

PPP candidates booked
F.P. Report
KARACHI: MQM-P has lodged a FIR against the PPP candidates for the General Elections 2024 and others on charges of 'killing' its worker during the clash in Karachi's Nazimabad area. As per reports, the MQM-P filed an application with Gulbahar police station under murder and terrorism-related clauses of the Pakistan Penal Code and Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.



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Cipher case Imran, Qureshi sentenced to 10 years in jail

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: A special court established under the Official Secrets Act on Tuesday handed both former prime minister Imran Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi 10 years in jail in the cipher case. The cipher case pertains to a diplomatic document that the Federal Investigation Agency's charge sheet alleges was never returned by Imran. The PTI has long held that the document contained a threat from the United States to oust Imran as prime minister.

The short verbal verdict was announced soon after recording the statements of the two accused under Section 342 during the hearing on Tuesday, as the court held a swift hearing of the matter despite the delaying tactics used by the defence.

Earlier, questionnaires were prepared to record their statements as the court resumed the hearing of the cipher case. On the other hand, the PTI had moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday morning to challenge the appointment of state defence counsel for the two accused in the cipher case, requesting it to declare the special court's Jan 26 orders.

Earlier on Monday, a lengthy hearing of the cipher case was held by the special court in Adiala jail during which cross-examination of 11 witnesses was completed. Also on Monday, a lengthy hearing of the cipher case was held by the special court established under the Official Secrets Act in Adiala jail during which cross-examination of 11 witnesses was completed.

During the hearing conducted by Abul Hasanat Muhammad Zulqarnain, the special court judge, a total of 25 witnesses were



presented before the court. The prominent names among those cross-examined by the two sets of lawyers include former foreign secretary Sohail Mehmood, former principal secretary to the PM Azam Khan, former Interior Secretary Yusuf Naseem Khokhar, interior secretary Aftab Akbar Durrani and former ambassador to the United States Asad Maqsood. Earlier in the day, the cipher case proceedings were again disrupted as the two accused got angry and started shouting. As the situation worsened, the special court judge opted for a temporary break after which the hearing started again.

Qureshi objected to the state-appointed defence counsel during cross-examination, expressing difficulty attending court in the current situation. PTI lawyer Salman Safdar noted that the Islamabad High Court had deemed the trial invalid, yet the case persisted in this court for the third time.

Hamid Khan, the lawyer of PTI Founder Imran Khan, said that this is not a trial; it is an abuse of power. "It seems they are in a hurry to punish Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi. All principles of a fair trial are being violated," said Hamid Khan.

Speaking to the media outside Adiala Jail, he expressed that it's not clear whose orders the court is following to announce the

verdict hastily. All this is a violation of laws and constitution and against the principles of justice in every way.

"Constitutional requirements should be fulfilled; we should go to no one but the court. No matter what the crime is, the right to defence should not be abolished. Our lawyers did not appear in court just one day; what was the urgency that they deny the right to defence?," he further said. The court has no right to appoint a defence counsel without the consent of the accused. "We will consult with our fellow lawyers and follow the next course of action," said Hamid Khan.

It should be noted that yesterday, the hearing of the cipher case was conducted by Special Court Judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain in Adiala Jail. Under the Official Secrets Act, the lengthy hearing continued for more than thirteen hours in the special court.

The statements of 11 more witnesses in the cipher case had been completed. After the cross-examination of the witnesses, questionnaires were prepared to record the statements of 342 accused. Former Chairman of PTI, Imran Khan, also appeared in court; he said, "I have come before you, note my presence. Now this fixed match is underway, what am I to do here?" After that, the former Chairman of PTI left the court.

PTI to challenge cipher case verdict in IHC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has announced to challenge cipher case verdict in Islamabad High Court (IHC). We will challenge the punishment awarded to PTI founder and ex-foreign minister after receiving a detailed verdict in the cipher case, Barrister Ali Zafar said while talking to a private TV Channel that after the special court announced its verdict.

Zafar criticized the verdict and termed the sentence to PTI leaders 'mockery' of justice. Jail trial in the cipher case was against Article 10-A, he claimed. The former law minister was of view that 'due' process was not adopted in the case.

Earlier in the day, a special court hearing cipher case handed a 10-year jail term, each, to former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. The former prime minister and the former foreign minister were facing trial in cipher case in Adiala Jail from last year for 'distorting' the facts of the diplomatic cipher. Both the PTI leaders were accused of conspiracy to misuse the contents of the cipher to fulfill nefarious purposes.

Meanwhile, in the aftermath, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) top leadership vehemently rejected on Tuesday the verdict handed down by a special court under the Official Secrets Act, which sentenced former premier Imran Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi to 10 years in jail in the cipher case.

In response to the special court's decision, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, a central leader of Tehreek-e-Insaf, addressed the media, urging party supporters to exhibit restraint and avoid expressing anger. He stated that PTI would challenge the Cipher case trial in court, expressing hope that the punishment meted out to PTI founder Imran Khan would be annulled.

PTI stalwart Omer Ayub Khan took to social media platform X (formerly Twitter), declaring his rejection of the verdict, citing political motives behind the decision. In a statement, he called on all PTI members and Pakistanis to remain calm and peaceful in the aftermath of what he referred to as a decision by a "kangaroo court" against PM Imran Khan and Vice Chairman Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

Omer Ayub Khan encouraged supporters to concentrate on the upcoming electoral process, emphasizing a high voter turnout. He urged PTI members to rally on February 8, 2024, and cast their votes for PM Imran Khan's nominated candidates, whose names have been posted on PTI's official website and social media channels.

Moonis Elahi declared 'PO'

F.P. Report

LAHORE: A special court on Tuesday declared PTI leader Moonis Elahi a "proclaimed offender" for his continued absence from proceedings in a money laundering case filed by the FIA.

The former federal minister, who fled the country in December 2022, is facing multiple cases of corruption and money laundering registered against him by the FIA, the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) and the NAB. Lahore's Central Special Court judge Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh also issued a permanent arrest warrant for Moonis, while making the declaration. "The accused has gone into hiding by design. FIA can take measures of Moonis's arrest by reaching out to [International Criminal Police Organisation] Interpol," the judge stated.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing meeting of the federal cabinet.

Federal Cabinet nods restructuring of FBR

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet, in a meeting, on Tuesday approved restructuring and digitization of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on the recommendations of the Revenue Division. The approval was accorded in a meeting chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

The meeting was apprised of the recommendations of an inter-ministerial committee that held its meeting on 23rd January under the caretaker finance minister. During its previous meeting, effective amendments were made in the summary after a comprehensive debate which was submitted in the cabinet's meeting today, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Under these reforms, a Federal Tax Policy Board would be constituted in the Revenue Division that would be tasked to formu-

late tax policy, fixation of revenue targets and work for coordination among the stakeholders. The federal minister for finance would head the Federal Policy Board. Under the new scheme, Customs and Inland Revenue departments would be separated and work under specific director generals in the relevant cadres who would also enjoy complete authority over the administrative, financial and operational matters.

Both the officials would ensure digitization of their relevant departments and implementation of globally recognized practices for transparency and addressing complaints. These departments would have separate oversight boards with the federal secretaries of ministries from finance, revenue, trade, chairman NADRA and relevant experts as its members whereas, minister for finance would head them.

The prime minister directed that clash of interests should be avoided during the appointment of experts from the private sector. He also asked that under the cabinet committee's recommendations for reforms, a draft should be presented for necessary legislation and approval in the upcoming session of the newly elected parliament.

On the occasion, the prime minister and the cabinet members appreciated the untiring efforts of the ministers concerned, chairman FBR and other relevant authorities for the preparation of these reforms. The meeting also endorsed decisions taken on January 26 by its cabinet committee on legal affairs but deferred amendments recommended by the ministry of water resources with regard to IRSA Act 1992 and directed to resubmit it in the next meeting of cabinet after a thorough debate.

9 terrorists killed in Balochistan attacks

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed nine terrorists including three suicide bombers and injured three in retaliatory actions following multiple terrorist attacks in Balochistan's Mach and Kolpur towns, the Inter-Services Public Relations said in a statement on Tuesday.

Multiple terrorists including suicide bombers attacked Mach and Kolpur complexes on night between January 29 and 30, which was effectively responded to by law enforcement agencies, the military's media wing said in a statement. The security forces in the vicinity were immediately mobilised to carry out the ensuing operation. Nine terrorists including three suicide bombers have been sent to hell and three others were injured, it added.

During an intense exchange of fire, four brave LEA members, having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat (martyrdom) along with two innocent civilians.

Effective response by law enforcement agencies is a testament to their unrelenting resolve in the fight against terrorism. Pakistan's security forces stand shoulder to shoulder with other LEAs to ensure peace and stability in the country, it concluded.

The operation was commenced following multiple terrorist attacks in Mach and Kolpur towns of the province's Kachhi district late Monday. The security forces repulsed a "fire raid" attempt by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) terrorists in Balochistan's Mach late Monday, reported media citing sources.

Mach city echoed with darkness and plunged into explosions after terrorists fired several rockets from mountains, followed by heavy gunfire, on Monday night. People were trapped in their homes due to explosions and firing, while firing also started in Kolpur town and Gokhart Bibi Nani area.

According to security sources, unidentified persons fired 15 rockets from the mountains at 9:30pm in the Mach area of Kuchi Bolan. Sources added security forces had received intelligence about the terrorist attack and laid an ambush for the terrorists. The terrorists retreated after being overwhelmed by the effective response of the security forces, they added. Security forces have launched a search operation against the fleeing terrorists, as per the insiders.

Earlier, the minister - in a post on X - said a report was received about a "few rockets" fired from the hilly areas of Machh. However, he noted, there were no reports of any losses, and the law enforcement agencies were alert. Meanwhile, the Balochistan Health Department said that two injured people from Mach were moved to a trauma centre in Quetta.

Caretaker Minister for Health, Dr. Amir Muhammad Jogejai on Tuesday paid a visit to Sandeman Provincial Hospital Quetta to enquire after the health of injured of Mach incident. Jogejai directed the concerned authorities to utilise all the available healthcare facilities for treatment of the injured.

Need for effective criminal justice system underlined

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday said that under the constitution, only parliament was mandated to legislate and stressed further reforms in the criminal justice system.

Expressing his views on a private TV (Aik) news morning show, he opined that the conviction rate under the contemporary criminal justice system was very low, reflecting deficiencies and efforts to be made to plug the loopholes through effective legislation. To a question about terrorist groups in Balochistan province, the prime minister said that non-state actors had no right to unleash violence and the State had the responsibility to counter such terrorist acts.

About 90,000 people in the country had lost their lives in waves of terrorism, he said, adding whether it was not the onus of political parties and the parliamentarians to improve upon the criminal justice system to expedite the conviction rate! The prime minister maintained that he was speaking about the whole justice system, especially its lower tiers. "Whose responsibility was to improve it? Carrying out legislative business under the constitution is the onus of parliament," he reiterated. Elaborating his viewpoint, he said that Baloch, Pashtuns and different settlers had been living in Balochistan for decades.

There was no political uniform group while one minority armed group was carrying out violent activities, he said, adding that the US State Department, the

PM for concerted efforts to explore oil & gas reserves

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday, while pointing to the abundant natural resources in the country, underlined the need for concerted efforts to explore onshore and offshore oil and gas reserves.

He was addressing the Petroleum Conference 2024 as the chief guest. Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir was the guest of honour. The prime minister affirmed the government's readiness to contribute in infrastructure development, logistics, and security to bolster exploration and production efforts. He further stated that the conference reflected a collective commitment to fully utilise the immense mineral potential so as to ensure energy self-sufficiency and transform Pakistan into a regional exporter of energy. He appreciated the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the Federal Ministry of Energy for fostering an investor-friendly environment by streamlining regulations and procedures.

UK, EU, and all other democratic countries had declared these groups as terrorists, he added. The prime minister said that he did not differentiate between banned TTP and Ahrar and BLA and BLF, as these terrorist outfits had been using violence as a tool to create terror and kill innocent people.

In their terrorist attacks, about 1038 people had been martyred since 2018 in the province, he said, and cited incidents of Coastal Highway and an attack on Turbat police station in which innocent people had been killed and burnt alive. On the other hand, he said the political protests and approach were acknowledged by the world, intelligentsia, and media. The world has declared ISIS a terrorist organization.

To a query, Prime Minister Kakar said that the Middle East was a complex challenge. Pakistan had

conveyed to different world fora and the international community that the continuation of the situation in Gaza was unacceptable, he added. They had stressed upon opening of humanitarian assistance corridors with immediate ceasefire. Along with the Muslim countries, Pakistan had reaffirmed a joint stance, he said.

The prime minister said that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Arab League and the entire world was speaking about the two-state solution with an independent Palestine based upon pre-June 1967 borders, with Al Quds al Shareef as its capital, adding that it was the unanimous stance of the Muslim world. He regretted that certain elements were criticizing him unjustly for referring to that solution and reiterated that Pakistan had not budged from its principled stance on Palestine.

4 dead in Sibi explosion near PTI's election rally

F.P. Report

QUETTA: Three people died and five others were injured in an explosion in Balochistan's Sibi, officials said Tuesday, the latest terrorist strike in Pakistan's restive province. Local police said the explosion, the nature of which is yet to be determined, occurred at the city's Jinnah Road.

Civil Hospital's Medical Superintendent Dr Shahid said that three injured people are in "critical condition", noting that an emergency has been imposed in the facility following the incident. The deadly explosion comes just eight days before the February 8 general elections, with security heightened across the country and law enforcers deployed to ensure the law and order situation.

Sibi Deputy Commissioner Khuda-e-Rahim confirmed that the blast took place as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) rally was passing through the city. PTI Balochistan's

spokesperson Nazeer Achakzai has also confirmed the death of three party workers in the blast that targeted the rally being held by one of its candidates.

Reacting to the incident, caretaker Balochistan Minister for Information Jan Achakzai expressed condolences to the victims' families. The minister underscored that the upcoming polls would proceed as per the schedule, adding that the attack was aimed at discouraging the provincial government from holding the elections.

Separately, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), taking notice of the incident, has sought a report from the provincial police chief. The attack comes in the backdrop of increased terrorist attacks that have plagued Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in recent months.

With more than 128 million voters, various circles have raised concerns over the deteriorating security

situation in the country, especially in the aforementioned provinces, with some lawmakers even moving the Senate seeking poll delay in light of security threats. Today's blast comes after security forces eliminated six terrorists, including Doda Baloch and Pardan Baloch, in Balochistan's Mach area hours after the city was attacked by terrorists in the late hours of Monday.

Militants belonging to the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) opened fire and launched 15 rockets towards the city, of which two fell onto Mach Jail Colony, one landed in the Levies police station, four rained into the FC headquarters and eight rockets landed in the city and surrounding areas. Firing incidents were also reported in Kolpur and Gokhart Bibi Nani areas with at least 13 injured being shifted to Quetta, from Mach and Kolpur, to receive medical assistance in the provincial capital.

We are not looking for war with Iran: Kirby

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: White House National Security Spokesperson, John Kirby said several times that the US is not looking for war with Iran. He made these comments at the White House Press Briefing room.

John Kirby extended condolences to the family members of the three US servicemen who lost their lives in a drone attack in Jordan yesterday. John Kirby described the loss of US servicemen as most horrific news for any family member to receive and he assured that the thirty injured US soldiers will be provided with the best medical service possible.

John Kirby was asked several times if the US had confirmed reports that Iran was behind the drone attack in Jordan, but a clear answer was not given in this regard citing intelli-



Stoltenberg's presence in Washington DC and his meetings with US officials, John Kirby said that he had detailed meetings with the US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and National Security Advisor, Jack Sullivan. These meetings are taking place in the backdrop of supporting Ukraine against Russia, John Kirby informed.

John Kirby also commented about several key donor countries to UNRWA, the UN's agency for Palestinian refugees, suspending their funding following accusations by Israel that a dozen of its employees were involved in Hamas's October 7 attack. Kirby said that the US will keep its suspension till the investigations are completed but he did acknowledge that UNRWA played a critical role in providing humanitarian assistance in Gaza.

Regarding NATO Secretary General, Jens

prese
KARACHI (APP): The Minister for Culture, Archaeology and Antiquities Sindh Dr. Syed Ali Shah here on Tuesday announced a state-of-the-art Sindh Laboratory aimed at preserving the archives and artifacts.

The Laboratory was named "Exploration and Excavation Branch Scientific Laboratory Data Center," established by the Government of Sindh to Karachi to facilitate research on the archives and artifacts and to ensure their preservation in modern facilities. Situated near the historical

PIC maintains ISO certified hospital for 2024

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's first International Organization for Standardization (ISO) QMS (Quality Management System) on Tuesday certified public sector hospital Peshawar Institute of Cardiology (PIC) that proved the ever best international standard hospital to get its successful Surveillance Audit for this year 2024.

According to the spokesperson Riffat Anjum, the PIC went through the ISO 9001:2015 Surveillance Audit. During the audit, PIC was found to have documented, implemented, and maintained its Quality Management System in compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015. She said evidence of compliance was successfully verified, and continuation to the certification was recommended by the audit team.

PIC has honored the first ever public sector hospital in the country to be ISO 9001-2015 certified in 2022. Maintaining the ISO standard of the hospital involves the tireless efforts of all the hospital staff, said Riffat Anjum.

The Medical Director of PIC Prof.Dr Shahakar Ahmad Shah and Hospital Director Dr Niamat Shah appreciated its staff for their continuous hard work, dedication, and commitment towards PIC. Peshawar Institute of Cardiology inaugurated in December 2020. The KP's first cardiac hospital providing the best and international standard health care not only in the province but to all patients of the country.

ANP candidate injured in gas explosion

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Awami National Party (ANP) PK-56 candidate Haji Abdul Aziz Khan was injured in a gas cylinder explosion, on Tuesday.

According to the sources, as a result of a loud explosion as soon as the stove was lit due to the leakage of the kitchen gas cylinder in the house on Tuesday morning by which he was injured. He was shifted to Mardan Medical Complex (MMC) Hospital where he was undergoing treatment in ICU and later shifted to Peshawar Hospital. Now his condition is out of danger.

In this regard, the nominated candidate of NA 22 and PK 58 and former Chief Minister Ameer Haider Khan Hoti along with PK 59 candidate Haroon Khan and Mayor Mardan Himayat-Ullah Mayar with said in a message on social media that the blessings of Allah Almighty he sustained minor injuries.

PML-N Lawyers Forum terms cipher case a judicial verdict

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Lawyers forum Khyber Pakhtunkhwa termed the conviction of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan and Ex Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi is a judicial process which was conducted in a transparent manner.

The statement was issued after a meeting of PML-N Lawyers Forum chaired by provincial President Kifayatullah Khan at Judicial Complex. Former President PML-NLF, Musarratullah Khan, General Secretary Akbar Yousaf, Advisor Atif Nazir, Secretary Information,

Salim Shah Hoti and Taimur Afridi spoke on the occasion.

The speakers said that former Prime Minister Imran Khan and ex Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had violated official secret Act which negatively affected the national interests. They said that the wrong policies of PTI government had led to political and economic stability which resulted in unprecedented price-hike in the country.

PML-N stalwarts accused PTI for the rise in poverty and unemployment. They contended that PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif was the only ray of hope to steer the country out of crisis. They maintained that Nawaz Sharif

was the only dynamic national leader who has the potentials to provide relief to people.

The participants said PML-N has given an economic and political reforms agenda through its manifesto which would be instrumental to overcome the sufferings of masses. They said that the PML-N reforms agenda would revive the economy which would help in improvement in growth and generation of employment opportunities. The manifesto had planned judicial reforms which would ensure timely justice to masses, they claimed. The meeting expressed condolence over the death of mother in law of ex-president PML-N Lawyer Forum Alam Zeb Khan.

Mock polling exercise for girls' participation in election held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a proactive initiative towards civic engagement, Islamic Girls College in Baghdad, organized a mock exercise on the voting process ahead of the upcoming elections. The event took place on February 8, where male students actively participated to understand the intricacies of casting their votes.

Under the collaborative efforts of the Step Organization, a non-governmental organization focused on civic awareness, Mohammad Ismail, representing the organization, highlighted the importance of educating voters on the election process. The mock exercise aimed to guide voters through the essential steps they would encounter on Election Day. The video session conducted by the Step Organization shed light on the four crucial stages that voters need to navigate during the election process. The first stage

involves the polling officer verifying the voters' identity by checking their original ID card and cross-referencing details in the electoral list.

The second stage unfolds with a loud call-out of the voter's name and serial number. Subsequently, the voter's name is struck off from the electoral list. Following this, the voter's thumb impression is taken, and ink is applied as an additional verification step. Mohammad Ismail clarified that different-colored ballot papers would be used for the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly elections - green for the former and white for the latter. Voters are instructed to verify the official stamp and signature on the back of the ballot paper, ensuring its authenticity.

The voter then proceeds to the designated voting assistant, who, with a stamp, seals the ballot paper behind a privacy

screen. Finally, the voter places the sealed ballot paper into the corresponding colored box - green for the National Assembly and white for the Provincial Assembly. Ismail emphasized that only votes cast on the original ID card would be considered valid.

However, he mentioned that voters with expired IDs would still be permitted to vote, addressing a potential concern. The educational exercise aimed to familiarize participants with the voting process's nuances, from the application of ink to the significance of colored ballot papers. Ismail also clarified that the thumb impression would serve as the primary means of casting a vote, with excess ID cards being an alternative option.

The mock exercise provided an opportunity for students to actively engage with the democratic process, fostering a sense of responsibility and awareness.



PESHAWAR: Bicycle riders holding umbrellas during rain.

An ode to a legacy

Syeda Umme Summaiya Gilani

"Money isn't important ... it's producing and creating things and opportunities that benefit everyone, everywhere, at all times."

