadership of Pakistan Navy (PN) and thus, Pakistan became the first country in the Indian Ocean Region to operate submarine force. PN submarine force started with just a single submarine, commissioned as PNS/M GHAZI, purchased from US, previously known as USS DIABLO.

PNS/M GHAZI participated in Rann of Kutch crisis and displayed her full potential in the 1965 war. Her deployment in 1965 war forestalled Indian naval forces from even leaving their bases. Realizing the value of a submarine force, Pakistan acquired three Daphne-class submarines from France, the heroic PNS/M HANGOR being one of them.

During the war of 1971, the submarine force participated, once again, with utmost vigor. This time PNS/M HANGOR came forward to target Indian Navy ships, INS KUKRI and INS KIRPAN. It is important to realize that the HANGOR action did not develop overnight and the events in 1971 were shaping for such actions due to crisis in East Pakistan. As the hostilities broke out, the period of patience reached its climax on the evening of 9th Dec when the enemy came into effective weapon range of HANGOR as it identified two enemy frigates

some distance off "Diu Head". Action stations were sounded, with all aboard eager to join the battle.

The Commander of the submarine had no illusions about the risks involved in engaging "hunter-killer" frigates, specially equipped for anti-submarine warfare. In spite of the risks involved, he moved close to the enemy, determined to inscribe the name "HANGOR" in the annals of Pakistan's history. The Commanding Officer of HANGOR closed the two targets at shallow depth with caution, prudence and exercising all professionalism to avoid detection. The two contacts were appreciated to be two Indian Anti-Submarine frigates (INS KUKRI and INS KIRPAN) engaged in Search and Attack Unit operations.

HANGOR was waiting on the estimated track of the targets and "Action Stations" were, therefore, sounded that the "shark" had bared its teeth and its

moment of reality had arrived. Although the enemy was operating sonar, HANGOR was not detected and therefore, still enjoyed the element of surprise. The conditions were not favorable for conducive submarine operations due to shallow depth (60-65 meters) in the area and the enemy surface fleet was in advantageous position due to limited maneuverability of submarine.

HANGOR was ready and at 1957 hours on 9th of December 1971, the sharp command "Shoot" rang out and the first torpedo sped away. The torpedo was supposed to hit INS KIRPAN but passed under and did not explode. The element of surprise was lost as the enemy's warship crew suddenly woke up realizing that they were under attack. The advantage had now shifted completely in favor of the enemy and INS KUKRI homed onto the known direction of torpedo launch position.

The HANGOR crew kept their

cool and calmly shifted target to INS KUKRI, obtained a quick solution and fired the second torpedo at it. The torpedo exploded under the magazine of INS KHUKRI and the huge explosion broke the ship into two pieces. With Squadron Commander, Captain Mohindra Nath Mulla onboard KHUKRI went down forever to the bottom of sea.

Having achieved her spectacular success, "HANGOR" started evasive manoeuvres as the enemy was certainly going to react with the entire available resources. For the next three days, Indian warships combed the vicinity of the scene of action and HANGOR was subjected to extensive depth charge attacks. Someone in the crew kept the count and according to him it came to be 156 attacks during this period. An extensive air search combined with surface ships was conducted but with intelligent evasive action, the submarine managed to evade these attacks and arrived in

Karachi safely after the ceasefire.

Despite these potential hazards, the morale of men onboard HANGOR never wilted. As a member of the crew put it, "The crew always felt that death would not matter so long as they succeeded in destroying the enemy". The ship's crew was justifiably satisfied with their achievement under difficult conditions. For their act of courage and devotion to duty the officers and men of HANGOR were decorated with 06 x Sitara-e-Jurat, 07 x Tamgha-e-Jurat and 21 x Imtazi Sanads. This is the highest number of operational gallantry awards given to a single unit of Pakistan Navy.

In order to pay tribute to high level professional crew of HANGOR and their victorious and valour act, 9th December is celebrated as HANGOR DAY each year. On 02 Jan 2006, HANGOR was converted to serve as a museum ship at Pakistan Maritime Museum as a symbol of courage and victory.



DODOMA: People collecting belongings in an area affected by landslides and flooding triggered by heavy rainfall in Tanzania.

Jenrick resigns as immigration minister over Rwanda legislation

LONDON (BBC): Robert Jenrick has resigned as immigration minister, saying the government's emergency Rwanda legislation "does not go far enough". He said "stronger protections" were needed to end "the merry-go-round of legal challenges which risk paralysing the scheme".

The government said the bill, unveiled earlier, made clear in UK law Rwanda was a safe country for asylum seekers. But it stops short of what some on the Tory right were demanding. In his resignation letter to Rishi Sunak, Mr Jenrick said the prime minister had "moved towards my position" on the emergency legislation.

"Nevertheless, I am unable to take the currently proposed legislation through the Commons as I do not believe it provides us with the best possible chance of success." Mr Jenrick added that the bill was "a triumph of hope over experience". In response, the prime minister described Mr Jenrick's resignation as "disappointing" and "based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the situation". "If we were to oust the courts entirely, we would collapse the entire scheme," Mr Sunak said.

"The Rwandan government have been clear that they would not accept the UK basing this scheme on legislation that could be considered in breach of our international law obligations." The plans to send some asylum seekers to Rwanda aim to deter people from crossing the English Channel in small boats. But the scheme has been repeatedly delayed by legal challenges and no asylum seekers have been sent to the east African country from the UK so far. Mr Jenrick, who had supported Mr Sunak's leadership campaign, said the emergency legislation was the "last opportunity" to prove the government would do "whatever it takes" to stop small boat crossings. Losing a minister who was once a key ally is a blow

for Mr Sunak, in a week when the government had been trying to get on the front foot on migration.

Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper said: "It is a sign of the total chaos in the Tory party and the complete collapse of Rishi Sunak's leadership that even while he is sitting in the Commons for the announcement of his new Rwanda plan, his own immigration minister is resigning because he doesn't think it will work." Senior figures are musing privately that they would not be surprised if Mr Sunak ended up facing a confidence vote from his own MPs. Although it may not come to that, it is a measure of the bleak mood among many Conservatives. Reports of Mr Jenrick's resignation first started swirling after the government published the draft bill. The legislation aims to address the concerns of the UK's Supreme Court, which last month ruled plans to send some asylum seekers to Rwanda were unlawful. The bill - which must be approved by Parliament - orders the courts to ignore key sections of the Human Rights Act in an attempt to sidestep the Supreme Court's existing judgement. It also orders the courts to ignore other British laws or international rules - such as the international Refugee Convention - that stand in the way of deportations to Rwanda.

However, it does not go as far as some Tory MPs wanted. Former Home Secretary Suella Braverman and her supporters had called for it to override the entire Human Rights Act, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the Refugee Convention, and all other international law. The bill allows ministers to ignore any emergency order from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg to temporarily halt a flight to Rwanda while an individual case is still being considered. But it stops short of providing powers to dismiss the whole of the ECHR. It also allows

migrants to legally challenge their removal to Rwanda on specific individual grounds, if they can prove that being put on a plane would leave them at real risk of serious harm. A source close to Mrs Braverman said the bill was "fatally flawed" and would be "bogged down in the courts for months and months". However, if the government had agreed to her demands this would have provoked a backlash from centrist Tories. The One Nation group, which is made up of more than 100 Tory MPs, had warned that overriding the ECHR was a "red line" for a number of Conservatives. The group cautiously welcomed "the government's decision to continue to meet the UK's international commitments which uphold the rule of law" but added that it would seek legal advice "about concerns and the practicalities of the bill". The draft legislation concedes that it may not be compatible with the ECHR. This means government lawyers have told ministers the measures could still be legally challenged. The former solicitor became a Conservative MP when he was elected in the 2014 by-election in the Nottinghamshire seat of Newark.

He was promoted into the cabinet as housing secretary in 2019 by then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Mr Jenrick, a 41-year-old father-of-three, also briefly served as a junior health minister in Liz Truss's government, despite backing Mr Sunak for the Tory leadership.

As immigration minister he consistently pushed for a harder line on legal and illegal immigration, expressing frustration at the high levels of both. He was also at the centre of several controversies, including a row over approving planning permission for Tory donor Richard Desmond. Mr Jenrick was also criticised for ordering a mural of Disney characters at a child asylum centre to be painted over.

2023 declared hottest year on record as UN slams climate inaction

BRUSSELS (AFP): Europe's climate monitor has declared that 2023 will be the hottest year on record, as a United Nations official used the COP28 climate summit to slam inaction. The European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) confirmed that the current year will be the "warmest" globally since records began in the middle of the 19th century. Before this, 2016 took the top spot.

C3S said it was practically impossible for the trend to change before the end of December after November became the sixth record-breaking month in a row. "The extraordinary global November temperatures, including two days warmer than 2C [3.6F] above pre-industrial (levels), mean that 2023 is the warmest year in recorded history," Samantha

Burgess, deputy head of C3S, said in a statement. Last month smashed the previous November heat record, pushing 2023's global average temperature to 1.46 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the pre-industrial era, the service said. No day with temperatures more than 2C above pre-industrial levels had ever been recorded. It had previously been assumed that 2023 would set a record for global average temperatures.

In mid-November, the US climate agency NOAA said there was a 99 percent probability that the year would be the warmest since 1850. However, none of the relevant institutions had yet fully committed to the record. At the COP28 in Dubai, UN climate chief Simon Stiell accused nations of "posturing", and

said negotiators should aim high and agree on a way to end the "fossil fuel era as we know it". A global climate agreement will ideally be finalised on December 12, the last day of the summit, but the latest draft text is "probably" expected, sources told the AFP news agency. The fate of oil, gas and coal - the main drivers of human-caused climate change - has been the biggest sticking point on the agenda, and divisions around their future have dominated the conference.

"We have a starting text on the table, but it's a grab bag of ... wish lists and heavy on posturing," Stiell told reporters. "At the end of next week, we need COP to deliver a bullet train to speed up climate action. We currently have an old caboose chugging over rickety tracks." The new draft of the negotiated text

will be brought to a large plenary meeting taking stock of the first week of talks before a rest day on Thursday, sources told AFP. Battle lines have previously been drawn on whether to agree to "phase out" or "phase down" fossil fuels. Phasing out fossil fuels and scaling up renewable energy is seen as crucial to the world's goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C compared with pre-industrial levels.

However, climate experts have warned that the Paris deal's 1.5C threshold could be breached within seven years if emissions are not slashed. C3S head Carlo Buontempo said, "As long as greenhouse gas concentrations keep rising, we can't expect different outcomes." The temperature will keep rising and so will the impacts of heatwaves and droughts."

Chennai flooded as heavy rains from cyclone Michaung batter south India

CHENNAI/HYDERABAD (Reuters): Rescuers used boats to reach people stranded in their homes amid widespread flooding in the India's Chennai after cyclone Michaung barreled into the southern coast, bringing in heavy rain and winds that uprooted trees and damaged roads.

An estimated 13 people, most of them in the manufacturing hub of Tamil Nadu, have died in the flooding that was triggered by the torrential rains that preceded the cyclone, which made landfall in Andhra Pradesh state.

Rescuers used inflatable rafts and ropes to pluck people out of their homes in Chennai, a city of more than 6 million people and a major automobile and technology manufacturing hub.

Local media showed images of rescue workers wading through waist-deep water and of submerged vehicles. Air force helicopters also dropped food rations to people stranded in flooded homes. "There are pockets of low lying areas," said Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner Dr. J. Radhakrishnan. "We to hope clear it soon."

Taiwan's Foxconn and Pegatron had halted Apple iPhone production at their facilities near Chennai due to the rains, sources told Reuters. Foxconn resumed operations.

In Andhra Pradesh, which bore the brunt of the cyclone, the damage was relatively contained, with roads damaged and trees uprooted as big waves crashed into the coast. This week's floods in Chennai brought back memories of the extensive damage caused by floods eight years ago which killed around 290 people. Some

residents questioned the ability of the city's infrastructure to handle extreme weather. State Chief Minister M K Stalin wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking 50.6 billion rupees (\$607.01 million) for the damage. Raj Bhagat P, a civil engineer and geo-analytics expert said better stormwater drainage systems in the city would not have been able to prevent the flooding. "This solution would have helped a lot in moderate and heavy rainfall, but not in very heavy rains," he said.

Erdogan calls for reinforced trust before Greece trip

ATHENS (Reuters): Greece and Turkey should reinforce trust and deepen cooperation on common challenges as they try to solve their differences, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said before a trip to Athens.

"There is no problem we cannot solve through dialogue on the basis of mutual goodwill," Erdogan told Kathimerini newspaper in an interview, a day before the two countries' fifth High-level Cooperation Council (HCC) in Athens. The neighbours and NATO allies have been at odds for decades over issues including where their continental shelves start and end, energy resources, overflights of the Aegean Sea, and ethnically split Cyprus. They reached the brink of war in the 1990s.

Erdogan and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis agreed in July to resume talks and confidence-building measures as they hailed a new, "positive climate" in ties after more than a year of tensions over energy resources and defence issues. Erdogan, who is due to meet Mitsotakis on Thursday, said that Turkey was honestly trying to resolve its differences with Greece and that Greece had realised that Turkey would never reject an extended hand of friendship. "I will tell him, Kyriakos, my friend, we don't threaten you if you don't threaten us," Erdogan told Kathimerini, adding that Athens and Ankara could solve their problems without foreign intervention. He said cooperation could be enhanced in sectors including the economy, transport, energy and migration, where Turkey needed the support of the European Union, and that the renewed electoral mandate both leaders received this year could help the two countries make constructive progress.

"We do see this trend of populist, far right political parties on the rise. And ... we're worried by that because they often are climate deniers. They're not telling the truth. And that's ... very unhelpful in this crucial decade for climate action." Wilders' party beat a center-left alliance led by former European Union climate czar Frans Timmermans into second place. In April, the Dutch government unveiled a package of measures to slash carbon emissions by promoting clean energy, sustainable homes and industry

Iran arrests a popular singer

DUBAI (AP): Iranian authorities have arrested a popular singer who had criticized the government after he was handed over by police in Turkey, the official IRNA news agency reported. Amirhossein Maghsoudloo, better known as Tataloo, has been critical of Iran's leaders since he had moved to Turkey. It wasn't clear why he was arrested by Turkish police, but IRNA reported he was facing complaints for allegedly inviting underage people to his home in Istanbul.

IRNA said Turkish police handed over him to Iranian authorities in the northwestern province of West Azerbaijan. Iran's hard-liners regularly criticize artists and celebrities and authorities have summoned many of them in recent months on various charges, including violations of chastity. Tataloo has never been allowed to hold a concert in Iran but was a popular underground singer with many young fans. During a 2017 presidential campaign, he met with the current president, Ebrahim Raisi. In 2015, he made a music video on an Iranian navy boat, defending the country's nuclear program.

Ex-lawmaker found shot dead

MOSCOW (AP): A renegade Ukrainian lawmaker who fled to Russia shortly after Moscow's invasion was found dead near Moscow. The Ukrainian military intelligence lauded the killing, warning that other "traitors of Ukraine" would share the same fate.

Illia Kyva, 46, a former member of Ukraine's parliament who had called for Kyiv to surrender when Russian troops invaded the country in February 2022, was found dead with a gunshot wound to the head in a cottage village near Moscow. Russia's state Investigative Committee opened a probe on murder charges. Andriy Yusov, a spokesman for Ukraine's military intelligence, said in televised remarks that Kyva was "done," adding that "the same fate will befall other traitors of Ukraine and accomplices of Putin's regime."

Dutch plans to tackle climate change are in doubt

AMSTERDAM (AP): The outgoing Dutch prime minister, Mark Rutte, told delegates at the COP28 United Nations climate conference his country is "committed to accelerating our efforts" to tackle climate change. Whether that happens in this nation - large parts of which are under sea level and protected by dikes - depends on talks that are underway to form a new ruling coalition.

Rutte's potential successor wants to trash the country's climate policies. One of far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders' pledges ahead of the Nov. 22 election his PVV party won set alarm bells ringing at environmental groups. "The climate law, the climate deal and all other climate measures will go straight into the shredder," his PVV party's election manifesto said. "No wasting billions on useless climate hobbies, but more money for our people," it added. "Wilders really denies climate change as something that the Netherlands should worry about. Which is interesting given that a large part of the country is below sea level," Rem Korteweg, a senior research fellow at the Clingendael Institute think tank, said after the election. Greenpeace agrees. A day after the election, activists hoisted banners outside the prime minister's office in The Hague that read: "No climate denier as our prime minister." "He is a climate denier," said Greenpeace campaigner Meike Rijkse. "He wants to take all climate policy and put it through the shredder. That's climate denial. He's denying the urgency of the climate crisis and what we need to do in the Netherlands." She fears that such messages are spreading across Europe as the continent puts in place plans like the Green Deal and Fit for 55, aimed at tackling climate change head on.

