

Earthquake jolts Swat F.P. Report

MINGORA: Residents of Swat and nearby areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa experienced a jolt on Monday as an earthquake struck the area. The Pakistan Meteorological Department reported that the earthquake registered a magnitude of 4.5 on the Richter scale. The tremors were felt across Swat and its surroundings, causing momentary panic among residents.



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Tarar flays threats hurled at journalists

— Gandapur's abusive outburst against woman opponents shows his sheer disregard for Pashtoon norms

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's abusive outburst against woman political opponents and journalists at the Sangiani public rally clearly showed his misdemeanour and sheer disregard for centuries-old Pashtoon norms and culture.

Addressing a joint press conference along with Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam, he said the Pakhtuns had a great tradition of according high respect to mothers, sisters and daughters. Taking a jibe at Gandapur, he said that the person, who had challenged a woman political leader (Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz) was scared of terrorists and criminals in his own province.

Only people of short stature like him could stoop so low by abusing and threatening political opponents especially women, he added. The KP CM should have talked about the strategy to eradicate terrorism from the province, but he indulged in mudslinging as per his party's tradition, Tarar said. The minister said that Maryam Nawaz had never bowed before any tyrant or oppressor, and did face fake cases bravely, besides imprisonment.

He pointed out that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had a record of not carrying out even a single quality project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during its 12-year tenure. He said that for its Sunday's flopped meeting, the KP government ruthlessly used public resources and machinery to bring the people to the venue.

The minister said in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, corruption had become an order of the day as the PTI leaders were getting kickbacks openly. Tarar questioned whether it a revolution to challenge a woman oppo-

nent leader. In fact, Gandapur and other PTI leaders vented their frustration in the wake of a lacklustre party show. He said the designated routes for the PTI workers remained open and the administration did not put any obstacle.

He reminded Gandapur that he was the chief minister of a province and he should take his job seriously, besides addressing the law and order issue in the KP. He advised the KP CM to initiate development works in the province and ensure health and education facilities to the people. Lashing out at Gandapur, he regretted that only those party leaders and civil servants had been removed who were not part of corruption campaign.

Terming the PTI a foreign-funded outfit, Tarar said that the late anchorperson Arshad Sharif had in a programme proved that Imran Khan had Jewish connections citing the statements of Hakeem Saeed and Dr Asrar Ahmed. A latest article in an Israeli newspaper had further exposed Imran's links with Jewish lobbies, he added. The minister said that Imran's cult was brought in despite being involved in inappropriate acts such concealing of assets and other moral crimes and he was even being compared with sacred figures. He said that the PTI leadership had even written a letter to the International Monetary Fund to push the country towards default. He said that the politics of hypocrisy and double standards was the hallmark of the PTI leadership.

Tarar said that Nawaz Sharif during his three tenures as prime minister, had laid the network of development projects in the country. He maintained that internal differences of the PTI had done the damage as the people stayed away from the so-called "mammoth rally". He reminded Gandapur that he still had time to mend his ways and serve the people of the province.

Attaullah Tarar said that soon a

weekly programme would be launched to expose fake news. Castigating the PTI's social media activists, he said no revolution could be brought just by keyboard warriors. Fake and old videos and footages were being uploaded by the PTI vloggers and woman activists in an effort to show that the ground of the rally was filled to the capacity, he added.

Even a former president had to apologise for uploading a fake video on his social media account, Tarar said. To a question, the minister said that the opposition was playing its role in the Parliament as the constitutional democratic system was fully functional in the country. He said that most of the mouthpieces of Imran Khan, who used to hold 10 press conferences on daily bases, had fled from the country. He challenged them to come back for facing the cases.

He said in the past, a leading politician raised the slogan of "Pakistan Khappee", even after the martyrdom of his dear ones. Nawaz Sharif, he said, came back to Pakistan to face legal proceedings leaving behind his spouse on the hospital bed abroad. He said that most of the PTI leaders were opportunists who did not even spare national institutions.

The minister strongly condemned the threats hurled at the journalist community and derogatory remarks against woman media persons during the PTI rally. The journalists were not politicians and they should not be treated in such a manner, he regretted.

Tarar said since assuming charge as Minister for Information and Broadcasting he had never stopped advertisements of any news channels since it resulted in delay of salaries to employees. He asked the media to adopt a resolution against the PTI at the National Press Club. He assured the media persons that the government would stand by them if they took any action against the PTI leaders for using abusive language.

Kundi accuses Gandapur of inciting May 9-like unrest

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has accused Ali Amin Gandapur of inciting unrest similar to the events of May 9 during a recent rally in Islamabad.

The governor urged the federal government to take immediate action against those involved in violating the law. He stressed that anyone distressing the constitution must face consequence, especially those responsible for the violence on May 9.

Governor Kundi also criticised the KP CM, calming his district was a hotspot for terrorism activities, and urged the KP CM to seek a vote of confidence for the provincial assembly as the law-and-order situation had deteriorated in the province. Kundi reiterated that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has always supported democracy and peaceful political process, and stressed the politicians were easy to hold accountable, but questioned when judges and military leaders would face the same level of scrutiny.

Meanwhile, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday expressed deep sorrow over the death of former MNA and prominent Muslim League leader Barrister Humair Hayat Khan Rokhri. In a condolence message, the Governor condoled Rokhri's death as an irreplaceable loss.

He acknowledged Rokhri as a dedicated, honest, and service-oriented politician who worked tirelessly for the welfare of his constituency and the country. His unique contributions earned him a special place in the hearts of the people, and his services will be remembered. The Governor extended heartfelt sympathies to Rokhri's family and loved ones during this difficult time. He prayed that Allah grants the deceased a place in eternal mercy and provides patience to the bereaved family.

Shehbaz hosts dinner in honour of parliamentarians

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday hosted a dinner in honour of parliamentarians from various political parties, expressing gratitude for their cooperation in the government affairs. He highlighted the slowdown in inflation to 9.6% in August 2024, citing it as a testament to the government's effective economic measures.

"The economic experts are forecasting further decline in the inflation rate during the current month which is a good news for the nation", he said, recalling that in 2018, they had left the government with a single digit inflation rate. The prime minister attributed the economic progress to the efforts initiated by his last government in April 2022, to save the country from default. The economic team's efforts had not only stabilized the economy but also put it on a growth trajectory.

The dinner was attended by the members of National Assembly and Senate belonging to the government's allied parties. The



prime minister said while assuming the responsibilities as Khadim-e-Pakistan, he had promised to the people that he would ease their problems at all costs. Now the positive results of economic reforms had started reaching the people, he said adding that it was not possible to achieve the goal of the country's development without making the life of the common man easier.

As regards the power tariffs, the prime minister said the government was taking measures to provide maximum relief to the low-income segments of the society. He said that the process of right sizing and downsizing in the government offices

had been started to reduce the expenditures.

The prime minister, while stressing the need for political stability and continuity in policies, said that everybody should have to get together to steer the country out of the economic quagmire. He also condemned the inappropriate language used by the leaders of a political parties last night. He said terrorism had almost been eliminated from the country under the leadership of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, but unfortunately it was resurging in some parts of the country. He, however, vowed to uproot the menace again.