PESHAWAR - a city steeped in history and cultural richness - has given birth to numerous luminaries who have left an indelible mark on society. Among these, the household of the unanimously-revered Sufi Saint Allama Syed Muhammad Ameer Shah Qadiri Gilani stands tall, and at its helm was one of his seven sons, Muhammad Hasnain Gilani: a man who lived a life dedicated to knowledge, culture, and community leadership.

Born on October 7, 1949, in the heart of Peshawar, Hasnain Gilani's upbringing was framed by the cultural, political, and religious education that echoed within the walls of his family home. A man of eagerness to learn from the start, he remained connected to his roots even as he traversed the globe. His life, a testament to the pursuit of dreams, reached its final chapter on January 15, 2024, at the age of 74.

Syed Muhammad Hasnain Gilani, lovingly called Said Agha, a name synonymous with a lifetime of accomplishments, was not just a dreamer but a fearless one. A beacon of inspiration, he wove grand dreams and shared their magic with the world. A banker by profession and a scholar and thinker by soul, he achieved the delicate balance between relishing life and serving his community.

In the corridors of intellectual exploration and civic engagement,

Syed Muhammad Hasnain Gilani's journey began at a tender age, shadowing his father with books as he delved into the intricacies of religious learning. His academic pursuits were complemented by his leadership at Peshawar College of Commerce, where he emerged as a dynamic force, frontlining student union bodies and ardently supporting the political vision of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was later assassinated by military dictator Gen Ziaul Haq.

Hasnain Gilani's professional journey took him from the National Bank of Pakistan to the challenging terrain of Afghanistan, where he played a pivotal role in establishing a bank amid precarious circumstances. His tenure as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Bank of Afghanistan spanned eight years, during which he also served as a chief advisor at various Afghan banks.

Academically, he held a master's degree in commerce and completed the translation of the holy Quran and Hadith under the guidance of his father, Syed Muhammad Amir Shah Qadiri Gilani.

His love for words and books was palpable, and he could engage in discussions on diverse topics. Venturing beyond the realms of academia, Gilani's foray into public service manifested in 2001 when he not only ran for but triumphed in an election to become the Nazim of district council of Peshawar. This marked the genesis of his extensive community service, a theme that would thread through various chapters of his life.

An avid cricket enthusiast and a family man with six children and eight siblings, Hasnain Gilani was not

just a provider but a mentor and friend to those around him. His infectious smile and unwavering support endeared him to many, making him a sought-after figure in times of need. What set him apart was his unwavering trust in Allah. A faithful servant, he believed that Allah would never abandon him, and his life was a living testament to this conviction.

Hasnain Gilani led a life that mirrored the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon Him). His father's larger-than-life personality served as a guiding light, and he walked in those illustrious footsteps, leaving an impact on everyone he encountered. In the tapestry of his life, every thread bore the mark of a man deeply immersed in the pursuit of knowledge, community service, and professional excellence. Syed Muhammad Hasnain Gilani, an embodiment of resilience, intellect, and unwavering dedication, left an indelible mark on every facet of his journey.

In a world filled with challenges, he embraced each moment with grace and dignity, appreciating the beauty in nature and life. His departure leaves a void that will be sorely felt, but the memory of his well-lived life will continue to inspire generations to come.

Said Agha, we bid you farewell with the feelings that individuals of such depth and completeness are seldom encountered; your absence leaves a profound void. We will deeply miss you! May we endeavour to emulate your example, forging ahead in the footsteps you've laid, and aspire to bring pride to your memory both in this world and the hereafter.

Farewell, oh, Robin! Your Legacy lives on!



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Chief Minister Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah chairing a meeting regarding Urban Mobility Plan for Abbottabad City.

Awareness workshop held in UoP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An awareness workshop regarding the electoral process was organized on Tuesday at the University of Peshawar's Department of Political Science, aiming to enlighten students about the intricacies of the electoral system. The workshop was attended by students, faculty members, and the chairman, focused on empowering the youth with knowledge about the upcoming elections.

Deputy Director Media Coordination and Outreach, Sohail Ahmad, addressed the participants, providing valuable insights into the forthcoming general elections scheduled for February 8. Encouraging students to fulfill their national duty by casting their votes, he emphasized the importance of raising awareness within their communities.

He arranged a mock polling exercise at the polling station, guiding students through the voting process. Students actively participated in the session and mock polling exercise, displaying keen interest in understanding the electoral procedures. The initiative aimed to equip the youth with the necessary information, ensuring they play an informed and active role in the democratic process during the upcoming elections.

Prosecution's role back bone in judiciary

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Director General (DG) Prosecution Mian Muhammad said that the great responsibilities laying on prosecutors as it is the backbone of Justice System across the globe.

This he said while addressing prize distribution ceremony held for awarding prosecutors on performance and added that your only aim is the dissemination of justice as well as provision of legal rights to marginalized segments. Director Monitoring Attiq-u-Rehman was also present on the occasion.

Prosecutor Officer Welfare Association President Sangeen Khan was awarded for best performance. According to report, prosecution had convicted 45 culprits for death penalty, 368 for lifetime imprisonment during 2023.

The awarded prosecutors including Fazal Mabood, Muhammad Ayub, Umar Niaz, Zafran Ullah, Atta Ullah, Asad Noor, Manzoor Hussain, Raza Khan, Umza Nasir, Andaleeb Bashir, Huma Malak, Nabeela Gul and Shahzadi Noor. DG directed prosecutors for utilization of their energies on dissemination of justice to deprived segments of society.

Afghans repatriate to native country

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The process of repatriation of Afghan nationals residing illegally in Pakistan continued peacefully as according to the official statistics, a total of 478300 Afghans have returned to their native country so far.

The statistics showed that a total of 2697 illegal Afghans including 914 male, 765 female and 1018 children returned to Afghanistan the other day. The repatriation effort involved the use of 110 vehicles, facilitating the return of 132 families to Afghanistan.

KPCTA arranges 'grand peace fair'

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA), in collaboration with the Department of International Relations at Peshawar University and the International Relations Students Association, organized a two-day "Grand Peace Fair" on Tuesday.

The aim was to orient the youth of the province towards diversity, promote peace and harmony, project a positive image of the province and the merged areas. Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts (NMDs), Amir Abdullah, and Brigadier Tashfeen attended the event as Chief Guests. President of IRSA Ahmad Ali Khan, and Incharge of IRSA Dr. Khurshaid were also present on the occasion.

On the first day, a panel discussion on peace was arranged and moderated by Dr. Sami Raza. The panel included Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) Amir Abdullah, Professor Dr. Hussain Shaheed suhrwardi, Senior Journalist



Mushtaq Yusufzai, Dr. Amir Raza and Senior Journalist Shams Mohammad. The participants discussed the situation in the merged districts and elsewhere in the country.

The panel discussion emphasized that the establishment of peace is vital for the growth of a healthy society and every member of society must endeavor to achieve this objective without considering petty interests and differences. Participants emphasized the need for a true analysis of any situation and making the right decisions, ignoring speculations and rumors.

They said that holding

such events would help counter negative narratives, change the mindset of people and project a softer image of the province and the newly merged districts.

On the occasion, the students of newly merged districts showcased the artefacts of their respective districts, including Hujra, depicting the culture of tribal areas. Food stalls were also established by students. Various cultural musical events including traditional waziri Attanr dances were also arranged by KPCTA. The instrumentalists from the newly merged districts enthralled the participants with their performance.

Cold weather with scattered rains predicted

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Regional Meteorological Center Peshawar on Tuesday predicted that cold and cloudy weather is likely to occur in most districts of the province.

However, it said rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Torgar, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, North & South Waziristan districts.

The center further predicted that scattered light rain is expected in Kohat, Karak, Hangu, Orakzai, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank and DI Khan districts. It said that snowfall may affect traveling and transportation and tourists are advised to be cautious.

During the last 24 hours rain occurred in most districts of the province. However, rain with snowfall occurred over Kohistan, Swat and Abbottabad. Rain (recorded in mm): Pattan, Malam Jabba & Balakot 04mm each, Kakul 03mm, Saidu Sharif 02mm, Khaar-Bajaur 01mm, Peshawar (A/P & City) and DI Khan

Trace (each). Snowfall recorded (in inches): Malam Jabba 02. The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar 18/09, Chitral 11/02, Timergara 13/03, Dir 08/01, Mirkhani 12/01, Kalam 04/-07, Drosch 12/00, Saidu Sharif 11/02, Pattan 10/05, Malam Jabba 03/-02, Takht Bhai 18/05, Kakul 11/00, Balakot 11/03, Parachinar 07/-02, Bannu 21/05, Cherat 11/02, DI Khan City 23/10. The lowest temperature recorded in the province was -07 in Kalam.

1st anniversary of Police Lines martyrs observed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: City Traffic Police organized a recitation of the Holy Quran on the occasion of the first anniversary of the martyrs of the Tragedy of Police Lines at Traffic Headquarters, on Tuesday.

Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Dr. Zahidullah, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Headquarters Zahoar Khan, DSP Zakaulah and other traffic officials and officials participated in large numbers. After reciting the Quran, prayers were offered for the elevation of the rank of regular martyrs.



Meanwhile, CTO Dr. Zahidullah also placed flowers on the martyrs' memorial. Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Zahidullah has said that the history of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police is full of sacrifices. He said that he has

heartfelt sympathy with the families of martyred police officers and personnel, they should not consider themselves alone in any way, they share their pain equally and they will not be left alone in any way.



PESHAWAR: Tehreek-e-Labaik candidate for NA-29, Muhammad Shafiq addressing party workers during election campaign.



In brief

Drive against power thieves F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Xen Syed Fazal Abbas Shah said that different teams are conducting continuous operations against electricity thieves in subdivision Kamalia and Pir Mahal. This he said while talking to The Frontier Post and added that people who steal electricity do not deserve any discount because those people are damaging the treasury of Pakistan by stealing electricity. Due to which we have to bear the loss of billions of rupees annually. We are trying to control electricity theft so that there is no loss to the national treasury. Xen said that we have registered 171 FIRs against electricity thieves and 59 people were arrested while fined Rs.22,15,466.1 out of which Rs.19,83,893.5 was recovered. In the end, he said that actions against electricity thieves will continue.

Ex-nazim JUI-F to support Vot-F F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: The political rhetoric intensified by heading towards polling day at ground level to public mobilize public opinion in their own favor in the premises of Takhtbhai tehsil of Mardan district. Former tehsil Nazim and traders' leader Haji Maaz Ullah Khan Mohmand announced his support for Jamiat Ulema Islam candidates including Iftikhar Khan Mohmand and Kaleem Ullah Khan in upcoming elections. He claimed that JUI will overcome current politico-socio crisis facing by the nation. Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) nominated independent candidate Muhammad Shoaib Khan claimed that Takhtbhai had ignored in every treasury and he will establish chain of developmental projects in the premises. He argued public to participate in electoral process for ensuring heavy turnout. Moreover, Jammat-e-Islami (JI) PK60 candidate Nauman Yousaf claimed that few percent elite had grabbed the national resources at the cost of poor men livelihood. He claimed that JI is only alternate in Pakistan for reforms and multi-dimensional change in the state's affair.

Man kills daughter

JACOBABAD (INP): A pitiless man shot dead two people including his daughter for honour and escaped the scene of crime here, police said on Tuesday. According to details, the incident took place in Goth Akbar Jakhani of Jacobabad where an accused Akbar Jakhani killed his young daughter and another youth over suspicion of having illicit relations. The culprit vanish the body of daughter and escaped after committing dual murder. The body of youth was shifted to hospital where it was handed over to heirs after legal formalities. The police after registering a case against the accused started raids for his arrest.

Two killed, another injured

OKARA (INP): Two people were killed and another critically injured in separate road accidents in Okara and Hafizabad on Tuesday, rescue sources said. According to details, the first accident took place at Haveli Lakha road of Okara where an over speeding car rammed into a tractor trolley moving ahead. As a result of accident, on car rider was killed on the spot while another sustained critical wounds.

PML-N presents its election manifesto for Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Presenting his election manifesto for the Lower Dir district, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz candidate for NA 7 Yasir Khan has said the Chakdara Timergara Expressway, restoration of the Chakdara Chitral CPEC route, establishment of a kidney hospital at Timergara, upgrading the district headquarters hospital to a teaching hospital level and provision of gas to all parts of the district would be his top priority.

Talking to local journalists at the Timergara press club here on Tuesday the PML-N nominee claimed the nation was eyeing on Nawaz Sharif who would become the next prime minister. He said the PML-N would also form a government in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with the support of other political parties. He said the Lower Dir district had been deprived of development and he would initiate mega development projects in the district after coming into power.

He said that consumers would be provided with gas facilities irrespective of their political affiliation. He said that the establishment of an industrial zone, construction of more grid stations, functionalizing of the Koto Hydro power sta-

tion, establishment of a kidney hospital and construction of playgrounds were needed in the district for which he would work on priority basis.

PPP joined: A former village council chairman of the Pakistan Tahreek Insaf Mashooq Jan along with his supporters on Tuesday announced to join the Pakistan Peoples Party during a function held at Koheri village of Balambat. He had joined the PTI in 2018 after quitting the PPP. The PPP candidate for NA 6 Muhammad Hanif Khan, PK 14 candidate Muhammad Zamin, PPP tehsil general secretary Gul Mir Khan and others addressed the function. They criticized the PTI previous lawmakers for ignoring the district in development.

The speakers alleged the PTI lawmakers had for the first time sold government jobs to youths while blue-eyed were recruited during the previous government. They asked the gathering to vote for the PPP as it was the only political party that represented the poor and marginalized communities.

JI workers' convention: Addressing a party workers' convention at Sheikh Khan Timergara the Jamaat-i-Islami candidate for NA 7 Maulana Muhammad Ismail and PK

16 Shad Nawaz Khan said the JI would win majority of the seats in Lower Dir. The convention was also addressed by the JI tehsil chief Malik Sher Bahadar, district secretary information Shuiab Ahmad and others.

The JI candidates said that no one could deny the role of senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan and MNA Abdul Akbar Chitrali in the parliament. They said the JI was contesting elections not only to work for infrastructure development but also to struggle for the enforcement of sharia law in the country. He said the people should also support the JI candidates if they wanted to restrict un-Islamic acts in the country.

Talking about the JI former lawmakers' achievements, they said the establishment of the University of Malakand, BISE Malakand Chakdara, construction of 76 kilometer long Balambat irrigation channel, construction of several major bridges, establishment of the Timergara Medical College, initiating work on the Koto hydro power station, upgradation of degree colleges Timergara and Gulabad to postgraduate level, establishment of a public library at Timergara and a network of schools and colleges all were the JI achievements.

PML-N to ensure majority in next treasury setup: Azam

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Former Federal Law Minister and Senator Azam Nazir Tarar has claimed that Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif will be elected Prime Minister for fourth term in all circumstances either simple majority or with the cooperation of allied parties while Bilawal Bhutto never be elected Prime Minister.

Addressing a press conference at resident of Chaudhary Qasim Ali Tarar in Vanike Tarar, Azam Nazir Tarar said that People Party is only provincial party of Sindh and no role of PPP is seemed in forming or strengthen next government. He expressed his hope that the people of the country would be proved that Pakistan Muslim League (N) was only popular party of the country to vote for PML-N in general election whereas PML-N would get simple majority.

He said that collaboration of different parties was beauty of politics and PML-N had made seat adjustment with different parties in Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Baluchistan provinces already. He said

that this bouquet and four units, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif would be elected next Prime Minister for fourth term. He said that it was need of the hour to strengthen all democratic institutions of the country and culture of hate and anarchy would be eliminated from country.

PML-N leader suggested that all mature political forces and parties should be united at same platform for starting new journey of progress and prosperity of the country. Replying to a question, he said that Muslim League (N) and Pakistan PPP were rival political parties and they both made ally in last regime of Benazir Bhutto but unfortunately elected Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was expelled from government undemocratically.

Our leadership neither give reply of nonserious language of chairman PPP being used in his speeches nor it was suit them, he said and added that Bilawal Bhutto never be elected Prime Minister at all because PPP was only a provincial party at Sindh level whereas PPP was not

in capacity to form or strengthen the government.

Responding to a query, he said that Imran Khan was made tall claims to save his government and PTI was not give opportunity to take sigh of relief to anyone its regime, whereas PTI was made suicide attacks on national economy, IMF Programme and PTI finally attacked on state institutions which was witnessed the whole nation, it was a dreadful conspiracy. He said that law would be taken action against proclaimed offenders and culprits.

He further said that Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif would steer the country from all crises to use his experience and vision to elect Prime Minister while 8, February would be day of success of PML-N. He regretfully said that workers and leadership of PML-N were faced fake cases of narcotics and cruelty during the PTI government but all workers were remained stand by the Mian Muhammad Nawa Sharif whereas now all so-called leaders of PTI were proved wall of sand and left their leader Imran Khan and Party.



HYDERABAD: Motorcyclist crossing railway track while train is approaching.

Empowerment of tribal girls stressed

F.P. Report

GHALANAI: In a concerted effort to uplift and empower girls' education in the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a special lecture was organized under the "Illum Tolo Da Para" campaign. Spearheaded by the Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps North, the event aimed to advocate for and promote educational opportunities for girls in Mohmand.

Superintendent of Police

(SP) Shazia Shahid, Director IT School Shakas, delivered an inspiring lecture across various girls' school campuses in Mohmand District. Her discourse emphasized the pivotal role of education for women and underscored the significance of serving as positive role models for future generations.

The guest speaker, alongside the District Education Officer, Mohmand shed light on the importance of girls' education and the proactive measures being implemented in Mohmand District to facilitate educational advancement for girls. The initiative garnered immense appreciation from both teachers and students, who lauded the efforts of the Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps North for providing a platform for meaningful interaction and dialogue, particularly tailored for girls, a pioneering endeavor in Mohmand district.

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QUETTA: Balochistan Provincial Minister for Health Dr. Ameer Muhammad Khan Jogizai present shield to Chairperson National Commission on Status of Women, Nilofar Bakhtiar.

JI, the only option in election F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) is the only option for the poor and underprivileged citizens of the country. JI is competent enough to take out the country of the prevailing economic and other problems. JI is well aware of the miseries of residents of Landi Kotal and will resolve it if elected.

These views were expressed by JI candidate for NA-27 Shah Faisal Afridi while addressing on the occasion of 'Meet the Press' here in Landi Kotal press club district Khyber on Tuesday. Flanked by PK-69, Muqtader Shah and other local leaders said that JI was a party of masses and the lonely option of poor citizens to get rid of corrupt rulers.

Since the creation of Pakistan, a group of corrupt rulers have been imposed on it that has made it almost bankrupt while the citizens are still deprived of basic rights, he remarked.

It was the purpose of JI politics to establish the Islamic code of life in the society and to bring change through democratic ways. He maintained that if JI gets an opportunity to rule, it will deliver with honesty and competence.

Peace was inevitable for economic development and JI would restore permanent calmness if got power. He called upon the tribesmen not to be deceived by the false promises of the observed former candidates and vote JI in the best interest of them.

Session on career development F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: In compliance with the directive issued by Deputy Commissioner Dir lower Wasil Khan on Tuesday a day-long session on "Career Counselling/Development" was organized by the District Youth Office in collaboration with the district administration Dir Lower at Dreams College Timergara here.

Hazrat Bilal (Additional Assistant Commissioner Timergara and Akbar Khan, a renowned social activist were invited as guest speakers in the Session. They highlighted the importance of career development and practiced SWOT analysis. The purpose of the activities was analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and how to avoid and overcome the anxiety and depression in students' career.

The speakers shared their personal success stories and encouraged the students to go ahead and focus on their career rather than focusing on useless depression. They said students should move forward with confidence and make their own decisions. The question-answers session was also carried out in which the participants showed keen interest. The take-away of the session was self-well-being and focusing on career goals rather than useless activities. At the end of the session certificates were distributed among the students and Shields were presented to the guests and prominent.

Competition expected on KP PA seats in Mardan

F.P. Report

MARDAN: A thrilling contest was expected on three provincial assembly constituencies of Mardan district among candidates of different political parties in upcoming general elections scheduled to be held on February 8.

PK-57 was considered one of those three provincial assembly constituencies. The number of total registered voters in this constituency is 184364 and 13 candidates were facing each other on the seat. The constituency was comprised of most of urban areas including Gulibagh, Baricham, Hoti and Sheikhmaltoon town.

The contesting candidates who were considered to give tough time to each, identified as Ahmad Khan Bahadar of ANP, Moulana Amanat Shah of JUI-F, Nawabzada Umar Farooq Khan of PPP and Zahir Shah Toru of PTI who was running elections as an

independent aspirant this year.

It was pertinent to mention here that the PTI candidates Zahid Durani in 2013 and Zahir Shah Toru in 2018 general elections had won this constituency.

In PK-58, nine candidates of different political parties were in the field. The number of total registered voters was 217529 in Pk-58 constituency. It was comprised of city and cantonment board areas. The ANP candidate and ex-chief minister Ameer Haider Khan Hoti had won this constituency consecutively in 2008, 2013 and 2018 general polls.

This time Mr. Haider Khan Hoti was facing the other contesting rivals including Abdus Salam Afridi of PTI, Mushtaq Seemab advocate of JI and Moulana Taj-ul-Ameen Jabal of JUI-F. However, Mr. Hoti was considered the most strong candidate to win the PK-58 provincial

assembly constituency this time as well.

Likewise, 17-candidates were in the fray in PK-59 constituency wherein the number of total registered voters was 178684. The constituency was mostly comprised of rural areas including Gujargari, Jamalgari, Manga, Fatima, Babaini, and Sarushah.

The ex-senior provincial minister Muhammad Atif Khan had won this provincial assembly seat twice in 2013 and 2018 general elections on PTI ticket. However, Mr. Atif Khan was running elections on NA-22 seat this time and left the PK-59 seat to his closed associate Tariq Mehmood Aryan.