"We do see this trend of populist, far right political parties on the rise. And ... we're worried by that because they often are climate deniers. They're not telling the truth. And that's ... very unhelpful in this crucial decade for climate action." Wilders' party beat a center-left alliance led by former European Union climate czar Frans Timmermans into second place. In April, the Dutch government unveiled a package of measures to slash carbon emissions by promoting clean energy, sustainable homes and industry

Former President Alberto released from prison

LIMA: Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, who was serving a 25-year prison term for human rights abuses during his decade-long rule in the 1990s, has been freed after the country's highest court restored a contentious 2017 pardon.

Fujimori, 85, was released from Lima's Barbadillo prison, a day after the court ruled to restore the pardon on humanitarian grounds, despite criticisms from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Inter-American Court) and victims' families. Fujimori had been in prison for 16 years after being extradited from Chile in 2007.

Crowds of supporters gathered outside the jail, as Fujimori was greeted by his two children - Keiko, a three-time failed presidential hopeful, and Kenji, a businessman - before being driven away in a grey truck. "It was time for this injustice against Fujimori to end, thanks to him, our country is on its feet," said Catalina Ponce, a Fujimori supporter waiting outside the prison, earlier in the day.

Fujimori, who is of Japanese heritage and led the country from 1990 to 2000, has divided Peruvians like few other former leaders. Supporters believe he saved Peru from the Shining Path armed group and economic collapse. Critics, however, say he abused democracy and committed atrocities during his government's battle against the Shining Path. The former president was convicted in 2009 of ordering the killing of 25 people in 1991 and 1992, but was given a pardon in December 2017 by former President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski.

The pardon had been repeatedly annulled or suspended by lower courts after pressure from the Inter-American Court and victims' families, until this week's constitutional court ruling. Shortly after the order, the president of the Inter-American Court asked Peru to stop the pardon until it had "all the necessary elements" to analyse whether conditions were met. Fujimori was impeached in November 2000 on grounds of "moral

incapacity" and also accused of corruption, a day after he had fled to Japan, where his parents were from, and resigned by fax. He later went to Chile, from where he was eventually extradited.

These days, he suffers recurrent respiratory, neurological and hypertension problems and has had tongue cancer. Ruling to reinstate the pardon cannot be appealed, but Fujimori also faces other legal woes. He has pleaded guilty to bribing lawmakers and spying on rivals while in power, and was also investigated over the forced sterilisation of hundreds of thousands of poor, mostly Indigenous women during his final four years in power. An estimated 270,000 Peruvians, many of them Indigenous people who did not speak Spanish, underwent surgery to have their fallopian tubes tied as part of a family planning programme implemented under Fujimori. In 2021, a judge ruled that Fujimori could not, at the time, be prosecuted in the case for technical legal reasons. — Al Jazeera

Venezuela arrests opposition figure

BOGOTA/HOUSTON (Reuters): Venezuela arrested an opposition member for alleged treason, after the attorney general said earlier there are arrest warrants out for several people connected to the campaign of opposition presidential nominee Maria Corina Machado for crimes including treason.

A lawyer for Machado's Vente Venezuela party said earlier in the day the staffers have always acted correctly. The wife of Roberto Abdul, a member of the commission which planned the primary where Machado was elected the opposition's 2024 candidate, has confirmed his arrest, Alfredo Romero, head of non-governmental organization Foro Penal said on social media. Foro Penal regularly defends political prisoners.

Abdul had previously been interviewed by authorities in connection with a criminal investigation into the primary, which the opposition has

said was transparent and fair. There are also arrest warrants for Henry Alvarez, Claudia Macero and Pedro Urruchurtu for crimes including treason, conspiracy and money laundering. Attorney General Tarek Saab said on state television in the afternoon. The three staffers, along with Abdul, took part in "destabilizing and conspiratorial actions" against a recent referendum vote over a territorial dispute with Guyana, Saab said. Voters in the referendum, backed by the government of President Nicolas Maduro, rejected an international court's jurisdiction over the long-running dispute and supported the creation of a new Venezuelan state in the Esequibo region, much to the chagrin of Guyana, which has questioned the vote's legitimacy. The four people and allies abroad used "financing from money laundering by international organizations and foreign companies

like Exxon Mobil" for their activities, Saab said, without providing more details. Exxon operates its largest foreign oil project offshore of Guyana. CEO Darren Woods said, he expects the dispute to be resolved within a couple of years through international arbitration.

Exxon did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Saab's allegations. Machado, who held a press conference nearly simultaneously to Saab, said the authorities "believe that with this they will create fear, imbalance, demoralization or demobilization, and it's just the opposite." The three staffers were present at her event, she added, and have the full support of her party. The party's lawyer, Perkins Rocha, said afterward in comments shared on social media there has been no official notification of the warrants. "We are waiting for them to notify us, we want to know what it's about," Rocha said.

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Afghanistan and the world view

THE Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesman, Wang Wenbin, has recently noted that China hopes Afghanistan will further respond to the expectations of the international community. According to him, being a long-standing friendly neighbour of Afghanistan, China believes that Afghanistan should not be excluded from the international community. The Chinese spokesman stressed the importance of building an open and inclusive political structure in Afghanistan. The Chinese Diplomat expressed hope that Afghanistan will adopt moderate and prudent domestic and foreign policies, firmly combat all forms of terrorist forces, develop friendly relations with other countries, especially with its neighbours, and integrate itself into the world community. Meanwhile, Thomas West, US Special Representative, is currently on a multi-nations trip to Pakistan, UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia to discuss regional issues and shared security interests, refugee protection and resettlement, humanitarian needs, human rights, and economic issues, all relating to Afghanistan.

Historically, the formation of an inclusive government, considering the realities in Afghanistan, and recognition of the rights and freedom of the people of Afghanistan have been the demands of the international community from the Afghan interim government since the Taliban took control of the neighbouring nation in mid-August 2021. The international community is persistently pressing the interim rulers and all friends and foes including the United States, China, Russia, Iran, Qatar, the KSA, and Pakistan are equally urging the cleric regime to embrace inclusiveness and pluralism in its ranks and files through a sharing mechanism with other political, and ethnic groups to form a unity government in that country. Although the international community is unceasingly pushing the Afghan interim rulers toward inclusiveness and diversity, it doesn't look like the international community will let it fall short of these demands. Unfortunately, the Taliban leaders kicked start their political missions after gaining power instead of initiating a nation-building campaign in a war-torn nation that not only added to the ongoing economic and social problems of the Afghan nation but practically isolated Afghanistan in the comity of the nations.

Historically, the US withdrawal and Taliban takeover could not bring any positive change in the lives of common Afghans as the humanitarian situation worsened, and the economic woes of the Afghan public multiplied after the Taliban gained control of Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the domestic and external policies of the Afghan rulers attracted further foreign opposition and animosity from the public as well as the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan. Historically, Islamabad, the long-held resolute supporter of the Taliban faced staunch opposition from the United States and allies over the past two decades but has now abandoned the Taliban regime due to Kabul's non-cooperation on the issue of terrorism that is the sole need of Pakistan. Interestingly, the Taliban leaders are repeating strategic mistakes of their previous rule as the current situation direly resembles with late nineties, while the current setup failed to gain a single recognition from the international community despite two years of rule in Afghanistan.

Interestingly, the world is unceasingly echoing its concerns regarding the humanitarian and security situation in Afghanistan but there is a sense of calm in Kabul and the Islamic Emirate declared its government as inclusive and expressed a desire to establish smooth and friendly relations with the world. The Afghan nation is currently embattled with serious economic issues while the humanitarian crisis intensified as the bulk of returnees come from Iran, Pakistan, and other countries. The global community must engage with the interim Afghan rulers while keeping political differences aside, who in turn must open up their folds for warring groups in the greater interest of the Afghan nation, so all Afghan factions collectively steer their country out of crises and a dawn of lasting peace and prosperity appears in Afghanistan.

Electoral delimitation and leaders' perplexity

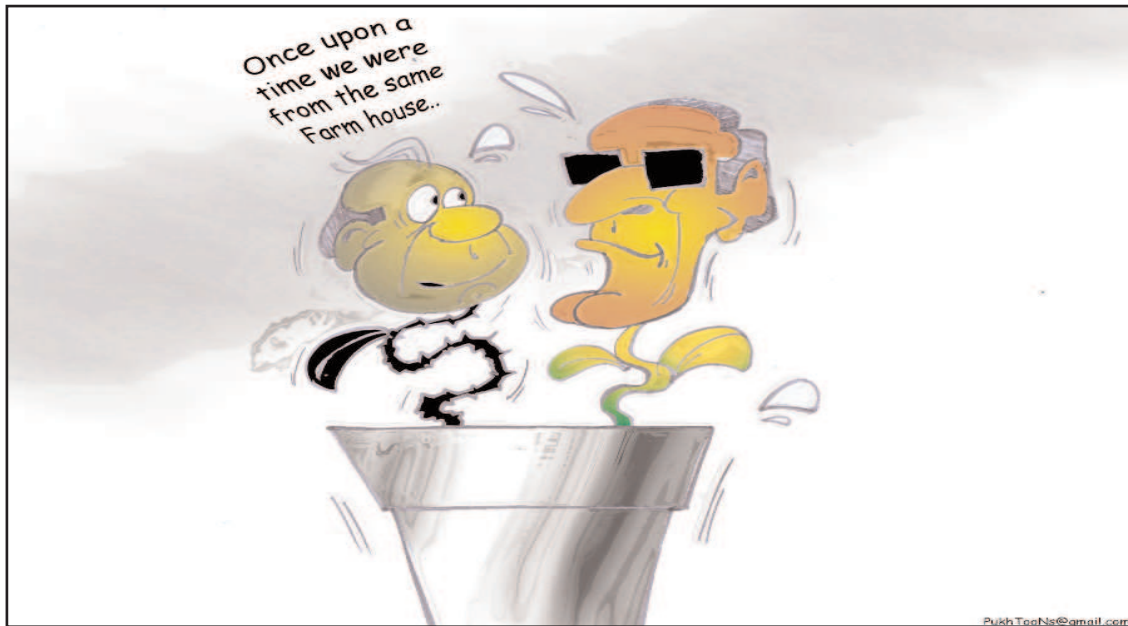
THE country is all set for a nationwide grand contest after the ECP completed a fresh delimitation of electoral constituencies following the digital census 2023. There had been certain reservations regarding fresh jurisdictions of the newly constituted electoral districts that number had been increased and their boundaries also altered due to an increase in population and number of voters as well. Although several political groups and politicians raised their concerns over fresh delimitation, the voices from Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PM-N) are louder. There might be a fear of a looming defeat or otherwise. Several PML-N leaders contended that constituencies cannot be altered arbitrarily according to the law, and therefore, the court should declare the constituencies established on an unfair basis null and void.

Historically, constituency delimitation involves the redrawing of electoral boundaries to create constituencies, often based on population ratio, geographical area or other physical or demographic statistics, that can significantly impact the electoral process in several ways leading to voters turn out and outcomes/ results of the polls. Delimitation can alter the balance of political power by creating or merging constituencies that may favour one political party over another. This process also impacts the distribution of seats in legislative bodies. Meanwhile, changes in constituency boundaries can affect the level of competition in elections and might create more competitive districts by balancing the number of voters from different political affiliations, or conversely. At the same time, the fairness and integrity of the electoral process can be influenced by how constituency delimitation is carried out.

All these are possibilities of the recent changes in the electoral constituencies that are a challenge to all contesting candidates from across the political spectrum. Historically, transparent and impartial delimitation processes are essential to uphold democratic principles and prevent gerrymandering. The politicians must have faith in the system and their public service if they ever deliver to the masses as that would be the only investment for any winning candidate at this crucial time. After all, there is no use crying over spilt milk, the fresh delimitation has naturally provided a level playing field for all parties. Therefore, all warring civic groups must kick off their political campaigns to override this challenge. As such, these types of trivial hardships never lose the hearts of great achievers.

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The IHRA definition of anti-Semitism has no place on Australian campuses

Micaela Sahhar, Sahar Ghumkhor, Jasmine Barzani & Natalie Ironfield

IN universities across the world, the definition of anti-Semitism put forward by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has been used to silence critical commentary on Israel's human rights violations and war crimes. In Australia, the definition has been having a chilling effect on campuses across the country.

Amid Israel's relentless bombing of Gaza, which has killed nearly 16,000 people, including more than 6,000 children, students and staff who have organised in solidarity with the Palestinian people have faced pressure and intimidation. At the University of Melbourne, the highest-ranked institution of higher education in Oceania, the university's administration has openly embraced the official Israeli narrative and refused to condemn what legal experts have called a textbook case of genocide.

While students and staff have tried to resist attempts at censorship and silencing, what is happening at the university is a good illustration of how the IHRA definition hurts academic freedom on campus and helps propagate colonial violence. In November 2022, the Parliamentary Friends of IHRA group was created, consisting of members of the Australian parliament. One of its first tasks was to write to all Australian universities, urging them to adopt the IHRA definition.

Following this announcement, the peak body for Palestinians in Australia, the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network, asked to be included in university deliberations on the subject but its call was unheeded. Since then, five Australian universities have adopted the IHRA definition, while seven, including high-profile Australian National University and the University of Adelaide, have publicly rejected the call.

The University of Melbourne was the first to publicly announce the adoption of the IHRA definition in January 2023. This was framed as the first step in its new antiracism initiative, with consultations to follow among Muslim staff and students in respect of a statement on Islamophobia. This approach highlighted the anti-Palestinianism at the heart of the university's adoption of the IHRA definition as it implied that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is sectarian in nature. Both Palestinian and Jewish academics have argued that the adoption of the IHRA definition undermines the fight

against racism and have pointed to the context in which it was carried out - to impede campus activism challenging Israeli apartheid.

As a group of university scholars in Australia have written: "[The] IHRA definition is not only vague but also not grounded in contemporary anti-racism scholarship or practice. It treats antisemitism as if it occurs in isolation from other forms of racism and disconnects the struggle against antisemitism from the struggle against other forms of racism." Particularly in Australia, a settler colony, fighting racism must begin with - and be grounded in - solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Kenneth Stern, author of the definition, has explained that it was never intended to be used for this purpose of limiting what can be said at universities. Using it in this way, he wrote, is deeply harmful for all.

The IHRA is a problem not just in Australia, but across the Global North. In response to a report compiled for the #NoIHRA project, prepared by Independent Jewish Voices, Amos Goldberg, Professor of Holocaust History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem noted "how powerful, cynical and vicious the weaponization of the fight against antisemitism for silencing critique of Israel and Zionism has become". Even before the IHRA definition was adopted by the University of Melbourne, there were already attempts at intimidation and silencing of those who speak out against Zionism on campus. In May 2022, the People of Colour department at the University of Melbourne's Student Union (UMSU) passed a motion, rigorously supported by evidence gathered by international human rights organisations, that criticised political Zionism and called for participation in the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement. Threats of a costly lawsuit from a Liberal Party member intimidated UMSU into rescinding their motion.

This tactic of lawfare has had a chilling effect on campuses, restricting political freedom. A Palestinian master's student described to us the impact of such actions on his student experience: "I've been made to feel that my life and that of my people is less worthy and less valuable than that of Israeli and Zionist students on campus." The adoption of the IHRA definition has only further encouraged the trend of curbing the freedom

of expression on campus. For Palestinian and Muslim students and staff whose criticism of Zionism is silenced by accusations of anti-Semitism, not only is their expertise challenged but their experiences of racism are often dismissed. As one academic described to us: "I have lived experiences of racism and Islamophobia. I know firsthand how much these actions hurt. So, I don't take it lightly to be accused of hate or racism.... It is unfair and traumatic that those of us who have been subjects of racism are now being silenced through accusations of racism."

Both Palestinian and Jewish students and staff are harmed by the IHRA definition's mischaracterisation of their lived experiences. As a Jewish academic noted to us: "In the past I've had frivolous complaints from Zionist students about my lectures, and given what we know about complaints under IHRA overseas (that they are plentiful but "unreasonable") there is a concern about the effects for all, most particularly Palestinians, with rising complaints. This is not the way to address anti-Semitism." Other academics feel a similar pressure in the classroom. One in the School of Social and Political Sciences shared that "it's always challenging teaching in the area of political violence and it's not always comfortable for students to critically reflect on governments or nations they might identify with, but now I am worried about having to tailor my teaching so it's less critical to avoid being targeted and smeared with charges of anti-Semitism". The risks to students include the future of their education. A law student involved in a recent Gaza fundraiser that was targeted by Zionists on campus shared concerns about possible disciplinary action: "We were all apprehensive about the potential consequences organising the fundraiser would have on our enrolment at the university." Speaking against Israel's justifications for the ongoing massacre of Palestinians is now cited by precariously employed academics at the University of Melbourne as yet another reason for work-related stress and anxiety.