President calls for political stability

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday underscored the need to further strengthen parliamentary democracy and promote political stability to put the country on the path of development.

Talking about the current challenges facing the country, the president emphasized the need to forge political unity to steer the country out of its political, economic and security challenges.

The president expressed these views during a dinner held in honour of parliamentarians belonging to Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan Muslim

League-Q (PML-Q), and Istehkaam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Chaudhary Salik Hussain, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, President ANP Senator Aimal Wali Khan, Former Caretaker Prime Minister and Senator Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, President IPP Abdul Aleem Khan, and senior political leadership of the country attended the dinner.

Speaking on the occasion, President Zardari called for promoting toler-

ance and mutual respect as well as strengthening democratic institutions. He said that political, economic and governance reforms were essential for improving public service delivery and bringing economic prosperity. He urged the need to rise above partisan interests and committedly work for the welfare of the people, adding that he was against the politics of confrontation that harmed the country. The parliamentarians from different political parties suggested various measures to bring stability and provide relief to the people. They also appreciated the president for his political wisdom and vision in evolving consensus on issues of national significance.

The Frontier Post

2 computers stolen from SC F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Two computers were stolen from country's top court and the Supreme Court officials have lodged a case in this regard. The Secretariat Police Station has registered a case on the complaint of Director IT Supreme Court about the theft of two computers. After analyzing CCTV camera footage, movements of two apex court employees – Zahid Iqbal and Faisal Khan – were found to be suspicious.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar addressing a joint press conference with Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and GB Amir Muqam.

PM lauds gatekeeper for averting train accident

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday paid tribute to Madad Ali, a gatekeeper who risked his life to prevent a major accident involving the Shalimar Express at a railway crossing near Nawab Shah railway station.

Madad Ali saved lives of hundreds of people by risking his own life, the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office. The prime minister lauded Madad Ali's bravery, saying, "he put his life on the line to save countless others." Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that Madad Ali's selfless spirit is an inspiration to all, saying, "We can all learn from his altruistic passion." The entire nation is proud of you, Madad Ali, the prime minister added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday strongly condemned the incident of firing targeting a police mobile van in Panjgur.

The Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif also expressed deep grief over the martyrdom of a police Sub-inspector Shakeel Ahmed in the incident, according to a PM Office press release.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in peace and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss. "The whole nation stands by the soldiers sacrificing their lives in the fight against terrorism. This war will continue till the elimination of this scourge in toto," Prime Minister Shehbaz resolved.

6 cops among ten injured in S Waziristan blast

F.P. Report

WANA: At least ten people including six police officials were injured when their vehicle was targeted with a remote-controlled explosive device in South Waziristan.

Officials of Rescue 1122 informed on Monday that police officials were on their way to Kari Kot area in a private vehicle when a roadside remote-controlled device went off with a big bang. The powerful blast injured six police officials including constables Aurangzeb, Muhammad Tahir, Kamran, Noor Salam Attaullah and passersby, Sayyed Akhtar, Amanullah, Abid, Habib Jan, Noor Khatim.

Soon after the blast, rescue teams and a large police force reached the site and collected evidence for investigation. The rescue workers provided first-aid to the injured and later shifted them to DHQ hospital. The police, after cordoning off the area, started an initial investigation into the incident.

PTI Gohar, Marwat arrested in Islamabad

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The police on Monday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Barrister Gohar outside the Parliament House.

Earlier, PTI's firebrand leader Sher Afzal Marwat was also taken into custody. The PTI leader was arrested outside the Parliament House along with his security guard. According to details, the PTI leader was shifted to Secretariat police station. A scuffle was also witnessed between the police officials and Marwat's guards after which one of the guard of the PTI leader was also taken into custody.

After the arrest of Marwat, PTI leader Shoaib Shaheen was also detained by the Islamabad police from his office. It was reported by PTI leaders decided to remain inside the Parliament House as a heavy contingent of police was seen outside while red-zone also sealed from several points. It also emerged that the PTI leader Ali Muhammad Khan was not arrested by the police when he came out from the parliament.

Alongside Omar and

Zartaj, more PTI leaders Hammad Azhar, Kanwal Shauzab, Naeem Haider Panjutha, Amir Mughal, and Khalid Khurshid would also be arrested, the sources said. Heavy contingents of police were deployed outside the parliament while all entry and exit routes to the Red Zone were also closed from D-Chowk, Nadra Chowk, Serena, and Marriott, except for Margala Road.

However, PTI MNA Ali Muhammad Khan was not taken into custody by the police when he departed from the parliament. Marwat was arrested for violating regulations devised under a new law —Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024, sources told media, adding that the PTI lawmaker was accused of clashing with police personnel a day earlier.

Alongside Omar and Zartaj, more PTI leaders Hammad Azhar, Kanwal Shauzab, Naeem Haider Panjutha, Amir Mughal, and Khalid Khurshid would also be arrested, the sources said. Several PTI lawmakers are currently present in the Parliament House including Gohar, Sheikh Waqas Akram,

Sahibzada Hamid Raza, Zain Qureshi, and Shahid Khattak.

They added that Islamabad police were expected to launch a crackdown against the former ruling party's Punjab leaders who attended yesterday's power show. It emerged that Islamabad police formally informed the Punjab top officials regarding the actions. In a separate action, Shoaib Shaheen was also arrested from his residence.

Police filed cases against several leaders from the Imran-founded party under newly-enacted Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024, at Noon and Sangiani police stations. 28 local leaders including Seemabia Tahir and Raja Basharat were also nominated in the cases. The first information report (FIR) stated that the charged PTI workers had attacked the police teams with batons and pelted stones who tried to stop them from violating the Islamabad rally's route. It added that police personnel deployed on security duties resorted to tear gas shelling and nabbed 17 party activists from the scene.

CJP says no interest in seeking extension

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Monday flatly refused to seek an extension in his tenure. Talking to journalists, when one of the reporters, while quoting PML-N stalwart Rana Sanaullah, said that if the age limit of all SC judges was increased, he (CJP) agreed to an extension, the chief justice said, "No, this is not the case."

He went on to say that in one of the meetings, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Azam Nazir Tarar and the attorney general of Pakistan were present. "But Rana Sana was not." He said he had been told the government planned to increase the term of employment of all chief justices (CJs), including him. "I said to them that they should extend the term of employment of other CJs. But I am not interested."

"I am not sure I will be alive tomorrow," Justice Isa said. When a reporter asked why the case of a letter penned down by six judges was not being fixed for the

hearing, he replied that it was the committee of judges, which had to do that. "The bench is not being formed due to the illness of Justice Musarrat Halali," he explained.

Bench composition would help predict case outcomes in past: Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa has remarked that previously the composition of a bench could often predict the outcome of a case. Chief Justice Isa addressed a full-court reference at the Supreme Court of Pakistan to mark the start of the new judicial year.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah was absent due to being abroad. Shariat Appellate Bench members Justices Qibla Ayaz and Khalid Masood attended the reference. In his speech, Chief Justice Isa emphasised the importance of evaluating institution's performance on such occasions.

He noted that he would complete one year as chief justice in nine days. He said he had introduced the live broadcasting of Supreme Court proceedings, starting with the Practice and

Procedure Act case, which was heard by the full court. Following this, the authority initially held by the chief justice was delegated to a panel of three judges.