Apart from PTI candidate, the ANP district general secretary Haroon Khan, the ex-tehsil naib-nazim Ibrahim Biland of JI and Moulana Aqil Ansari of JUI-F were going to give tough time to each other in the up-coming general elections.

JSQP holds protest against maltreatment of resources

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The Jai Sindh Quami Party (JSQP) arranged protest against the auction of Sindh lands, cutting of Karunjhar Jebel and alteration of Sindh's resources at in front of the town hall of Badh major city of Larkana district.

The protestors carrying banners and placards with the slogans of stop auctioning and destroying the resources of Sindh. Qadir Brohi and others said that the PPP has been imposed on Sindh for the past fifteen years, which has destroyed and ruined Sindh. The government lands of various districts of Sindh have been illegally given in the name of their favorite personalities. Beauty is cutting the Jabal Jabal, which the people of Sindh cannot bear in any case.

Their enemies are starting several phases of DHA projects, which are trying to resettle non-local people in Sindh. He said that Sindh is not an international orphanage. Every government that comes to this auction, Anhuni has warned the government to end the anti-Sindh projects so that the first wave of chaos among the people of Sindh can end will go.

Women March to be held 8th March: The leader of Sindh Shahi Organization (SSO) Ayesha Deharijo,

Alia Bakhsh Thalhu of Sindh Women's Democratic Front in Larkana Press Club with other women's organizations said that women will march on March 8.

Because women are being mistreated in many areas of Sindh, women are being massacred due to misbehavior in tribalism and are subjected to unnecessary torture in the name of honor, while the women of Larkana Division are being subjected to violence. There are many problems where women are being harassed and tortured in educational and various institutions. The abovementioned leaders added that only from 2021 to 2023 more than 500 women and men have been accused of defamation and blackmailing.

Larkana is a big city and political stronghold of Sindh, where different societies have flowed, but despite them, women are not safe and there are incidents of harassment of them in different ways. He said that we are organizing the platform of Larkana Women's Action Committee till the month of March and hosting the women's march on March 8.

The purpose of Kareng Hamari March will be to have houses in the name of women living at home, to take measures for women's reproductive health and to

end sexual harassment of women employed in various government and semi-government offices and to honor women. Stopping killings in the name of and harassing women while stopping gas are also the objectives of stopping.

Balanced use of fertilizers stressed for high cultivation: A seminar on balanced use of fertilizer was organized by Fujii Fertilizer Committee (FFC) at Larkana, in which special guest Director Agriculture Extension wing Lal Deen Junejo and many farmers of the surrounding area participated.

On the occasion, FFC's agricultural expert Muhammad Waqas, balanced use of fertilizer. Participating farmers were informed on the subject and it was strongly emphasized that the farmer should use the fertilizer in a balanced way to get the desired results.

On this occasion Director Agriculture Extension Larkana Division Lal Deen Junejo said that the farmer should FFC farmers can benefit from the free experience of soil and water to increase the yield per acre of agricultural land, while doing so can also get the best yield. They can play their role in improving the economy in the province.

Tough competition excepts between PPP & PML-N in Thatta

F.P. Report

THATTA: PML-N candidate from NA: 225 district Thatta Rasool Bux Jakhro has rejected all claims regarding a "Secret deal" with PPP candidate Sadiq Ali Memon, on Tuesday.

This he said while addressing a public gathering as part of his election campaign in Jughshahi town of district Thatta that he had challenged the corrupt system by contesting election

against those who had been plundering the resources of Sindh for years. "I will take concrete measures to uplift quality of life of people living in the remote areas of district Thatta", adding that he would not bent his knees to his opponents at any cost. Recounting contributions of PML-N chief Nawaz he said that during PML-N governments Pakistan was put on the path of progress and peace was restored in Karachi the biggest city of

the country. Hitting out at his rivals he said that those who ruled Sindh for 15 years were earning the ire of public upon their failure to deliver. Thatta a historically rich district of Sindh comprises two provincial assembly seats-PS 75 and PS 76 besides a national assembly seat-NA: 225. An interesting consent is expected between Pakistan People's Party's candidate Sadiq Ali Memon and Rasool Bux Jakhro of PML-N for NA-225.



In Kayah, medics treat war wounded in hidden hospitals

KAYAH STATE: When the military seized power in February 2021, Dr Ye was living a life many young people in Myanmar only dream of - working as a doctor in London. Hailing from a military-supporting family, he had given little thought to politics before then. "Before the coup, I was brainwashed by them," the 32-year-old told Al Jazeera during an interview in southern Shan State in December. "The coup enlightened me."

But it also left him reeling with survivors' guilt. He watched from afar as hundreds of people his age and younger were gunned down in the streets during peaceful pro-democracy protests. Soon, those protests morphed into an armed uprising, with the military deploying mass reprisals against the civilian population. "For a while, I was donating money, but I wasn't happy with that. Every morning when I woke up, I was depressed seeing news about the killings, the bombings, the burned down villages," he said.

At his lowest point, Dr Ye even attempted suicide. "I decided I had to come back and participate in the revolution physically," he said. In April 2022, he travelled to Kayah State, which shares a mountainous border with Thailand. A coalition of anti-coup armed groups has carved out significant territory there and in neighbouring southern Shan. Dr Ye's decision to move to this "liberated area" caused a rift in his family because his father is an official in the regime's prison department in the nation's capital of Naypyidaw. "We totally split up, we don't talk at all any more," he said, adding that his father had even threatened him with arrest. "I don't think he'll ever change his mind."

His background as a paediatrician made Dr Ye valuable in treating the many children displaced by the conflict, but like all healthcare professionals in Kayah, he is also a temporary war medic. "I have to stabilise the vital signs, check the blood pressure and heart rate," he said, of patients brought in after being injured in the conflict. When a resistance fighter was rushed into her clinic in east Demoso with a serious injury to his right leg from an air attack, Dr May got to work despite the buzz of warplanes overhead.

"We could hear the sound of a fighter jet flying over us, but we couldn't run anywhere because we had to resuscitate the soldier. So, we just had to stay there and accept whatever might come," said the 33-year-old, who worked as a general practitioner at a private hospital in Mawlamyine before the coup. "I could work in a private hospital again or go abroad, but if I did that I'd feel like I wasn't doing my duty for my country, for my people," she said. In the first half of 2023, east Demoso was one of the worst conflict zones in the country, and

Dr May took to sleeping in a bomb shelter.

"Every day when I woke up, I heard the sound of artillery, and sometimes at 2 or 3am, we'd hear a fighter jet flying over our heads," she said. "We literally lived beneath the soil in the bunker. We had to sleep there, we had to eat there because we didn't feel safe on the surface any more." When Al Jazeera visited east Demoso on January 4, it was eerily quiet. Fighting had since shifted to Loikaw, the state capital, but few civilians had returned home, leaving the area largely devoid of people. Dr May said the military targets healthcare facilities because it knows resistance fighters receive treatment there, even though common civilians also rely on them for life-saving care.

"Because we've been taking care of our comrades, including war injuries, and that's not good for these ...," she pauses thinking of the right word. "These dogs." Since the coup, people in Myanmar have taken to referring to regime soldiers as sit-kway, or "military dogs". The Geneva Convention says that health facilities and mobile health units "may in no circumstances be attacked".

After months of near-misses, Dr May's hospital was hit by an air raid in May 2023. "It felt like I'm suddenly on a battlefield, I'm inside my own coffin, everything flashed before my eyes," she said. Luckily, nobody was killed, but the inpatient buildings were destroyed. Dr May's hospital has since moved to a more stable area in the state and Dr Ye said his facility has also relocated three or four times. Dr Oak, who did autopsies of the victims of the Christmas Eve massacre, said he has had to move twice as well. Once, a missile landed next to his hospital in Nanmekhon in Demoso township. The second time, an air raid hit his facility in northern Loikaw township. Dr Oak was taking a break, using the internet in town, but four of his medics were killed. For this reason, most hospitals in Kayah are not only hidden but also come equipped with bomb shelters.

When Al Jazeera visited one of these clandestine hospitals in late December, a member of the Demoso People's Defence Force (PDF) was groaning in his bed. "It hurts so much I can't sleep," he said. The PDF is a pro-democracy armed group with units spread out across the country. The fighter's legs had been badly injured by an air attack in Loikaw; doctors had already amputated one of his feet. Half of the 12 patients in the hospital had been injured by landmines in Moebye, a town in southern Shan that is mostly controlled by the resistance. The military seemingly rigged it with explosives before retreating in September 2022. — Aljazeera

ANC suspends Zuma after rival party launch

JOHANNESBURG (BBC): South Africa's former President Jacob Zuma has been suspended from the party he once led, after refusing to vote for it and launching a rival organisation. The governing African National Congress (ANC) announced this decision.

"Zuma and others whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles, will find themselves outside the African National Congress," said Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula. Mr Zuma's nine years as president, from 2009, were dogged by scandal. An official inquiry said the former president placed the interests of corrupt associates ahead of those of his country, in a process known as "state capture". After he left office, he was jailed in 2021 for not appearing at the inquiry. He also faces corruption charges over a 1999 arms deal. He denies wrongdoing in all cases.

Despite these issues, the ANC had tolerated Mr Zuma, but the creation of a new party that may pose a threat was deemed a step too far. The party, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), meaning "spear of the

nation", shares a name with the ANC's former armed wing he once served in. In a scathing letter, Mr Zuma's former ANC bedfellows accuse him of debasing the "proud history of armed struggle against the apartheid regime" through the "opportunistic use of military symbolism". They also say MK only exists to "erode the support base of the ANC".

South Africa's current President, Cyril Ramaphosa, replaced then-President Zuma in 2018 and promised to clean up government. He now leads an embattled ANC into this year's general election. At MK's official launch in December, a statement was read on Mr Zuma's behalf saying he would "die a member of the ANC" but not vote for it, adding that some of its leaders behave in an "un-ANC manner" and it was now his mission to "rescue" the "once-great movement". Mr Zuma has also launched highly personal attacks on his successor, and former deputy, Mr Ramaphosa. The BBC's Daniel de Simone in Johannesburg says many South Africans see Mr

Zuma as representing what is wrong with the recent past, and as having tainted the ANC. Yet he commands huge loyalty from some quarters. Thousands of South Africans rioted in protest at his 2021 jailing for contempt of court, and a recent poll estimates that almost one in three South Africans approve of him.

It is not yet clear how far this will translate into popular support for his new MK party at the ballot box, but it is likely to cost the ANC votes. The ANC, which had its roots in the liberation struggle against apartheid, has governed South Africa ever since white-minority rule ended in 1994. Mr Zuma, 81, had been a lifelong member of the ANC. He joined aged 17 with no formal schooling and soon rose through the ranks of the ANC's military and intelligence wings, followed by top posts in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal and ultimately the deputy presidency and presidency. Correspondents say this year's election is viewed by many as the most competitive since the ANC came to power in 1994.

Ecowas: Nigeria rebukes states for quitting regional bloc

ABUJA (BBC): Nigeria has accused Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger of letting their people down by quitting the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas). It is the first comment from the chair of the economic and political body since the three governments announced their decision to leave.

The three states were already suspended from Ecowas after recent coups. Their military rulers have distanced themselves from ex-colonial power France and strengthened ties to Russia. Arguing that they wanted to restore security before organising elections, they formed a mutual defence pact in September called the

Alliance of Sahel States. They accuse Ecowas of being influenced by external powers and failing to help them tackle the jihadist violence in their countries.

Reports from Niger said 22 people had been killed in a suspected jihadist attack on a village near the border with Mali. A local official said people had arrived in Motagatta in the Tillaberi region on motorbikes and started shooting people. Withdrawal will hit hard given that the community guarantees visa-free travel and the right of settlement and work in member countries, according to an analysis by AFP news agency.

Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger were all founding

members when Ecowas was set up nearly 50 years ago. Relations between the three countries and the with Ecowas had been tense after coups took place in Niger in July, Burkina Faso in 2022 and Mali in 2020. Ecowas called on all three countries to return to civilian rule. In its statement on the three countries' departure, Nigeria's foreign ministry accused them of not acting in good faith and criticised their military leaders. "Unelected leaders engage in a public posturing to deny their people the sovereign right to make fundamental choices over their freedom of movement, freedom to trade and freedom to choose their own leaders," it said.

Election officials register Putin to run in election

MOSCOW (AP): Russia's election commission formally registered President Vladimir Putin as a candidate for the March presidential election, a vote in which he's all but certain to win another six-year term in office. Putin, 71, is running as an independent, but he retains tight control over Russia's political system that he has established during 24 years in power. With prominent critics who could challenge him either jailed or living abroad and most independent media banned, his re-election in the March 15-17 presidential vote looks all but assured.

In 2018, Putin also ran as an independent, snubbing the United Russia party that nominated him to run in 2012. With his approval ratings hovering around 80 percent, Putin is far more popular than United Russia, which is widely seen as a part of the Kremlin-controlled state bureaucracy rather than a political force. The Central Election Commission formally cleared Putin for the race after reviewing 315,000 signatures gathered by his campaign from all 89 regions of Russia. Russian election law requires independent candidates to present at least 300,000 signatures to get on the ballot. The commission already has approved three other candidates who were nominated by parties represented in parliament and weren't required to collect signatures: Nikolai Kharitonov of the Communist Party, Leonid Slutsky of the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party and Vladislav Davankov of the New People Party. All three parties have been largely supportive of the Kremlin's policies. Kharitonov ran against Putin in 2004, finishing a distant second.

Boris Nadezhdin, a 60-year-old liberal politician who serves as a local legislator in a town near Moscow, is also seeking to run. He has openly called for a halt to the conflict in Ukraine and starting a dialogue with the West. Thousands of Russians have lined up across the country to leave their signatures in support of Nadezhdin's candidacy to allow him to qualify for the race, an unusual show of opposition sympathies in the rigidly controlled political landscape that raised a challenge for the Kremlin. The Central Election Commission is expected to review Nadezhdin's papers later this week to decide whether to register him for the race. Under a constitutional reform that he engineered, Putin is eligible to seek two more six-year terms, potentially allowing him to remain in power until 2036.

French farmers block major motorways

PARIS: French farmers have blocked major motorways around France with tractors in a standoff with the government over concerns about inflation and competition from cheap imports. Farmers said they aimed to establish eight chokepoints on significant roads into Paris. "We need answers," said Karine Duc, a farmer in southwestern Lot-et-Garonne, as she joined a convoy of tractors heading for Paris.

"This is the final battle for farming. It's a question of survival," she told the Agence France-Presse news agency. The government, which has been careful to avoid an escalation, has gradually dropped plans to reduce subsidies on agricultural diesel and promised to ease environmental regulations. Paris has also said it would push its European Union peers to agree to ease regulations on fallow farmland. Farmers must meet certain conditions to receive EU subsidies, including a requirement to devote 4 percent of farmland to "non-productive" areas where nature can recover. But farmers organisations say the plans need to go further. "At this stage, what we want ... is to increase the pressure," Arnaud Rousseau, head of the influential farmers union FNSEA, said on RTL radio. "So we will block all the main highways that go to and from Paris, up to 30km [18 miles] from Paris. — Agencies

Meloni unveils plan to promote Africa development, curb migration

ROME (AP): Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni unveiled Italy's big development plan for Africa at a summit of the continent's leaders, aiming to stem the numbers of migrants, diversify sources of energy and forge a new, non-predatory relationship between Europe and Africa.

Meloni declared the summit a successful first step, and top European and United Nations officials said the Italian plan, with an initial endowment of 5.5 billion euros, would complement initiatives already under way focusing on climate adaptation and clean energy development in Africa. But African Union Commission Chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat was more cautious, telling the summit that African countries would have liked to have been consulted beforehand and didn't want more empty pledges.

"We need to pass from words to deeds," Faki, the former prime minister of Chad, told the summit. "You can understand that we cannot be happy with promises that often are not maintained." Two dozen African leaders, top EU and UN officials and representatives from international lending institutions were in Rome for the summit, the first major event of Italy's Group of Seven presidency.

Italy, which for decades has been ground zero in Europe's migration debate, has been promoting its development plan as a way to create jobs and opportunity in Africa and discourage its young people from making dangerous migrations across the Mediterranean Sea. The plan involves pilot projects in areas such as education, health care, water, sanitation, agriculture and energy infrastructure. In her opening, Meloni outlined projects from Morocco to Mozambique that she said would enable Africa to become a major exporter of energy to Europe, to help wean it off its dependence on Russian energy following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Italy, which under fascism was a colonial ruler in North Africa, would stand to benefit as a hydrogen pipeline would pass through the peninsula, she said. She said the plan envisaged an initial endowment of 5.5 billion euros in loans, gifts and guarantees. It wasn't immediately clear if the amounts represented new investments or monies previously earmarked for development. "We want to free up African energy to guarantee younger generations a right, which to date has been denied," Meloni told the summit in



an opening address. "Because here in Europe we talk a lot about the right to emigrate, but we rarely talk about guaranteeing the right to not be forced to emigrate."

Meloni, Italy's first hard-right leader since the end of World War II, has made curbing migration a priority of her government. But her first year in power saw a big jump in the numbers of people who arrived on Italy's shores, with about 160,000 last year. As the summit got underway, the International Organization for Migration reported that nearly 100 people had died or gone missing in the Mediterranean so far this year, twice as many as in the same period of last year, which was the deadliest since 2016. The government's plan, named after Enrico Mattei, founder of state-controlled oil and gas company Eni, seeks to expand cooperation with Africa beyond energy and amounts to a new philosophy and method, Meloni said. "It's a cooperation of equals, far from any predatory temptation, but also far from the charitable posture with Africa that rarely is reconciled with its extraordinary potential for development," Meloni told the leaders. Asked at a closing press conference about the lack of consultation with African leaders, Meloni acknowledged she may have "erred" in being too specific in describing pilot projects in her introductory speech. But she said the summit provided African leaders with a preliminary outline of Italy's philosophy backed by concrete examples, that will be brought forward in a shared partnership.

As the summit got underway, Italian green and opposition lawmakers held a counter-conference at

Italy's lower chamber of parliament to criticize the Mattei Plan as a neo-colonial "empty box" that seeks to again exploit Africa's natural resources. Cristiano Maureri of Action Aid Italia lamented that the government had excluded any consultation with civil society groups active in African development to formulate the plan, and said that it regardless represented something of a repackaging of existing projects. "We are talking about initiatives that have already been presented in other contexts, only with a new stamp on them," he said. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed praised Italy for focusing on the key pillars of energy and food systems, saying they complement an approach already mapped out by the African Union. But she lamented that overall, the 2030 targets of the globally-approved UN Sustainable Development Goals are "falling woefully short."

"I urge the government of Italy to make such deep, effective, and equal partnerships a reality, and to use its presidency of the G7 to work with other countries to do likewise," she said. Alongside the Mattei Plan, Meloni's government has forged controversial deals with individual countries to try to mitigate the migration burden on Italy. An EU-backed deal with Tunisia aims to curb departures through economic development projects and legal migration opportunities, while a bilateral deal with Albania calls for the creation of centers in Albania to process asylum applications for Italy-bound migrants rescued at sea. Albania's Constitutional Court cleared the deal to be voted on by parliament.

Ukraine funding, Orban's opposition set to dominate crucial EU summit

BRUSSELS: European Union leaders are preparing for a crucial meeting that will be dominated by a second attempt at passing a 50-billion-euro (\$54bn) amendment to the EU budget that will help finance Ukraine over the next four years. That amendment was vetoed by Hungary at December's regular summit along with 20 billion euros (\$21.7bn) in military aid to Ukraine for 2024.

The EU's executive, the European Commission, is reportedly hoping to bring Hungary on board at Thursday's meeting by offering Prime Minister Viktor Orban an opportunity to block a continuation of the support next year when the EU would evaluate whether Ukraine still needs the money and meets requirements to receive it. EU support has been key to Ukraine's war effort.

The bloc has spent more than 40 billion euros (\$43bn) to support Ukraine's budget and 27 billion euros (\$29bn) in military aid since the war began almost two years ago in addition to 17 billion euros (\$18.4bn) supporting millions of Ukrainian refugees in Europe. This year, Ukraine's budget faces a \$48 billion shortfall. There is a more coercive approach. This month, the European Parliament condemned

Orban's December veto and asked the European Council of EU government leaders to investigate Hungary for "serious and persistent breaches of EU values". That obliges the council, which still wields ultimate power in the EU, to invoke proceedings that could ultimately suspend Hungary's voting rights and deprive it of its veto. But Europe initiated such proceedings, known as Article 7, against Hungary in 2018, and they failed because the system requires unanimity in the council and Poland supported Hungary. Poland has a new, centre-left government that is friendly to Ukraine and no longer aligned with Orban, but Slovakia last year brought Robert Fico's Smer Party to power to Orban's undisguised delight.

Both men are Eurosceptics and share an adversarial relationship with Brussels. Fico immediately ceased supplying military aid to Ukraine upon taking office and this month voiced his support for Orban. "I will never agree that a country should be punished for fighting for its sovereignty. I will never agree with such an attack on Hungary," he said in a joint press conference with Orban. "Article 7 would need a consensus that every member state would support it, but Slovakia won't,

and almost certainly the Netherlands won't. So I would argue that it won't go through." University of Helsinki lecturer in Eastern European studies Katalin Miklossy told Al Jazeera. The top vote-getter in Dutch parliamentary elections last year was the party of far-right leader Gert Wilders, who has yet to form a government but has also said aid to Ukraine should be cut.