While students and staff at the University of Melbourne and elsewhere have been facing the added pressure of the IHRA definition, they have not stayed silent on the brutal Israeli war on Gaza. On October 25, Vice-Chancellor Duncan Maskell issued a statement "concerning the Israel-Gaza war" in which he presented Israel as the injured party defending itself against an "act of terrorism committed by Hamas". He expressed no criticism of Israel's actions, which have been defined as amounting to genocide by legal experts. The statement caused outrage across campus. An open letter was drafted in response and signed by more than 2,500 staff, students and alumni. "We express our grave concern about how this misrepresentation of Israel's genocidal attack against the people of Palestine will contribute to further loss of life in Gaza and harm to Palestinian students, staff and alumni of the University," it stated.

The open letter also invited signatories to include a statement in their university email signature that calls on the university to rescind its adoption of the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism. The public list of names in the open letter challenges the censorship instilled by the IHRA definition and aims to defend academic freedom on campus. Beyond the letter, other groups on campus also spoke up. The criminology discipline at the University of Melbourne, for example, unified in their stance against the vice-chancellor's statement, collectively issued a response, tweeting:

"We are particularly concerned by the conflation of criticism of Israel's policies and actions with antisemitism, and the policing of solidarity with Palestine. As Criminology activists and scholars, we stand united against the criminalisation and silencing of the right to speak truth to power." It is telling that the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), which has increasingly been representative of low-income casual workers, joined over 100 trade unions in Australia that came out to unequivocally condemn Israel's bloodiest assault on Gaza. As Palestinian trade unions call on workers internationally to escalate economic pressure by leveraging their labour power, there is an urgency for higher education workers to also go beyond verbal condemnation. As Israel's indiscriminate killing of Palestinians in Gaza, as well as the West Bank, continues, the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism is emerging as a clear obstacle to critical scholarship and action in resisting and denouncing such atrocities. The use of this definition has no place on Australian campuses.

Aljazeera

World must act to prevent another genocide in Darfur

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

AS the world grapples with a myriad of challenges, it is crucial to cast a discerning eye on regions that continue to bear the brunt of conflict and human suffering. Darfur, a region in western Sudan, stands as a stark reminder of the international community's failure to prevent genocide in the not-so-distant past. Despite efforts to bring about peace, there are ominous signs that another catastrophe may be on the horizon, demanding our immediate attention and action.

The scars of the Darfur genocide, which unfolded between 2003 and 2008, are still fresh in our collective memory. The conflict, driven by ethnic and tribal tensions, resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and the displacement of millions. International outcry and promises of "never again" echoed through diplomatic corridors, yet the situation in Darfur remains precarious.

The Sudanese government's attempts to control the region through a brutal campaign against rebels and perceived dissidents have left a power vacuum, exacerbating existing ethnic and tribal fault lines. Despite the ousting of former President Omar Bashir, who was indicted by the International Criminal Court for his role in the Darfur genocide, the underlying issues persist, simmering beneath the surface and threatening to erupt once again.

The international community must recognize the signs pointing toward a potential recurrence of genocide in Darfur. The first ominous signal is the lack of meaningful progress in achieving lasting peace and stability. Despite multiple peace agreements and negotiations, the region remains mired in violence, with clashes between government forces, rebels and various armed groups persisting. This ongoing instability creates an environment conducive to mass atrocities.

Secondly, the humanitarian situation in Darfur is dire, with millions of people in need of assistance. The displacement of populations, coupled with a lack of access to basic resources such as food, water and healthcare, creates an environment ripe for exploitation and abuse. History has shown that desperate circumstances can lead to increased vulnerability and heightened tensions, providing the perfect breeding ground for the seeds of genocide to take root.

Moreover, the world cannot afford to turn a blind eye to the alarming rise in hate speech and incitement to violence in Darfur. Inflammatory rhetoric, fueled by deep-seated ethnic and tribal animosities, is spreading like wildfire, sowing the seeds of discord and deepening divisions within the population.

The international community must recognize the power of words in shaping public perception and act swiftly to counteract the dangerous narratives that can escalate into widespread violence. A critical factor contributing to the potential for genocide in

Darfur is the insufficient international response. The UN and other key players have been slow to react, bogged down by diplomatic hurdles and a lack of consensus on how to address the complex web of issues at play. It is imperative that the global community overcomes these challenges and acts decisively to prevent another humanitarian catastrophe.

To avert the looming crisis, a multifaceted approach is required. First and foremost, there must be a concerted effort to address the root causes of the conflict in Darfur. This includes tackling long-standing issues of marginalization, discrimination and unequal distribution of resources. The international community, working through diplomatic channels, should pressure the Sudanese government to address these structural issues and work toward inclusive governance. Humanitarian aid must be ramped up to alleviate the suffering of the people in Darfur. The international community should provide the necessary resources to ensure that those affected by the conflict have access to food, clean water and medical care. This not only addresses the immediate needs of the population but also serves as a crucial step in preventing the escalation of violence.

Additionally, the UN and other relevant bodies must strengthen their peacekeeping efforts in Darfur. This includes deploying more troops and ensuring that they have the resources and mandate to effectively protect civilians. The international community must be resolute in holding those responsible for human rights abuses accountable, sending a clear message that impunity will not be tolerated. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has a unique role to play, as it holds significant influence in Sudan. It should urgently engage in diplomatic efforts to promote dialogue and reconciliation among the conflicting parties, emphasizing the principles of peace and tolerance.

Second, the OIC can mobilize humanitarian aid to address the urgent needs of the affected population, fostering stability. Third, by leveraging its diplomatic network, the OIC can encourage regional cooperation and support for peacebuilding initiatives in Darfur. Through these concerted efforts, the OIC can play a crucial role in preventing the recurrence of genocide in this troubled region. The world cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past by allowing another genocide to unfold in Darfur. The signs are ominous and the international community must act with urgency, determination and a collective sense of responsibility. By addressing the root causes, providing humanitarian aid, strengthening peacekeeping efforts and applying diplomatic pressure, we can work toward a more stable and secure future for the people of Darfur. The echoes of "never again" must ring true and we must stand united to prevent another tragedy on the scale of the Darfur genocide.

Arab News

Deepening Sino-EU cooperation serves global interests

Chen Weihua

THE China-EU Summit, being held in Beijing on Thursday, is important for many reasons, not least because it is the first face-to-face meeting between the two sides since 2019 at a time of escalating geopolitical tensions.

The several virtual meetings during the three years of the COVID-19 pandemic, albeit critical, were no substitutes for face-to-face meetings. There is no doubt the top leaders of the two sides need to meet more often and hold dialogue to understand each other better since misunderstandings and lack of mutual trust are still plague China-EU relations. Unlike the European Union which has since March 2019 changed its definition of China-EU relations to cooperation partner, economic competitor and systemic rival,

China's stance has been consistent: it views the China-EU relationship as a comprehensive strategic partnership, which began 20 years ago.

China and the EU, despite their differences, have great potential to expand cooperation, which has benefited both sides. Apart from trade, investment and people-to-people exchanges, such cooperation also includes working together to overcome global challenges such as climate change, global economic slowdown and nuclear proliferation. China's recent decision to provide visa-free travel for citizens of five EU member states - France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain - is a major step aimed at encouraging people to people exchanges. The EU should reciprocate this gesture with measures to facilitate the visa appli-

cations of Chinese tourists and business people, which have so far been a source of complaint.

As someone who witnessed in 2016 the launch of China-US reciprocal 10-year visa agreement, I feel it would be great if China and the Schengen countries came to a similar understanding. Perhaps top EU leaders such as European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen should spend some time traveling in China besides participating in the summit in order to see and understand the real and diverse China. Such an experience may make them realize that the differences between the two sides should not prevent them from deepening cooperation in different fields. For example, the EU

should view China's position document on the Russia-Ukraine conflict without any bias and realize the importance of its call for a cease-fire in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict instead of nitpicking. It should realize that the two conflicts, if allowed to escalate, would deal a huge blow to the EU by, for instance, triggering an influx of refugees in Europe, which is already a top concern for the bloc.

The EU has asserted that it does not seek to decouple from China. Yet the sheer rhetoric of "de-risking" is souring China-EU ties. Mercedes-Benz CEO Ola Kallenius put it rightly - "for us, de-risking doesn't mean reducing our presence in China but increasing it". Similarly, many German companies, from Volkswagen to Bosch to

BASF, continue to increase their investments in China. One of the reasons for the EU's trade deficit with China is that many EU companies' units manufacture products in China and export them to the EU.

The EU could change that by welcoming more Chinese investors and lifting the growing screening measures that discriminate against Chinese investors and withdrawing the export control imposed on companies such as the Dutch firm ASML, the world's largest semiconductor equipment manufacturer. The EU could also reduce the deficit by ratifying the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, an agreement that took seven years to finalize and will remove the barriers for both EU and Chinese investors. EU leaders should realize that Chinese companies, contrary to Western perception,

have become strong competitors of global enterprises. For example, Chinese electric vehicle and solar panel companies are global leaders thanks to the country's early transition toward clean energy. In fact, the EU should applaud China's achievements in green transition because it could contribute a lot to the EU's ambitious Green Deal.

Trying to build barriers to undermine China's green transition by launching anti-subsidy investigations and even threatening punitive tariffs will undermine the global fight against climate change. So the EU should change its mindset, and accept that China, the world's largest developing country, can take the lead in some advanced industries, especially those critical to the global fight against climate change and green transition.

The China Daily

A free Belarus is possible. But we can't do it alone

Alexandra Boguslawskaia

IT has been two years since I was forced to leave my home country, Belarus, and become a journalist in exile. I have not been home since. I left in September 2021, a year after the presidential elections that sparked the largest protests in modern Belarusian history. This peaceful uprising against the regime of corrupt dictator Alexander Lukashenko has brought not only the winds of freedom and the feeling of national pride to my country, but also an unprecedented level of repression.

By the time I left, I had already experienced arbitrary arrest and the groundless withdrawal of my press accreditation, preventing me from working safely and legally. My best friend, who is also a journalist, was jailed. Twice a week, I went to the prison to deliver her parcels and letters. Every morning, I woke up and listened to footsteps outside my door, wondering if the authorities were coming to throw me in prison, too.

I remember how in 2020, Belarus was everywhere in the news. Beautiful, brave people took to the streets with white-red-white flags. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya unexpectedly emerged as the leader of the democratic movement to challenge Lukashenko's grip on power. People around the world were inspired to stand in solidarity, and Western politicians declared their support for democratic Belarus, refusing to recognize Lukashenko as the legitimate president. Unfortunately, in 2023, the situation looks completely different. Both the continued efforts of freedom-seeking Belarusians and the government's crackdown on dissent have faded into the background amid numerous crises around the world.

Belarus still desperately needs the world's support and attention. Although there are no longer large-scale protests, Belarusian people continue to face severe repression. According to the Viasna human rights center, at least 46,700 Belarusians were arrested and kept in detention centers in inhumane conditions during the past three years. Currently, there are 1,449 political prisoners in Belarus, 32 of whom are journalists and media

workers. Individuals in Belarus face detention for expressing any form of support for Ukraine. During the first year of Russia's war, at least 1,630 Belarusians were prosecuted for involvement in anti-war protests or railway sabotage. The true scale could be even worse, as Belarusian human rights defenders and media do not always receive the whole information about repression in the country.

All of this may look like mere numbers or horrific statistics, but behind each of these figures is a human story - unfair repressive actions taken by the authorities that ruined the life of a person and their loved ones. Andrei Aliaksandrau, the editor who introduced me to journalism, was sentenced to 14 years in prison for "high treason" and other far-fetched allegations like "the creation of extremist formations." While in jail, he married his partner Irina Zlobina, who was herself sentenced to nine years. My colleague Maryna Zolotava, the editor-in-chief of TUT.BY (Belarus' largest media outlet, now forcibly closed), was sentenced to 12 years in prison just for doing her job. Belarusian philosopher Uladzimir Mazkevich, 67, whose lectures I listened to with admiration, went on hunger strike in jail. Nevertheless, he was sentenced to five years in prison. There are many stories like this.

The outside world has not received any information about the health and condition of even the most famous political prisoners like Maryia Kalesnikava, Viktor Babaryka, or Siarhei Tsikhanousky for over half a year. The Belarusian authorities' strategy is to isolate political prisoners in hopes that the world will forget about them. The lack of information about their well-being is especially concerning because Belarusian prisons are notorious for their unsanitary conditions, overcrowded and freezing cells, and generally inhuman treatment. In this environment, the prospects for survival are unpredictable - activists Vitold Ashurak and Mikalai Klimovich, along with artist Ales Pushkin, have all died in Belarusian prison.

Furthermore, Belarus' authoritarian government has invested signifi-

cant efforts in dismantling civil society. According to the human rights organization Lawtrend, 1,457 NGOs have been eliminated by authorities in the last three years. This includes groups supporting victims of domestic violence, people with disabilities, and even protecting birds.

The independent Belarusian media sector was also one of the main targets of repression from the start of the political crisis. Since 2020, 57 Belarusian journalists have been imprisoned on criminal charges, more than 3,000 websites have been blocked, and 17 Belarusian independent media have been declared extremist organizations. Even more crucially, the authorities criminalized media consumption, sentencing Belarusians to prison for sharing posts from the wrong Telegram channel or something as small as reacting to a photo of a security officer with a poop emoji.

These unprecedented repressions forced over 180,000 Belarusians, including 400 journalists like me, to emigrate. But even Belarusians living in exile cannot escape from the reach of Lukashenko's government, which has banned them from obtaining new passports and other official documents at embassies abroad. This puts a great deal of pressure not only on Belarusian emigrants but also on their host countries, which must deal with thousands of people with expired documents. Despite facing daily suppression from authorities or being pushed abroad, Belarusians never stop fighting for their country's democratic future. Tsikhanouskaya, as leader of the Belarusian Democratic Forces, regularly meets with Western politicians in an effort to keep Belarus on the agenda and seek official recognition for her proposed "New Belarus" passports for Belarusians in exile.

Belarusian independent media are still working in exile, attempting to provide their fellow countrymen with reliable information and actually succeeding in it. New projects are constantly emerging. The global Belarusian diaspora raised nearly 600,000 euros (\$652,000) during the "We Care" online Marathon of solidarity with political prisoners.

Belarusian experts from various fields are producing a list of reforms, trying to imagine what a democratic future for Belarus would look like.

Inside the country, people continue to hold peaceful assemblies (though not on the same scale as in 2020) to demonstrate their opposition to the regime. In this situation, the international community, particularly the European Union, should not let its support for a democratic Belarus wane. It is necessary to maintain pressure on Lukashenko's government and not be fooled by his deceptive actions like before. The EU must not forget about the 1,449 political prisoners whose health is wasting away in Belarusian prison, and should demand their release.

But more importantly, Belarusians need institutional support for their fight. Sustainable financial and practical support should be secured for media and civil society organizations. Furthermore, Belarusians require opportunities for education and professional development so they can run Belarus' new democratic structures. EU support could also be expressed by formally recognizing these efforts and issuing statements in favor of integrating Belarus into the European community in the future. A democratic Belarus is in the European Union's interests. For over two years, Lukashenko has been ferrying migrants to the borders of Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland, which in response have erected walls to defend themselves. He allowed Putin to use Belarus as a staging ground for invading Ukraine. And authoritarian tactics, in general, can be quite contagious because, as we see, Russia is implementing many of the repressive methods employed in Belarus.

I would like the world to understand that Belarus' absence from the headlines does not mean this crisis is over. I have spent two years of my life in exile, but I am determined to return to help my country become the best in the world. I am sure that time will come soon. Belarusians have not given up their fight. With the help of the international community, there is definitely hope for my country's future.

The Moscow Times

Saudi foreign policy charts new course in a multipolar world

Zaid M. Belbagi

THE Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a hive of diplomatic activity. Among the less obvious facets of the Kingdom's wider transformation in recent years has been the gear change in its foreign policy as it recalibrates to a multipolar world. Courtied by the West, expanding in the East and reemergent in its immediate region, the Kingdom's diplomatic map is being redrawn and the experience of recent months has put this under the spotlight.

The role of Saudi foreign minister has always been a prestigious one. For decades under the control of the future King Faisal, the role remained in his mold under the stewardship of his son, Prince Saud bin Faisal. This role was, however, remolded under the current incumbent Prince Faisal bin Farhan. Unassuming, diligent and indefatigable, he has come to personify the Kingdom's bold redrawing of its foreign policy. Whether meeting with the US secretary of state or the Chinese leadership, representing his country in Cairo or supporting its successful Expo bid in Paris, Prince Faisal has carried out his role adeptly and discreetly at a time when the Arab world lacks a robust voice.