Chief Justice Isa discussed the elimination of biases in case assignments, stating that previously, it was possible to predict a case outcome based on the bench's composition. He mentioned that he no longer knew which judge would hear a case beside him, which he believed was a shift towards more impartial proceedings. He also addressed the modernisation of the case listing process, stating that the practice of having case lists approved by the chief justice had ended.

Now, the Registrar has been instructed to publish two-week case lists, which would aid lawyers in tracking their cases and managing schedules more effectively. Chief Justice Isa concluded by mentioning that specific cases, especially related to legislations, were prioritised based on their importance. The court has also issued directives to expedite certain cases as needed.

NAB withdraws new Toshakhana case against Imran, Bushra Bibi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has withdrawn the new Toshakhana case filed against former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi from the accountability court.

A hearing on the bail application was held in the new Toshakhana reference against the PTI founder and

his wife on Monday. Salman Safdar, Imran Khan's lawyer, argued that the new Toshakhana case no longer stands after the restoration of NAB amendments, as the crime is invalid under the current law.

The NAB prosecutor stated that following the restoration of amendments, the case is no longer within NAB's jurisdiction. The accountability court judge, Muhammad

Ali Warraich, took a three-hour break before announcing the decision to transfer the new Toshakhana reference to a Special Central Court. The court also ruled that the relevant court will hear bail applications on Sept 10. Recently, Imran Khan had sought relief in the 190 million-pound case, using the Supreme Court's decision on NAB amendments as grounds for acquittal.

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فون: نمبر 042-35865731-35865732
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PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar and CEO WSSP Riaz Mehsud chairing a meeting regarding cleanliness situation in Peshawar.

KPJA completes series of capacity building trainings for paralegal staff

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy Peshawar (KPJA) has completed a series of training programmes, aimed at enhancing the professional skills and capacity uplift of Paralegal Staff of district judiciary including Stamp Vendors, Petition Writers, Oath Commissioners and Notary Public.

The inaugural session of the last one day training for Stamp Vendors held at the Academy, with Director General, Mr. Jehanzeb

Shinwari, as the chief guest, Dean Faculty, Mr. Zia-Ur-Rehman, Senior Director Administration, Mr. Dost Mohammad Khan, Senior Director Research & Publication, Dr. Qazi Attaullah and other officers and Directors of the Academy were also present on the occasion.

In his welcome address, Director General, KPJA, emphasized that the objective of this one-day training was to strengthen the justice sector by boosting the professional capabilities of

Paralegal staff (Stamp Vendors). He highlighted the essential role of Stamp Vendors in the preparation of documents and documentary evidence required by the courts. He added that their status is not like that of an ordinary book-seller, paper-seller and stationery seller, rather their status is like a national trustee.

DG Academy clarified that the unprofessional behavior of a Stamp Vendor adversely affects the valuable rights of the people. If a

malpractice is committed in the date and entry of stamp sale in the relevant register, it will be the starting of creating false documentary evidence, and this false evidence would, in many cases, lead the courts to draw wrong and erroneous conclusions. And consequently, the justice delivery system would be adversely affected.

The Director General further highlighted that the irresponsible behavior of a Stamp Vendor could cause irreparable loss to the public exchequer.

UNDP empowers' stakeholders for tackling climate change risks

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: United Nation Development Program (UNDP) Pakistan's Scaling Up of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) Risk Reduction Project (GLOF-II Project) recently held a series of Stakeholders' Communication and Coordination Workshops. These workshops brought together community members and representatives from various government departments, including PDMA, OFWM, Forest, SWC, and other relevant

officials at the district or tehsil level.

From 7th to 9th September 2024, UNDP GLOF-II Project organized these workshops in Utror, Matiltan and Mankiyal valleys of District Swat. The workshops provided a platform to identify and address potential communication and coordination challenges that may arise during the Project's implementation in these areas. The primary objective of these workshops was to cement clear and effective communication and coordination among all stake-

holders involved in the project, ensuring that community members are well-informed and actively engaged throughout the Project's duration.

"This workshop gave us the opportunity to voice our concerns. We were pleased to see that the stakeholders listened to our inputs and assured us that the Project activities will fully reflect our perspective," said Mahmood Khan, a resident of Matiltan valley.

UNDP's GLOF-II project works in 16 valleys of Gilgit Baltistan and 08 val-

leys of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It empowers communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthens public services to lower the risk of disasters related to GLOFs, and improves community preparedness and disaster response.

The project also supports the development of sustainable livelihood options in project areas, with a particular focus on the participation of women in ensuring food security and livelihoods.

Meeting pledges to promote peace in Kurram District

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a significant development, representatives of Anjuman-e-Hussainia and Anjuman-e-Farooqia held a meeting in Peshawar to discuss ways to restore peace and stability in Kurram District.

The delegations, led by Jalal Bangash (Anjuman-e-Hussainia) and Munir Bangash (Anjuman-e-Farooqia), agreed to take their respective communities into confidence on all matters and ensure responsible behavior. They also pledged to play a positive role in restoring lasting peace in the region.

The series of meetings and jirgas will continue bilaterally, with a focus on resolving all issues,



including land disputes, peacefully. The leaders emphasized the importance of adopting a legal approach to all matters through mutual consultation and understanding.

The leaders expressed hope that a good environment would be created in Kurram District in the

near future, leading to the resolution of issues. They appealed to the people of kuram District to remain peaceful in these circumstances and demanded that the state fulfill its responsibilities in a just manner.

The meeting was attended by prominent

leaders, including former federal minister Sajid Tori, former senator Sajjad Tori, Syed Wali Syed Mian, Pir Syed Kazim, Haji Muhammad Nazar, Abbasi Ali Tori, Karbalaee Nawab Hussain, Anjuman Farooqiya Karam General Secretary Imran Jaji, Muhammad Sulaiman Ghulje, Retired Director IB Rahim Bangash, Haji Asadullah Kharote, Malik Alf Gul Jaji, Haji Bahadur Khan Mangal, Maulana Usman Shah Jaji, Mansoor Jaji, Khan Amir Zadrar, Abdul Qadeer Bangash and others.

The leaders agreed to jointly support the Grand Jirga, a significant step towards promoting peace and stability in the region.

KhUJ flays CM's derogatory remarks against journalists

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, has been strongly condemned for using indecent and derogatory language against the journalistic community, especially female journalists.

In a statement, President of Khyber Union of Journalists, Nasir Hussain, Senior Vice President Imran Ayaz, Vice President Basir Qalandar, General Secretary Imran Yousafzai, and other officials expressed their astonishment at PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar's stance, stating that he had not heard the derogatory remarks made by the Chief Minister regarding journalists.

The union rejected Barrister Gohar's apology. The officials of Khyber Union of Journalists pointed out that former Prime Minister Imran Khan, during his tenure, repeatedly leveled baseless accusations and criticisms against the media.

However, now in jail, he is seen praising the media and requesting access to media representatives.

The union further stated that Ali Amin Gandapur's use of vulgar language against the entire journalistic community, particularly women, proves that blaming the media for political failures has become a part of PTI's training. They added that the Chief Minister is attacking journalists to hide his government's and political incompetence.