EU members could continue to provide aid through a special vehicle that lies outside their regular budget, something Orban has said he would not oppose, or by allowing member states to help Ukraine bilaterally. These approaches have disadvantages. They are more expensive and deprive the EU of a single voice in foreign policy, making it appear weak as war rages on European soil. They fail to address problems in Hungary itself, which the European Parliament described as an "electoral autocracy" that defies EU values. It has already seen 30 billion euros (\$32.5bn) in EU aid suspended for manipulating the judiciary and suppressing free speech and minority rights. Most importantly from a practical point of view, these approaches do not lock in the aid at a time when the EU is mostly comprised of

governments and a European legislature willing to help Ukraine. Many observers expect European Parliament elections in June to produce a legislature less well-disposed towards Kyiv - and that could be what Orban is banking on. "Victor Orban reads the cards right, unfortunately," Miklossy said. "He understands the wind in the EU is changing. There are more and more voices in the EU that want the Ukrainians to just sit down at the table and negotiate peace with the Russians because we cannot afford to support Ukraine forever." In this view, Orban lies in wait for a Eurosceptic government in Austria this autumn, where the far-right Freedom Party has led polls for a year, and in Germany next year, where the far-right Alternative for Germany has doubled its following in the past 18 months and now comes second in polls to the Christian Democratic Union.

Orban may be right about European trends, according to a poll the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) published this month. It found that climate change, pandemics, immigration and fears of global financial instability all trounced Ukraine as existential fears in nine European countries polled.

UN's top court will rule Friday on its jurisdiction in a Ukraine case

THE HAGUE (AP): The United Nations' top court will rule on Friday whether it has jurisdiction in a case brought by Ukraine accusing Russia of violating international law by using a false accusation of genocide as the pretext for its 2022 invasion.

Kyiv launched the case at the International Court of Justice days after the start of the full-scale war in 2022, arguing that Russia breached the 1948 Genocide Convention by wrongly claiming Ukraine was committing genocide against Russian-speaking people in the country. Russia has flouted an order by The Hague-based court to halt hostilities.

Moscow snubbed hearings over provisional measures in 2022 but filed an objection to the court's jurisdiction. During hearings in 2023, lawyers for Russia asked the court to toss out the complaint, calling the legal case an "abuse of process." Ukraine is not claiming Russia is committing genocide but rather arguing that the false accusation of genocide is enough to violate the 1948 treaty. Kyiv told judges the neighboring countries clearly have a dispute as defined by the convention. The court on Wednesday will rule on a separate case between Russia and Ukraine. In a complaint filed in 2017, Kyiv says Russia began

bankrolling rebels in eastern Ukraine in 2014 and has discriminated against Crimea's multiethnic community after its annexation of the region. In that case, brought under an anti-discrimination treaty and a terrorism financing convention, Ukraine has asked the court to order Moscow to pay reparations for attacks and crimes in the region. That would include the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 which was shot down by Russia-backed rebels on July 17, 2014, killing all 298 passengers and crew. The International Court of Justice captured world attention in recent weeks with a case brought by South Africa accusing

Israel of committing genocide in Gaza. Judges issued provisional measures last week calling on Israel to do all it can to prevent death, destruction and any acts of genocide in the conflict. In an interview with The Associated Press last week, the UN high commissioner for refugees, Filippo Grandi, expressed concern the war in Ukraine was being forgotten. "I think the big difference from last year to this year is that this year, this is not news anymore in the world," he said. Latest UN figures say 10 million people have been displaced by the war in Ukraine, with more than 10,000 people killed and another 19,000 injured.

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Pak-Iran reunion

FOREIGN Minister of Iran, Honourable Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has recent paid an official trip to Pakistan. The extraordinary visit of the Iranian Foreign Minister to Islamabad owes tremendous importance in the backdrop of the recent border clashes and diplomatic uproar between the two neighbors. The Iranian foreign Minister held brief talks with his Pakistani counterpart Syed Jalil Abbas Jilani, and also met Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Kakar, and Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir at Army Headquarters in Rawalpindi. According to the details, a wide array of bilateral relations including the border situation and the recent unfortunate incidents were briefly discussed during the first-ever high-level interactions in the post-conflict scenario between the two brotherly Muslim states.

In fact, the emergency diplomatic voyage of the Iranian chief diplomat effectively bridged the gap and reunited both nations reiterating their resolve to expand their cooperation, especially in the political and security domains. Both sides agreed to adopt collective and collaborative approaches to confront the menace of transnational terrorism by fully leveraging the robust institutional mechanism that already exists between their countries. The top leadership of Iran and Pakistan agreed to establish a high-level consultative mechanism at the level of the foreign ministers which will meet alternatively in both Iran and Pakistan regularly to oversee the progress that is being made in various areas of bilateral cooperation and teamwork. Both countries vowed to cooperate to fight terrorism in their respective areas while liaison officers would be appointed in each other country for effective coordination against the collective enemies.

Pakistan and Iran are two brotherly Muslim nations that are linked with multiple bonds of religion, shared culture, language, history, religious heritage, and geographical association. The two countries have ever enjoyed great cultural, geographical, and historical commonalities throughout the past. Both countries significantly boosted their trade and security cooperation by constituting a bilateral border management mechanism along with setting up various border markets to curb smuggling, promote trade activities, and increase livelihoods in border regions. Unfortunately, the Pak-Iran border region had always been a point of concern between the two neighbors due to the illegal movement of miscreants, transnational criminal gangs, and smugglers. Baloch ethnic insurgent groups the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) have sanctuaries on the other side of the border that are often used by the anti-state elements to attack Pakistan, while the Iranian Sitsan-based Jaish Al-Adel often crossed joint border to hide inside Pakistan.

Historically, foreign-funded terrorist groups and transnational criminal gangs are the major threat to Pakistan-Iran ties, peace, and stability in that region. Both countries are well aware of the foreign powers who substantially fund and sponsor those terror groups. Indian Intelligence Agency coordinates with Baloch insurgents through the Indian Embassy in Tehran and Consulate General in Zaydan, while Western Intelligence Agencies use their diplomatic missions to support Jaish Al-Adel for the said job from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Transnational terrorism is a real risk which merits coordinated efforts, teamwork, and cooperation from both effectees nations. The leadership from both countries has displayed the utmost resilience, brotherliness, and sagacity in dealing with the recent border clashes to undermine their bilateral fraternal ties. The two sides had a consensus that terrorism was a common threat that needed to be tackled through collaborative efforts, better coordination, and intelligence sharing, agreeing to use collective wisdom and joint resources to overcome this challenge. It is of utmost importance that both countries use this opportunity in their best national interests and eradicate the menace of terrorism from their soils permanently to provide a peaceful, secure, and healthy living environment to the people of the region.

SBP's monotonous policy drive

THE SBP's Monetary Policy Committee has decided to maintain the current interest rate of 22 percent for another 2-month term. The SBP Governor and the monetary policy committee members told the media that there has been a significant improvement in the foreign exchange reserves which exceeded 8 billion dollars at this point. The Central Bank authorities forecasted that steady growth is likely to curb the headline inflation up to 23 to 25 percent by the end of the current financial year.

The Central Bank's narrative regarding the improvement in economic conditions and the continuation of a historic high-interest rate of 22% for a straight several months is somewhat harmful if not disastrous. Pakistan is witnessing the highest-ever interest rate in South Asia, which is not only counterproductive for the national economy but is indicative of some emergency situations in the country. The interest rate is a key tool used by the central bank to regulate the economy and control money trading by the private banks. The lower interest rates facilitate the money borrowing by households and businesses along with encouraging investment to stimulate economic growth. Conversely, higher interest rates curb money borrowing, discourage domestic/foreign investment, and slow down economic growth.

Following the 2022 floods and the acute financial pressures earlier in the year, economic activity has stabilized and inflation has begun to gradually decline on the back of strong policy adjustment, however, political uncertainty and unstable foreign reserves largely marred the gains of the South Asian economy. Historically, the Central Bank remained focused on the traditional measures of policy adjustment concerning interest rates and trading of bonds/certificates while totally ignoring the lucrative cryptocurrency market and manipulation of online sales/purchase markets that is almost equal to the traditional global economy. This is the field that does not demand bulk domestic/foreign investment, imports, exports or other costly endeavors but needs mental work and brainstorming from the central bank's high ups in respect of legislation, regulation, and strict monitoring. A majority of the world nations have regulated cryptocurrency and successfully grasped limitless dividends of the cryptocurrency market. The State Bank must look for alternative fields to steer the nation out of persistent economic frailty, otherwise continuous high policy rates have sunk the businesses, and slowed down the economy in the past two years.

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Gaza war could shift region's rules of engagement

Dr. Mohammed Al-Sulami

OPERATION Al-Aqsa Flood has openly displayed the conflicting interests of stakeholders and brought the region back to the center of attention. Certain observers believe that the outcome of the Gaza dispute will shape the global order, surpassing other current conflicts in Asia or Europe.

Amid the Gaza war and other regional interactions, Iran's tensions with the US and Israel are escalating. Tel Aviv is exploiting the current volatility to target Iranian proxies, particularly Hezbollah. This is part of Israel's greater plan to position itself as the dominant economic and political power in the Middle East by reshaping the region. In light of this, Iran is revamping its strategies and approaches to engage and confront its adversaries.

Iran's approach to the Gaza war is based on three key factors. Firstly, its relationship with Hamas and the so-called Axis of Resistance. Secondly, internal socioeconomic conditions, with Iran aiming to address them through de-escalation and reconciliation with its neighbors, as reflected in last year's Saudi Arabia-Iran rapport deal. Thirdly, its relations with the US, amid concerns that, if the war continues and expands, Washington will intervene on the side of Israel, ultimately ending the Iranian project. Iran is keen to avoid this scenario.

Iran's perspective, since the outbreak of the Gaza war, is that the US is aiming to reposition itself as a vital actor in the region in the light of China's growing engagement through its transnational corridor, diplomacy and partnerships with Gulf states. Iran posits that, in order to achieve this, Washington and its partners last year announced the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, which Tehran perceives as a threat to its own aspirations to connect East and West, as well as the Global North and Global South, via economic corridors.

Some interpretations suggest that the Oct. 7 attack was an attempt to derail the US project to normalize relations between Israel and the Gulf states. Iran views this project as being dismissive of Palestinian interests and

has opposed it since Day 1. Hence, observers argue that Iran, via its proxies - in this case, Hamas - has adopted a more offensive and proactive approach to disrupt the US project, totally altering the understood rules of engagement between the actors.

Regardless of interpretations and which one is more valid than the other, from Israel's perspective, the prime goal of the Gaza war is to eliminate Hamas. If it is successful, Iran will suffer significantly, as it will lose an important lever it has employed in its regional dispute against the US and Israel. In addition, the elimination of Hamas would open the door to more advanced and aggressive campaigns against other Iranian proxies in Syria and Iraq. With the end of these proxies, Iran's influence and role in the region would come to an end.

Iran's forward defense strategy is facing a crisis, with Iranian proxies feeling the heat and Tehran believing that the battle could eventually shift to inside its territories. Typically, Iran blamed the US and Israel for this month's Kerman incident, in which almost 100 people were killed and more than 200 injured. Thousands had gathered at the tomb of Qassem Soleimani to mark the fourth anniversary of the former Quds Force commander's killing. In addition, cyberattacks on fuel stations and other critical infrastructure have been showcased by Iran as further evidence of the battle shifting closer to home. Iran is struggling to deal with three key challenges: continual support for its proxies, the consequences of the Gaza war and clear warnings from the US not to expand the conflict. To navigate these challenges, Iran has adopted a strategy that minimizes risks, maximizes gains and considers Arab public opinion.

Through this, it aims to prevent the Gaza war's ramifications from affecting its domestic stability, avoid direct confrontation with the US or Israel and win the sympathy of the Arab world. For its success, it depends on Iranian proxies sticking to the established rules of engagement. There may be

breaches, Iran acknowledges this, and is willing to accept US or Israeli retaliation, even if it is harsh.

This strategy is shaped by Iran's recognition of its limitations and constraints. It is pursuing a gradual approach of inflicting multiple minor blows on the US and Israel, rather than risking a costly direct confrontation that could risk the Iranian state and its regional ambitions.

The current conflict between Iranian proxies, Israel and the US has entered a new phase. Many key commanders and masterminds of Iranian proxies, such as Razi Mousavi, Saleh Al-Aroui and Abu Taqwa, have all been assassinated in recent weeks. These assassinations and other attacks were conducted quickly, with short time gaps in between, signifying a shift in the US and Israel's approaches and establishing a new deterrence equation that aims to minimize the chance of broader confrontations, while leaving the door open for US-Iranian dialogue on critical matters.

In light of this new equation, Iran's responses have been measured, reflecting its limitations. In addition, domestically, the Iranian political currents are divided over whether the country should or should not engage in a multifront regional war. Even Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei issued instructions to commanders, urging them to exercise restraint and avoid direct military confrontation. Russia and China's preoccupations with other war theaters, as well as US efforts to isolate them in the region, could further narrow Iranian options and responses in the future. If the US is successful in pushing back the Russians and Chinese, Iran will be left stranded, with little support, especially if it entangles itself deeper into the Gaza war or works to expand its scope.

Through analyzing Hassan Nasrallah's statements, it seems Hezbollah and Iran are coordinating to prevent a large-scale confrontation. The limited conflict in Lebanon-Israeli border areas serves as a sign of Hezbollah's willingness to engage in negotiations, particularly concerning border demarcation and issues that

have remained unresolved since 2006.

By analyzing Iran's strategic mindset and reviewing the previous actions taken by Tehran under similar circumstances, it becomes apparent that the conditions for confrontation between it and Israel are currently unfavorable. The qualitative recent Israeli operations have predominantly targeted the support provided by Iran to Hamas via its proxies. These operations are not aimed at directly striking the Iranian project, nor do they target Hezbollah's top leadership or military committees - which are positioned far away from the targeted areas - despite Israel's capability to do so.

The current situation indicates that the region will undergo significant changes following the Gaza war. The previous balances established in the past decade are no longer in place and the Iranian regime faces an existential threat if it continues to impede the US-Israeli project. Despite this bleak outlook for the regime, it still possesses various levers it could employ to stay afloat. These include closing the Strait of Hormuz and targeting strategic sea routes, with the Red Sea crisis being an example of this. It could also advance its nuclear program to establish a deterrent force against major threats, attack oil tankers to impact global oil prices or expand the scope of the confrontation in the Middle East by targeting Israeli interests both within and outside the Occupied Territories. Another option would be to activate Iranian cells in Europe and worldwide to destabilize global security and stability.

To conclude, given the Gaza war, its consequences and Iran's adaptation of its approaches and strategies to deal with new challenges, the most likely scenario is for Israel to generalize the model of the 2006 war and its aftermath, such that the cost of the war deters Hamas and other Iranian proxies from attacking it again. However, this Israeli aim is not in contradiction with Iran's overarching ambitions, as its proxies will continue to carry out their operations and roles across the region in line with Tehran's objectives.

Peace still elusive in Moscow-Kyiv conflict

Zhao Huirong

IN the tumultuous theater of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, this year seems full of uncertainties and shifting alliances. The fervor over Ukraine in Western corridors has metamorphosed into palpable weariness, mainly due to the Israel-Palestine conflict. With Ukrainian forces being compelled to shift from an offensive to a defensive stance, the scales seem tipped in favor of Moscow, which was perhaps evident in Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu's claim of having been in complete control of Mariupol on Dec 25, 2023.

Ukraine is caught between the pursuit of war and the clamors for peace at home. The Ukrainian government's call for an immediate withdrawal of Russian forces and the need for the international community to recognize Ukraine's borders with Russia reflect the harsh reality of a divided population. The majority of the Ukrainian people, though, still believe that the "resistance" against Russia should continue and Ukraine should not make any compromise on its territorial integrity. But since those demanding a "cease-fire" are in a minority in Ukraine's corridors of power, the Ukrainian government is not only unwilling to engage in negotiations but has also refrained from changing the piece of legislation implemented in October 2022 which explicitly prohibits negotiations with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The fulcrum of Ukraine's military capabilities rests precariously on the lever of Western support. A decline in military aid from the West could lead to a more severe crisis. The pivotal variable in the United States' policy toward Ukraine is the looming specter of the US presidential election in November. Should former US president Donald Trump or his endorsed candidate win the election, a seismic shift in US support for Ukraine could recalibrate the geopolitical chessboard, and prompt the US administration to divert its military and strategic resources to the Asia-Pacific region.

The US, meanwhile, has been treading cautiously, continuing to support Ukraine and coaxing European allies into making greater commitments to help Ukraine, with the ultimate goal of strategically weakening Russia so that the Russian people vote out Putin in the presidential election scheduled for March. But the fact that Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have halted their military support to Ukraine shows the US policy is a failure. Worse, thanks to the support of the US and the European Union to Ukraine, the European Parliament elections in June threaten to cause a surge in far-right parties, widening the divisions within the EU.

In Ukraine, internal strife and corruption have undermined the Ukrainian military's resolve. A combination of factors, from a shortage of recruits to poorly trained and inexperienced soldiers, paints a bleak picture of the Ukrainian military's spirit

and fighting capability. In the quest to bolster its ranks, Ukraine has widened the conscription net, by inviting older and inexperienced individuals to join the armed forces.

Besides, Ukraine's massive economic quagmire has exacerbated the country's predicament, not least because its national debt had increased further to \$136.35 billion by November 2023. That prompted Ukrainian Finance Minister Vladimir Martynenko to seek more foreign aid, citing a shortfall of \$290 billion in the required \$410 billion. The economic strains mean the government will struggle to provide adequate logistical support to the Ukrainian armed forces, creating a perfect storm of challenges.

On the opposite side of the chessboard, Russia sees Ukraine not only as a piece on the geopolitical chessboard but also as an internal affair. Though there were initial anti-war rumblings in Russia, the Russian government has successfully molded public opinion into resolute support for its actions against Ukraine. And since Putin is widely expected to be re-elected as the Russian president in March, the stage seems set for a bolder, more confident Russia.

Russia says it's on a mission to demilitarize and "de-Nazify" Ukraine, and simultaneously counter neocolonialism, oppose hegemony and reshape the global order to make it fairer and equitable. In fact, the political unity, economic rebound and efficient production of military equipment and weapons have helped Russia take forward its agenda.

However, the road ahead is not without challenges. Russia still faces resistance to its plan to "reclaim" southern Ukraine so as to establish a land route between "New Russia" (sparsely settled land south of Russia) and "Transnistria" (strip of land between Ukraine and Moldova). And should Ukraine show signs of retreat, Western support might recalibrate, plunging both sides into a longer conflict, perhaps with diminishing intensity.

A cease-fire seems like a distant dream and comprehensive peace a mirage on the geopolitical horizon given the recent developments. The prolonged conflict is inherently tied to the geopolitical tug-of-war between Russia and the West. It's a high-stakes geopolitical game where neither side is willing to yield. As a result, the future of Ukraine hangs in the balance.

Only when one side exhausts its military capabilities or faces strong opposition at home can one expect any change in the stances of Russia and Ukraine. A cease-fire agreement may follow in such a case, but territorial disputes are likely to persist. The conflict also shows that Russia and the US-led West are locked in a zero-sum game, making it difficult for both parties to agree to a compromise. The quest for peace, elusive yet imperative, has to navigate a treacherous path, highlighting the dance between diplomacy, military might and the human cost of conflict.

The China Daily

Labour's new graduate plan could bankrupt Britain

Matthew Lynn

SOME smooth patter. A little easy-going charm. And a flexible relationship with the truth - at least where properties are concerned. The qualifications for a successful career as an estate agent have always been fairly straightforward.

But the Labour Party, which will almost certainly be in government very soon, wants to add something extra to the list. A university degree. Likewise, it thinks child-minders need to attend university, and perhaps very soon plenty of other professions as well. The trouble is, that is the very last thing the economy needs. All it will do is drive up costs, and rack up even more student debt. Labour's plans to professionalise Britain could, in reality, put us all out of business.

Most of us have probably had a moan about estate agents from time to time. Perhaps they failed to men-

tion the train line running through the back garden, or cheerfully described what many would consider a broom cupboard as a bedroom. We have all learned to take the glossy brochures with a generous pinch of salt. Even so, it seems unlikely that anyone ever came back from a viewing complaining that the person showing them around didn't speak three languages or understand the finer points of post-feminist theory.

But shadow housing minister Matthew Pennycook has now tabled an amendment to planned housing legislation that would require all agents to have at least one A level, and for directors of agencies to hold an undergraduate degree. Agents will suddenly need to be a lot better educated.

Seriously? There are so many problems with the British housing market, from hopelessly inadequate supply, to petty building

regulations and stamp duty, but estate agents lacking a criminology A level probably isn't one of them. Even if the case were to be made for better regulation of estate agencies, minimum educational requirements are not the answer.

It doesn't stop there. Labour's shadow education secretary Bridget Phillipson said last year she wanted nurseries to be "graduate-led", a move designed to "reduce inequality". All of that comes at a time when there has been a huge rise in the number of jobs that require increasing levels of formal education, from race horse trainer to social worker. We are not quite at the point where you need a degree in chemistry to serve cocktails, or a doctorate in psychology to answer the phone at a call centre. But perhaps we should just give Labour time.

Continually demanding

more and more qualifications for every job creates three big problems. First, it forces young people to get degrees, and rack up huge debts in the process. Who would want to go into an estate agency at 18 if the avenue to becoming a manager or director is blocked off? Instead, teenagers will be forced to rack up thousands in debts for a qualification that could be completely irrelevant to their work. The average estate agent earns £34,000 per year, and the average child-minder is on £28,000. And looking after small children in a nursery requires kindness and patience, and many other skills which cannot be acquired in a lecture hall.

Next, it will push up prices for consumers. The costs of childcare are already crippling for many young couples, and are putting many of them off hav-

ing children, or forcing one or other parent to give up their career so that they can stay at home themselves. Likewise, the costs of buying and selling a home are already too high. And yet demanding more qualifications means salaries will have to rise to pay for all the extra student loans, and in turn those costs will have to be passed onto the customers.