The Kingdom's renewed voice on the international stage is a reflection of the ambitious vision laid out for the country by its leadership. Under this plan, the efforts to rejuvenate Saudi society and its economy are apparent, while the Kingdom's actions on the world stage are indicative of a similar effort on the political front. This change has been remarkable, as seen through the Kingdom's foreign policy activity, which is today more becoming of a country with the strategic importance, resources and religious significance of Saudi Arabia. As the US has retreated from the region and a succession of White House administrations have focused on the emergence of China and the reemergence of Russia, Saudi Arabia has similarly sought an alternative path. For a decade, Chinese oil imports have outstripped those of the US and, simultaneously, Saudi Arabia and China have rapidly improved their

cooperation. Centered on energy, though not exclusive to it, their ties have grown significantly as Chinese companies have invested heavily in the Saudi economy. Huawei's role in Saudi Arabia's 5G rollout and wider digital market is only outstepped by Chinese investments in Saudi greenfield projects totaling \$16 billion. Last month's local currency swap worth \$7 billion - i.e., SR26 billion or 50 billion Chinese yuan - was also indicative of the expanding relations between the two countries.

As Saudi Arabia embarks on an increasingly autonomous geopolitical trajectory, China has been supportive. The China-brokered rapprochement with Iran, coupled with its hosting of four Arab foreign ministers, including Prince Faisal, in Beijing last month to discuss the Israel-Hamas conflict further illustrated the Kingdom's readiness to seek political solutions with the mediation of new partners. With the US absent from certain arenas important to the Kingdom's transformation, relations have simultaneously expanded with India. As India's third-largest oil supplier, this bilateral relationship is strategically important for both sides. Following the establishment of the Saudi-India Strategic Partnership Council in 2019, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has since visited New Delhi twice. Most recently, the crown prince was at the G20 Summit in India in September, when the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor was announced. This project aims to facilitate trade between India and Europe via the Middle East.

With \$100 billion of Saudi investment in renewable energy, food security and grid connectivity promised thereafter, these two states seek to collaborate in disruptive sectors such as startups, education and digitalization, alongside defense manufacture and a critical coastal refinery in western India in which Saudi Aramco has invested. The growing relationship with India comes amid several months of Saudi sales of US government debt, reflecting an investment

policy that matches the Kingdom's diplomacy as a rapidly developing country working increasingly outside of the Western economic world order. One embodiment of the shift in Saudi foreign policy was its August decision to join the BRICS multilateral forum, which comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. With the accession of the Kingdom, the UAE, Egypt, Iran, Argentina and Ethiopia, the group will come to represent 3.7 billion people and, with that, some of the most exciting high-growth markets of the next three decades. The Kingdom's participation in BRICS is recognition of its growing position in global supply chains, as well as its convening power in the Arab world.

Given the Kingdom's rapid growth under Vision 2030, its BRICS membership provides another opportunity for it to cultivate an alternative to the Western-dominated world order, while being a linchpin of the Global South. Saudi Arabia's plans to diversify its economy and seek foreign investment allows the BRICS countries to provide it with another opportunity to go beyond its traditional partnerships with the Gulf, Arab and Western worlds and broker relationships with a more diverse set of partners. The Kingdom's diplomatic achievements of recent years show a distinct effort to expand its influence globally and foster new partnerships. Nevertheless, the Kingdom's role in the Arab and Muslim worlds means it can seek to have a bigger voice. The UN is beholden to its Security Council, which has no permanent African or Arab members. Saudi Arabia's robust distancing of itself from the Abraham Accords amid gross human rights abuses by the Israeli army was welcomed across the Arab world, but the recent Arab, Islamic and African summits in the Kingdom highlighted how urgent it is for the Islamic world to have one voice, especially amid foreign policy crises. Though the Kingdom's plans are far from complete, the energy around its foreign policy shifts must be welcomed - embodied by a young, dynamic leadership and a dedicated foreign minister.

There's a lot of good news for Nikki Haley

David Axelrod

THE Republican presidential debates have so far produced two big winners - one who will be center stage Wednesday in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for the fourth GOP matchup, and another who won't be there at all.

Nikki Haley, the former UN ambassador and South Carolina governor, has ridden three commanding debate performances into the thick of the competition to become the last candidate standing beside former President Donald Trump vying for the Republican presidential nomination. The good news for Haley is that she is now running neck-and-neck for second place with the formerly formidable Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has done a slow and steady fade since the heady days a year ago when he was closing in on Trump in polling and was the great hope of the Republican establishment.

The bad news for Haley is that she still is about 50 points behind the former president, who has made himself the other big winner of the first three Republican debates simply by leaving the stage to others. In skipping the debates, Trump wagged that without his oversized presence, his opponents would primarily train their fire on each other. So far, he has won that bet.

Despite his absences, Republican hearts have grown fonder for Trump since the first candidate debate Aug. 27 despite the weight of four criminal indictments (he has denied any wrongdoing in the cases). His aggregate polling lead, which was substantial then, has increased over the intervening months. Wednesday's debate at the University of Alabama will take place less than six weeks before the Iowa caucuses, the official kick-off of the nominating process. A belea-

guered DeSantis has placed all his chips on a strong second-place showing or, even better, a surprise upset of Trump in the Hawkeye State to stay alive in the race. But Haley has drawn even there in some polls.

A second-place finish for Haley in Iowa on January 15 would almost certainly end DeSantis' campaign and give her some momentum heading into the New Hampshire primary, where she already is in second place, though still more than 20 points behind Trump. An upset there would set up a showdown with Trump a month later in her home state of South Carolina, where she is popular but he is revered among the Republican base. Haley's late surge has meant a deluge of cash and other campaign assets from well-heeled donors desperate for an alternative to Trump. Some have migrated from DeSantis, others from Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, who dropped out on November 12.

Most notably, Haley last week picked up the endorsement of billionaire Charles Koch, whose conservative network has been a force in Republican politics. But one sure sign that you are making progress in politics is when your opponents attack. It's terrible to be ignored, but when you get more prominent, rivals turn the heat up on you. With Trump absent, Haley, who thus far has mostly eluded frontal attacks, is more likely to get frontrunner treatment from her rivals on Wednesday night. Like Haley, former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, the most outspoken critic of Trump in the Republican field, also hopes to make New Hampshire a breakthrough moment. Christie may look to stop Haley's momentum in this debate - perhaps by challenging her

for not being critical enough of Trump.

DeSantis, who has already started running ads attacking Haley's work while governor to attract Chinese investments, is likely to step up his attacks. And businessman Vivek Ramaswamy, a frenetic troll who has been Haley's nemesis and foil in the first three debates, undoubtedly will continue attacking her for, among other things, her hawkish positions on national security. But Haley has already proven to be a pugnacious debater herself. She is unlikely to take this incoming without firing off some sharp attacks of her own. Helpfully for viewers, there will be more time for all of this party and thrust Wednesday, since the cast of candidates participating in this debate has once again shrunk. Several of the eight who qualified for the first debate have left the race, including Trump's former Vice President Mike Pence and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum.

A steadily shrinking field was the design of Republican Party chair Ronna McDaniel, who set up an escalating series of minimum polling and fundraising qualifications for each of the first four debates to weed out uncompetitive candidates. McDaniel wanted to avoid the debacle of 2016, when candidates had to break into back-to-back varsity and junior varsity debates in order to all be accommodated. Still, as the clock ticks and Trump's prodigious lead remains steady or grows, Wednesday's debate has the anti-climatic feel of a silver medal round. The biggest player will once again be absent, content to allow his struggling primary opponents to savage each other while he fires from afar at them, President Joe Biden and a long list of perceived political enemies.

CNN

Arab and Muslim Americans' 'moral flight' from Biden far from pointless

Ray Hanania

THE biased left-wing American news media, which favors the reelection of President Joe Biden next year, knows it has a big problem in the face of Arab and Muslim American anger over Israel's violence in Gaza. In what can be termed a "moral flight," Arab and Muslim Americans, who helped Biden win several key swing states during his 2020 presidential election victory over Donald Trump, have vowed to abandon Biden over his failure to restrain Israel and stop it indiscriminately bombing Gazaan civilians in response to the Hamas attack on Oct. 7.

However, according to numerous news and opinion articles published in the past few weeks, this Arab and Muslim flight will not come to pass as they have no other realistic options and will likely be forced to return to Biden in November next year. But that is based on the assumption that all Arabs and Muslims see Trump as having done more to harm their communities than Biden. While Trump certainly ostracized them during his pursuit of Israel's agenda, including pushing for the Abraham Accords, the truth is that the former president's policies were not as bad as Biden's failure to act on Gaza, which has resulted in terrible suffering for the 2.3 million Palestinians living there. An "Abandon Biden" campaign was launched last week to galvanize Arab and Muslim voters into opposing his reelection bid. They have a key say in some crucial swing states - including Michigan, Minnesota, Arizona, Wisconsin, Georgia, Nevada and

Pennsylvania - that Biden barely won in 2020 and that he must win again in order to remain in office. Media logic implies Arab and Muslim voters will only harm themselves by abandoning Biden and that realization will ultimately force them to vote for him again. But the media does not understand the depths of Arab and Muslim anger over Biden's failure to restrain Israel. The Biden administration has effectively given Israel the mandate to abandon international laws and human rights to carpet-bomb Gaza, killing thousands of civilians, including more than 5,000 children, and injuring tens of thousands more. Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken have not only failed to restrain Israel and force it to adhere to international norms, but the US is also financing Israel's war machine, providing the weaponry that is being used to kill civilians. Worse is that Biden and Blinken have defended Israel's conduct and rejected the claims made by Palestinians, the UN and many world leaders that it is engaging in war crimes.

Every nation has a right to respond to terrorism and violence against its civilians. But it must do so within the parameters of international law. Israel, however, is acting outside of those internationally defined parameters. You do not kill everyone in a city as a means to take out alleged criminals. What Israel has done in Gaza is all about revenge and expanding its anti-Arab policies, with the aim of preventing Palestinians from ever achieving statehood.

Arabs and Muslims cannot forgive Biden for allowing this to go as far as it has, creating what many activists are now calling the "Gaza Holocaust." Palestinian civilians are being killed by Israel at a pace described as almost unprecedented in the annals of world conflict. What some Arabs and Muslims in America see - and that the news media and Biden supporters seem to ignore - is that Trump is a far better alternative if the choice is between his "bad policies" and the massacres committed by Israel on Biden's watch.

Large sections of the mainstream American news media seem to hate Trump more than they hate the killing of innocent civilians. They care more about protecting Biden than protecting women and children in Gaza. Despite the argument that their anger will eventually be calmed due to a lack of options, the Arab and Muslim American communities do actually have alternatives. They have many choices.

They could vote for Trump, who is leading the Republican presidential field going into next year's primaries. They could refuse to vote for either Trump or Biden and reject America's flawed two-party system by supporting one of the several third-party candidates, despite knowing they cannot win. Or they could simply not vote in the presidential election at all.

One persuasive argument Arabs and Muslims in America have come to recognize is that both the national Republican leadership and the national Democratic leadership embrace policies that

Sensible about-turn

Levente-Horvath

was finally concluded by then German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Dec 30, 2020, the last day of the German EU Council presidency. However, the trade war between the United States and China has left its mark on EU-China relations.

The EU and China are important trading partners: in 2022, the bilateral trade in goods increased by 23 percent year-on-year to a record level of \$57 billion euros (\$935 billion). EU exports to China rose by 3.1 percent to 230 billion euros (\$250 billion), while EU imports from China increased by 32 percent to 626 billion euros (\$683 billion). In 2022, the trade volume amounted to more than 2 billion euros per day. In 2021, five months after the CAI agreement was frozen, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the Global Gateway strategy, which is strikingly similar to the BRI, but with the European strategy focusing on ideological aspects rather than economic cooperation and development. While China celebrated the 10th anniversary of its initiative in 2023 with

the participation of more than 150 countries, the Global Gateway - two years after its birth - is still little known and has little to show. The same applies to the US alternative, the "Build Back Better World" initiative.

The West cannot accept that Asian countries have become economically and politically stronger, that the 500-year Atlantic era with its colonial hegemony has come to an end and that the world beyond the West does not want cooperation based on Western ideology, but rather economic cooperation and joint development based on their national interests. The former is provided by the Global Gateway and Build Back Better World, the latter by the BRI. Not much can be said about the former two, but the latter, as mentioned earlier, has already celebrated its 10th anniversary with great achievements to its name. In 2023, instead of rethinking its political relations with China in terms of close economic ties and the economic interests of EU countries and initiating new negotiations based on peace, cooperation, mutual respect and mutual benefit, the

EU has been stepping up its "de-risking" policy toward China. Meanwhile, China has reacted calmly to the EU's initiative. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, for example, said at a news conference following the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in October that the BRI and the Global Gateway strategy can be aligned, so as to leverage their respective strengths and form synergy to help developing countries speed up infrastructure development.

Hungary was the only EU country to participate in the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in October. As a timely response to the changing world order, Hungary announced its "Opening to the East" policy in 2010, which aims to diversify international relations and build ever closer political and economic ties with China and other Asian countries in addition to its existing Western relations. It is hoped that the EU leadership at the EU-China Summit will come to China with a new attitude and approach that will serve the common interests in its negotiations with one of its largest economic partners.



OGDCL, PPL & GHPL sign decarbonization charter



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a significant stride towards sustainable energy practices, Pakistan's leading Exploration and Production (E&P) companies, OGDCL, PPL and GHPL, joined forces for environmental responsibility. At the United Nations Climate

Change Conference (COP28) held in Dubai, these E&P companies participated actively in the conference and exhibition, engaging with global stakeholders at the Pakistan Pavilion.

During the conference, OGDCL, PPL, and GHPL signed the Decarbonization Charter, emphasizing

ing their collective commitment to supporting climate change initiatives and decarbonization.

The accord underscores the E&P sector's desire to aligning business operations with global sustainability goals. The collaboration is aimed at transitioning towards a more sustainable and environmen-

tally conscious energy landscape.

The Pakistan Pavilion, a focal point for discussions on the nation's efforts towards decarbonization, hosted a panel discussion titled "Pakistan's Upstream Petroleum Sector and Decarbonization." Organized by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in collaboration with the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) and OGDCL, the event featured distinguished panelists including Ahmed Hayat Lak, MD/CEO of OGDCL; Imran Abbasi, MD/CEO of PPL; Faheem Haider, MD/CEO of MPCL and Masood Nabi, MD/CEO of GHPL.

Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Mr. Muhammad Ali also graced the occasion, witnessing the insightful discussion that explored the critical intersection of Pakistan's upstream petroleum sector and the imperative for decarbonization.

Sustainable policies to promote investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr Riina Kionka, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan said that Pakistan is a potential market for business and investment activities and it should focus on sustainable economic policies to attract more foreign investment.

She said this while talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that called on her led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President. Piotr BUSZTA, First Counsellor, Head of Political, Trade and Communication Section of EU to Pakistan was also present on the occasion.

Dr Riina Kionka said that the EU is the biggest export destination for Pakistan and that Pakistani exporters should take full advantage of the EU's GSP Plus to further improve their exports.

She said that the EU supports Pakistan's integration into the global economy by furthering bilateral trade, promoting direct investment, and supporting institution building.

She said that the EU also supports Pakistan's ongoing economic reform agenda in consultation with the international financial institutions. The EU is planning to expand its dialogue and cooperation with Pakistan in addressing its energy issues.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the EU's apparel import market was valued at over 191 billion in 2022 while Pakistan is a major exporter of apparel.

He urged the EU to import more textile products from Pakistan which would help boost industrialization in Pakistan and revive our economy.

He thanked the EU parliament for extending the EU's GSP Plus scheme to Pakistan until 2027 and hoped that it would create new opportunities for Pakistani exporters to enhance exports.

Gold rates up by Rs800

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed an increase of Rs.800 on Thursday and was sold at Rs.218,900 against its sale at Rs 218,100 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.685 to Rs.187,671 from Rs 186,986 whereas that of and 10 gram 22 Karat gold grew to Rs.172,032 from Rs 171,403. The price of per tola silver and ten-gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,600 and Rs 2,229.08 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$2 to \$2,050 from \$2,048, the Association reported.

PSX gains 800 more points

— closed at 64,718.08

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 800.35 more points, a positive change of 1.25 percent, closing at 64,718.08 points against 63,917.72 points the previous trading day.

A total of 1,316,526,260 shares valuing Rs 37.179 billion were traded during the day as compared to 984,813,834 shares valuing Rs 35.094 billion the last day. Some 402 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 216 of them recorded gains and 167 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 19 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric with 246,006,787 shares at Rs.3.97 per share, Cnergyco PK with 98,899,853 shares at Rs

5.07 per share and Hascol Petrol with 60,506,500 shares at Rs 6.83 per share.