The Khyber Union of Journalists called on PTI founder Imran Khan to take notice of the Chief Minister's remarks. The union's officials emphasized that the smear campaign against the journalistic community, especially the derogatory statements targeting women, will be raised at all relevant forums.

They warned that if the Chief Minister does not apologize for his behavior, the journalistic community will respond with full force.

Suicidal jacket defused

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar police on Monday averted a big attempt of sabotage and recovered a suicide waist jacket thrown by the would-be terrorists in the vicinity of Phandu police station here.

Police said a suspected motorcyclist was signaled to stop but the rider instead threw his luggage before fleeing the area. Upon inspection of the luggage, police find a suicidal waist jacket and promptly called the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS).

On receiving information SHO Phandu, Kashif Hayat along with his team and personnel of BDS reached the spot where the BDS officials successfully defused the suicide jacket.

Service Level Agreement on E-Stamping KPITB, BoK sign MoU

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) ceremony was held on Monday at the office of Senior Member Board of Revenue in which Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Revenue & Estate Nazir Ahmed Abbasi, Senior Member Board of Revenue Ikramullah, Member Board of Revenue (Admin) Aamir Latif, Managing Director Bank of Khyber Sher Muhammad, Managing Director Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board Akif Khan, and other senior officials attended the ceremony.

Addressing the meet-

ing, Provincial Minister of Revenue & Estate Nazir Ahmad Abbasi said that E-Stamping is a very important initiative of the Board of Revenue.

Because stamp duty is an important source of revenue generation and E-Stamping will also provide maximum facilities to the people of the province.

Regarding E-Stamping, the first MoU was signed in September 2022, but now instead of the National Bank of Pakistan and the Punjab IT Board, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board (KPITB) and the Bank of Khyber (BoK) have extended it to all the districts of the province. Provincial Minister of

Revenue & Estate said that different rates have been allocated regarding stamp duty which will be very helpful in doubling the revenue of the province.

He also said that this is a big initiative of the government for the convenience of the people, good administration and good governance.

While this will also increase the revenue of the government.

He said that the manifesto of the provincial government is to provide maximum relief to the people, for which the provincial cabinet is working day and night under the leadership of Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur.

Booklet on KP's tourism wonders on the cards



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA), University of Peshawar and Jazz Mosafir on Monday joined hands to publish a tourism booklet to promote the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's wonders.

Titled "Discovering the Wonders of KP", the booklet would help boost tourism awareness and provide valuable information to visitors about the scenic places of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The agreement regarding the joint venture was signed during a ceremony held at the KPCTA's conference room here.

KPCTA Director General Tashfeen Haider and representatives of the University of Peshawar and Jazz Mosafir were present on the occasion.

Jazz Mosafir chief exec-

utive Sajjad, Manager of the Digital Transformation Cell Abdul Basir, and other notable figures also attended the ceremony. They pledged their support for this meaningful initiative.

Dr Shakeel Khan from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality, University of Peshawar would curate the booklet.

Speaking on the occasion, Tashfeen Haider highlighted the importance of new initiative and said that it would cultivate a sense of responsibility toward tourism among the younger generation.

He said that the booklet would help students understand their role in promoting tourism while fostering a deep appreciation for the natural and cultural heritage of KP.

"This booklet would serve as a valuable educational resource, contributing significantly to our

efforts in promoting tourism and creating awareness about the province's rich cultural and natural landscapes," the DG said, adding that the KPCTA was taking tangible steps for the promotion of tourism in the province.

The booklet, designed for students, would highlight the diverse tourism opportunities and the cultural richness of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, from its breathtaking landscapes to its vibrant festivals.

It would help inspire and educate young minds about the beauty and significance of the region's tourism sector as well.

The booklet is also expected to play a key role in promoting responsible tourism and engaging the youth in understanding the value of preserving and promoting KP's tourism potential.

PDWP KP approves projects worth Rs.3.5bn

PESHAWAR (APP): The fifth meeting of the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has approved projects worth over Rs.3.5 billion.

The meeting of the PDWP was held here with Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Planning & Development Department, Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah in the chair on Monday. Besides, members of PDWP, the authorities of the concerned departments attended the meeting.

On the special directives of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, the meeting approved the project of the provision of free books and school bags for children in the Merged Districts.

The forum also approved schemes of various sectors for the development of the province including a flood preventive project of Rs.1 billion on the sides of Indus River for D.I. Khan.

The project of the provision of free books and schools for the schools' students in Merged Districts is worth Rs.2.5 billion.

Remembering Rahimullah Yusufzai - I

Riaz Yusufzai

R E N O W N E D
Rahimullah Yusufzai had unprecedented knowledge about Afghanistan and the issues related to this war ravaged country. He gave a new dimension to journalism with professional commitment and hard work when he moved from Islamabad to Peshawar for journalistic pursuit. Through sheer hard work, dedication and devotion to duty and yet accurate and objective reporting, he got attention of the world by reporting from this region which is very much fertile in terms of news.

Later on, with the passage of time, some events started to happen in the neighbouring Afghanistan which necessitated a reliable and farsighted analyst to keep the people of the

region in its real perspective. Rahimullah Yusufzai filled this vacuum with his God-gifted talents and continuous work and thus created a large circle of listeners and readership. Also in Afghanistan people in large number used to tune to the radio especially to BBC to listen his reports and thus keep themselves informed of the happening in Afghanistan. After Russia's invasion of Afghanistan, the activities of the Jihadees organisations and above all the Jihadist activities of Osama Bin Laden made the doyen of journalism — Rahimullah Yusufzai — indispensable for reporting in the region. He had contributed many articles on Afghanistan from which books can be compiled. But here efforts are being made to reproduce some parts of his 13 famous articles based on his first meeting with Bin Laden, his personality, his Jihadi

activities which spoke volume of his intensive studies, deep analysis and credible reporting. On 7th August 1998, the article he wrote in "The News International" under the caption "FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH" created ripple in the stagnant water of journalism. In this article, he wrote in detail about Osama Bin Laden's close associate Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, his contact with him and the message conveyed by Sheikh Osama Bin Laden. He begins his article as such "Hello! I am Dr Ayman Al-Zawahiri. Do you recognise me?" It was about 9.50 pm (Pakistan Standard Time) and I was still considering which story to file for the next day's issue of The News, after having received my usual quota of endless visitors. The voice sounded familiar and I was about to lay my hands on one of the lead stories of the day.

"Yes, I do remember

you. How are you Dr Al-Zawahiri?" Pat came the reply on the distant satellite phone: "Assalam-o-Alaikum, brother, I am alright. Brother Osama Bin Laden sends his regards to you and he has a message for you. I hope you can put it on BBC and in your paper."

Here was the phone call which every journalist worth his salt would be willing to receive even at the eleventh hour. By now, my tiredness had gone and I was no longer feeling sleepy. But my office door was still open and, as is the case often any moment could barge in any moment. I was busy praying that no one would disturb me while I was receiving one of the most important calls of my life.

"I will do my best. Please go ahead with the message," is all I could utter as Dr Al-Zawahiri hurried to put across the message. "Osama Bin

Laden calls on the Muslim Ummah to continue Jihad against the Jews and Americans to liberate their Muqamat-i-Muqadassa (holy places). Meanwhile, he denies any involvement in the Nairobi and Dares-Salam bombings."