Finally, it will make staff shortages even worse. Most employers already can't find enough people to do the work that needs to be done, largely because there is such a mismatch between the roles that people are now being trained for, and the jobs that are actually available. There are currently around 900,000 vacancies, a number which has remained stubbornly high in the post-Covid era. Mandating extra qualifications will only make that even worse.

What the UK needs right

now is fewer students, and more generous funding for universities for those that do go on to higher education. And it needs more satisfying, well-paid careers that are open to people who prefer to start their working lives at 18 instead of 21.

Decades after Tony Blair's ill-conceived 50 per cent target, Labour is doubling down on its graduate dream. It is a terrifying insight into what will, without question, be the party's entire approach to government, imposing yet more intrusive rules and regulations, worsening our financial position, and exacerbating staff shortages for business. It might satisfy backbenchers and party activists, who are now overwhelmingly drawn from academia. But it will prove a catastrophe for the economy - and for the teenagers who are forced into paying for degrees that they don't need.

What will be the effect of momentous world court ruling?

Chris Doyle

FAR too many viewers, listeners and readers in Western states would not have been fully informed about Israel's loss at the International Court of Justice last Friday. Much of the media ignored or downplayed the rulings of the paramount judicial body in international law when it found that there were plausible grounds to consider that Israel's conduct against Palestinians in Gaza could amount to the crime of genocide and ordered a series of provisional measures.

There are few crimes graver than genocide, which is the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. The international court determined that, for the purposes of the Genocide Convention, the Palestinians of Gaza constitute a people. This will infuriate the many Israeli leaders and politicians, both past and present, who deny that the Palestinian people even exist. The court said they do exist and that they may be at risk of being erased. Moreover, this was not a close decision. It was a clear-cut vote from the judges, either 15-2 or 16-1, with even the Israeli ad hoc judge voting in favor in two cases. Many expected the court to be far more divided.

It will be several years before the court reaches an ultimate determination as to whether Israel's actions constitute genocide, but Tel Aviv is now on trial for that crime. Every action it takes in Gaza has to be assessed. So, if it strikes another hospital, is this a single act or pattern of behavior? Palestinians are widely bemoaning the court's failure to order an immediate ceasefire. One can understand why, given the huge loss of life, destruction and starvation they are enduring.

Looking at the situation on the ground, how can any right-thinking person wish to see this carnage continue for one moment longer? Moreover, having determined that a genocide could be occurring, should the court not be ordering every possible measure to stop it?

Various reasons have been cited as to why this was the case. Hamas is not a state and not a party to the Genocide Convention, so the court has no authority over it. It also agreed that Israel did have the right to take action after the atrocities of Oct. 7, which few deny.

One should not belittle the momentous nature of these rulings and the knock-on impact they should have. Firstly, it will be hard, if not impossible, to implement the orders of the court without there being an immediate ceasefire. This is the view of, for example, B'Tselem, the Israeli human rights organization. You cannot provide humanitarian aid in Gaza while it is under bombardment, so a cessation of Israeli attacks is essential.

Secondly, the rulings may have a chilling effect on diplomats, officials and military personnel in states that are actively aiding and abetting Israel, and specifically those that supply Israel with weapons. These people should be asking if any of their actions might make them complicit in a potential genocide.

What about the Israeli reaction? Despite their public outbursts, the Israeli leaders must be rattled. The cozy existence in which they enjoyed complete impunity has been, if not shattered, at least rocked. The Israeli defense against the charge of genocide was lamentable. On the one hand, its spokespeople claimed that the international court is the legal arm of Hamas.

On the other, Israel won because the court did not order a ceasefire. Netanyahu was in full global gaslighting mode when he claimed that "Israel's commitment to international law is unwavering." If only. Will Israel adhere to any of the orders? Will Israel agree to provide a report on its progress within a month? Very unlikely. More likely, Israeli leaders may start limiting the bombardment of Gaza and permit more humanitarian aid into the Strip to lower the international pressure.

As for the reaction of Israel's allies, the US, UK and others have refused to demand that Israel adhere to the rulings. The accusations of double standards are overwhelming. When the court ordered provisional measures in the case against Myanmar, the UK welcomed the decision and asserted that Myanmar must do more "to protect the Rohingya." In the case of Israel, the British government stated: "We respect the role and independence of the ICJ. However, we have stated that we have considerable concerns about this case, which is not helpful in the goal of achieving a sustainable ceasefire."

Instead, at least 10 donor states have suspended funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency after it dismissed several employees on the basis of allegations, not proven claims, that they participated in the Oct. 7 attacks. Was this a punishment for the temerity of South Africa in taking Israel to the world court? Who knows? But it is punishing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza, who are already on the cusp of death by bombing, starvation and disease.

While UNRWA is punished as a result of mere allegations, Israel is exonerated of all charges by the US

and others before an investigation has even properly begun. In its more than 110 days of bombardment of Gaza, Israel has not been held to account once. For example, I have yet to hear one American or British leader condemn the public incitement to genocide from Israeli leaders. The court ordered Israel to investigate and punish such state-

The rest of the world is looking on aghast. How did the US and its allies react to these allegations? It suspended funding. How has the US reacted to the International Court of Justice's ruling that there are plausible grounds that Israel is committing genocide? Nothing. Did the US or the UK say they would be suspending the sale of arms and the massive bombs that have been used in the Gaza Strip to destroy civilian infrastructure? Not a bit.

Attention will this week turn to the UN Security Council. Algeria is pursuing a case there "in order to activate the ruling of the International Court of Justice on the provisional measures imposed on the Israeli occupation." Will the US veto a resolution calling for the court's orders to be implemented? How will Britain and France vote?

The ruling should also push the International Criminal Court to expedite its investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by any party in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Delay is inexcusable and questions must be asked why this is not proceeding faster. At the optimistic end of the spectrum - if there is one - perhaps even Israel's most ardent backers will conclude that a proper ceasefire is overdue. The international court may not have ordered one directly, but perhaps it has made a ceasefire more likely.

Arab News

‘Israelism’: The promised land needs a new narrative

Myriam Francois

‘If you want to change the world, you need to change your story’”, so says Michael Margolis, CEO and founder of Storied, a strategic consultancy that specialises in storytelling for disruption. As a filmmaker, the quote makes perfect sense to me. Stories provide us with an emotional sustenance which can galvanise, hearten and sustain humanity through its most complex and arduous challenges. But stories, unlike mere ideas, or arguments, speak to the heart, a space beyond hardened misconceptions which can impede our ability to relate and connect to our shared humanity.

In a new, controversial documentary film called Israelism, two young American Jews raised to unconditionally love Israel, experience a profound and life-changing awakening as they bear witness to the brutality of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. As they join a growing movement of young American Jews battling the old guard to redefine Judaism's relationship with Israel, the protagonists take us into the battle over the very soul of modern Jewish identity.

The film has been touring US campuses, where its release during the ongoing genocidal assault on Gaza has led to numerous calls for censorship and cancellations of scheduled screenings by campus authorities. In the midst of a highly censored public debate around the Israeli occupation, the efforts to censor the film is a reflection of the times - even the Jewish voices for peace being targeted by the machine which has for so long sought to silence Palestinian calls for liberation. Israelism tells a story which we all need to hear, not least because today the United States is the only force that can rein in Israeli extremism. It offers a small window into how powerful special interest groups in the US groom young Jews into blindly supporting Israel, and how some, like its protagonists, manage to escape it.

But to a non-Jew like myself, the most compelling element of the film was its candid depiction of the emotional bond most Jews have been made to develop with Israel, and the difficulties they experience when they attempt to step outside of the powerful, unifying narrative that sustains this bond.

While its many critics, including myself, view Israel as an ethno-nationalist, racially supremacist rogue state, at odds with international law and operating an apartheid system, Jews are taught from a young age that the modern state of Israel is the embodiment of Jewish self-actualisation and freedom. That's no small narrative to dismantle because, in part, it is true. After years of persecution and exile, Jews do finally have a home. Except it is not their home. It's that of the Palestinians. The displacement of Palestinians from their land to actualise the Zionist myth of a "land without people for a people with a land" is no less objectionable than the persecution and exile imposed on the Jews historically.

While the main characters in Israelism come to see that their dream of Israel has been built on a lie, what was missing from the film was an alternative story. Academic Barnett R Rubin poetically describes the Jewish narrative about modern Israel in his article titled "False Messiahs": "Repeated in every era, this grand narrative - slavery to freedom, exile to redemption - was the constant, if sometimes barely audible, background music of the Jewish people's understanding of their encounter with history."

Rubin paints a poignant picture of Jewish history, replete with the horrors of anti-Semitic European persecution through the centuries, exile, and a deep longing and hope for a place of safety and security. Political Zionism does not emerge out of a vacuum, he explains, but from the inability of European states to guarantee the safety and security of the Jewish people. With the pogroms and eventually, the culmination of European racialised violence in the form of the Holocaust in the mid-20th century, the toxic intersec-

tion of colonialism and Zionism sets the stage for our current crisis. "Israeli Jews are settler colonialists with a historical memory of indigenous origin," writes Rubbin. "They developed an ideology and a political rather than purely religious movement of 'return'. But their historical memory of the Jewish people did not create the right or capacity to confiscate or occupy a single dunam of land against the will of its possessors. The historical memory of one people, however tenacious, creates no right to rule over another."

That narrative of dispossession, persecution and triumph is what is buttressing support for the current state of Israel. While a growing movement of critics is dismantling this, the next generation of haunted residents of this contested land, desperately need a new story of hope to replace it.

With the pogroms and eventually, the culmination of European racialised violence in the form of the Holocaust in the mid-20th century, the toxic intersection of colonialism and Zionism sets the stage for our current crisis. "Israeli Jews are settler colonialists with a historical memory of indigenous origin," writes Rubbin. "They developed an ideology and a political rather than purely religious movement of 'return'. But their historical memory of the Jewish people did not create the right or capacity to confiscate or occupy a single dunam of land against the will of its possessors. The historical memory of one people, however tenacious, creates no right to rule over another." That narrative of dispossession, persecution and triumph is what is buttressing support for the current state of Israel. While a growing movement of critics is dismantling this, the next generation of haunted residents of this contested land, desperately need a new story of hope to replace it.

of cosmic dimension, but also promises to liberate the Palestinians. As Rubin also points out: "What is objectionable about colonialism is not the immigration or settlement of a population of a different ethnic or national origin, or of people that are in some sense non-indigenous, but the domination of one group over another. It is impossible to rewind and rerun history. But it is possible, indeed necessary, to assure a future where Palestinians and Israelis have equal rights."

As Israelism become increasingly disillusioned with Netanyahu, Jewish voices within and outside of Israel need to confront the impact of militaristic ideology on their culture, politics and identity. The Israel Democracy Institute survey, a monthly gauge of Israeli sentiment on current events, found diminishing levels of optimism for the country's future security and democratic character. If the nihilistic TikTok videos mocking Palestinian children weren't a wake-up call, the telegram groups in which thousands revel over snuff movies of Palestinian civilians being tortured and killed should be. Any denigration of the humanity of another necessarily diminishes our own.

This loop of dehumanising violence should not be varnished by propaganda tales any longer. While honouring legacies of suffering and exile, opposition to the apartheid state must also make way for the promise of a new dream. Nelson Mandela's freedom movement wasn't led merely by opposition to white supremacy - it was guided by a dream of coexistence, equality and justice for all. Contrary to narratives of Palestinian contrariety, Palestinian leadership has consistently and generously made space for the Jewish presence on their land. It is now up to the new generation of Jews to reimagine their history in a way which honours all God's children equally - and in that new story lies the true promised land.

World War Three is approaching fast, and too few are willing to admit why

Sherelle Jacobs

ARE we on the brink of a third world war? In the age of "peak apocalypse", it is easy to laugh off such a question. After all, we already find ourselves on permanent pandemic-watch, are besieged daily by predictions of ecological collapse, and drip-fed a diet of dystopian drama by crude Netflix algorithms. But the risk of a global war has surely not been so high since America was locked in an existential battle against the USSR.

Around the world, authoritarian regimes are failing. In an era of global stagnation, their inability to deliver on promises to provide jobs, tackle poverty and grow their middle classes is coming to a head. Paranoid about internal dissent, autocrats thus have a growing incentive to bet the farm on shoring up their power by focusing on external enemies, whether via expansionist regional wars or high-risk existential conflicts against the West.

The fast-moving crisis that has erupted following a drone attack on a US base near Jordan's border with Syria is a perfect example of our frightening new reality. Although Iran has denied any direct involvement, it is clear that it is deeply implicated in what is merely the latest in a string of Tehran-linked attacks designed to drive the US from the Middle East.

Given the inevitable US response, it begs the question: why would Iran partake in such a reckless escapade in the first place? The point that is often missed in all the usual observations of Iran as a mad, evil fundamentalist regime is that it is also a failing one. The decline of Iran is among the most extraordinary stories of modern times. It was one of the great ancient civilisa-

tions, auspiciously situated at the centre of global trade and presiding over some of the world's largest oil and gas reserves. But a fossilised and inept theocracy has reduced it to a dumpster fire of a country. Its infrastructure is comparable with that of a war-torn state, half of the population lives in poverty.

As the scale of the mullahs' national mutilation becomes impossible to conceal, and protest movements grow, the embattled regime has sought to deflect from its failings by doubling down on long-standing ambitions to establish itself as a regional hegemon, creating a "Shia Crescent" that can function both as a defensive sectarian shield against the Sunni and Western infidels and as a focus of imperialistic pride. Becoming a nuclear power is, of course, crucial, to such a vision. Indeed, the real danger may be not that Iran is becoming genuinely more powerful, but that its leaders know that time is not on their side. True, Tehran is probably only a few years away from building nuclear warheads for ballistic missiles. But as its economy tanks, the regime may suspect that it will become harder for it to justify the cost of the programme to its restive citizens.

This chimes with a pattern that historians have identified throughout history. What previous world wars teach us is that it is not confident and successful countries that start wars, but corroded and schizophrenic ones that both suffer from grandiose delusions and mortal dread of the future.

Today this paradox of the fragile aggressor is playing out not only in Iran, but to an even more terrifying

extent in Russia. The Putin regime has spectacularly failed to capitalise on Russia's inbuilt advantages - not least its embarrassment of natural resources - to raise living standards and create prosperity. Much of the Russian population lives on the brink of destitution, and the country is stuck in an oil trap usually reserved for third-world nations. State predation, creeping monopolisation, cronyism, and a baroque universe of lies have seen the gains from market reforms in the 1990s squandered. Putin, in response, is attempting to arrest economic and demographic decline and deflect from his failures at home through conquest. While they call her the bear, post-Soviet Russia is more akin to the jellyfish that continues to release devastating toxins into the water after death, its attack cells firing uncontrollably even after decapitation.

Again, what might make Russia even more dangerous is that its window for "recovery", as envisaged by Putin, is narrowing. If current trends continue then Russia will be a geopolitical minnow with in just a few decades, inferior in prowess even to rising Africa powers such as Nigeria. One might even speculate whether gathering clouds in China could see Beijing flirt with a civilisational war with the West. Xi Jinping's one-time grand strategy - to maintain exceptional growth rates, largely via a state-engineered investment - has collapsed. He has responded by shifting China towards a military-autocratic model - from the pursuit of the China Dream to a vision of Greater China. His new "military-civil fusion" strategy, which aims to make China the most technologically advanced military power in

the world, reflects this pivot.

Nor is the notion that China could raise the risks of a new world war by invading Taiwan unthinkable. Xi knows he may have only limited time to act; while it is believed that, by 2027, Beijing will have military superiority over the US in the Taiwan Strait, given its shrinking population and stagnant economy, it is an open question how long that could last. The conventional attitude is that, if World War Three arose, it would be by accident. But we should entertain the possibility that autocratic leaders - tortured by the prospect of death in the event of their fall from power - will be willing to pursue survival strategies that, while irrational to us, appear deeply rational to them. They may pose a threat to human survival on par with, say, inadequately secure pathogen labs or the uncontrolled evolution of AI. The risk is amplified in an era when rogue dictators genuinely think that they can win. As it moves to a "strike-first" nuclear doctrine, Russia is increasingly convinced it has an advantage in the event of nuclear war. The Iran regime, having weathered a generation of isolation, could well be suffering from "survival arrogance".

The West, if it is to contain the authoritarian threat, will have to make use of what is a perilous trump card of its own: its own unpredictability, inherent in being democracies. From the normalisation of relations with China in the 1970s, which blindsided the Soviet Union, to the surprisingly robust response to the invasion of Ukraine, the West is feared by its enemies because they can never quite know what it will do next. It may have to roll the dice once more to maintain its supremacy.

The Telegraph

Here's who won't be Trump's VP

Dean Obeidallah

THE Donald Trump vice presidential reality selection show is heating up, with pundits laying out lists of possible people Trump might choose. They range from South Carolina GOP Sen. Tim Scott, to Ohio Sen. JD Vance, to even former Fox News host Tucker Carlson. This may seem premature since Trump has only locked up 32 of the 1,215 GOP delegates needed to secure the 2024 Republican presidential nomination. But with great confidence I can share how Trump will decide his pick if he does win the nomination.

Trump won't select a running mate who will help expand his voting base, as he did in 2016 when he named then-Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, who had broad support from conservative evangelicals and experience in foreign affairs as the vice chair of a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee. Nor will Trump - who turns 78 in June and whose increasing verbal errors have raised red flags about his mental fitness - make it a priority to pick a vice president who is ready to step in for him as commander in chief if need be. The one and only metric Trump can be sure to employ is who will be the most loyal to him. It's that simple. And that's especially true after Pence chose loyalty to the US Constitution above Trump himself on January 6, 2021, when Trump wanted Pence to block Congress' certification of President Joe

Biden's electoral victory. As a reminder, in response to Trump pressuring him to thwart the transfer of power when presiding over the January 6 joint session of Congress, Pence posted on social media hours before: "It is my considered judgement that my oath to support and defend the Constitution constrains me from claiming unilateral authority to determine which electoral votes should be counted and which should not."

As a result, Trump was left to publicly beg Pence later that day to do his bidding by way of both social media posts and in his speech at the Ellipse south of the White House shortly before his supporters launched their attack on the US Capitol, disrupting Congress' certification of the Electoral College vote showing Biden had beaten Trump. And during the attack, Trump expressed his frustration with his vice president for refusing to block the certification by tweeting that Pence "didn't have the courage to do what should have been done to protect our Country and our Constitution." Do you think Trump wants to go through that again? Of course not! He needs absolute loyalty.

After all, Trump's announced second-term agenda will feature "retribution" and "revenge." To do so, Trump - who is facing 91 felony charges in four cases - has vowed to use the Department of

Justice as weapon to investigate his political opponents. (Trump has denied all wrongdoing in the cases against him.) Trump's plans include reclassifying tens of thousands of federal civil service workers so he can replace them with people who will be loyal to his agenda. And Trump - who has repeatedly praised dictators and autocratic leaders - recently announced on Fox News that if he wins in 2024, he would be a dictator but only for "Day One" of his presidency.

With those type of schemes, Trump needs a vice president who will not push back like Pence did. Rather, Trump requires someone who will passionately and unquestioningly work with him to achieve his extreme and undemocratic agenda.

The question, then, is which of the names being floated for his running mate meets that standard? Many would point to New York GOP Rep. Elise Stefanik, who now parrots all things Trump, including calling the people in prison for attacking our Capitol - including those who assaulted police officers or were found guilty of seditious conspiracy in connection with January 6 - "hostages." Stefanik has also echoed Trump's claim that her prosecution for various alleged crimes is "weaponization of the federal government," and even deleted a tweet in which she had

denounced the January 6 attack as "absolutely unacceptable and anti-American" - as former GOP Rep. Liz Cheney recently noted.

But there is still time for a person like Scott to make up ground. And Scott is doing just that, as we saw Tuesday night when he literally professed his love to Trump. That happened during Trump's victory speech in New Hampshire, when Scott stated he didn't really hate Trump's GOP opponent Nikki Haley - who appointed him as senator years ago - after the former president surmised that he must loathe her given that he had endorsed Trump instead. Rather, Scott declared to Trump in front of the audience, "I just love you." There are also dark horses like Arizona Senate candidate Kari Lake, who not only is an avid Trump booster, but in 2022 publicly vacuumed the red rug that Trump would be standing on with her and declared that Trump had "BDE" - referring to the big energy linked in some way to the alleged size of his penis. That is a special type of commitment.

In fact, there's plenty of time for the other contestants vying to be Trump's VP pick to debase themselves with public displays of affection. They just need to remember that when it comes to Trump's ultimate selection - assuming he wins the GOP nomination - his top concern won't be who is the best choice for the United States.

CNN

PSX continues with bearish trend, loses 931 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 931.98 points, a negative change of 1.48 percent, closing at 61,841.74 points against 62,773.72 points the previous trading day.

A total of 436,120,659 shares valuing Rs 15.286 billion were traded during the day as compared to 317,577,239 shares valuing Rs.10.693 billion the last day. Some 346 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 76 of them recorded gains and 249 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 21 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 52,895,427

Pakistan earns \$382.925m by exporting transport services in 5 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$382.925 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

This shows an increase of 7.28 percent as compared to \$356.949 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the fiscal year (2022-23), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 38.19 percent, going up from \$74.970 million last year to \$103.600 million during the months under review.

Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services dipped by 62.22 percent from \$60.960 million last year to \$23.030 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services however increased by 475.09 percent from \$14.010 million to \$80.570 million current year, the PBS data revealed.

The exports of air trans-

Pak-KSA agrees to increase bilateral economic, trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday agreed for increasing bilateral economic and trade relations to enhance the business integration between the two countries.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malkii met with Caretaker Minister for Interior and Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz here to negotiate

China's mobile phone shipments up 6.5% in 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): China's mobile phone shipments rose 6.5 percent year-on-year to 289 million units in 2023, according to the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology.