Sapphire Textile witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 127.22 per share price, closing at Rs 2,012.66, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Fibres Limited with a Rs 98.19 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,407.69.

Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 109.00 per share closing at Rs 11,290.00, followed by Pakistan Engineering Company with Rs 41.25 decline to close at Rs 508.75.

Rupee gains 03 paise against Dollar

Pakistani Rupee on Thursday gained 03paise against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs284.11 against the previous day's closing at Rs284.14.

However, according to

the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs283.2 and Rs285.9 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 24 paise to close at Rs306.26 against the last day's closing of Rs306.50, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen went up by 02 paise and closed at Rs1.95; whereas a decrease of 64 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs357.46 compared to the last closing of Rs358.10.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham came down by 01 paise to close at Rs77.36, while the price of the Saudi Riyal remained unchanged and closed at Rs75.75.

Islamic Retail Banking Awards: HABIBMETRO SIRAT wins two awards



F.P. Report

KARACHI: HABIBMETRO SIRAT Islamic Banking was honoured with two prestigious awards at the 9th Islamic Retail Banking Awards (IRBA).

IRBA is the first-of-its-kind Islamic banking awards programme based on the Cambridge IFA efficiency model that involves meticulous analysis of global Islamic banking efficiency performance. The awards highlight, acknowledge and honour success stories in the Islamic retail banking sector. The award ceremony was held recently in Bahrain and attended by renowned dignitaries from the Islamic banking world.

The Bank won Excellence Award for Advocacy, Awareness, and Literacy in Pakistan 2023, as well as the Best Islamic Retail Banking Media Campaign 2023. Mr. Saleemullah Shaikh, Head of Islamic Banking proudly accepted these accolades on behalf

of HABIBMETRO SIRAT.

Commenting on the recognition, Mr. Khurram Shahzad Khan, President & CEO, HABIBMETRO said, "I am delighted to accept IRBA's recognition for HABIBMETRO's Islamic banking brand - SIRAT. These accolades are testament to our commitment towards advancing Islamic Banking through advocacy and awareness. We owe this recognition to our team and clients whose patronage gives us the opportunity to nurture our Islamic banking business. This recognition further cements our dedication to promote ethical and Shariah-compliant banking solutions. At HABIBMETRO, we remain steadfast in our mission to enhance the SIRAT brand through strategic focus and targeted endeavors. By strengthening the presence of SIRAT, both nationally and internationally, our aim is to actualize the full potential of Islamic bank-

ing as it continues to shape the financial landscape of today and tomorrow."

HABIBMETRO provides Shariah-compliant banking services to its customers through a network of 117 dedicated Islamic banking branches and 233 windows. The Bank launched its Islamic Banking brand, SIRAT in 2014 and has since won numerous awards including Best Islamic Banking Window for Global Expansion and Best Islamic Banking Brand of the Year at the Global Islamic Finance Awards 2020 and 2021, as well as the IRBA Excellence Award for Islamic Banking Strategy for Global Growth 2022.

HABIBMETRO is a subsidiary of Habib Bank AG Zurich, which operates in 10 countries across four continents. Locally, HABIBMETRO is serving millions of customers through a nationwide network of over 500 branches in more than 200 cities.

'Standards & Circularity in Textiles' organized by TDAP



F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: The second in the series of seminars on "Standards & Circularity in Textiles" was held by TDAP in Faisalabad on 6 December 2023 at PTEA Office. The agenda was to discuss the upcoming sustainability

regulations in export markets and how Pakistan's textile sector can be prepared accordingly.

The Economic Minister of Pakistan in Brussels, Mr. Omar Hameed, provided a thorough explanation of the EU's growing Sustainability

Regime under the EU Green Deal. He emphasized on further awareness regarding such legislations and promoting public-private dialogue on the topic. The speakers from NTU, Dr. Shahood uz Zaman and Dr. Muzammil Husain briefed

the participants on facts regarding climate change and how adopting circular strategies such as 9R can help combat the phenomenon, and then Prof. Dr. Yasir Nawab concluded the technical presentation and highlighted the innovations in textiles and progress of research work in NTU. He gave a detailed presentations on the alternative fibers being developed at NTU which can be used to boost Pakistan's sustainable textiles exports. Lastly, Dr. Irfan Yousuf, Consultant on Carbon Markets, informed the participants on the voluntary carbon markets, its prospects in Pakistan and how Pakistan's industrial sector can utilize the carbon credits.

PTEA and the participants expressed their gratitude to TDAP for organizing such informative seminars which are aimed towards preparing the industry to adopt sustainable practices as per the global trends.

CCP granted approval

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has granted approval for the merger of a listed company, M/s. First UDL Modaraba, with a public unlisted company, M/s. UDL International Limited. The merger approval will lead to the listing of the previously unlisted company on the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

The merger reflects the growing confidence of the corporate sector in the Pakistan Stock Exchange. It also comes at a time when the KSE-100 index surpasses the 64,000-point mark.

Established under the Modaraba Companies and Modaraba (Floatation and Control) Ordinance, 1980, First UDL Modaraba has a registered office located in Karachi. UDL International

Limited, also headquartered in Karachi, engages in diverse activities such as sale, purchase, import and export, general trading, and the supply of general orders and commodity products.

After merging, UDLIL shall transfer the Musharika portfolio of the FUDLM to its wholly owned subsidiary, M/s. UDL Financial Services Limited (UDLFSL).

The phase I review of the merger application determined that the proposed transaction will not result in the dominance of UDL International Limited in the relevant market post-transaction. Therefore, the merger was officially authorized.

This merger marks a positive step in the corporate landscape and is poised to contribute to the continued growth and stability of the entities involved.

Tokyo stocks end lower

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks ended lower on Thursday after Wall Street fell as the US job market cooled further and oil prices tumbled.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index lost 1.76 percent, or 587.59 points, to end at 32,858.31, while the broader Topix index slid 1.14 percent, or 27.29 points, to 2,359.91.

The dollar fetched 146.43 yen, against 147.35 yen on Wednesday in New York.

The Tokyo market "was in a wait-and-see mood ahead of the November US jobs data," IwaiCosmo Securities said.

"Partly prompted by a reaction to sharp rallies yesterday, selling on profit-taking was also prominent," the brokerage added.

Overnight in Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.2 percent, while the broad-based S&P 500 shed 0.4 percent.

Court Notice

In the Court of Judge Family Court Kohat. Suit no 166/FC Date of hearing 20-12-2023. Titled:- Zakia Vs Chanzeb (etc) Notice against- (1) Chanzeb Son of Jahanzeb (2) Gulnaz Bibi widow jahanzeb (3) Ikramzeb Son of Jahanzeb R/o Meri Banda Bannu Road District Kohat presently R/o (now in Abroad Dubai UAE (Defendants) Whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a family suit of Dower (etc) against you defendants in which date of hearing 20-12-2023 is fixed for your appearance. Since your intimation/ service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you defendants is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 20-12-2023 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on 21-11-2023. (Court of JFC Kohat)



In brief

Handball championship

MULTAN (APP): Government Girls College Burewala won the Inter-Collegiate handball championship, organized by education board Multan, here Thursday. Burewala girls college was the only team that won its all three matches in succession and claimed the championship title while Punjab college claimed the runner-up trophy with two wins and one loss. Rifah girls college Khanewal stood third. Star girls college that made its maiden appearance in the competition could not win any match but they gave tough time to rivals. International athlete and sports officer Mepco Razia Sultana, sports incharge Multan board Malik Nisar, members of official panel including Naemullah Khan, Nadeem Bhutta, Qaisar Javed and Muhammad Qaisar witnessed the matches among others.

PFF Futsal National Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 12 matches were decided from Groups C and D on the second day of the PFF Futsal National Cup (FNC) Phase Four in Total Football Park, Garrison, Peshawar. In the first match of Group C, DFC thumped Young Kukikhel Football Club by 13-2. In the second encounter, Combine Satkhail FC Buner defeated Afridi Stars by 7-1. The third match was played between Young Kukikhel Football Club and Combine Satkhail FC Buner where Young Kukikhel Football Club remained victorious 6-3. In the fourth encounter, DFC defeated Afridi Stars by 3-1. The fifth match between DFC and Combine Satkhail FC Buner ended in a 1-1 draw. In the last game of Group C, Young Kukikhel Football Club beat Afridi Stars by 4-2. Based on the points table, DFC and Young Kukikhel Football Club have reached into next stage. In the first match of Group D, Wachen FC outclassed Hayatabad FC by 5-0. The second match was won by Afghan FC, 7-5 against the opponent Baber FC. In the third match, Hayatabad FC beat Baber FC by 11-2. The fourth game was won by Wachen FC 7-0 against the Afghan FC. In the second-last game of Group D, Wachen FC downed Baber FC by 4-2. In the last game of the day, the match between Hayatabad FC and Afghan FC ended in a 6-6 draw. From Group D, Wachen FC and Hayatabad FC have qualified for the next stage.

Football Men's C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): NUML, Islamabad downed Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi by 2-0 in the final of Intervarsity Football Men's Championship at University Ground on Thursday. Both teams displayed top notch in the game but at the end NUML came out victorious. The Football Championship was part of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Trophy and was organized by Directorate of Sports P M A S - Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi in collaboration with HEC. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr. Muhammad Naem was the chief guest on the occasion.



CANBERRA: Abrar Ahmed claimed Pakistan's first wicket, Prime Minister's XI vs Pakistan tour match.

Sadia named in ICC Women's Player of the Month awards

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal was named among other players in the International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's Player of the Month awards from November's international contests. Bangladesh left arm spinner Nahida Akter celebrates her second successive nomination for the Women's Player of the Month after more wicket-taking heroics in her side's ODI series triumph against Pakistan. Compatriot Fargana Hoque joins her on the shortlist after starring with the bat, notching valuable runs in the second and third encounters. The final name on the list is Pakistan's Sadia, nominated for the first time thanks to her economical spells and an impressive performance in the first match.

Sadia was among the wickets once more during Pakistan's visit to Bangladesh. Despite falling short of series victory, Iqbal impressed with economical wicket taking spells in the early exchanges, said a press release. The first match was a particular highlight for the 28-year-old, her nine overs going for 13 runs with four wickets falling. This Player of the Match display was followed by another two wicket-haul, and Iqbal ended the month with six wickets at

12.50 and an economy rate of 2.58.

Nahida was named on the shortlist for the second successive month after her performances guided Bangladesh to a 2-1 victory over Pakistan in Mirpur. Nominated in October for her T20I endeavours, this time she conquered in ODIs – Akter winning the Player of the Series award with seven wickets across the three matchups at an average of 14.14, taking three for 30 in the first match and three for 26 in the decisive final fixture.

Meanwhile, with 110 runs in the victorious ODI series, Fargana Hoque earned her inaugural nomination for the ICC Women's Player of the Month. The opener played a key role in levelling the series with a valuable 40 runs in the second outing in addition to a catch and a run out in the field as Bangladesh won in the Super Over. The series was won when Hoque top-scored in the third match with a controlled score of 62 to chase down the target and seal the triumph.

Meanwhile Men's Player of the Month shortlist features two of Australia's key performers as they secured their sixth Men's Cricket World Cup crown, and one of India's record-breaking strike bowlers.

Travis Head wrote himself into World Cup legend during November

courtesy of two match-winning performances in the semi-final and final of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup to earn his first nomination since June. Similarly, Glenn Maxwell grabbed the headlines with an unforgettable innings to seal qualification through to the knockout stages. Completing the lineup of nominees is India's Mohammed Shami, whose inspired bowling performances saw India blitz their opponents on the way to the final.

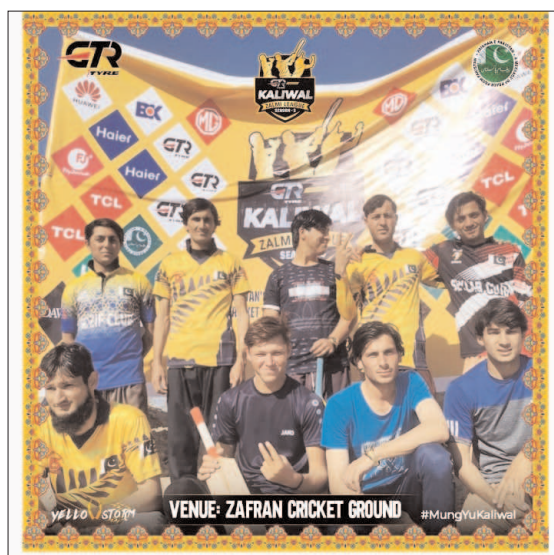
Head was nominated for the Men's Player of the Month for the first time since his match-winning contributions helped Australia clinch the ICC World Test Championship Final in June. A similar story unfolded in India, culminating in two Player of the Match performances in the knockout stages. South Africa were thwarted by Head's brilliance with bat and ball in the semi-final in Kolkata; the spinner taking the key wickets of Heinrich Klaasen and Marco Jansen before top scoring with 62 in 48 balls in the thrilling chase.

His crowning glory however came in Ahmedabad. Staring at 241 for victory, Head hit a sparkling 137 in 120 balls to see his side home at a canter amid jubilant celebrations.

Popo Club beats Dara Club

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Football League Season 6 continued at Tahmas Khan Football Stadium as in the first match Popo Football Club Islamabad defeated Dara Football Club by 3-1 on Thursday. On this occasion, former Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Football Association Basit Kamal was the chief guest along with Regional Sports Officer Zakirullah. District Sports Officer Gul Rukh, match Commissioner former Pakistan team captain Gohar Zaman, chief organizer and Chairman of Youth Glam Welfare Organization Gul Haider and other personalities also witnessed the matches.

The first match of the ongoing football league was played between Dara Football Club and Popo Club Islamabad in Tahamas Khan Football Stadium Peshawar, in which Popo Football Club won by three goals to one. The first goal was scored by Popo Club in the 20th minute through right winger Raheel who netted a fine goal. Adeel Ahmad scored the second goal in the 33rd minute while Waleed scored the third goal in the 52nd minute to win the match three to one.



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Zalmi started Cricket activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The festival of Kaliwal Zalmi League has started in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The matches of the largest and most popular tap ball cricket tournament of the province were organized in the twenty districts on day one.

More than 500 teams have registered in the first phase of Kaliwal Zalmi League. The first phase matches will continue till December 11 in 34 districts, after the drafts of PSL 9, the top teams will be in action in the second and final phase.

Chairman of Peshawar Zalmi Javed Afridi said that Peshawar Zalmi is trying to provide healthy activities to the young cricketers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at grass root level including at street level. The objective of

organizing the Village Zalmi League is to promote the passion for sports among the youth of all the small and big cities, villages and villages of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Javed Afridi said that while Zalmi reached the hidden talent in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the talent hunt, Kaliwal Zalmi is providing an opportunity to young cricketers of all provinces to meet and play through the league. The best young cricketers can go further by performing well in KZL.

Former New Zealand cricket great heaps praise on Pakistan women team

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former New Zealand women team wicketkeeper-batter Katey Martin, who is part of the commentary panel for the Pakistan-New Zealand, has commended Pakistan women's performance in the series so far.

Speaking exclusively to PCB Digital on Thursday, the 38-year-old Martin, who played 199 international matches for the White Ferns, said, "It has been a special day for Pakistan women's team. I think the investment that has been put into the Pakistan women's team, the PSL [exhibition matches of Women's League], it shows these girls are gaining more confidence on the international stage as not many teams have beaten New Zealand at home.

"I just loved the way the girls have gone about their business in the matches so far, the energy in the field and they have hit few sixes as well. The celebrations at the end of the game shows how much the win meant to them.

"Fatima Sana is probably one of the X factor players and she is a great competitor. I had a brief chat with her and as a local player over here, I gave her a

few words of advice around bringing the stumps into play and she will get a bit of assistance as well.

"Nida Dar has been a fantastic captain and I guess the bravery for her to continue and push through that hamstring was amazing. She wanted to be out there and we saw the tears after the game and how much this meant to her. Pakistan side had come to New Zealand before and they haven't been able to perform so I am proud of the effort that they have put in and are able to get the rewards. They just need to believe in themselves that they can do this against top four sides." Pakistan women's team made history this week in New Zealand by defeating the hosts at Otago Oval in Dunedin in the first two matches of the T20I series, securing an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

After beating the New Zealand women side, also known as White Ferns, by seven wickets and 10 runs in the first and second T20I, respectively, the Pakistan women's team reached Queenstown from Dunedin on Wednesday afternoon. Following a

one-day rest, the touring side will resume their training Friday at the John Davies Oval in Queenstown, where they will take on the White Ferns in the third T20I at the same venue on Saturday. The toss will take place at 1230 local time, with the first ball to be bowled at 1300. The cricket fraternity praised Pakistan team's remarkable feat of becoming the first Asian side to defeat New Zealand in a T20I series.