That is all, said Dr Al-Zawahiri, as he tried to close the conversation. I had many questions to ask but Dr Al-Zawahiri was in a hurry. I only managed to ask about his and Bin Laden's whereabouts in Afghanistan and the brief reply I got was that they were "somewhere in Afghanistan." And as he prepared to sign-off, someone managed to enter the system and ask, "Who are you?, who are you?" The intruder was definitely an English language speaker but it was difficult to conclude from that brief sentence whether the accent was American or British. The intrusion may have alerted Dr Al-Zawahiri and

soon he was saying Assalam-o-Alaikum to bid me goodbye. But before he could put down the cradle, I was able to renew my request for an interview with Bin Laden. "I will consult Brother Osama Bin Laden and get back to you," he promised. He further narrated that

"Dr Al-Zawahiri's call lasted less than two minutes but it gave me a great story. Since I had his voice taped when I interviewed him in May this year in Khost in southern Afghanistan, I didn't have much difficulty in judging that the man who had called me was Dr Al-Zawahiri. Memories of that visit came flooding back as I struggled in between countless more phone calls to write the story and put it on air and in print.

He also elaborated that almost half an hour after Dr. Al-Zawahiri's phone call, the Americans

attacked Khost. some newspapers, journalists and some writers, perhaps out of jealousy, have even pointed out at the possibility of my becoming a tool in the hands of the US to track Osama Bin Laden. A few people have also hinted that I played a double game. My answer to all these questions and allegations would be that "I am first and foremost a journalist." I am in the field of journalism also because it is a very interesting and sacred profession". After that, phone calls started coming in from all over the world asking me for bin Laden's phone number and address so they could call him and get important stories for themselves. His trust in me and mine in him was the reason why his call came again on August 21 at 11 pm, 24 hours after the US Tomahawk cruise missile attack on the Harakat al-Mujahideen base. "The war has just begun.

Americans should wait for reply. This was Bin Laden's brief message. Which Dr. Al-Zawahiri quickly conveyed to me. "Brother Osama Bin Laden is safe and sound. We have survived the American invasion. Tell Americans that we are not afraid of bombings, threats and acts of aggression. We survived 10 years of Soviet bombing in Afghanistan and we are ready for more sacrifices. He writes that Bin Laden has since become a hero to many Muslims around the world.

In a 1998 issue of The News International titled "Is Osama a threat", Rahimullah Yusufzai wrote about Bin Laden's alleged fatwa of jihad against the US, at least that's what many in the Taliban and Pakistan thought. It is said that the Americans acted a bit more on the so-called fatwa of "Jihad" against America by Bin Laden.

Continued



In brief

Three killed in accident

NEELUM VALLEY (APP): Three persons were killed and five others sustained injuries in a road accident that occurred near Jabri area located at Neelum valley of Northern region, tv channels quoting rescue sources reported on Monday. According to details, a tourist car carrying passengers was heading towards Babon area when it met an accident near Jabri of Neelum valley. As a result, three persons died on the spot. Five other persons were also injured in the same incident. Those killed in the incident were identified as Saddam, Yusuf and Isa. The ill-fated persons were hailing from Karachi. The dead and injured were being shifted to district head-quarter hospital. Further investigations are underway.

Police arrests MPA

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Pakistan Muslim League MPA Rana Abdul Manan was arrested following the rejection of his bail in a case pertaining to torture of the Jatoi assistant commissioner, from the Lahore High Court Multan Bench, on Monday. A few days ago, Rana Abdul Manan, along with his accomplices had allegedly tortured Jatoi Assistant Commissioner Tariq Mahmood. The police concerned had registered a case against the MPA and his accomplices. The Lahore High Court Multan Bench rejected the bail on Monday. Meanwhile, the police arrested the MPA. However, MPA's sources claimed that he had surrendered to police to participate in the investigation.

ANF seizes two kg ice drugs

QUETTA (PPI): ANF claims to have seized two kg ice drug and 40 ecstasy tablets from the possession of two drug peddlers in an operation conducted on Monday near University of Balochistan at Sariab Road area of the provincial capital. According to ANF, its team seized two kg ice and 40 ecstasy tablets from the possession of two drug peddlers in an operation conducted near University of Balochistan. It said that during interrogation, both the drug peddlers confessed to selling narcotics to the students of the university of Balochistan. FIR against the drug peddlers was lodged. Further investigation was underway.

Seven profiteers arrested

SARGODHA (INP): Seven shopkeepers were booked over profiteering in various parts of the city on Monday. According to official sources, the price control magistrates inspected various areas, including University Road, Faisalabad Road, Quench Mor and Chungi No 9. They caught shopkeepers, including Asghar, Faisal, Javed, Gulzar, Shaukat, Kamran and Liaquat, for overcharging and imposed fine on them. The cases were also registered against them.

Anti-polio drive reviewed

HYDERABAD (APP): On the first day of the polio eradication campaign, Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad Bilal Ahmed Memon visited ongoing polio campaign activities in the district. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad Zainul Abidin Memon and other related officials were also with him. The Commissioner directed relevant officials to be diligent during the anti-polio campaign and make every possible effort to cover the refusal cases because the only solution to prevent the virus is to administer two drops of polio which helps to boost immunity of children up to the age of 5 years.

Talal vows to send Gandapur to jail over police clashes

FAISALABAD (INP): PML-N Senator Talal Chaudhry on Monday vowed legal action against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur for leading party supporters who "attacked and pelted stones" at Islamabad police at last night's rally.

Chungi No 26, on the outskirts of the capital, turned into a battleground on Sunday night as police clashed with PTI supporters after the latter allegedly refused to stick to the designated routes for the public gathering in Sangjani. A dispute with the district administration over the agreed timeframe for the event also caused consternation among official circles.

Police claimed that PTI supporters ignored the traffic instructions and insisted on using the route set for the general public, which caused tensions to rise before PTI supporters started pelting police with stones. In response, the police party retaliated and resorted to baton charge and tear gas shelling. Dozens of protesters were also arrested and bundled into prison vans, and were later taken to different police installations.

In a televised address on Monday, Chaudhry said: "Once again, the Islamabad police was deliberately attacked by the people who

had come to Islamabad under the leadership of the KP chief minister. "Not only will those who attacked and pelted stones but also their mastermind will be arrested and sent to jail over this chaos," he asserted.

Chaudhry said: "No one stopped them (PTI supporters). No policeman stood in their way. There was no obstruction [yet] they attacked the police on purpose in a botched attempt to hide their failed jalsa. "Not only will the law take its course but in the coming days, I see his future from being the KP chief minister to going to the Adiala Jail," the PML-N senator said.

Ahead of the PTI event, the Islamabad administration had taken extraordinary security measures and blocked all the entry points of the city with containers. Addressing Gandapur, the PML-N lawmaker said it was "not possible that you threaten the institutions and the parliament that we will not let things run".

"We have vowed that we will not let political incitement continue. No matter how much legislation we have to do to achieve this or give strict punishments, we will do so," Chaudhry affirmed. He went on to say that even if the PTI held scores of rallies or initiated a movement over May 9

cases or the £190m graft case against incarcerated party founder Imran Khan, it would "not get an NRO".