5G phone shipments came in at 240 million units last year, increasing 11.9 percent on a yearly basis and accounting for 82.8 percent of

Pakistan Fertilizer Industry organized a dealers' convention

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Fertilizer Industry including Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC), Fauji Fertilizer Bin-Qasim Limited (FFBL), Engro Fertilizers Limited, Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited and Agritech Limited organized a dealers' convention on 29th January, 2024 at Flaties Hotel, Lahore.

The management of fertilizer companies and fertilizer dealers from all over the country attended the convention. The convention was arranged to apprise the dealers about availability of fertilizers, imports of Urea by Government of Pakistan and to devise a strategy to ensure availability of Urea and all fertilizers as per suggested price of the Company. The Following top management of the fertilizer industry participated in the convention:

Mr. Ather Javed: Group General Manager Marketing, Fauji Fertilizer Company Ltd

Mr. Atif Muhammad Ali: Vice President Marketing, Engro Fertilizers Limited

Ms. Rabel Saduzai: Director Marketing & Sales, Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited

Mr. Tanveer Raza: Head of Marketing, Agritech Limited

Mr. Shakeel Ahmad: Advisor Marketing, Fauji Fertilizer Bin-Qasim Limited

The other senior management from fertilizer industry also participated in the Dealers' Convention and shared valuable thoughts to devise the future strategy.



The Management of fertilizer companies informed the dealers that companies are making all out efforts to produce fertilizers as per the capacity of manufacturing plants. In the meantime, Government is also very serious and active for ensuring availability and supply of fertilizers to the farmers all over the country on control rates.

The government has taken the initiative of importing Urea to make up the shortage for smooth availability of the fertilizers to the farmers. The Management of Fertilizer Industry apprised the participants about current status of fertilizers situation, distribution and supply system.

He further added that with imported Urea by government of Pakistan, the stocks position has improved significantly to meet the fertilizer requirement at national level. For immediate supply of imported urea, required arrangements are being completed, and in a few days, substantial volumes of imported urea would also be available in the market. The dealers were urged to refrain from any

practices of black marketing, fertilizer hoarding and ensure sales of fertilizers to farmers on control rates.

This was specifically highlighted that the most important and staple food crop of Pakistan is at very critical stage of Urea use, therefore, we all stakeholders need to support government of Pakistan's farmer supportive efforts for enhancing crop productivity, farmer profitability and National Food Security.

This was further reinforced that we need to make collective efforts to contribute for the agricultural and economic growth of the country with prime focus to attain self-sufficiency in food production to minimize the import bill.

Government has spent foreign exchange to import Urea and Companies are working day night to ensure fertilizer supplies to meet the domestic demand of the country. Similarly, dealers should ensure supply of fertilizers at control rates so that wheat production may not be compromised at any cost.

The government of Pakistan has fixed wheat production target of 32

runner-up was Bata Pakistan Limited with a Rs.20.00 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,760.00.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.1,687.50 per share closing at Rs.20,812.50, followed by Colgate-Palmolive (Pakistan) Limited with Rs.109.27 decline to close at Rs.1,444.33.

Meanwhile, the exports of road transport services during the months under review witnessed a growth of 75 percent going up from \$5.520 million to \$9.660 million during this year, it added.

Among the road transport services, the exports of freight services witnessed a decrease of 13.47 percent from \$1.930 million to \$1.670 million, while the export of postal and courier services also dipped by 26.74 percent, from \$3,440 million to \$2.520 million, the data revealed.

Information Technology (IT) sector.

The minister said the northern regions of Pakistan were rich in natural beauty. He said that investing in luxury resorts in these areas could be beneficial for both the countries. Dr. Gohar Ejaz said "we are working on setting up 'Brand Pakistan' stores globally to market Pakistani products.



LAHORE: An elderly man is engrossed in repairing bicycles on the footpath in Anarkali Bazaar.

Fruit exports soar by 9.31 %, hitting \$171 mln in 1st half

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's fruit exports surged by 9.31 percent in the initial half of the ongoing fiscal year compared to the same period last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

According to PBS data, fruit exports reached to \$171.280 million from July to December (2023-24), showcasing a notable increase from the exports of \$156.692 million recorded during the corresponding period in the previous fiscal year (2022-23).

On year-on-year basis, the good exports however declined by 5.10 percent in December 2023 when com-

pared to the exports of the commodity during December 2022. The fruit exports in December 2023 were recorded at \$43,210 million against the exports of \$45,532 million in December 2022. On month-on-month basis, the fruit exports surged by 125.71 percent in December 2023 when compared to the exports of \$19.144 million in November 2023.

The overall food group exports from Pakistan increased by 49.84 percent during the first six months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Food exports during

July-December (2023-24) were recorded at \$3,481,200 million as compared to the exports of \$2,323,275 million in July-December (2022-23), a surge of 49.84 percent, according to the latest PBS data. In terms of quantity, the gold imports declined by 80 percent when compared to the imports of 60 kilograms during November 2023.

It is pertinent to mention here that the country's overall merchandise trade deficit contracted by 34.29 percent during the first half of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The Trade deficit from July-December (2023-24) was recorded at \$11.148 billion as against the deficit of \$16.965 billion in July-December (2022-23), showing negative growth of 34.29 percent.

During the period under review, the exports increased by 5.17 percent to \$14.981 billion compared to the exports of \$14.244 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data. On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 16.28 per cent and were recorded at \$26.129 billion compared to \$31.209 billion last year.

Gold rates up by Rs.700 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 700 and was sold at Rs 216,100 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs.215,400 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs .600 to Rs.185,271 from Rs184,671 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 169,832 from Rs.169,282, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram Silver remained stagnant at Rs 2,600 and 2,229.08 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$7 to \$2,057 from \$2,050, the Association reported.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Port activities reported at Port Qasim where five ships namely, MSC Mumbai-VIII, Maersk Atlanta, MSC Yukta-X, Encore and Tromso scheduled to load/offload Containers, Rice and Palm oil, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal and Liquid Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile a bulk cargo carrier 'Sea Bird' to load 41,900 tonnes of Rice also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during the same period.

A total of eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, MSC Mumbai-VIII and Simaisma are left the port on today morning and another petroleum product ship 'Sunrise' is expected to sail on same day.

Cargo throughput of 115,955 tonnes, comprising 88,553 tonnes imports cargo and 27,402 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,748 Containers (2,158 TEUs are Import and 1,590 TEUs are export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours. There are 04 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them three ships, Maersk Boston, Al-Debal and African Hornbill carrying Containers, LNG and Coal are due to expected to take berths at QICT, EVTL and PIBT on today, while three more container ships, Marathopoulos, Cap Andreas and Maersk Pittsburgh are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Wednesday.

SBP organizes art competition for new banknote designs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has been organizing an Art Competition to have innovative and thematic design ideas for the new series banknotes. "The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has initiated the process for issuance of a new banknote series. To have innovative and thematic design ideas for the new series banknotes, an Art Competition is being organized," said a SBP press statement issued on Tuesday.

According to the statement, the local artists, designers and art students/designers are eligible to participate in the Art Competition. It said, the participants may develop the designs on the themes, including but not limited to, social and cultural identities, demographic diversity, climate change and environment protection, economic development, natural landscapes, architectural heritage and national symbols.

The artists are expected to come up with novel designs and ideas, the statement said adding the designs should be submitted to Director, Finance Department, State Bank of Pakistan, I.I. Chundrigar Road, Karachi, by 11th March 2024.

The Art Competition will be conducted under the following terms and conditions:

a) The Participants can share design of all the seven (07) existing denominations (Rs. 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1000 and 5000) or fewer denominations based on their choice.

b) Design for each banknote shall be presented in hard copy on white paper along with a writeup of not more than hundred words in English or Urdu, explaining the design and its theme.

c) The colours of each banknote denomination should be unique and easily distinguishable.

d) A Jury comprising reputed artists will evaluate the designs and recommend the top six (06) designs for each denomi-

nation to the SBP for picking the top 3 designs of each denomination.

e) The first, second and third designs of each denomination will be given the prize of Rs.1,000,000/-, Rs.500,000/- and Rs.300,000/- respectively.

f) The participants shall ensure that their submitted designs are free from any copyright claims and/or any liabilities.

g) The members of the Jury, SBP and its subsidiaries employees and their family members shall not be eligible to participate in the Art Competition.

h) The designs submitted in the Art Competition will be sole property of the SBP and the SBP will be at liberty to share the design or any modification thereof with the banknote designers for the purpose of banknotes designing, without any extra compensation.

i) For any questions and clarifications about the Art Competition, please contact us at banknotes@sbp.org.pk.

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COURT

NOTICES

BUNER

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 275 / 1, Institution 23/1/2023, date of hearing 20/2/2024. Bakht Biland Khan VS Shabar Khan etc. Notice to no. 12/7.Nihar s/o Falas resident of Kowga tehsel Mandarn district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the court at 9 am dated 6/2/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

PESHAWAR

In the Court of Aftab Iqbal ADJ Peshawar Next date of hearing 27/02/2024 suit number 42/14 Case title: Abdul wali VS Shehla Gul Notice to 1 Shehla gul alias Shaista gul d/o Alam zaib r/o Nowshera cantt presently residing at 41 Baneratt street manchester M193EF uk. 2 Gulzar alam s/o Naik Amal 3 Ahmad zaib s/o shan Zaib R/O Aziz bhatti road Nowshera cantt (Respondents) In the above title case the respondents /defendants is directed to appear before this court at 8:30 am on 27/02/2024 either personally or through attorney or counsel, in failure an ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against respondents /defendants. Given under my hand and seal of the court.

LOST & FOUND

I have lost my bachelor of science degree of University of Peshawar Reg.# 99-PAF-2530, issue date 29, June 2001. If anyone finds please return it to Yasir Sarfaraz S/o Sarfaraz Hussain AT Squadron PAF Base Peshawar. 03468852073.

بیان حلفی

میں کی اگرچہ ملک طیف بیان تاہم کی راہ اور اس کے مجموعہ ملک 11-10-2022 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے ان کے شری اور بیٹی درجہ میں ہے، بعد، چاہا اس کے مجموعہ ملک اور بعد ملک سکونڈ خزان چران کے کاہوان کا کوئی شری اور بیٹی وارث نہیں ہے اس میں کوئی غلط بیانی نہیں کی تو میں اس کا مدار ہوگا

العبد اگرچہ ملک طیف ملک اور اس کے مجموعہ ملک ملک طیف بیان تاہم کی راہ اور اس کے مجموعہ ملک 11-10-2022 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے ان کے شری اور بیٹی درجہ میں ہے، بعد، چاہا اس کے مجموعہ ملک اور بعد ملک سکونڈ خزان چران کے کاہوان کا کوئی شری اور بیٹی وارث نہیں ہے اس میں کوئی غلط بیانی نہیں کی تو میں اس کا مدار ہوگا

In the Court of Aftab iqbal ADJ Peshawar Next date of hearing 27/02/2024 suit number 45/CR Case title: Abdul wali VS



In brief

Handball
Championship

MULTAN (APP): "Faisalabad beat Mardan seven-one in the opening match of the All Pakistan Inter Board Girls Handball Championship held on Tuesday. According to Malik Nisar, the In-charge of Sports for the Multan Board, the match was played on a single-league basis. All four teams will compete against each other, and the team with the highest points on the table will be declared the champion. Naeemullah, Nadeem Bhutta, Ghazanfar Raan, and Muhammad Qaisar, who served as match officials, were present during the match. Congratulations to Faisalabad on their victory, and we look forward to the upcoming matches in the championship."

Mooney regains top spot in ICC rankings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Australia opener Beth Mooney has reclaimed the number one position in the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings after a match-winning knock in the first T20I of their three-match home series against South Africa. The left-handed opener, who first attained number one position in March 2020 and was most recently at the top in December 2022, struck a fine 72 not out off 57 deliveries with 11 fours and a six to help world champions Australia score an eight-wicket win and go one-up in the series, said a press release. South Africa star Laura Wolvaardt, who helped restore parity with a 53-ball 58 not out in the second match, has reached a career-best 731 rating points while remaining number three after the weekly update to the women's rankings that considers performances in the first two Australia-South Africa matches in Canberra and the first two matches of the Zimbabwe-Ireland series in Harare. South Africa opener Tazmin Brits is another one to make notable progress in the batting rankings, moving up three places to a career-best sixth position after scoring 100 runs in two innings. Fast bowlers Annabel Sutherland of Australia (up six places to 34th) and Marizanne Kapp of South Africa (up five places to 40th) have also advanced. Ireland opening batter Amy Hunter has made huge progress after unbeaten innings of 101 and 71 helped her team take a 2-0 lead in the five-match series. The wicketkeeper-batter is now the highest ranked batter from Ireland, gaining 21 slots to reach a career-best 18th position, five positions above Gaby Lewis (up three places to 23rd). Ireland all-rounder Orla Prendergast (up five places to 46th) and the Zimbabwe pair of Mary-Anne Musonda (up four places to 47th) and Kelis Ndhlovu (up 20 places to 59th) have also moved up the batting rankings.

Shamar Joseph ruled out of ILT20

GABBA (Agencies): West Indian pace sensation Shamar Joseph is set to miss out on the ongoing ILT20, owing to his toe injury which he suffered during West Indies's historic Test win over Australia at the Gabba. Joseph was set to join the Dubai Capitals in the ILT20 after the conclusion of Test series against Australia, however, he will now return home. He is expected to achieve full fitness in time to represent Peshawar Zalmi, in the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 9. Notably, Joseph rose to fame for his exceptional grit when he defied the aforementioned toe injury to power the West Indies to their first victory over Australia since 1997.



POTCHEFSTROOM: Ahmad Hassan punches one off the back foot as Ryan Hunter looks.

Pakistan beat Australia in FIH Hockey5s WC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan defeated Australia by 11-3 goals in a one-sided encounter in the FIH Hockey5s World Cup at Muscat, Oman. According to the details, for Pakistan Captain Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf scored five goals including a hat-trick while Ghazanfar Ali and Zakaria Hayat scored two goals each. Murtaza Yaqub and Arshad Liaquat scored one goal each. Pakistan Hockey Team Management includes Head Coach Olympian Shakeel Abbasi, Manager Dilawar Hussain while Waqas Mahmood as Physiotherapist and Junaid Akhtar as Video Operator.

Pakistan team would play the 9th and 10th position match of the event on Wednesday against the winner from teams of Switzerland and New Zealand. Pakistan beat Jamaica by 15-2 in FIH Hockey5s WC: Pakistan downed Jamaica by 15-2 in the FIH Hockey5s World Cup's Challenger Trophy at Muscat, Oman. According to the details, after being out of the race for the quarter-finals, Pakistan defeated Jamaica by a huge margin in the ongoing matches to determine the 9th to 16th positions. For Pakistan, Abdul Hannan Shahid scored

seven goals including a double hat-trick while Rana Waheed scored five goals including a hat-trick. Arshad Liaquat, Ghazanfar Ali, and Zakaria Hayat scored one goal each. Pakistan Five Side Hockey Team Management includes Head Coach Olympian Shakeel Abbasi, Manager Olympian Dilawar Hussain, Physiotherapist Waqas Mahmood, and Video Operator Junaid Akhtar were also present with the team. Pakistan team would play a match against the winner of the USA vs Australia match to determine the 9th to 12th position in the event.

Record \$9.63 billion spent on 2023 transfers: FIFA

PARIS (AFP): Football clubs worldwide spent a record \$9.63 billion (8.88 billion euros) on international transfers last year, surpassing the previous record set in 2019 by more than \$2 billion, according to a FIFA report published Tuesday. The latest figures represent a 48.1 percent increase compared to 2022 when transfer spending began to climb again after two years of belt-tightening due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The top 10 player transfers in 2023 accounted for over 10% of the entire outlay. Those deals included Jude Bellingham's move to Real Madrid, Enzo Fernandez joining Chelsea and Harry Kane signing for Bayern Munich. English clubs, led by Chelsea, again topped the list by splashing out a combined \$2.96 billion -- three times as much as those in France, which placed second on the list. Clubs from Saudi Arabia broke into the top five spenders for the first time with a combined outlay of \$970 million following the notable purchases of Neymar, Sadio Mane and Riyad Mahrez. Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema also moved to the Gulf kingdom, but on free transfers. Chelsea were followed by Paris Saint-Germain, Liverpool, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich as the top five biggest-spending teams in 2023. In contrast, German sides received the most in transfer fees at almost \$1.21 billion -- boosted by the sales of Bellingham (Borussia Dortmund) and Randal Kolo Muani, who left Eintracht Frankfurt for PSG. Portuguese clubs brought in the greatest numbers of players from abroad with 1,017 incoming transfers, while Brazil exported the most with a total of 1,217. The FIFA report also highlighted the "impressive growth" of the transfer market in women's football. In 2023, a total of 623 women's clubs were involved in international transfers, up from 507 the year prior. Some 1,888 players moved from one country to another as well, surpassing the 1,571 in 2022, and generating record annual spending of \$6.1 million -- up 84.2 percent from 2022.

All-round Ahmad Hassan stars in Pakistan U19's victory over Ireland U19

POTCHEFSTROOM (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan U19 got over the line against Ireland U19 in a low-scoring match by three wickets in hand in their first fixture of the Super Six stage. Pakistan U19 stumbled in the chase of 182 but Ahmad Hassan ensured his team's victory with a responsible unbeaten half-century. After being asked to bat first, Ireland's opening batters, Jordan Neill (4, 17b) and Ryan Hunter (10, 28b, 1x4) put on a partnership of just seven runs as Ubaid Shah drew first blood for Pakistan U19. The right-arm pacer induced a top edge from Neill's bat and pounced it safely. Meanwhile, Hunter was removed by pacer Ali Raza as Amir Hassan took a low catch at mid-on. Gavin Roulston (7, 21b, 1x4) too departed a couple of overs later as Ahmad Hassan lured him into a drive, which resulted in a nick caught behind by Saad Baig. Ireland skipper, Philipus le Roux only lasted for three runs after facing 16 balls, as he too fell to Ahmad. Ireland found themselves reeling at 39-5 in 18.1 overs following Kian Hilton's dismissal for 12. Scott MacBeth (16, 19b, 3x4s) hit three boundaries in his 19-ball stay at the crease but he fell to Ubaid who returned for his second spell. John McNally joined forces with Harry Dyer to rebuild the Ireland innings and stitched a 65-run seventh-wicket partnership. Dyer (31, 41b, 2x4s) was caught at deep square off the bowling of Haroon in an attempt to play a slog sweep as Ahmad took the running catch. McNally (53, 81b, 2x4s) brought up a fine half-century before falling prey to Ali Raza. Ireland were bundled out for 181 in 48.4 overs after Oliver Riley's (18, 24b, 1x6) stumps were shattered by Amir. Ubaid was again at his best as he bagged three wickets while Amir, Ali Raza and Ahmad returned with two wickets each. Haroon chipped in with one scalp. In reply, Pakistan's opening batters got off to a cautious start with a 24-run partnership before Shahzaib Khan (11, 25b, 1x4) was caught at slip off the bowling of Reuben Wilson. Soon, Shamyl Hussain (7, 11b) too misused one that was taken by wicket-keeper Ryan Hunter. Left-hand batters, Azan Awaiz (21, 41b, 2x4s) and Saad Baig (25, 44b, 3x4s) put on a 47-run third-wicket partnership to steer Pakistan out of trouble. Off-spinner Harry Dyer pinned Azan leg before wicket while breaching Saad's defenses to leave Pakistan 78-4 in 21.2 overs. Ubaid Shah, promoted to bat at six, too fell to Dyer after scoring eight off 10, including a boundary, as Pakistan struggled at 96-5 in 24 overs. With the Ireland bowling running riot, Ahmad Hassan and Haroon Arshad

bailed out Pakistan in the tricky situation. The duo put on a 63-run sixth-wicket partnership while inching closer to the target. Haroon fell after contributing 25 off 34 balls with the help of one boundary while Ahmad kept Pakistan U19 in the game while holding the fort at one end. With a total of 20 runs away from the target, Pakistan U19 also lost Arafat Minhas (3, 12b) as Dyer bagged his fourth wicket of the game. Ahmad crossed the fifty-run mark while Ali Asfand contributed with two vital boundaries scoring an unbeaten nine off 15 balls. Ahmad remained undefeated on 57 off 72 balls to see Pakistan home in a challenging run-chase with just three wickets left. Apart from Dyer's four-wicket haul, Wilson, Riley and Neill took one wicket each. Pakistan U19 will face Bangladesh U19 in their second Super Six fixture on 3 February at Benoni. Scores in brief: Pakistan U19 beat Ireland U19 by three wickets. Ireland U19 181 all out, 48.4 overs (John McNally 53, Harry Dyer 31; Ubaid Shah 3-31, Ali Raza 2-18, Amir Hassan 2-34, Ahmad Hassan 2-37). Pakistan U19 182-7, 43.4 overs (Ahmad Hassan 57 not out, Haroon Arshad 25, Saad Baig 25; Harry Dyer 4-35, Jordan Neill 1-11). Player of the match -- Ahmad Hassan (Pakistan U19).