Series schedule:
3 Dec – 1st T20I, Dunedin (Pakistan women beat New Zealand women by seven wickets)

5 Dec – 2nd T20I, Dunedin (Pakistan women beat New Zealand women by 10 runs)

9 Dec – 3rd T20I, Queenstown (1pm local time)

12 Dec – 1st ODI, Queenstown (11am local time) (ICC Women's Championship)

15 Dec – 2nd ODI, Christchurch (2pm local time) (ICC Women's Championship)

18 Dec – 3rd ODI, Christchurch (2pm local time) (ICC Women's Championship).

Pakistan declare innings at 391-9 as Shan Masood hits double ton on second day

ISLAMABAD (APP): The second day of the four-day game against Prime Minister's XI at Manuka Oval in Canberra saw Prime Minister's XI post 149-2 in 60 overs after Pakistan declared their innings at 391-9.

Pakistan captain Shan Masood resumed from his overnight tally of 156 to add 45 more runs to his score, reaching his third first-class double hundred, according to information made available here by Pakistan Cricket Board.

Shan ended with an unbeaten 201 from 298 deliveries, including 14 boundaries and a maximum. Right-arm fast bowler Jordan Buckingham, who had taken three wickets the pre-

vious day, struck twice today to complete a five-wicket haul. He removed Aamir Jamal and Mir Hamza, who both went out cheaply. Shan declared the innings after Khurram Shahzad was run out courtesy of a direct hit by Nathan McSweeney, with the scoreboard reading 391-9 in 116.2 overs.

In return, Prime Minister's XI opening duo of Cameron Bancroft (53, 128b, 3x4s) and Marcus Harris (49, 102b, 6x4s) put up a 96-run stand to give their team a solid start.

Abrar Ahmed provided the breakthrough for Pakistan, dismissing Harris in the 36th over. Right-arm pacer Khurram Shahzad trapped Bancroft LBW to provide Pakistan the second

wicket. Cameron Green (18 not out, 71b, 2x4s) and Matt Renshaw (19 not out, 60b, 1x4) batted together to add 37 more runs to take the total to 149-2 at stumps, with the side trailing by 242.

The third day's play at Manuka Oval will resume on 0430 PKT.

Scores in brief:

Pakistan 391-9d, 116.2 overs (Shan Masood 201 not out, Sarfaraz Ahmed 41, Babar Azam 40, Abdullah Shafique 38; Jordan Buckingham 5-80, Mark Steketee 1-58, Nathan McAndrew 1-68, Todd Murphy 1-110)

Prime Minister's XI 149-2, 60 overs (Cameron Bancroft 53, Marcus Harris 49; Khurram Shahzad 1-23, Abrar Ahmed 1-54)

Younis breaks Egyptian's Guinness World Record

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani pugilist Younis Khan has broken the Guinness World Record of Egypt's Fariz Muhammad Shaban.

Younis, who hails from South Waziristan, broke the world record for the most one-hundred punches in one minute.

Fariz Muhammad Shaban of Egypt did 214 punches in one minute while Younis was able to set the record by hitting 265 punches. Younis has already set two Guinness

World Records and was the student of Pakistan's renowned martial artist and Guinness World Record Holder Irfan Mehsood.

As many as 15 students of Irfan have made Guinness World Records and his club 'Lion's Den Fight Club' has set 115 Guinness World Records so far. Irfan has broken many records including most push-ups (fingertips, carrying a 60 lb pack) in one minute, most step-ups in one minute (carrying a

100 lb pack), and the longest time in a reverse abdominal plank position carrying a 100 lb pack. He was also the only athlete to break world records using 80 to 100 Pounds of weight.

"I'm the only Pakistani athlete to break most of India's world records. I have so far broken records of nine countries including India, USA, UK, France, the Philippines, Iraq, Egypt, Italy, and Spain," he told APP.

FIH Hockey Junior WC

Pakistan defeat New Zealand 4-0

ISLAMABAD (APP): Arshad Liaqat scored a brilliant hat-trick to help Pakistan beat New Zealand 4-0 in their second match of the ongoing FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Thursday.

Pakistan started in their top gear and finished in the same fashion.

Liaqat, who was in outstanding form right from the outset, scored three goals in the 19th, 30th and 54th minutes of the match

to put Pakistan in a commanding position.

Skipper Abdul Hanan Shahid also chipped in, scoring a goal on a penalty corner in the 32nd minute of the match.

Pakistan will take on Belgium on December 9 in their last group match.

The Junior World Hockey Cup features 16 teams from around the world, including Pakistan in Pool D alongside the Netherlands, Belgium, and New Zealand.

Defending champions Argentina are in Pool A along with Australia, Malaysia and Chile. Egypt, France, Germany and South Africa are in Pool B while Pool C includes Canada, India, South Korea and Spain.

The top two teams from each group will make it to the quarterfinals.

As the tournament progresses, fans can expect more exhilarating matches as teams vie for supremacy on the international stage.

Shan Masood joins Kings, Faisal Akram moves to Sultans

ISLAMABAD (APP): Karachi Kings, the victors of Pakistan Super League (PSL) season five, have solidified a significant trade agreement with Multan Sultans, marking a noteworthy transformation in their lineup ahead of the HBL PSL Draft 2024.

In this pivotal trade, Pakistan's current Test captain, Shan Masood, is set to bolster the Karachi Kings' squad, said a press release.

In exchange, Karachi Kings bid farewell to left-arm wrist spinner Faisal Akram, transferring him to Multan Sultans, along with their first pick in the diamond round and first pick in the silver round.

Shan Masood, initially joining Multan Sultans during the 2018 season and making his impactful HBL PSL debut in 2019 against Karachi Kings, has been a

significant contributor throughout his league career. Leading Sultans to top the league stage in the 2020 season and qualifying for the playoffs for the first time in franchise history, he has amassed 1,318 runs in 42 matches. His presence also played a pivotal role in Sultans' title win in 2021.

Speaking on this trade, team owner Salman Iqbal expressed excitement about the impactful addition of Shan Masood to the Karachi Kings' lineup, highlighting Masood's proven track record and leadership skills. He also acknowledged the departure of Faisal Akram, wishing him success in his new chapter with Multan Sultans. "We are thrilled to welcome Shan Masood to the Karachi Kings. His wealth of experience, coupled with his remarkable

accomplishments in the league, undoubtedly brings a new dimension to our team. Shan's leadership qualities and work ethics on and off the field align perfectly with our vision for the Kings. We eagerly anticipate his influence and believe that his presence will significantly fortify our pursuit of success in the forthcoming HBL PSL season," commented Team Owner Salman Iqbal.

This trade signifies Karachi Kings' strategic approach as they continue their rebuilding and restructuring process in preparation for HBL PSL Season 9. Karachi Kings eagerly anticipate the seamless integration of the new additions into the squad and remain dedicated to their pursuit of excellence in the forthcoming HBL PSL season.

Curran redemption as England thrash West Indies to level ODI series

NORTH SOUND (AFP/APP): Sam Curran bounced back with a match-winning bowling display as England scored a series-levelling six-wicket victory over the West Indies in the second One Day International in Antigua on Wednesday.

Curran was spanked for 98 runs off 9.5 overs on Sunday as England slumped to a four-wicket defeat in the series opener -- the worst ever performance by an England bowler in ODI

cricket. But the left arm seam and wing bowler responded superbly on Wednesday, bagging three of the first four wickets as the home side were bundled out for 202 off 39.4 overs in the day/night fixture. Will Jacks then anchored the English response at the top of the order with 73 while there was a welcome return to form for Jos Buttler, the England captain taking his team to victory with an unbeaten 58 in an unbroken fifth-wicket partnership of 90 with Harry

Brook (43 not out).

"It was tough the other day but just have to keep moving forward and try to bounce back," Curran said after his Man-of-the-Match performance at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. Curran's opening burst and the support of Gus Atkinson reduced the West Indies to 23 for four. But for a 129-run fifth-wicket partnership between captain Shai Hope (68) and Sherane Rutherford (63), it would have been a complete capitulation by the hosts.



In brief

IRSA releases 85,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 85,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 40,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1490.73 feet and was 90.73 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 20,500 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1170.35 feet, which was 120.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 5,400 cusecs and 26,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 65,900, 43,500, 39,400, and 9,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 7,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

National Voters' Day being celebrated

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Voters' Day is being celebrated across the country on Thursday to promote the importance of the right to vote. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja in his message on the occasion appealed to the people to exercise their right to vote for the bright future of the country. People should remember that the power to vote is in their hands. They should use their vote keeping their own and their children's future in mind, said CEC. Raja said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is well aware of all its constitutional and legal obligations and is committed to conducting transparent and peaceful elections. He said the printing and delivery of the final election lists has been completed, adding that the ECP is going to issue the notification of District Returning Officers, Returning Officers, and Assistant Officers in a few days. He said in a few days election schedule will be released. The general elections were held for the first time on 7 December 1970, 53 years ago, in memory of which Voters' Day is celebrated every year to raise awareness among people, especially youth and women, about the right to vote and international laws on the right to vote.

ANF recovers over 425 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its crackdown against drug traffickers conducted 10 operations across the country and recovered 425 kg drugs besides arresting seven accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 1400 grams Ice drug was recovered from a passenger's trolley bag at Allama Iqbal International Airport. The accused resident of Lahore was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-676. In another operation, 650 grams heroin was recovered from a passenger's trolley bag at Allama Iqbal International Airport. Accused resident of Lahore was going to Bahrain by Flight No. GF-767 arrested. 3 kg heroin and 240 grams Ice were recovered from a parcel booked for the UK at a courier office in Karachi. 1040 grams heroin and 1025 grams Ice were recovered from two suspects arrested near T-Chowk Rawalpindi. The accused including a woman were arrested during the operation.



ISLAMABAD: Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony & Islamic Countries and Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi addressing The Palestinian Solidarity Conference.

'No compromise on quality of medicines'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination has said that the government would not compromise on the quality of medicines.

According to the spokesperson of the Ministry of National Health Services, the ministry has taken coordinated measures to ensure the supply of quality and standard medicines. These steps were

taken on the direction of Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan. The minister said that providing safe, effective and quality medicines to the people is our priority.

Dr Nadeem Jan said that the registration board suspended the registration of six manufacturers for producing adulterated and sub-standard medicines.

He said that the board has issued show-cause notices to

seven manufacturers and added that notices were issued by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan's (DRAP) Licensing Board on violation of good manufacturing practices. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that the board has cancelled the licenses of three pharmaceutical companies. He said that the board approved veterinary vaccines for cattle especially the vaccine for lumpy skin disease.

Special drive launched against traffic rules violators

ISLAMABAD (APP): A special campaign has been initiated in Islamabad against violators of traffic laws, including motorcyclists riding without helmets, overloading passengers, and those lacking number plates.

During the last 24 hours, the Islamabad Capital Police teams have taken legal action against 259 motorcyclists riding without helmets, and 53 motorcycles were impounded across different police stations. Similarly, legal action was also taken against motorcyclists, and nine motorcycles were impounded across various police stations.

Moreover, stringent action was taken against 25 motorcycles without number plates, with 21 motorcycles impounded across different police stations.

Chief Traffic Officer (CEO) of Islamabad, Sarfraz Virk, has emphasized that a special drive is underway within the federal capital to ensure compliance with traffic laws.

Citizens have been urged to ensure adherence to city traffic laws, including the use of helmets while riding motorcycles and the use of number plates issued by the Excise and Taxation Department.

Farewell ceremony held for outgoing police officials

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police Thursday arranged a graceful ceremony in the honor of three officials who retired after the completion of their services.

The ceremony was attended by Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Sarfraz Virk as Chief Guest and by SP Traffic, all Zonal DSPs, and other senior police officials. The CTO Islamabad lauded the performance of retired officials, including DSP Muhammad Saqlain, Inspector Muhammad Qasim, and Sub-Inspector Muhammad Ijaz. He expressed his best wishes for their future success and endeavors.

He also paid rich tributes to them for their outstanding work during their career in Islamabad Capital Police. He said that the outgoing officials served at various posts in different divisions of the Islamabad capital police and always accomplished their assignments in a responsible manner.

Muslim, Christian leaders condemn Israeli war crimes in Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Muslim and Christian leaders on Thursday came together to condemn the Israeli war crimes in Gaza and called for an immediate halt of its atrocities in Palestine.

Speaking at a press conference at Fatima Church, they urged the United Nations to take a leadership role in getting stopped the fighting raging in Gaza.

The Muslims and Christian leaders asserted that the entire Pakistani nation, regardless of religious affiliations, stood united in demanding an end to the ongoing atrocities against the innocent people of Gaza. On the occasion, Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Harmony and Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Muslim Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, expressed gratitude to Pope Francis for addressing concerns about the deteriorating situation in Gaza. Ashrafi, who is also Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council, stressed the need of immediate cessation of the war, advocating for the establishment of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine with Al-Quds as its capital.

Emphasizing the significance of Palestine and Kashmir issues for the Muslim Ummah, he denounced attempts by certain elements to sow division in Pakistan and the Muslim world on the

matters. Ashrafi reaffirmed that Pakistan viewed Israel as an occupier and usurper.

Bishop Sarfraz denounced the plight in Gaza people, emphasizing that the Strip, revered as the Land of Prophets, should be liberated from the Israeli occupation.

Israel was not only attacking the Muslims and their homes and facilities but also the sites belonging to the Christian community, including churches and hospitals, he added.

He advocated for interfaith dialogue among believers of various faiths, including Muslims, Christians, and peace-loving Jews, to foster peace and tranquility in the region. Allama Arif Wahidi, Vice President of the Shia Ulema Council, said Israeli atrocities and violence in Gaza were a profound insult to humanity, and believers of every religion should unitedly denounce the inhuman acts of the usurper.

Wahidi appealed to the international community to exert pressure on Israel to cease its war crimes in Gaza, which, otherwise, might impact the entire world.

Concluding the press conference, Ashrafi announced that Friday sermons would focus on advocating for justice for the innocent people of Palestine and promoting peace for Palestinian children. Peaceful rallies would also be held nationwide, he maintained.

NA speaker urges Pakistanis to enthusiastically participate in upcoming elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf urged Pakistanis on Thursday to enthusiastically participate in the upcoming elections and said that the power of their vote would determine the fate of the country.

In a message on Voter Day, the speaker said that general elections were scheduled for February 8 in Pakistan, and it was the prime responsibility of all citizens to actively engage in the electoral process.

He highlighted the need for broad participation in the democratic process,

emphasizing that decisions made through the ballot box would shape the future of Pakistan.

He said, this year's delimitation process had included a significant number of young voters, reflecting a positive trend for the future of democratic engagement. The speaker commended the increased inclusion of youth in the electoral process.

He specifically encouraged aged women voters to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming elections, emphasizing the importance of their full and meaningful participation

in shaping the country's destiny. He urged all Pakistanis to eagerly await the opportunity to send their elected representatives to the National Assembly, contributing to the progress and development of the country. Expressing commitment to working together for the betterment of Pakistan and making decisions that would positively impact future generations, the speaker hoped that, on February 8, 2024, Pakistan would witness a new era of democracy through fair and transparent elections.

NAB holds seminar on 'Curbing Corruption through a Documented Economy'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Sohail Nasir on Thursday stressed on the importance of individuals holding themselves accountable and working together to combat corruption in the society. Speaking at a seminar on "Curbing Corruption through a Documented Economy," he suggested that children should take on an active role in preventing corruption or corrupt practices in their surroundings.

The seminar was organized by NAB in partnership with the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) in connection with the Anti-Corruption Week-2023.

Nasir emphasized that everyone should be committed to performing their duties diligently and honestly.

He observed that "our societal behaviour, which is often marked by negativity and indiscriminate criticism, done merely for the sake of criticism, has the potential to erode and harm the fabric of society".

NAB Rawalpindi Director General Mirza Irfan Baig, in his remarks, said that corruption was a curse as it disrupted the peace of society. He underscored the significance of refraining from seeking positions undeservedly and highlighted the necessity of ensuring self-accountability.

He mentioned that the NAB Rawalpindi was currently handling corruption cases of Rs 8 billion and over, with an overall successful recovery of Rs 350 billion. Recently, the Bureau facilitated the return of Rs 600 million to the affected individuals of Arain

City, and its conviction ratio stood at over 61 percent, he added. Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairman Dr Amjad Saqib emphasized the importance of personal transformation and advocated for demanding behavioural change from oneself before expecting it from others.

He mentioned that his organization, Akhuwat, had provided loans to more than six million deserving individuals to help them start their own businesses. To date, over Rs 220 billion had been disbursed, achieving an impressive recovery ratio of 99.9 percent, he added.