The senator censured the PTI leaders at Sunday's rally for only speaking about Imran rather than the issues affecting the common citizens, such as inflated power bills, rising food costs and the economy. Hinting at difficulties for the PTI in obtaining permission for future rallies, Chaudhry said that the party's violation of the agreement with the Islamabad administration for the rally would be considered when reviewing future requests.

Accusing the PTI-run Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government of corruption, the Chaudhry demanded that the party "return the money embezzled" under the Peshawar metro, Billion Tree Tsunami, and road construction projects. "It is not possible that the money that should have been spent on the people of KP is used to organise rallies and descent upon Islamabad," he said. During his address, the PML-N leader went as far as terming Imran an "Israeli agent", basing his allegation on a recent blog in Times of Israel that itself termed Imran's potential role in shaping Pakistan-Israel relations as "speculative".

Appointment of Okara Varsity acting VC challenged

OKARA (INP): The appointment of acting vice-chancellor of University of Okara Dr Javed Akhtar has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday.

The court, however, rejected the plea to immediately stop Dr Javed Akhtar from working as University of Okara vice-chancellor. During pro-

ceedings on Monday, Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh directed petitioner Assistant Professor Dr Hamid Mukhtar to amend his petition as it was not maintainable.

Malik Awais Khalid Advocate appeared in court on behalf of University of Okara. The petitioner's lawyer argued before the court that in presence of

pro vice-chancellor an acting vice-chancellor cannot be appointed.

University of Okara's Legal Adviser Malik Awais Malik objected to the maintainability of the petition, saying petitioner Dr Hamid Mukhtar was not a victim party. He also maintained that the petition has also not made Punjab government a respondent.

DC for beautification of Bahawalpur

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Zaheer Anwar chaired a meeting in his office to review measures taken for beautification and cleanliness of the city.

The Deputy Commissioner stated that all teshils should play an active role in cleanliness, large-scale afforestation, and the beautification and decoration of the city. He said that the Parks and Horticulture Authority should work effectively to make the city green and carry out the pruning and watering of plants along the greenbelts and roads.

He directed that the attendance of the field staff be ensured, and the officers of the relevant departments should ensure effective monitoring of cleanliness and decoration matters. The meeting was attended by Director General Parks and

Horticulture Authority Rubina Iqbal Abbasi, Chief Officer District Council Nasrullah Malik, Chief Officer Municipal Corporation Mian Azhar Javed, Director Arts Council Mian Ateeq Ahmed, and other relevant officers.

Meanwhile, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Zaheer Anwar Jappa in his office to review cleanliness and sanitation, the availability of machinery for cleaning tasks, and the collection of sanitation fees at the union council level under the Clean Punjab Programme.

Assistant Commissioner General Akhtar Malik, Chief Officers of the district council of the division, officers from the Municipal Corporation, and officers from municipal committees, and the Local

Government Department were present. The Chief Officers briefed the meeting on the activities of the Clean Punjab Programme under their respective institutions, the collection of sanitation fees, and the availability of machinery.

They provided information about the machinery and human resources available to carry out cleaning and drainage work under the Clean Punjab Programme. The Deputy Commissioner stated that efforts should be made to improve sanitation arrangements in urban and rural areas under the Clean Punjab Programme and to ensure the collection of sanitation fees. On this occasion, relevant officials presented suggestions for enhancing the cleanliness and drainage work under the Clean Punjab Programme.



MARDAN: KP Minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru chairing a meeting of ongoing development projects

Absconder held with illegal arms F.P. Report

TANK: The Tank police have arrested an absconder recovering illegal arms and drugs from him in the limits of Malazai police station on Monday.

According to police spokesman, the district police, following the strict instructions of District Police Officer Aslam Nawaz Khan, was making all out efforts to eradicate all crimes from the city. As part of such efforts, a team of Malazai police led by SDPO Rural Shahjahan Afridi along with SHO Raffi Ullah Khan conducted search and strike operation in different areas.

During the operation, the police arrested absconder Israr son of Sher Muhammad, who was wanted to police in multiple cases. The police also recovered a Kalashnikov along with 10 cartridges and 325 grams of Ice drug from him.

Serving public, a moral responsibility F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Former independent candidate Provincial Assembly PP-123 Kamalia, Choudhry Khushi Jutt said that it is my moral duty to serve the people because I am the people's representative and their servant. I find peace in my heart by serving people, on Monday.

He further said that there are numerous problems of the people in the constituency which are increasing day by day instead of decreasing. Our effort is to solve the problems of the people immediately so that the people do not get into more problems. Khushi Jutt said that many youth of our constituency are unemployed who are deprived of government jobs despite being educated.

The government should give relief to the people by reducing the inflation and give jobs to the educated youth to end unemployment. He said that the government should settle the sports grounds so that the young generation can participate in sports. Be able to stay busy and stay away from harmful diseases like drugs. In the end, he said that the doors of my house are always open for the people of my constituency.

Khatam-e-Nabuwat seminar held in Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Khatam-e-Nabuwat Academy Khyber Pakhtunkhwa director Mufti Muhsin Mahmood Mubarakzai has said the protection of the belief in the finality of Prophethood is must for the Muslim Ummah as it is part of their belief. Addressing a workshop as a chief guest at a local seminary in Hajiabad here on Monday, he said that the Pakistani nation had made sacrifices for this sacred mission.

The workshop was held in the spacious hall of the Islamic International School and College Hajiabad. The workshop was attended by seminary students on a multimedia projector according to the modern requirements of the time. Mufti Muhsin emphasized that they should learn

the belief of the finality of Prophethood and convey it to every Muslim.

He made it clear that bringing the message of the finality of Prophethood to every home and inviting the people to learn it is their first goal to be achieved and the day was not far that the slogan of the finality of Prophethood would rise on the tongues of the people of Pakistan.

Mufti Mohsin Mahmood Mubarakzai, a renowned Islamic scholar said that the decision of Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Issa is welcome as he has won the hearts of the Pakistani nation by withdrawing his decision in the Mubarak Sani case, after which there is a row of mourning in the Ahmadi ranks. The principal of the Islamic International College, Qazi Ayaz,

thanked the guests.

Citizen complaint: Maulana Masihullah, a resident of Samar Bagh, has complained that his appeal for financial assistance from the Pakistan Baitul-Mal cannot be processed as the Managing Director post is lying vacant.

Talking to local reporters here on Monday he said that he submitted an application for financial assistance in the PBM office in Islamabad two months ago but he was yet to get the assistance as the MD was not available. "I visited the office several times during this period, but MD was not available", he said, adding that hundreds of aspirants like him, were facing difficulty due to unavailability of the PBM MD. He demanded the government to appoint the MD as soon as possible.

Two outlaws held, stolen items recovered

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Dera police have arrested two outlaws recovering stolen items and drugs from their possession here in the limits of Paroa police station on Monday.

According to police spokesman, a team of Paroa police station led by SDPO Paroa Circle Noor Haider Khan along with SHO Gulsher Khan arrested accused Muzammil son of Ghulam Rasool, who was wanted to police in a theft case.