SL beat Pakistan in Women's U19 Tri-Nation T20 Series 5th match



ISLAMABAD (APP): Sri Lanka outplayed Pakistan by 31 runs in the fifth match of the Women's U19 Tri-Nation T20 Series at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium. Sri Lanka Women U19 won the toss and elected to bat first. Zaib-un-Nisa Niaz provided an early breakthrough, as she removed Dewmi Wijerathne for a second-ball duck. Nethmi Senarathna and Vishmi Gunarathna built a 66-run second-wicket stand to bring momentum to the innings. Maham Anees dismissed Senarathna (35, 45b, 3x4s) to break the partnership. Gunarathna remained unbeaten at 71 from 55, including 11 boundaries. Captain Manudi Dulana Nanayakkara also chipped in with an unbeaten 17 off 18, with one boundary. Sri Lanka Women U19

finished at 134-2 in 20 overs. Maham and Zaib-un-Nisa were the only two wicket-takers for Pakistan Women U19. Eymam Fatima and Samiya Afsar provided Pakistan Women U19 a solid start to the chase, courtesy of a 42-run opening stand. Rashmika Sewwandi brought an end to the partnership as she dismissed Samiya (26, 21b, 5x4s) in the last over of the powerplay. Soon after, Maham Anees (6, 15b) was stumped off Yasanthi Herath. Eymam's bat produced 38 from 40, with five boundaries and one maximum, before she fell victim to the Sri Lanka captain N a n a y a k k a r a . Wicketkeeper-batter Komal Khan added 17 from 36, including one four, before she was caught on Sewwandi's bowling in the

last over. Zoofishan Ayyaz contributed an unbeaten eight from seven, as Pakistan Women U19 managed to get to 103-4 in the stipulated 20 overs. Sewwandi was the pick of Sri Lankan bowlers, accounting for two wickets. Herath and Nanayakkara returned with a wicket each. Pakistan Women U19 next play against hosts Bangladesh Women U19 on Wednesday. Scores in brief: Sri Lanka Women U19 134-2, 20 overs (Vishmi Gunarathna 71 not out, Nethmi Poorna Senarathna 35, Manudi Dulana Nanayakkara 17 not out; Maham Anees 1-13, Zaib-un-Nisa Niaz 1-32). Pakistan Women U19 103-4, 20 overs (Eymam Fatima 38, Samiya Afsar 26; Rashmika Sewwandi 2-16).



MULTAN: Players in action in handball match played between Multan Board and Lahore Board teams during Pakistan Inter Board Girls Handball Championship at BISE Ground. —APP Photo

Lahore, Karachi move in National Women's T20 final

ISLAMABAD (APP): Lahore and Karachi have qualified for the final of the National Women's T20 Tournament 2023-24, after securing the top two spots on the points table following ten rounds of matches. Rawalpindi missed out on the qualification based on net run rate (NRR) as they fell short of Lahore's NRR despite having the same number of wins. The final is scheduled to be played on Wednesday at Pindi Cricket Stadium. The last round of National Women's T20 Tournament 2023-24 saw Lahore, Rawalpindi and Karachi emerge on top after all six teams participated in games played across three venues in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. At Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi captain Aliya Riaz hit an unbeaten half-century to lead her team to victory against Quetta, fresh off a match-winning century the previous day. Rawalpindi won the toss and invited

Quetta to bat first. Rawalpindi found success early on as captain Aliya Riaz dismissed Khadija Chishti (17, 19b, 3x4s) in the last over of the powerplay. Fareeha Mehmood was caught off Tania Saeed's bowling for a four-ball duck as Quetta were reduced to 33-2 in seven overs. Then, Dua Majid (24, 28b, 3x4s) was run out by Humna Bilal. Jannat Rasheed scored 15 from 22, including a four, before she too was run out by Humna. Aima Saleem dismissed Laiba Mansoor (4, 11b) and Anam Amin (2, 9b) cheaply. Tania pinned Khizra Rani leg-before for a seven-ball duck while Faiza Zaman added five more to the total before she fell to Aima, who had her third of the innings. Quetta finished with 84-8 in 20 overs; Aima ended with three wickets while Tania had two to her name. Aliya dismissed one batter. Aima (8, 3b, 2x4s) was caught and bowled by Anam

on the third ball of the innings. Despite the early wicket, Rawalpindi went all guns blazing, as they chased the target inside the powerplay, winning the game by nine wickets. Aliya produced a fiery knock that yielded an undefeated 58 from just 18 deliveries, showcasing an impressive tally of 10 fours and two sixes. Natalia Parvaiz supported her captain with an unbeaten 18 off 12, with two fours and a six as Rawalpindi got to 86 in just 5.3 overs. For her quick-fire knock and a wicket, Aliya was awarded player of the match for the second consecutive game. In a rain-impacted game at Ayub Park Ground, Karachi scored 100-5 in 15 overs in reply to Multan's 114-5 in 20 overs, winning the game by 20 runs as per the DLS calculations. Multan scored 114-5 in 20 overs after being put to bat first by Karachi. Aiman Anwar provided the first break-

through for Karachi, as Samina Aftab was caught on just four off 21. Multan captain Gull Feroza and Saika Riaz stitched up a 74-run second-wicket partnership, countering the earlier setback. Gull Feroza hit her fifth half-century of the tournament, producing 67 from 57 on the back of 10 boundaries before she fell to the opposing captain Fatima Sana in the 18th over. Huraina Sajjad ran out Saika as she departed for 26 off 28, with one boundary. Warda Yousaf and Noor-ul-Iman could only contribute a run each before they had to walk back to the pavilion. Fatima, Aimen and Rameen Shamim accounted for a wicket each. Ayesha Bilal found success early on as Muneeba Ali was caught for just four runs. Javeria Khan and Omaima Sohail recuperated with a 49-run second-wicket stand until the latter fell to Rehmat Noreen for 24 on 22, with three boundaries. Javeria added 40 from 41,

with two fours, before she was run out. Yusra Amir (20 not out, 18b, 1x4) was the other contributor with the bat. The Fatima Sana-led side was awarded the game by 20 runs, as per DLS calculations after rain interrupted the game soon after Karachi got to 100-5 in 15 overs. Gull Feroza was adjudged player of the match for her well-fought knock. Following their win, Karachi secured their spot in the final, as they finished second on the points table. At Diamond Cricket Ground in Islamabad, Lahore's Nashra Sundhu registered the first five-wicket haul of the tournament as she helped Lahore to a dominating 10-wicket win over Peshawar. Peshawar could not capitalize on their decision to bat first as they were bundled over for a paltry total of 50 in 16.4 overs. Lahore struck early as left-arm spinner Nashra Sundhu removed Shabnam Hayat for a run in the second over.



In brief

DC orders fuel price inspection drive

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon's directives, the Assistant Commissioner City conducted a thorough inspection of key areas, focusing on G-6, G-7, Blue Area, F-7, F-6, areas aimed at ensuring compliance with OGRA's fixed fuel rates. Excitingly, the Assistant Commissioner made impactful moves during the operation. Moreover during the operation one pump owner and four individuals found guilty of overcharging faced immediate arrest. Additionally, two people were apprehended for using faulty measuring instruments, adding another layer to the crackdown. Dr. Abdullah Tabassum, the ICT spokesman on Tuesday confirmed the swift action, highlighting the importance of adhering to regulated prices. As a stern warning, the authorities addressed concerns about poor sanitation, signaling a comprehensive approach to uphold standards in the city. This proactive initiative underscores the commitment to fair practices and consumer protection.

'Citizens to get civic facilities'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Tuesday initiated the provision of convenient basic services to simplify the tedious process of vehicle registration and acquiring essential documents. The citizens hailing from nearby areas of Fatima Jinnah Park Bolan Gate F-9 can get civic facilities through a dedicated van from 03:00 to 05:00 pm today, offering a hassle-free experience for residents seeking to register, transfer, or pay token tax for their vehicles. ICT spokesman Dr. Abdullah Tabassum said. On the directive of DC, the excise staff will be stationed at the park's parking lot, streamlining the procedures related to vehicles. This initiative aligned with the commitment to make essential services more accessible to the public. He said that adding to the convenience, the 'Facilitation Center Doorstep ICT Vehicle' will also be available on-site.

RPO reviews construction work

RAWALPINDI (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO), Syed Khurram Ali reviewed the ongoing construction work at Safe City Project and Khadimat Center Liaquat Bagh here on Tuesday. According to police spokesman, the RPO issued instructions to the concerned authorities to complete the project within the stipulated time. The police chief said that the project would prove to be an important milestone for the safety of life and property of the citizens of Rawalpindi, while the Khadmit Center would also play an important role in providing various facilities to the public under one roof. On the occasion, SP Rawal Division Faisal Saleem gave a briefing about the daily progress on the construction work.

Tourists advised to get weather updates

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Murree district administration has advised the tourists to get weather updates and traffic-related information prior to traveling to Murree. According to a Murree district administration spokesman, the administration on the special directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Murree, Zaheer Abbas Sherazi had finalized all arrangements for snowfall season. The tourists were being given information about weather updates and travel advisories at all entry points of Murree, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Muhammad Sami Saeed along with International donors formally inaugurates the 4RF Dashboard at the Planning Ministry.

Women hold full rights to cast vote in elections: Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Affairs and Pakistan Diaspora in Middle East and Muslim Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Tuesday said that women have full rights to cast vote in elections.

Addressing a press conference, he emphasized the importance of voting as Pakistan is gearing up for general elections being held on February 8.

He highlighted the ongoing preparations being observed across the country for the next polls.

About recent discussions on social media regarding the Shariah status of voting, Ashrafi who is also the Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC), underscored that voting was not only a civic duty but also a testimony, asserting, "If the testimony is known, it is a crime not to give it."

He extended this principle to include women's voting rights, and emphasizing that women could not be deprived of their right to vote.

He said Pakistan Ulema Council had already issued a 'Fatwa' (religious decree) affirming the legality of voting, with specific arrangements in place for women to exercise their voting rights. He clarified that Pakistan had a separate polling stations and polling staff will facilitate women voters, ensuring their participation in the democratic process.

As the election day approaches on February 8, he urged all citizens to actively engage in the electoral process. He also emphasized the importance of assessing candidates based on their abilities, love, and loyalty to the country while casting votes. He reiterated that voting was a fundamental duty of every citizen, emphasizing the significance

of democracy and urging all eligible voters to fulfill their civic responsibility on the election day. Ashrafi mentioned that in a significant diplomatic development, Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian had held talks with Pakistan's political and military leadership. He said the talks concluded with a commitment to continue dialogue and cooperation on regional matters besides reaffirming commitment to promoting peace and stability in the region.

Supporting the joint statement issued following the meeting, Ashrafi emphasized the collective responsibility of all nations in combating terrorism, labelling it as a global menace that requires a unified approach. Regarding the escalating situation in Palestine, he raised concerns over it and reiterated the importance of Muslim unity in addressing such issues.

Railways added ten more passenger trains in last year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has added as many ten more passenger trains across the country in a bid to accommodate the passengers, provide better facilities to the commuters besides generate more revenue for the department.

"Before completing the network of 96 trains over the entire railway network, the last year the figure of trains is 86 which will be improved after the concerted efforts of the department," an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said the facilities being provided to the passengers at railway stations include waiting rooms, vending stalls,

station restaurants, wheelchairs, information desk, computer reservation facilities, a public address system to inform the public about the arrival/departure of trains, provision of paramedics and 1st aid facility, online reservation facility, passenger insurance service and revival of help desks at stations facilities in trains. To a question, Pakistan Railways has beefed up precautionary measures to reduce passenger train accidents and only six minor accidents with no causality took place on the entire railway network in the country during the last three months.

"Only two train accidents

have taken place in September, no accident happened in October and four train accidents occurred in November due to effective steps of the department," he added. He said the drastic decrease in accidents has been witnessed due to the efforts being undertaken to reduce trespassing at unmanned level crossings and unauthorized locations. "Our staff is continuously monitoring the railway tracks across the country and conducting thorough inspection of the trains as the safety of the passengers is the top priority of the department," he said.

Tech-savvy workforce essential for country's standing in rapidly evolving global economy: Mushaali

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaali Hussein Mullick has said that the active involvement of youth in innovation, investment and the overall economy was crucial for driving progress of the country.

She was addressing Future-Fest 2024, an innovation Expo in Lahore. The SAPM was accompanied by Focal Person to SAPM Sabien Hussein Mullick and Advisor to SAPM on Communication Waqas Banorie, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

At the Expo, a mix of

entrepreneurs and exhibitors displayed a wide variety of innovative ideas spanning different industries and services.

Mushaali Hussein Mullick was apprised about Future-Fest achievements of \$200 million direct investment which resulted in 30, 000 direct jobs and the organization of innovation road show. She said that Future-Fest had achieved commendable milestones. She noted that Future-Fest's efforts to secure over \$200 million in direct investment would be a boost in developing cutting-edge technologies, startups and projects across various industries in the country. She appreciated the innovation

road show organized by Future-Fest which brought together entrepreneurs, cutting-edge startups, industry leaders, and technology enthusiasts from 40 cities and 80 universities.

Mushaali Hussein Mullick was also apprised about His Royal Highness, Prince Fahad bin Mansour's extraordinary contribution to the technological landscape of Pakistan. She said that the Prince's announcement of investment of \$100 million for the establishment of a tech house marked a significant milestone in the promotion of innovation and economic development in our country.

CDA services to go online to facilitate citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) launched its new website to facilitate the general public, says a press release issued here on Tuesday. In this regard, a ceremony was held at the authority's headquarters which was attended by the CDA chairman, members of its Board, representatives of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries and officers of concerned formations. On this occasion, the chairman said that the use of technology in the authority would improve service delivery.

He said that the launch of new and updated website was an important step towards digitalisation.

He further said that Land and Estate records are also being digitalised.

CDA was introducing secure paper for issuing allotment and transfer letters to

reduce the risk of forgery and tampering of records, he said.

The chairman further added that the initiative would help reduce complaints of corruption, fraudulent transactions and eradication of complaints like alteration in records. A tree management system has also been introduced as part of the technology based initiatives being taken in the authority. This system will be based on state-of-the-art Digital Trees Inventory software. Similarly, for the first time all tree and plants data will also be digitized with the help of field force and satellite imagery. Under which barren land can be identified along with trees and plants data so that the land of Islamabad can be kept free from illegal constructions and encroachment and plantation can be done there as per need.

Consul General vows continued efforts for welfare of Pakistanis in UAE

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Consul General in Dubai, UAE, Hussain Muhammad on Tuesday vowed to continue all-out efforts for the welfare of the Pakistani community living in the United Arab Emirates. "It is the core objective of the mission to extend all possible facilitation and assistance towards achieving the welfare of Pakistani community," he said during his visit to Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD), according to a press release received here from Dubai Consulate General of Pakistan. The consul general visited the PAD on the invitation of Pakistan Journalists Forum (PJF).

Speaking on the occasion, Hussain emphasized that every Pakistani living in UAE was the ambassa-

dor of Pakistan and needed to work jointly towards shared goals of national wellbeing.

"It is the responsibility of each one of us to portray positive image of our motherland through our conduct. Pakistanis living in UAE must adhere to local laws. The consulate will always be welcoming and forthcoming in assisting our community," Hussain remarked. In his welcome address, PJF President Tahir Munir Tahir assured the consul general of the forum's support, especially in highlighting the positive image of Pakistan.

The PJF members exchanged views with the consul general during an elaborate question-answer session. Later, Dr Muhammad Nasim Sabir,

Medical Director at Pakistan Medical Centre (PMC), established by PAD, gave a detailed briefing to the consul General on the working, facilities and services extended to deserving patients on welfare basis.

He said on average more than 100 patients from all nationalities were treated free of cost in the medical facility. Consul General Hussain Muhammad lauded the selfless contributions and dedication of doctors and healthcare professionals extending volunteer services at the PMC. "Humanitarian and welfare services exhibited under the umbrella of PAD, have earned recognition and appreciation for Pakistani community," he added.

Students can apply for Romanian Gov't Scholarship 2024-25: HEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Students can apply for the Romanian Government Scholarship 2024-25 for professional degrees in various disciplines by submitting their documents online till the mid of March. According to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) on Tuesday, Romanian government offers scholarships to foreign citizens in different fields, except medicine, dentistry and pharmacy.

The students can access the online platform at <https://studyinromania.gov.ro>, via the apply for MPA Scholarship button, or directly at <https://scholarships.studyinromania.gov.ro>.

Each candidate will create an account on the StudyinRomania platform fill in the requested data and upload the required

documents till March 16, 2024.

The result of the scholarship will be announced by email around July 15, 2024 to every candidate who applied for the scholarship.

It is the responsibility of the students applying for any professional degree (Medical, Engineering, Nursing, Architecture, Law, Veterinary Medicine, etc.) to first get confirmed its accreditation from the respective Councils i.e. Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC), Pakistan Council for Architects and Town Planners (PCATP), Pakistan Bar Council (PBC), Pakistan Veterinary Medical Council (PVMC), Pakistan Technology Council, etc.

Kashmir Solidarity Day: A call for youth action

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmir Solidarity Day, observed on February 5 by Pakistan and Kashmiris worldwide, is a national holiday signifying solidarity and support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), who have been fighting for their right to self-determination for over 70 years.

In addition, the day honours the hundreds of Kashmiris who have been martyred in the war and advocates for a diplomatic settlement that satisfies both the UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. Kashmir Solidarity Day is not only a day of commemoration but also a day of action. It's a day to bring attention to the predicament of the Kashmiris, who are subjected to political persecution, economic marginalisation, military repression, environmental destruction and breaches of their human rights while living under Indian rule.

It's a day to call for justice for those who have been victims of state brutality, including the numerous extrajudicial executions, mass rapes, forced disappearances, and acts of torture that several local and international human rights organizations have recorded. It's a day to question the narratives of the Indian government and its backers, which reject the legitimacy of the Kashmiri resistance movement and present Kashmir as an essential component of India under its fascist RSS Hindutva Ideology of Akhand Bharat.

The youth's contribution is vital in this regard. The bulk of people in Kashmir are young, and they have led the charge in the struggle for self-determination. They endure intense militarization and monitoring, but they have demonstrated incredible bravery, tenacity, and inventiveness in expressing their discontent and goals. They have challenged the

established status quo and asserted their identity and agency using a variety of protest tactics, including stonemaking, graffiti, art, music, poetry, social media, and civil disobedience.

Additionally, they have been the most impacted and most at risk from the violence. They have experienced social and cultural estrangement, a lack of educational and career options, and physical and psychological damage. They have been harassed, intimidated, and arbitrarily detained by security personnel. They have not been given the room or the stage on which to air their complaints and dreams. The Indian government and media have branded them as extremists, terrorists, separatists, and anti-nationals.

Therefore, the youngsters must receive the encouragement and appreciation they deserve. They are both the change makers and the victims of the war. They embody not just Kashmir's future but also its present. They are the peace process's motivators as well as its stakeholders.

So, we urge on youth of Pakistan and the rest of the globe to show support for the youth of Kashmir on Kashmir Solidarity Day. We implore them to educate others about the Kashmir problem and to educate themselves about its history and realities. To cooperate and converse with the youth of Kashmir and to raise their voices and demands. We all should continue to stand up for the rights and dignity of the Kashmiri people and put pressure on the international community and governments to act decisively in favour of a peaceful, democratic settlement of the crisis. On Kashmir Solidarity Day, we pledge to remain steadfast in our support of the region and rekindle our optimism for a successful and peaceful future for Kashmir and its people. It is a

day to honour the sacrifices and hardships made by the Kashmiri people, as well as to commemorate their spirit and tenacity.

This day serves as a reminder that Kashmir is a nation with a rich history, culture, and identity; not just a piece of territory. Today is an important opportunity to make it very loud and clear that Kashmiris control the region and have the freedom to determine their future.

This is the day to declare clearly that Kashmiris are not alone; we Pakistanis are here for them. We support them in your fight for liberty, equity, and respect. Pakistan supports them in their fight against injustice, occupation, and oppression. We support their desire for self-determination, democracy, and peace and their vision of a brighter future in which they can live in peace, safety, and prosperity. Pakistan honours them, Kashmiri youth, who have persevered in demanding their rights and pursuing their dreams. They are strong and courageous. In their region, they are the real leaders and the real heroes. For all of us, they are the source of motivation and inspiration. They embody Kashmir's voice and vision.

Hence, we vow to stand by them in every manner on Kashmir Solidarity Day. We vow to speak up for them in all public spaces and on all media. We vow to work together on all campaigns and projects. We vow to support them through every trial and hardship. We vow never to disappoint them, never to make them feel alone.

We are unified, we are one, we are Kashmir. We are the people, the force, and the agent of change. We are the answer, the hope, and the liberation. Kashmir is ours, and we are Kashmir. The writer is a student of BS IR at NDU, Researcher at Policy East & Intern at Kashmir Institute of International Relations



ISLAMABAD: Traffic police official issuing challan to rickshaw loader driver due to overloading which is a violation of the traffic rule at Lathrar Road, Khana Pull.

Sohail meets British Envoy
KABUL (BNA): Mohammad Sohail Shaheen, the chief of the political office of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in Qatar, met with the British envoy for Afghanistan, Robert Chatterton Dickson, in Doha. The meeting encompassed discussions on various topics, especially bilateral relations between the two parties. Shahin highlighted that the upcoming special representatives' meeting for Afghanistan, scheduled for February 18-19 in Doha, was also a key point of discussion.

Construction begins for 19 check dams
KANDAHAR (BNA): Following a decree from the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, construction work has commenced for 19 check dams in Kandahar province, starting with the Shah Wali Kot district. These check dams, which are part of a project led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, have the capacity to store tens of thousands of cubic meters of water. The construction is expected to be completed within three months, at a total cost of three million Afghanis.

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

Islamic Emirate strives to provide advanced medical facilities for hospitals



KABUL (BNA): Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, has announced a commitment to enhance medical facilities and recruit specialist doctors across the nation's hospitals. In a meeting with representatives from Ariana Medical Complex, Amiri Medical Complex, Cure Hospital, and French Hospitals for Children, Hanafi discussed the current state of private hospitals and their future plans. Dr. Abdul Wahid Sadiqi, the head of Ariana Private Hospital, highlighted the services provided by specialist doctors in these hospitals. Dr. Sadiqi pointed out the lack of advanced medical equipment and facilities, which hinders the treatment of certain diseases. He emphasized that providing these facilities domestically would not only enable the treatment of such diseases but also save resources by reducing the need for patients to travel abroad. The Islamic Emirates authorities were urged to focus on the health sector, particularly in educating specialist doctors, supplying standard medical equipment, and developing health centers across the country. Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi views health services as a fundamental commitment of the Islamic Emirates and an essential need for the people. He affirmed the Islamic Emirates' dedication to delivering healthcare services that meet international standards to the Afghan people. This includes efforts to equip hospitals with advanced medical facilities and hire qualified doctors. He further stated that Afghanistan's workforce across various sectors is a valuable asset to the nation. He says that through coordination and collaboration, the country can progress, and the people can overcome challenges.