Dr Raheem Awan, Director General of the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA), mentioned that NAB and LAJA had jointly resolved to educate the youth about the impacts of corruption. They were preparing to initiate a campaign and training programme in educational institutions to combat corruption.

He emphasized the importance of strengthening anti-corruption institutions.

Former Inspector General of Police, Syed Kaleem Imam, emphasized the importance of ensuring equality among citizens to foster a harmonious and peaceful society. In the end, NAB awarded cash prizes and shields to the winning students of declamation, poster design, painting, skit, and other competitions. Some 304 students from schools and colleges of Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Murree, Attock, Jhelum, and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) participated in the competitions.

MOITT implementing series of measures to expedite growth of ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOITT) is implementing a series of measures to expedite the growth of information and communication technology (ICT) in the country.

An official from the IT ministry said that the rapidly developing IT sector holds immense growth potential and could play a significant role in stabilizing the country's economy. The official said that while the government is actively providing facilities, it is crucial for the industry to enhance its capabilities. Highlighting Pakistan's significant youth population, resources, skills, and deter-

mination, he noted the vast potential for growth in the ICT sector. With the right steps, the ICT sector has the potential to outpace traditional industries, he added. Foreign investment in startups has already surpassed the \$800 million mark, indicating the growing interest of global companies in Pakistan.

The government is contemplating the introduction of a standardized test to facilitate graduating students in securing internship opportunities and employment in the industry. To support external investment through venture capital (VC), the government plans to establish a Pakistan Start-ups Fund.

Fans remembers Junaid Jamshed on his 7th death anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Renowned Junaid Jamshed, a Pakistani pop star who later turned to preaching remembered on his seventh death anniversary on Thursday where people from all walks of life, especially the fans through media platforms have paid him rich tributes to the departed soul and recalled his favorite memories in their own way.

He was born in Karachi on Sept 3, 1964. He briefly worked as a civilian contractor and engineer for Pakistan Air Force before turning into a singer.

He formed a pop music band Vital Signs and also led the band as a singer. The band gained immense worldwide popularity during the 90s, with their songs like "Aitebaar", "Goray Rang ka Zamana", "Dil Ki Baat", "Dil Dil Pakistan" and

"Sanwali Saloni", electronic media channels reported. His singing career was booming and he toured the whole world to show his talent in live concerts, but after entertaining the pop music lovers for 15 years, in 2004 Junaid officially left the music industry at the peak of his career and reconnected to his Islamic faith.

As early as 1999, media had been speculating about Junaid's drift from music soon after the Vital Signs faded away. The speculations soon died after Junaid released his single albums in merely two years and continued world tours.

After 2001, Jamshed disappeared from the public eye and avoided media attention. Over the years, Junaid stays distant from Hyatt who continued to work on producing music.

In 2003, BBC World Service conducted an unsentimental poll to choose ten most famous songs of all time. Around 7,000 songs were selected from all over the world.

According to BBC, people from 155 countries/territories voted in the poll. "Dil Dil Pakistan" was ranked third among the top 10 songs. In 2004, Jamshed officially renounced music and engineering after announcing that he would devote his life to Islam.

In 2007, the government of Pakistan awarded him Tamgha-e-Imtiaz. He went on a mission of preaching the religion to the residents of Chitral where he died in a horrible crash when PIA flight PK-661 of aircraft ATR-42 turboprop plane crashed near Havelian with 47 passengers and crew members on board along with Junaid Jamshed and his wife.

Pakistan prepares to showcase talent at Expo in Riyadh

ISLAMABAD (APP): Under the Chairmanship of Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik, an important meeting on Thursday was convened to discuss the active participation of the Pakistan in the upcoming Human Resource and Labor Services Expo in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Through Expo which is scheduled to take place from December 24 to December 27, Pakistan aims to showcase its rich pool of talent and human resources on a global platform, said a press release issued here.

Pakistan will host a dedicated pavilion, highlighting the skills and capabilities of its workforce in that regard, the press release added.

The said meeting was attended by Joint Secretary (Emigration), Managing Director, Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC), Director General (BE & OE), and Community Welfare Attachés in Saudi Arabia.

The discussions centered around the meticulous arrangements required for the successful setup and operation of the Pakistani pavilion at the expo.

The primary objective of Pakistan's pavilion and active participation in the expo is to amplify employment opportunities for the Pakistani workforce in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

By showcasing the diverse skills and talents of Pakistani professionals, the pavilion will aim to attract potential employers and collaborators, fostering stronger economic ties between the two nations. The SAPM expressed his commitment to ensuring that the pavilion would serve as a strategic platform to connect Pakistani job seekers with opportunities in Saudi Arabia. The government's engagement in such expos underscored its dedication to enhancing the employment landscape for overseas Pakistanis, he added.

As preparations are underway, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis is optimistic about the positive impact, the expo will have on promoting Pakistan's human resources at an international level. The participation of the government in this significant event reflects its proactive approach towards creating pathways for employment and collaboration on a global scale.



RAWALPINDI: A view of a burnt oil tanker which overturned at the Airport Road on late Wednesday night.

Ministry sign MoU

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce has signed 11 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with foundation and collaborative institutions to support vulnerable families and small businesses in the country. According to a statement released by this Ministry today, based on these MoUs, approximately \$7 million will be allocated across 15 provinces in the country for various activities aimed at supporting youth and vulnerable communities.

The Frontier Post

Jamadi-ul-Awwal 22, 1445 — Friday, December 08, 2023

Afghan Embassy functioning

NEW DELHI (TOLOnews): Arindam Bagchi, a spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs, said that the Afghan embassy in New Delhi and the consulates in Mumbai and Hyderabad are functioning. Bagchi made the remarks to reporters in a weekly press briefing. However, he said that India's position on the "recognition of the entity has not changed." "I guess the Afghan diplomats who are here continue to provide services for the Afghan nationals," he said.

Abusive policies harm males, females

KABUL (TOLOnews): The "Taliban's abusive educational policies in Afghanistan are harming boys as well as girls and women," Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in a report on Wednesday, saying that the departure of qualified teachers has led to regressive curriculum changes.

"These changes have led to increased fears about attending school, falling attendance, and a loss of hope for the future; with this, the Taliban risk creating a lost generation," the report said.

"They have said it is for a temporary time. It has not yet been clarified. They have not explained their plan which they say they are considering, so that we can come to school based

on their policies," said Hosna, a university student.

This comes as Malala Yousfzai, Pakistani activist for female education and Nobel Peace Prize winner, told the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture that "many Muslim scholars including in Afghanistan have made it clear that Islam does not condone denying girls and women their rights to education and work but the Taliban are not interested in the truth."

The female students above grade six once again called on the Islamic Emirate to provide them with educational opportunities.

"Our call on the government is to reopen our schools. It has been two

years now we are sitting at home and having no achievement," said Haleema, a student.

"Our call on the Islamic Emirate is to provide us a ground for schooling," said Fahima, a student.

But the Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, said that all rights of women and girls are ensured in Afghanistan.

"The rights which the Islamic sharia dedicated for our sisters should be ensured and the Islamic Emirate has taken positive steps in this regard," he said.

The Islamic Emirate's restrictions on women and girls particularly in the field of education faced strong reactions from the international community.

No need to show enmity

KABUL (Ariana News): Acting Minister of Higher Education Neda Mohammad Nadim says when problems occur between Afghanistan and neighboring Islamic countries, there is no need to show a "sharp and hostile" reaction.

Speaking at an event in Nimroz province on Thursday, Nadim stressed that "sometimes there is a problem between two brothers who live in the same house, but their brotherhood does not disappear because of this problem."

He added that there should be no enmity not only with the neighboring Islamic countries of Afghanistan but also with other Muslims around the world.

"This enmity is not for the benefit of the Muslims, it is for the benefit of the infidels," he stressed.

China firm's crude oil production durges 300%



KABUL (Khaama Press): A Chinese company has increased crude oil production in Afghanistan by 300 per cent, according to a report by Bloomberg.

The news media outlet reported on Wednesday that Central Asia Oil and Gas Company, operating under the name Sinopec of China, a private company, has increased crude oil production in Afghanistan by approximately 300%.

According to the report, this Chinese company has aimed to increase crude oil production in Afghanistan by drilling over 10 oil wells.

Bloomberg released this report while previously, Hamayon Afghan, the spokesperson for Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, stated that this Chinese company had drilled approximately 10 oil wells in Afghanistan.

However, Mr. Afghan added that with the creation and drilling of these 10 oil wells, crude oil production in Afghanistan has currently increased fourfold.

Experts believe that the surge in crude oil production in Afghanistan is

reducing the country's reliance on oil imports from neighboring nations.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan, the group has actively sought to strengthen its relations with China. This new-found partnership extends beyond just diplomacy, as it encompasses significant economic and investment cooperation. China has made substantial investments in various sectors within Afghanistan, marking a notable shift in the region's geopolitical dynamics.

In the wake of the Taliban's resurgence, Afghanistan has found itself heavily dependent on its neighbor, Iran, for crucial energy imports such as oil and gas. The landlocked country's energy needs are met predominantly through imports from Iran, highlighting the significance of regional partnerships in ensuring Afghanistan's energy security.

The evolving relationships in Afghanistan's geopolitical landscape, particularly with China and Iran, carry global geopolitical repercussions.

Iran Minister: Illegal immigrants to be returned to Afghanistan

TEHRAN (TOLOnews): The Iranian Minister of Interior Ahmad Wahidi once again emphasized that the citizens of Afghanistan who are living in Iran illegally should be returned to their country.

Wahidi did not name a group or a country, but he added that the "enemy" wants to start anti-Afghan sentiments by creating a conflict between Afghans and Iranians.

Wahidi emphasized that Tehran also has plans for immigrants with documents.

"When the Taliban came here, I told them that you should prepare the ground for them (Afghan immigrants) to return to their country. After all, everyone should return to their own lives. You should come up with a mechanism for their return, and they said to give



us some time," said Wahidi. "Different countries and organizations should continue their humanitarian aid to the refugees who need help, regardless of the internal conditions of Afghanistan," said Asifa Stanikzai, a women's rights activist.

Meanwhile, some refugees have said that they face harassment in different

cities in Iran. According to them, Afghan immigrants are first arrested and then deported.

"Immigrants in Iran are divided into two categories, undocumented refugees are forced into deportation and other immigrants face many economic challenges," said Muslim, an Afghan refugee.

"In Iran, immigrants

face unemployment and those who do not have legal documents issued by the Iranian government are deprived of citizenship rights, such as owning a house, going to school, and traveling," said Zabiullah Mahzon, an Afghan refugee.

The Islamic Emirate asked neighboring countries, including Iran, not to persecute Afghan immigrants.

"The countries where the Afghan immigrants have lived should be given a chance, and the oppression of the immigrants should be stopped," said Zabiullah Mujahid, spokesman of the Islamic Emirate.

Earlier, some Iranian media had reported through Ahmad Wahidi, that there are currently nearly 5 million Afghan citizens living in Iran.

Carpet production increases in Afghanistan, says officials

KABUL (Ariana News): The Carpet Manufacturers Union says the carpet production industry has increased significantly in the country this year.

Union members said that there are still problems in the carpet export sector and called on the Islamic Emirate to solve these problems.

"Our production in 2023 compared to 2022 has a small and large percentage increase, but regarding its export, the same problems as before still exist," said Farid Ahmad Karimzada, a member of the union.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Industry and Commerce



officials have said that up to one million square meters of carpets and rugs are produced in the country every year, and currently the process of exporting

carpets to the world markets continues.

According to them, efforts are underway to export more carpets to foreign countries.

"We have exported about 580 thousand square meters of carpet worth 23 million dollars to Austria, Spain, United Arab Emirates, England, America, Italy, Pakistan, Turkey, China, France, Canada, Kuwait, The Netherlands, India and other countries," said Abdulsalam Jawad Akhundzada, a spokesman for MoIC.

Economic experts have also stated that when the carpet industry expands in the country, it can create jobs for many people at home.

They added that many people who cannot do other jobs will weave carpets.

Afghanistan dry fruit exhibition organized in Oman

OMAN (TOLOnews): For the first time, Afghan products, including dry fruits, have been displayed in an exhibition in Oman.

Ten Afghan businessmen participated in the exhibition, which is expected to be held for three days.

Some of these participants have said holding such exhibitions is beneficial in introducing Afghan products to other countries and increasing the number of exports.

"It was the first exhibition that the government of Oman directly invited businessmen to build relations and increase trade between Oman and Afghanistan," said Mahboob Ullah Mohammadi, a trader.

"Dry and fresh fruit and other products of Afghanistan are called fore here. Some people here use the organic products that we have," said Sefatullah, a trader. The officials of the Afghan embassy in Oman have also said that they are trying to increase the amount of trade between the two countries [Afghanistan and Oman]



and provide the necessary facilities for businessmen.

"We ensure that we support Afghan products and Afghan businessmen so that Afghan businessmen can start the business process in Oman," said Abdul Samad Munib.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce pledged that it will address the challenges faced by

businessmen in obtaining visas and participating in international exhibitions.

"Regarding obtaining a visa, we have provided facilities to all our businessmen. Those of our businessmen who want to participate in international exhibitions or travel to other countries to obtain business contracts can come to the ministry. We

make it easier for them to get a visa," said Abdul Salam Akhundzada Jawad, spokesman for the ministry.

The statistics of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce show that only thirteen exhibitions were held in the country in the last eight months, where merchants from 34 provinces displayed their products.

From teacher to flower vendor: A women's journey in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): Laila, a flower vendor, is worried about the lifespan of her flowers as autumn comes to an end and winter, with its snow and rain, approaches. She transitioned from being a teacher during the republican era to becoming a flower seller during the reign of the Taliban, which has provided her with a satisfying income. She says, "Selling flowers means selling love, and right now, I am in the business of selling love."

The return of the Taliban administration in Afghanistan marked a significant turning point in recent Afghan history, as it brought about profound changes in the lives of women and imposed a crisis of unemployment and economic hardship on the people. Since this turning point, women have been less visible in public interactions, and according to reports from Amnesty International, women have been excluded from the social sphere.

Laila, a 52-year-old woman, has turned to selling flowers in this tumultuous environment. She was once a teacher and claims to have educated hundreds of girls and boys with pen and paper. Before the Taliban administration, opportunities for girls' education were available, but Laila's husband did not allow their

daughters to go to school, leading to her separation from him. However, with the arrival of the Taliban government, girls' education has been prohibited, leaving Laila unsure of what to do with this new restriction.

Laila says, "Perhaps nowhere else has it happened that a mother is a teacher, yet her children are not allowed to attend school."

In Laila's view, the inability of women in Afghanistan to give birth to sons leads to deep conflicts between spouses. Laila is one of the women who have faced this issue, and the lack of a male child has strained her relationship with her husband.

Access to quality education for women in Afghanistan has been limited, and Laila, who has endured many hardships for the sake of her two daughters, is increasingly concerned about their future due to these restrictions. She believes that proper education empowers women to achieve financial independence, intellectual freedom, and a better social position.

Throughout history, women have made significant efforts to fight for gender equality. However, many differences and limitations in women's access to opportunities and resources still persist.

Changing this situation requires the collective efforts of society, including both men and women, as well as political, social, and legal changes.

Why did the former teacher turn to selling flowers?

After the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan and its new policy of canceling pension payments, Laila no longer receives her retirement benefits. This ongoing situation and the economic shock that disrupted people's lives have put tremendous pressure on Laila.

Laila says, "I tried seeking foreign aid to find work. I struggled for several days, but in the end, I would return home at dinner time."

After several days of effort, Laila finally bought several flower branches from the flower vendors in Kabul's New City with the money she had. By selling these branches, which come in red and white colors, she managed to cover her living expenses and support her two young daughters.

Her business has expanded since then, and she is content with her income. However, with the arrival of winter and the end of the flower season, her business is dwindling. She is trying to find an alternative source of income, but for now, she earns 600 Afghanis daily from selling flowers, which

she uses to pay rent and support her family.

Laila is frustrated by the societal judgment that occurs when someone, especially a woman, engages in challenging work in Afghanistan. She notes that while such work is stigmatized, doing similar work abroad is considered honorable.

Despite her separation from her husband, Laila remains concerned. She says, "I fear that one day, my husband and his sons will see me in the streets selling flowers and still judge me, even though there's no shame in this work; the shame is in being burdensome."

When Laila carries flowers in the street for sale, she is often mistaken for a beggar, and the police try to take her to the collection areas for beggars, as the process of gathering beggars has recently begun in Kabul. However, Laila strives to continue her work more systematically, wearing clean clothes. In some cases, she is forced to hide her flowers.

Currently, Laila faces other crises that have caused significant concerns for her and her family. The primary reason for these crises is the absence of a male child and the lack of a male guardian, as per Afghan social norms.