The police also recovered a stolen Bicycle and an electric battery from the

arrested accused. In another action, the same police arrested a drug dealer named Muhammad Imran son of Allah Ditta recovering 385 grams Ice drug from him. The police registered a case against the arrested drug dealer and started further investigation.

Meanwhile, the district traffic police on Monday fined several drivers for taking extra fares from passengers, overloading and use of LPG cylinders in public vehicles. DSP Traffic Syed Sagheer Abbas Gilani along with Incharge Traffic Asif Lashari, taking

action on public complaints, inspected several drivers on different routes.

During the inspection, the police imposed fines on many drivers for using illegally installed Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Cylinders in passenger vehicles, overloading and collecting extra fares. The DSP said the inspection of passenger vehicles on the roads would be enhanced to facilitate the common people. He warned the transporters to avoid overloading and overcharging otherwise strict action would be taken against them.

Cholera-like disease outbreak in Mirpurkhas Village

MIRPURKHAS (APP): The Deputy Commissioner of Mirpurkhas, Dr. Rashid Masood Khan has taken immediate action in response to the reported increase in cholera-like disease cases in the village of Haji Sakhi shar located in UC Ghior Sharif, Taluka Sindhri, on Monday.

According to the DC, on his instructions, the Assistant Commissioner of Sindhri, Abdul Ghafar Lakhir and the District Health Officer, Dr. Jairamdas, promptly sent a medical team from the

Health Department to the affected village. The medical team set up an emergency camp in Sakhi shar village where they treated a total of 137 patients including 77 men and 60 women.

Additionally, 40 children under the age of 5 were treated for diarrhea and 70 children above 5 years of age also received treatment for the same condition. The team also treated 6 skin patients and 35 suspected malaria patients, and immunized 32 children. The medical team has col-

lected water samples from the village which will now be sent to a laboratory in Karachi for testing. Meanwhile, the Assistant Commissioner of Sindhri, Abdul Ghaffar Lakhir is taking necessary steps to ensure the immediate drainage of accumulated rainwater in the area. The DC has emphasized the importance of this prompt response to address the concerning health situation in the village and prevent the further spread of the cholera-like disease.

Jirga to approach court against AWKUM land sale

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Loya Jirga Mardan decided to go to court against the syndicate meeting of Abdul Wali Khan University, on September 12 regarding the government's decision to sell university land and announced to set up a protest camp in College Chowk from tomorrow. Also create

The Loya Jirga meeting was held in Mardan Press Club under the chairmanship of ANP President Imran Mandori, Mayor Mardan Himayatullah Mayor took special part in the meeting, Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Zahir Shah, Saeed Akhtar Advocate of Jamaat-e-Islami, Syed Inayat Bacha of Muslim League, People's Party Aslam Khattak, Mufti Abdul Wakil of JUP, District Bar President Noor Badshah Advocate Ashraf Hoti Advocate of Pakhtun Khamli Awami Party, Mushtaq Seemab, Ghulam Sarwar Saraf, Faqir Muhammad Saraf, Ghulam Habib of Youth Parliament, Akbar Ali Kashmiri of Contractors Association and Mardan Press Club President M. Bashir Adil and others participated in the meeting.

The ministerial committee of

the government strongly condemned the decision to sell the lands of the universities and Bacha Khan Medical College. The Jirga unanimously decided that an injunction will be taken from the court against the Syndicate meeting while a protest camp will be set up in College Chowk by students, politicians and civil society from across the district from today (Tuesday). In the Jirga meeting, it was decided to hold a protest in front of the office of Commissioner Mardan Division on September 16 and various committees were formed for the protest movement.

Addressing the meeting, the speakers said that the government's decision is like playing with the future of the children of Mardan. The people are not ready to accept the government's decision in any case, the government should make it possible to make payments to the victims of the lands immediately and complete the constructions in the universities according to the master plan. The leaders of the Loya Jirga said that all the political parties are on the same page for the rights of Mardan and will fight for the rights of Mardan unanimously, overcoming political differences. A meeting of all

the chairmen and education councils will also be called.

WSSCM lauded traders role in development: Chairman Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) Board of Directors (BoD) Engineer Adil Nawaz, stated that the business community is the backbone of the national economy. He emphasized that the company will collaborate with the business community to keep Mardan city clean and beautiful.

He expressed these remarks during his visit to the Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI). The Mardan Chamber, of Commerce and Industry President Zahir Shah, welcomed him and provided a detailed briefing on the chamber's activities. During the meeting, it was decided that the company and the chamber would sign an agreement to strengthen their relationship.

MCCI President Zahir Shah stated that "Mardan is our home, and its development and prosperity are our responsibility." He praised the efforts of WSSCM and assured that the chamber would fully support the company. Chairman Adil Nawaz assured full cooperation and stated that the problems faced by the business community would

be resolved as soon as possible. He stated that the company is striving to provide the best services within its limited resources.

Ph. D thesis defended: Qurtuba University is proud to announce that Dr. Ali Khan has successfully defended his research thesis, earning his PhD in Political Science. His groundbreaking research, titled "The Role of Social Media and Political Polarization in Pakistan," offers valuable insights into the complex dynamics between digital platforms and political discourse in the country.

Dr. Khan's research was supervised by Dr. Aziz Ur Rahman, who guided him throughout the rigorous academic journey. The final examination of his thesis was conducted by Professor Dr. Usman Askari, the esteemed Chairman of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Punjab.

Commissioner stresses on coordination: Commissioner Mardan Javed Marwat has emphasized the need for implementation of a coordinated action plan by academia, anti-narcotics agencies and law enforcers to control the growing trend of drugs in the society. He

also directed to conduct an effective awareness campaign in this regard.

He was addressing the meeting of the ANF Committee regarding the prevention of drugs and narcotics in the conference room of the commissioner's office here today. Besides Regional Police Officer Najib -ur -Rahman, Deputy Commissioner Swabi Nasrallah and Secretary to Commissioner Madam Sara Tawab, the meeting was also attended by Regional Director Excise, Anti-Narcotics Force, officers of Social Welfare Department, Assistant Commissioner Takhtbai Junaid Khalid, Director of Administration of Abdul Wali Khan University Dr. Idrees.

The registrar Engineering University and other concerned officials. The meeting reviewed the data regarding the use of narcotic substances in Mardan Division and especially educational institutions and steps so far taken for its prevention. The meeting was told that awareness sessions are being conducted in the light of the committee's instructions, while the activities taking place in and around the institutions are being monitored along with the staff of the institutions. RPO Mardan informed

the forum about anti-narcotics measures in the division. He said that the police is taking vigorous action against drug dealers.

Commissioner described the role of Excise and Social Welfare Department as important in this regard and directed that both departments should play an active role in this regard. He said that the youth are the valuable capital of the nation and their involvement in negative activities creates social problems, so all institutions and academia must work together to clean these institutions from negative activities. Meanwhile, a meeting of the Divisional Intelligence Committee was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Mardan in which RPO, DC Swabi Nasrullah, DPO, officers of CTD and security agencies participated.

The security situation at the division level was reviewed in detail and necessary decisions were taken in this regard. He said that all necessary measures will be taken to protect the life and property of the people, but the people have to fully support the institutions in this regard so that far-reaching results of the measures taken for the security of the country and the protection of the people can be seen.