Deputy PM prioritizes implementation of infrastructure projects in the Islamic Emirate

KABUL (BNA): Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, has emphasized the importance of addressing people's problems and implementing infrastructure projects as top priorities for the Islamic Emirate. In a meeting held in Lakan region, Khost province, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir expressed his commitment to resolving local challenges and initiating developmental projects in the province. The visit also indicated that the leaders of the Islamic Emirate extend beyond the central region, showing their dedication to understanding the needs of the people. Recognizing the resilience of the people of Khost in resisting past



invasions, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir commended their sacrifices and reiterated the Islamic Emirate's commitment to prioritize the needs of the population. He further assured the leaders in Khost province that their suggestions and recommendations would be taken into consideration.

Economic commission's technical committee discusses key issues

KABUL (BNA): The Technical Committee of the Economic Commission held its regular meeting and addressed several economic topics. One of the main highlights was the presentation of a sufficiency plan for vegetable and edible oils, which was approved in principle. Representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock were tasked with sharing the plan with the Ministries of Water and Energy, as well as Industry and Trade, in order to gather their opinions. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Technical Committee of the Economic Commission for final approval. Furthermore, discussions were held regarding the issuance of national optical fiber licenses to new applicants. Following a detailed conversation, it was decided that new licenses should be awarded through international bidding, and contracts with qualified companies will require approval from the Economic Commission. This decision has been referred to the Economic Commission for the final endorsement. The Technical Committee of the Economic Commission also focused on plans for new sources of income for the National Environmental Protection Agency. Representatives of the agency were entrusted with coordinating the plan with relevant ministries and authorities, seeking their input before presenting it to the Technical Committee for further consideration.



Taliban Defense Minister assures Foreign Diplomats to ensure security for projects

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Taliban Defense Minister has told Iranian, Pakistani, and Chinese diplomats that the Taliban is ready to ensure security and cooperation for the implementation of development projects in these countries in Afghanistan. Mullah Yaqub Mujahid raised this issue after the "Regional Initiative for Afghanistan" meeting in Kabul. The Taliban's Defense Ministry stated in a press release on Tuesday that Mr. Mujahid had separately met with representatives from China, Iran, and Pakistan. According to the press release, during these meetings, Mr. Mujahid discussed mutual relations, economic, and security cooperation with the representatives of these countries. The press release added that before these meetings, representatives from India, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan had



attended a reception hosted by the Defense Minister of the Taliban. The Taliban's Defense Minister held this reception and meetings with foreign diplomats one day after the Kabul meeting. Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, no countries have officially recognized their regime. This lack of recognition is primarily due to their disregard for women's rights, their ban on girls attending schools and universities, restrictions on employment and free movement, and their failure to honour their international commitments. The international community has been united in withholding recognition from the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan. Their actions regarding women's rights, the education of girls, employment, and international obligations have raised significant concerns and have led to a lack of formal recognition by any nation.

UN emphasizes support for women's businesses in Afghanistan

Tabasum Nasiry

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has stated that, in light of the collapse of Afghanistan's economic system, it has supported 50 women in the central regions of the country in various aspects, ranging from small and medium-sized businesses to infrastructure and healthcare services for women. On Monday, 29th January, this organization released a report, affirming that the goal of UNDP's development programs is to support women entrepreneurs in strengthening and enriching communities. Friba, a college student at Bamyān University's Law School, who couldn't continue her education due to limitations, expressed to this organization that she wanted to support her family after completing her studies. However, due to the constraints, she has established a small dairy business in a residential complex in Bamyān. She, who collects raw materials from villages across the region to produce dairy products,

emphasized that with the "cessation of dairy product purchases, orders decreased by over 60%, and women in the districts even had to stop raising sheep and cows because there was no demand. I lost hope and considered quitting." Friba, expressing her satisfaction with the United Nations development programs, stated, "One of the reasons women are subjected to violence is their lack of economic independence." According to the UNDP report, in addition to supporting women entrepreneurs, the organization has also provided them with business opportunities worth over USD 1,500. This is happening while, after two years, women are still deprived of access to their fundamental rights, including education, work,

and active participation. The United Nations Development Program had previously announced that it has created communal kitchens to provide work opportunities and income. According to the UNDP development program, the prohibition of women's work has affected Afghanistan's economy, causing a blow of 600 million to 1 billion dollars to the country's economy.



Karzai stresses girls' education in meeting with women activists



KABUL (Khaama Press): Hamid Karzai, former President of Afghanistan, emphasized the vital importance of reopening schools and universities for girls during a meeting with a group of women activists and supporters of girls' education. Mr. Karzai considered girls' education crucial for the progress and development of Afghanistan during this meeting. He also wrote in his

social media platform X on Tuesday that "National dialogue and understanding are essential for ensuring lasting peace and stability in the country." During this meeting, female activists stressed the necessity of higher education for girls for the growth and development of society. These women activists called for effective measures in various areas, including ensuring girls' education rights,

and emphasized national unity in this regard. Mr. Karzai had previously mentioned during a meeting with representatives of international organizations that national dialogue should be initiated for the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Since the Taliban took control of Kabul, they have implemented over 50 decrees that severely curtailed women's rights, including access to edu-

cation, employment, and free movement. These restrictions have effectively erased women from public life. Despite facing widespread criticism from both national and international organizations and prominent figures, the Taliban has continued to tighten its grip and impose more restrictions. As a result, no countries have officially recognized their regime due to these oppressive policies.

Nawaz says he never revealed state secret

F.P. Report

BAHAWALNAGAR: Slamming the incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan after his 10-year sentence in cipher case, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif said that he had neither compromised the national security nor revealed any state secret to save his rulership.

The three-time ex-premier, in his address to an election rally in the Haroonabad town of Punjab Bahawalnagar district on Tuesday, came down hard on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and blamed him for hatching a "conspiracy" which compromised the national security.

In a major development today, the cricketer-turned-politician and the former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi were sentenced to 10 years, each, in the cipher case, pertains to allegations of making contents of a secret cable sent by the country's ambassador in Washington to the government in Islamabad public. He praised the Haroonabad people for gathering in large numbers to welcome him and said that his election rally broke attendance records of all previous rallies in the city.

"Despite being subjugated, I had never revealed any state secret nor compromised the national security," Nawaz said while pointing fingers at Khan,

adding that he "attacked" the country's integrity to save his rule. "I am still standing before the nation despite facing cruel oppression. I had been ousted from the premiership for not receiving salary from my son. I was removed from the premiership thrice which also resulted in losses to the country."

The PML-N supremo took credit for controlling inflation, fuel rates, load-shedding, the US dollar fluctuations and relief to farmers and common people during his previous tenures. "We had also gotten rid of the IMF. We were expanding the motorway network, working on the CPEC [China-Pakistan Economic Corridor]. On the other hand, the former PTI government kept begging before foreign countries," Nawaz claimed.

He also mentioned the latest ranking of the global corruption index, saying: "Transparency International declared the PTI founder's era most corrupt. Corruption was decreased during our tenure but the country's corruption index had risen during the PTI government." Nawaz blamed Khan for shaking the foundations of the country during his four-year rule.

He vowed to stay focused on getting Pakistan back on its feet besides working for the country's prosperity and development. He also announced the construction of a motorway from Lahore to

Bahawalnagar if voted to power. Addressing the same rally, Maryam Nawaz praised the 10-year sentencing of Khan in the cipher case by a special court today.

"When Nawaz Sharif was sentenced in the scandalous Panama case, the PTI founder was enjoying sweets. Unlike him, Nawaz is not celebrating the sentencing of [Imran] Khan today." "The former premier had played with the national security by waving a fake paper and terming it a conspiracy. PTI isn't a political party and they should be treated like terrorists," she added.

"Despite being ousted from power thrice, subjected to oppressiveness and attempts to end his political career, Nawaz has never gone against the country and is still here among the nation," said the party's senior vice president. She appealed to the nationals to elect PML-N to power to resume the journey towards development and prosperity. With the party supremo back in Pakistan after nearly four years of exile, the PML-N believes it has got a much-needed boost — given the dismal performance during the 16-month tenure of the coalition government, headed by Shehbaz. The party has fielded 208 candidates for the 266 National Assembly general seats up for grabs. Meanwhile, overall for the five legislatures, the PML-N has issued 671 tickets out of the 859 seats.

JI to defend Islamic tenets of Constitution, says Siraj

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sirajul Haq has emphasized that the JI will steadfastly defend the Islamic tenets of the constitution, including Article 62 and 63. Addressing election rallies in Lower Dir on Tuesday, he remarked that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) aspiration to annul Article 62 and 63 would never come to fruition.

Sirajul Haq said the fact was that the two other former ruling parties have also become supporters of the PML-N manifesto. Transforming Pakistan into a secular state, he said, was their sole agenda. The former rulers aimed to appease the US and Western lobbies, he remarked.

He further stated that the JI would resist all conspiracies against the Islamic identity of Pakistan. He said a clear majority in Pakistan was in favour of Islamic system. Yet, he added, their desire was never fulfilled as the ruling two percent elite was afraid of the laws based on Quran and Sunnah. He said the article 62 and 63 guaranteed the presence of honest and capable people in the parliament. Are the former ruling parties wanting presence of corrupt persons in the assemblies, he questioned.

Siraj said the country went through different experiences yet Islamic system was never introduced here. He said Islam provides solution to all the problems facing the country and its people. The JI, he added, would introduce interest-free economy and ensure rule of law and constitution after coming to power. He appealed to the people to vote for the JI for better Pakistan.

Meanwhile, he expressed concern over the verdict of the special court in the Cypher Case. As the trial court announced 10-year prison for Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday, the JI chief said had the trial held in the open court, it would have been better for all sides. The PTI leaders, however, he said has the right to appeal. The JI, he said, would continue to struggle for the rule of law in Pakistan.

Imran disqualification: PHC dispose off pleas

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprised of Justice Ishfaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad dispose off plea seeking disqualification of former Prime Minister Imran Khan from NA35 Bannu for concealment of facts in nomination form, on Tuesday.

PHC accepted supplementary plea in this regard and also ordered petitioner that Inam Ullah (applicant) may file a writ plea in this regard anytime as per his will because Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan isn't contesting election from NA35.

The counsel Qazi Jawad Ihsan Ullah Qureshi advocate argued that the petitioner was candidate of Justice and Democratic Party, the former Chief Justice of Pakistan Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudary party in 2018 and lost to PTI founding chairman Muhammad Ishaq Khan.

Former Prime Minister neither named his daughter nor disclosed spouse's assets in the nomination papers and submitted fake attorney in 2018 general elections, the writ pleaded. PTI founding chairman Imran Khan neither truthful nor trustworthy as enshrined in Articles 62&63 of the Constitution of Pakistan and requested for disqualification of former PM, the counsel argued.

The petitioner had risen several objections before Returning Officer in this regard but all was turned down by accepting nomination papers of Imran Khan for NA35 and approached PHC for redressal of grievances, the petition stated.

The counsel Qazi Jawad Ihsan Ullah Qureshi advocate argued that PHC may replace word of rejecting the plea in the previous order sheet with dispose-of because it will create legal hurdle to petitioner in future.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi visiting the Center or training at Society for Children Need of Special Attention (SCINOSA).

PPP to make university in every district: Bilawal

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing a mammoth public gathering in Dera Ismail Khan expressed his gratitude to the Jiyalas for coming out in such a large number to support the Party. The people of D.I. Khan have supported the Party through thick and thin. The relationship between the Party and Dera Ismail Khan dates back three generations. Quaid-e-Awan Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto contested the elections from D.I. Khan and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto too frequented the region.

Bilawal said that there were concerns regarding D.I. Khan being too cold. However, the weather seems pleasant enough. What would become of those who were using the weather as an excuse? The determination and zeal of the Jiyalas of D.I. Khan has made it apparent that it will rain arrows on election day. Chairman PPP said that the Party too is told not to reach out to the people due to security threats. Terrorism is raising its head once again, but we cannot leave the soldiers of Shaheed Quaid-e-Awan and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. The Jiyalas of PPP are courageous, honourable, loyal and brave.

Bilawal said that the country is in peril once again, and the traditional politicians do not have the capability to combat the plethora of challenges. Those from Raiwind or elsewhere do not have any inkling about the problems faced by the common people. There has been an unprecedented increase in poverty, inflation and unemployment. When the country's farmers, labourers, students, youth and the downtrodden are in pain, the PPP cannot leave them alone.

The same terrorists that were combated by the Jiyalas of the Party, against who Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto rendered the greatest sacrifice, are raising their heads once again. Moreover, D.I. Khan is still facing the devastating impacts of the catastrophic floods that have left people without shelter. Had it been any other country, the politicians would have joined forces to combat the challenges together. Currently, there is only one political party that is representing the common man and the downtrodden masses of the country, which is the PPP.

It has been doing so since three generations. PPP has been tackling poverty, hunger and unemployment since three generations. The rest of the political parties protect the interests of the elite and benefit them. They think



that the economy can benefit from making the rich richer. However, it is Quaid-e-Awan who taught us that progress can only occur when the common man is empowered.

Bilawal said that he has himself prepared a 10-point economic charter which prioritises the solutions to the three main problems faced by the people which are inflation, poverty and unemployment. This agenda follows the philosophy of Shaheed Quaid-e-Awan and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. The 10-point agenda has been published in numerous regional languages, including Pashto and Saraiki. He instructed the Party workers to disseminate the contents to people all over the region.

Chairman PPP said that he resolves to not only increase wages, but double them within five years. The Party also resolves to provide 300 units of electricity free-of-cost to the deserving citizens of the country through solar power. The PPP aims to construct three million houses for the people all over the country, and give ownership to the women of the households. The Jiyalas should convey to the flood victims of D.I. Khan that the PPP government is resolving not only to construct houses for them but also to regularise temporary houses while giving ownership to the women.

Chairman Bilawal said that the PPP has promised to make a university in every district, but for D.I. Khan especially, the PPP aims to establish a university for women. The people can access free healthcare treatments ranging from liver and kidney ailments to cardiac issues from institutions established by the PPP all over Sindh. The PPP aims to construct similar institutions for the people of D.I. Khan within six months. Chairman Bilawal said that he wishes to serve the women of D.I. Khan just as a son would, hence the PPP plans to not only expand the

revolutionary Benazir Income Support Programme but also provide interest-free loans to the women of the country so that they can gain financial independence and contribute to the economy of the country. Addressing the farmers and labourers, Chairman Bilawal said that he is aiming to provide the 'Benazir Kissan Card' and the 'Benazir Mazdoor Card', to provide crop insurance and financial assistance to all small farmers, and social security to labourers after February 8. These initiatives are being taken as an extension of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's policy, which revolved around the farmers and labourers of the country getting their due share. He empowered the small farmers by taking land from the rich landowners. The PPP will support the farmers, growers and labourers directly instead of giving subsidies through the elite. It was the dream of Quaid-e-Awan Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that no child or adult goes to sleep on an empty stomach.

Hence, the Party plans to introduce the 'Bhook Mitao Programme' on the level of union councils nationwide to combat hunger. Moreover, the youth of the country needs to be apprised of PPP's legacy of serving the nation. For the youth, the PPP aspires to initiate the 'Youth Card' so that unemployment can be dealt with and the youngsters are equipped with all the necessary skills they need, along with financial assistance.

Chairman PPP said that the Party will achieve all of these goals through a strategy for financing. The PPP analysed the statistical figures of the country, it discovered that the 17 ministries which were to be devolved were still operated by the federation and more than 300 billion rupees is spent by the government to run them annually. Moreover, our elite is given subsidies worth 1500 billion rupees every year.

Meeting contemplates on urban mobility plan for Abbottabad

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An important meeting to discuss the matters related to Urban Mobility Plan for divisional headquarter Abbottabad was held here at Islamabad, on Tuesday with Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah in the chair. Besides the concerned authorities of NHA, Planning Commission and other federal entities, officials of the relevant provincial departments attended the meeting.

The meeting was briefed about the proposed options for the construction of interchange on Hazara Motorway in order to connect it to the Abbottabad city. The participants were also briefed about the project regarding dualization of NHA road from Havelian to Qalandar Abad and other important matters. It was informed on the occasion that NHA has chalked out it's plan for constructing an interchange at Sherwan on Hazara Motorway to connect it to Abbottabad city, adding that CDWP has also approved PC-1 for that interchange.

"Construction of a flyover and tunnel is also the part this project", it was informed and added that land acquisition process for the implementation of the project has also been initiated. Similarly, in order to address the vehicular traffic issues in Abbottabad city, the project regarding dualization of NA-35

from Havelian to Qalandar Abad has been divided into three different packages. The chief minister on the occasion, has directed the NHA and relevant provincial authorities to jointly visit the Abbottabad city and finalize strategies for implementation of aforementioned projects.

"Final proposals regarding land acquisition and other related matters be submitted for the approval of caretaker provincial cabinet", he directed and said that traffic issue in Abbottabad city is getting worse with the each passing day; it needs to address once and for all. He said that all the relevant departments and institutions would have to complete their respective responsibilities well in time for the purpose. The provincial government will extend its all-out support on priority basis in this regard, he added.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister chaired another meeting to discuss the matters regarding seats enhancement in the Medical and Nursing Colleges of the province. Besides his Advisor for health Dr. Riaz Anwar and Spokesperson Brig(R) Syed Mujtaba Tirmizi, high ups of the Ministry of Health, Pakistan Nursing Council and relevant provincial departments attended the meeting. The meeting agreed in principle with seats enhancement in Medical and Nursing Colleges.

It was also agreed to start the second shifts in the government Nursing Colleges of the province. It was decided on the occasion that

Medical and Nursing Colleges interested in seats enhancement would formally submit their applications to the relevant federal departments; and the departments would inspect the capacities of those colleges regarding seats enhancements. The Colleges, fulfilling the set criteria to this effect would be allowed to enhance their seats in the relevant discipline.

The Chief Minister speaking on the occasion, said that significant increase in the skilled human power is the need of hour adding that the provincial government is taking practical steps under a comprehensive and well devised strategy in this regard. He said that youth are 60% of our total population; we can make our youth a valuable asset of the nation by imparting them markets oriented skills and training. He said that the provincial government, has chalked out Human Resource Export Strategy under which youth of this province would be imparted with market based crash courses and sent abroad for employment.

He added that the health sector of the province has a lot of capacity regarding increase in skilled human power. We want to increase our human power in health sector without compromising the quality. He also asked the relevant federal departments to come forward and extend their support to the provincial government for this purpose, adding that we all have to play our respective role in this national cause.

Anti-judiciary campaign No action against journalists till Feb 8 polls, SC assured

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan on Tuesday assured the Supreme Court that no action would be taken against journalists, who were issued notices over their alleged involvement in the smear campaign against judges, till the general elections slated for February 8.

The development came during the hearing of a suo motu case which was taken up along with an old case heard in 2021 pertaining to the harassment of journalists. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Muhammed Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali conducted the hearing of the case.

On January 17, the caretaker government formed a five-member Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to ascertain the facts behind a malicious social media campaign against the Supreme Court judges after the apex court gave a verdict on election symbol of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The JIT constituted under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 consists of officials from police, FIA and intelligence agencies.

The FIA's list titled "JIT-SM campaign against CJP and State Institutions" which has names of 47 media persons and YouTubers went viral on social media. A day earlier, the top judge said the Supreme Court cannot stop any journalist or even the general public from expressing criticism, direct-

ing the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) not to take legal action against them for critiquing the apex court.

The AGP, during the hearing today, told the top court that the notices will be issued again after the elections. AGP Awan and the Press Association of Supreme Court's officials appeared before the court. At the outset of the hearing, CJP Isa asked if any petition was filed today. To this, the press association's president said that the plea could not be filed as the FIA did not provide a list.

CJP Isa said that the top court did not issue an order because of this, adding that he was expecting a petition to be filed. "The court cannot issue any order until the matter is heard in the judges' committee," he added. Later, he asked where the joint investigation team's notification was. "If the court takes a suo motu notice like this then the journalists would object," he added. Justice Mazhar apprised that those who received the notices could have submitted their answers.

"Has anyone appeared before the FIA?" questioned Justice Mazhar. At this, AGP Awan said that the JIT was stopped till today. Journalist Matiullah Jan told the court that attempts were being made to control the media. He then pleaded that the institutions should summon them in connection with the notices after Feb 8 polls. "The federal government should be asked to create a social media code of conduct in collaboration with stakeholders," said a lawyer.

CJP Isa asked whether the court could issue an order like this. "There is no law to regulate digital media. The law is only for criminal proceedings," replied Justice Mazhar. The chief justice said that the court can only request the stakeholders to sit together. At this point, the PA president said that despite the court's observation, the notices were not withdrawn.

14 more children die of pneumonia

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pneumonia claimed 14 more lives of children during the past 24 hours in Punjab, the health department said on Tuesday. According to the Punjab Health Department, a total of 872 new cases of pneumonia cases were reported during the last 24 hours as compared to yesterday's 801.

Over the current month, Punjab has reported 275 pneumonia-related deaths, while over 15,000 cases have been reported in the province. Health experts attribute the rapid increase in cases and deaths in Punjab to the environmental pollution caused by smog during the winter season.

Pneumonia was an infection in the lungs, often caused by viruses. It can manifest after symptoms of a cold or flu and can range from mild to severe. Typically, pneumonia was more common in children aged five or younger.



KARACHI: Policemen detain an activist of PTI outside High Court who arrived for case hearing.