Given that Laila lives alone with her two daughters, aged between 19 and 22, they face larger issues. This issue is one of the challenges women in Afghan society frequently encounter, and what makes it more problematic is the "negative perception of others" towards three women living without a male guardian.

When Laila and her young daughters try to find a rental house, landlords often refuse because they lack a male "mahram."

Laila, with tears in her eyes, says, "Generally, it may not be

good to say this, but in most cases, they rent the house to us because they think we are not proper women, and they believe that we can fulfill our requests made of us. Nevertheless, we are trying to find another house and separate from there."

As Laila speaks about the challenges in her life, she wipes away her tears with her shawl and says, "I achieved my own desires, and my daughters received an education. That's enough for a mother who was a teacher in the past."

Considering the prohibition of girls' education, I asked Laila, "What did you gain from your education that made you endure all these difficulties?" She replied, "Education taught me humanity."

Laila's life story represents the lives of thousands of other women in this country. Women who face challenges such as work, income, and difficult lives for various reasons, including domestic violence, gender inequality, and hundreds of other difficulties, have never tasted the sweetness of life.





ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi virtually addressing the internal conference on ‘Transformative pathways for water and food systems in a climate resilient Pakistan’ at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Putin, Saudi Crown Prince concerned over catastrophe in Gaza

RIYADH: Russian President Vladimir Putin has extended his congratulations to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Saudi Arabia winning the bid to host the World Expo 2030. Riyadh garnered 119 out of 165 votes – beating challengers South Korea and Italy – by the member-states of the Paris-based Bureau International des Expositions.

A readout of their talks published on Thursday, a day after the Russian president's visit to the Kingdom, noted their discussions on the countries' historical and strategic relations as well as the current regional and international situations. "The two sides stressed their keenness to continue working to enhance mutual and joint investments in the two countries, enable the private sector, exchange visits, hold joint investment forums and events, develop the investment-attractive environment, provide the necessary enablers, and solve any challenges in this field," the statement read.

The two leaders commended the close cooperation between them and the successful efforts of the OPEC+ countries in enhancing the stability of global oil markets. They also stressed the "importance of continuing this cooperation, and the need for all participating countries to adhere to the OPEC+ agreement, in a way that serves the interests of producers and consumers and supports the growth of the global economy." The leaders agreed to enhance cooperation in areas including oil and gas, environment, technology, digital economy, space and sustainable tourism. — Arab News

Party's symbol bat will remain, says Gohar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan has asserted that the party's recent intra-party elections were conducted transparently and constitutionally, dismissing concerns about their legitimacy. He further expressed confidence that the party's symbol, the bat, will remain on the ballot paper.

Speaking to media after meeting PTI founder Imran Khan at Adiala Jail, Khan addressed allegations of controversy surrounding the elections. He claimed that "a clear and transparent intra-party election was held under the complete constitution and law." He acknowledged "efforts being made to prevent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf from getting the mark of the bat," but expressed unwavering certainty that it will remain their symbol.

However, Khan's claims are contested by multiple applications filed at the Election Commission. One application, filed on behalf of PTI members, demands a re-election under the supervision of a neutral party, citing irregularities in the process. Another application, filed by a resident of Islamabad, Raja Tahir Nawaz Abbasi, claims the elections violated the party's constitution and urges the Election Commission to declare them invalid and order a new election.

Death toll tops 17,000 as fighting rages on in Gaza

Guterres calls on UNSC to declare ceasefire in Gaza

NEW YORK: In a dramatic constitutional move, the UN secretary-general has invoked one of the few powers that the Charter gives him, to call on the Security Council to declare a ceasefire to avert a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza that could have "potentially irreversible implications for Palestinians as a whole and for peace and security in the region."

He cautioned that such an outcome should be avoided "at all cost." In a letter to the Security Council seen by Arab News, Guterres invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter, which says the secretary-general "may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion, may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security."

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said this was the first time Guterres had felt compelled to invoke the article since taking office in 2017. In his letter, Guterres said the more than eight weeks of fighting had "created appalling human suffering, physical destruction and collective trauma across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory." He added: "Since the start of Israel's military operation, more than 15,000 people have reportedly been killed, over 40 per cent of whom were children. Thousands of others have been injured. More than half of all homes have been destroyed." He said: "Some 80 per cent of the population of 2.2 million has been forcibly displaced, into increasingly smaller areas. More than 1.1 million people have sought refuge in UNRWA facilities across Gaza, creating overcrowded, undignified and unhygienic conditions. — Arab News

International said on Thursday that Israeli strikes that killed Reuters journalist Issam Abdallah and injured six others in south Lebanon on October 13 were likely a direct attack on civilians that must be investigated as a war crime.

Human Rights Watch, in a separate statement, said the two Israeli strikes were "an apparently deliberate attack on civilians and thus a war crime." A Reuters investigation published on Thursday found an Israeli tank crew killed Abdallah and wounded the six other reporters by firing two shells in quick succession from Israel while the journalists were filming cross-border shelling from a distance. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has published a report highlighting food insecurity in the Gaza Strip, pointing out that households in northern Gaza are "experiencing alarming levels of hunger".

At least 97% of households in northern Gaza have "inadequate food consumption", with nine out of 10 people going one full day and night without food. In the southern governorates, a third of the households have reported high levels of severe or very severe hunger, with 53% experiencing moderate hunger. Since October 7, 1,249 trucks carrying food assistance have reached Gaza. Before the war, about 500 trucks would enter the Gaza Strip daily. WFP says that to provide food assistance to the affected population in Gaza, 100 trucks with food would be required to cross inside every day.

Media rights group Reporters Without Borders (RSF) urged Israeli and Egyptian authorities on Thursday to allow journalists to move freely across the Gaza Strip's southern border crossing into Egypt. The Rafah crossing was shut after Israel declared war on Hamas in Gaza following the deadliest attack in its history on October 7. While it has intermittently opened in recent weeks, only people whose names were on approved lists have been allowed out.

In a statement, RSF called for the Rafah crossing to be opened "so that journalists can finally come and go on both sides of the border". Palestinian journalists who, like other civilians in Gaza, have had to flee their homes in the north of the Gaza Strip "are now being told by Israel to assemble at the border with Egypt, with no possibility of crossing", RSF said. "Conversely, international reporters are prevented from entering." The Rafah crossing is controlled by Hamas and Egypt, though RSF says Israel monitors all activities at the southern border. — Aljazeera



ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Mian Nawaz Sharif leaving High Court after attending his hearing.

Interim govt to assist ECP to hold free, fair election, says KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah has said that the basic job of an interim government is to hold free and fair elections, adding that the caretaker government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will implement the directives of Election Commission the Apex Court with regard to conduct of general elections in letter and spirit.

He said that the government would ensure all measures for holding the general elections in a peaceful manner and no stone would be left unturned to improve security situation in the province.

Talking to journalists, during his visit to Chinese Cultural Centre "China Window" Peshawar, the Chief Minister said that improving law and order in the province was one of the key areas of the incumbent government, adding that the security forces, police and other law enforcing agencies were doing well to achieve the desired results.

Very soon, Khushal Pakhtunkhwa program would be launched featuring the law and order and durable peace as the foremost priority, he remarked. He added that the caretaker government would make all possible efforts to ensure long lasting peace and attract foreign investment towards the province.

Responding to a question, Arshad Hussain Shah said that, concrete measures were being adopted to ensure security of development projects being carried out under the portfo-

lio of CPEC adding that special security unit had been set up with regard to the security of projects being executed by international development partners. Regarding financial issues of the province, the chief minister stated that concerted efforts were being made to resolve financial issues on sustainable basis adding that financial matters related to federation had already been taken up with Prime Minister.

He carried special sympathies for the province and committed to extend every possible support. He maintained that the whole country was going through the financial crunches but with joint efforts, we would get through. Disclosing another important feature of the Khushal Pakhtunkhwa initiative, Arshad Hussain Shah said that youth of the province would be fully equipped as per market demands by imparting technical skills, and under the initiative, annually 5 lac skilled persons would be exported to foreign countries. Touching upon the Pak-China friendship, Arshad Hussain Shah said that Pakistan and China enjoyed cordial and long lasting relations and establishment of China Window in Peshawar was praise worthy effort for further strengthening the relations between both the countries.

Earlier, the Chief Minister visited the various galleries of "China Window" and took keen interest in cultural objects displayed there. The chief minister was accompanied by caretaker ministers Barrister Ferroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Dr. AAmir Abdullah and Dr. Najeeb.

Meanwhile, the Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice

(R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah said that corruption is a social evil that eats away at any nation or society like a termite; a society which becomes a victim of corrupt practices, does not need any external enemy for its destruction; its corrupt system lonely is enough to destroy it. And that's why, he added that the corruption has always been considered as a roadblock to national progress and development, and as a result, people lose their trust in the system.

He made it clear that incumbent caretaker provincial government was not only committed to promote transparency and to eradicate the scourge of corruption but also taking curative measures to this effect, adding that the government has introduced "Prosperous Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Vision" and the most important component of that vision is "Zero Tolerance Policy" against corruption. We will strictly monitor the public service delivery centers and eradicate the root causes of corruption and malpractices.

He was addressing a seminar jointly organized by the NAB Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Provincial Anti-corruption Establishment at Nishtar Hall, Peshawar on Thursday. Provincial Caretaker Cabinet's Members, higher government officials, students and representatives from civil society attended the seminar. Addressing the participants, the caretaker Chief Minister said that it was a brutal and painful fact that the corruption had become a major obstacle in the way of our socio-economic development.

Escalation in smuggling activities raises concerns official injured

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In a disconcerting turn of events, a surge in the smuggling of non-custom paid (NCP) vehicles through Mardan and Peshawar has drawn attention to the inadequacies in curbing this illicit trade. According to classified information, a staggering 17 NCP vehicles were reportedly smuggled into Swat yesterday via Mardan.

Sources reveal that Swat's excise police responded forcefully to the smuggling attempt, resulting in an excise official sustaining injuries due to gunfire from the perpetrators. The confrontation also led to the destruction of excise vehicles during the operation.

Despite excise officials managing to regain control of the situation and successfully seizing three non-custom paid vehicles, an unexpected twist unfolded. In a puzzling move, the Director General Excise ordered the release of the apprehended NCP vehicles. The decision by the Directorate General (DG) to release non-custom paid vehicles after the excise police operation not only raises serious concerns but also warrants a thorough critique. This move appears to betray the sacrifice of excise police personnel, essentially

selling their blood for reasons yet to be disclosed.

The inexplicable decision to release seized NCP vehicles, especially in the aftermath of an operation where an excise official was injured and excise vehicles were destroyed, reflects a disregard for the sacrifices made by law enforcement. This action not only undermines the efforts of excise officials but also compromises the integrity of anti-smuggling initiatives.

The DG's choice to prioritize the release of seized vehicles over the well-being of excise officials not only lacks transparency but also erodes public trust in the enforcement system. Such decisions set a dangerous precedent, sending a message that the sacrifices of those on the front lines of combating illegal activities can be dismissed with impunity.

This incident demands a critical examination of the decision-making process within the Directorate General. The question remains: why were the NCP vehicles released, and whose interests were prioritized over the safety and well-being of excise personnel? A comprehensive investigation is necessary to address these concerns and hold those responsible for compromising the principles of

justice and law enforcement accountable. The incident highlights the need for reforms and oversight within the enforcement agencies to prevent the recurrence of situations where the blood of dedicated excise police personnel is seemingly undervalued for inexplicable reasons.

The gravity of the situation has prompted high-ranking authorities, including the Army Chief, DG ISI, and DG IB, to take notice. An urgent call for a thorough investigation has been issued to determine those responsible for jeopardizing the lives of excise officials and perpetuating this unlawful trade. The incident underscores the pressing need for a comprehensive inquiry to unveil the intricate web of actors involved in these smuggling activities. The release of the seized NCP vehicles, particularly on orders from the DG, raises questions about the integrity of the process and calls for a stringent examination of the decision-making chain. As the investigation unfolds, it is imperative to ensure accountability and address the root causes of such incidents. The safety of law enforcement personnel and the integrity of anti-smuggling operations must be prioritized to maintain the rule of law in the region.

We are protecting fundamental rights of citizens, says PHC CJ

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan and Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim observed that court's assistant/jury member to be nominated in former Speaker National Assembly plea against his arrest as well as provision of record of cases registered against while adjourned further hearing till 12th December, on Thursday.

Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan observed that we are protecting fundamental rights of citizens enshrined by Constitution of Pakistan as per judge's oath irrespective of political appliances of applicants. He added that we didn't want a particular political party convey court's proceedings in their favour but it's our constitutional responsibility.

The court overlooking the subject matter of arrest that will be considered in a particular case or to be considered in all registered cases and if not, what will be the procedure as we have to protect citizen's rights, chief justice remarked. He added that the court doesn't that political party can convey proceedings as favoritism towards them.

Additional Advocate General

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Danyal Asad Chamkani, Deputy Prosecutor General National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Muhammad Ali and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader counsel Sher Afzal Marwat Advocate before court during the hearing.

The counsel Sher Afzal Marwat advocate argued that former Speaker National Asad Qaiser is arresting continuously in different cases and added that the applicant is booked in six cases at different places in relation with 9th May incidents.

The petitioner also filed a writ petition earlier regarding provision of records of cases and inquiries against Asad Qaiser while provincial government had submitted report but rearrested in new cases after obtaining bails in the previous cases, the counsel added. He argued that as many as 34 cases are registered against former Speaker National and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly till today.

Former Speaker is arrested in a case which didn't operated under the jurisdiction of Asad Qaiser as well as one-time arrest can be considered in all cases as Supreme Court had decided in Abdul Sattar Niazi case in 1974, the counsel added. The schools and col-

leges owned by Asad Qaiser were closed several times while reopen on court's intervention, Sher Afzal advocate argued.

The counsel argued that provincial government is registering new case after releasing of former Speaker and added that Asad Qaiser arrested several cases which were registered on complaint of unidentified informers, the counsel added.

In the meantime, Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan PHC had raised similar question from prosecution and prosecution will answer that one-arrest will be considered in all cases or to be entertain in the particular in case but this is important matter and must be addressed.

Additional Advocate General Muhammad Nisar argued that he will assist court in this case but Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan stopped him from argument and observed that he had served as Law Officer during PTI government.

However, Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani informed that two reports on behalf of Anti-corruption Establishment is submitted and inquiry is under processes against Former Speaker National

Assembly. Additional Prosecutor General Muhammad Ali informed neither inquiry nor investigation is going against Asad Qaiser at NAB.

Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim remarked that it is the responsibility of Magistrate to look over that immediate arrest in new case after release and observed that is Magistrate fulfilled his responsibility.

Unfortunately, Magistrate didn't fulfil legal responsibility so, the petitioner approached PHC and that Supreme Court had decided it in Sugra Bibi case that the Magistrate would decide matters related to custody, the counsel argued. He added that prosecution conveying that court's decision had no worth and it is happening for the first-time in history. It doesn't happen for first time in history of Pakistan but you are targeted for first time, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim observed. While chief justice remarked that Advocate General is suppose be available because it is important case.

Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amir Javed after resuming of hearing and requested for provision of time for preparation while PHC accepted adjournment plea for ground-work in the case as High Court will decide the matter in detail and length.

PHC stopped arrested former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and Mujahid Khan in other cases while adjourned further hearing till 12 December.

PHC questions CS regarding equal playing field to PTI: During a Contempt of Court hearing regarding the alleged restriction on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rallies, Justice Ijaz Anwar of the Peshawar High Court expressed concern over the unequal treatment of political parties.

A two member's bench heard the case. He inquired from the Chief Secretary and the Election Commission why PTI rallies were being targeted, while other parties were allowed to hold meetings without restrictions. Justice Anwar pointed out that a crackdown was initiated whenever PTI attempted to organize a meeting, while other parties faced no such hurdles. He questioned the rationale behind this disparity, asking if there was a specific ban on PTI's political activities.

In response, the Chief Secretary assured the court that equal opportunities would be provided to all parties. He explained that while PTI's workers' convention was allowed to proceed due

to compliance with SOPs and placement, ANP and JUI were denied permission for failing to adhere to the guidelines. Justice SM Atiq Shah noted that without the court's intervention, the permission for rallies was often denied. Justice Anwar further questioned the Election Commission, asking if their sole responsibility was conducting elections. He expressed concern that despite reports of targeted actions against a specific party, the district officers remained silent.

The court also noted the appointment of caretaker ministers who were now actively participating in the elections, raising concerns about potential bias. The Election Commission lawyer assured the court that they would take action against any violation of the law, including those involving the caretaker ministers. Justice Anwar emphasized the importance of ensuring a level playing field for all parties, urging both the Chief Secretary and the Election Commission to address any requests for rallies with this principle in mind. He stressed that the concerns raised in national and international media regarding unequal treatment needed to be addressed by the Election Commission.