Gaza enters its 2nd school year without schooling

KHAN YOUNIS (AP): This week, when they would normally be going back to school, the Qudeh family's children stumbled with armfuls of rubble they collected from a destroyed building to sell for use in building graves in the cemetery that is now their home in southern Gaza.

"Anyone our age in other countries is studying and learning," said 14-year-old Ezz el-Din Qudeh, after he and his three siblings - the youngest a 4-year-old - hauled a load of concrete chunks. "We're not. We're working at something beyond our capacities. We are forced to in order to get a living." As Gaza enters its second school year without schooling, most of its children are caught up helping their families in the daily struggle to survive amid Israel's devastating campaign.

Children trod barefoot on the dirt roads to carry water in plastic jerricans from distribution points to their families living in tent cities teeming with Palestinians driven from their homes. Others wait at charity kitchens with containers to bring back food. Humanitarian workers say the extended deprivation of education threatens long-term damage to Gaza's children. Younger children suffer in their cognitive, social and emotional development, and older children are at greater risk of being pulled into work or early marriage, said Tess Ingram, regional spokesperson for UNICEF, the United Nations agency for children. "The longer a child is out of school, the more they are at risk of dropping out permanently and not returning," she said.

Gaza's 625,000 school-age children already missed out on almost an entire year of education. Schools shut down after Israel launched its assault on the territory in retaliation for Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel. With languishing negotiations to halt fighting in the Israel-Hamas war, it's not known when they can return to classes. More than 90% of Gaza's school buildings have been damaged by Israeli bombardment, many of them run by UNWRA, the U.N. agency for Palestinians, according to the Global Education Cluster, a grouping of aid organizations led by UNICEF and Save the Children. About 85% are so wrecked they need major reconstruction - meaning it could take years before they are usable again. Gaza's universities are also in ruins. Israel contends that Hamas militants operate out of schools. Some 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been driven from their homes. They have crowded into the sprawling tent camps that lack water or sanitation systems, or U.N. and government

schools now serving as shelters. Kids have little choice but to help families.

Mo'men Qudeh said that before the war, his kids enjoyed school. "They were outstanding students. We raised them well," he said. Now he, his four sons and his daughter live in a tent in a cemetery in Khan Younis after they had to flee their home in the eastern neighborhoods of the city. The kids get scared sleeping next to the graves of the dead, he said, but they have no alternative. The continual flow of victims from airstrikes and shelling into the cemetery and the plentiful supply of destroyed buildings are their source for a tiny income.

Every day at 7 a.m., Qudeh and his children start picking through rubble. On a recent day of work, the young kids stumbled off the pile of wreckage with what they found. Qudeh's 4-year-old son balanced a chunk of concrete under his arm, his blonde curly hair covered in dust. Outside their tent, they crouched on the ground and pounded the concrete into powder.

On a good day, after hours of work, they make about 15 shekels (\$4) selling the powder for use in constructing new graves. Qudeh, who was injured in Israel's 2014 war with Hamas, said he can't do the heavy work alone. "I cry for them when I see them with torn hands," he said. At night, the exhausted children can't sleep because of their aches and pain, he said. "They lie on their mattress like dead people," he said.

Children are eager for a lost education. Aid groups have worked to set up educational alternatives - though the results have been limited as they wrestle with the flood of other needs. UNICEF and other aid agencies are running 175 temporary learning centers, most set up since late May, that have served some 30,000 students, with about 1,200 volunteer teachers, Ingram said. They provide classes in literacy and numeracy as well as mental health and emotional development activities. But she said they struggle to get supplies like pens, paper and books because they are not considered lifesaving priorities as aid groups struggle to get enough food and medicine into Gaza.

In August, UNWRA began a "back to learning" program in 45 of its schools-turned-shelters that provide children activities like games, drama, arts, music and sports. The aim is to "give them some respite, a chance to reconnect with their friends and to simply be children," spokesperson Juliette Touma said. Education has long been a high priority among Palestinians.

Typhoon triggers Vietnam, killing 14

HAI PONG (AFP): Super Typhoon Yagi ripped roofs off buildings, sank boats and triggered landslides in Vietnam, leaving 14 people dead, before being downgraded into a tropical depression as it continues to weaken.

Yagi, which has devastated infrastructure and uprooted trees, made landfall in northern Vietnam, packing winds exceeding 149km/h (93 mph), before being downgraded into a tropical depression. Meteorological authorities described Yagi as "one of the most powerful typhoons in the region" over the past decade.

A family of four was killed in a landslide in the mountainous Hoa Binh province of northern Vietnam, according to state media. The landslide happened around midnight, after several hours of heavy

rain brought by Yagi, when a hillside gave way and collapsed onto a house, VnExpress said, citing Vietnamese authorities. The home's 51-year-old owner escaped but his wife, daughter and two grandchildren were buried, their bodies recovered soon after. At least 10 others have been killed in storm-related incidents, some crushed by falling trees or drifting boats, the defence ministry's management agency said.

Several areas of the port city of Hai Phong were under half a metre (1.6 feet) of floodwaters, and electricity was out, with power lines and electric poles damaged, according to AFP news agency. At Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site about 70km (43 miles) up the coast from the city, fishermen were in shock as

they examined the damage. According to the Reuters news agency, a dozen people were missing at sea near Ha Long, with rescue operations expected to start when conditions allow. The report could not be immediately verified.

At least 23 boats were also seriously damaged or sunk at the Hai Au boat lock on Tuan Chau Island, according to residents. Rooftops of buildings were blown off and motorbikes were left toppled over in piles of building rubble and glass, AFP reported. Before hitting Vietnam, Yagi tore through southern China and the Philippines, killing at least 24 people and injuring dozens others. Mounting evidence shows that increasingly warmer oceans are fuelling more powerful tropical storms than before, according to climate scientists.

North Korean leader for boosting naval power

SEOUL (Reuters): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un underscored the importance of strengthening naval power as he toured a naval base construction site, state media KCNA reported.

"Now that we are soon to possess large surface warships and submarines which cannot be anchored by the existing facilities for mooring warships, the construction of a naval base for running the latest large warships has become a pressing task," Kim was quoted saying. During the tour, Kim stressed the need to build a naval port capable of operating weapons systems of the warships and revealed military measures to deploy anti-aircraft and coastal-defence systems for defending the port, according to the report.

Kim cited geopolitical advantages of the site for the country, bordered by the sea on both the east and west sides. The location of the site was not specified in the report. A recent satellite imagery analysis by 38 North indicated that North Korea's newest ballistic missile class submarine (SSB), the "Sinpo-C" class, was undergoing an exten-

sive fitting-out period at the Sinpo South Shipyard.

In a separate visit to a shipyard, Kim ordered to increase national investments in shipbuilding projects so that immediate tasks and long-term plans for laying the foundation for the development of the shipbuilding industry are pushed forward as scheduled.

KCNA also reported Kim's visit to a defence industrial enterprise, where he stressed the need to make munitions production more scientific and modernised to guarantee the performance of newly-developed military hardware, and an inspection of an artillery academy. Separately, North Korea condemned a recent consultation meeting and simulation drill on extended deterrence conducted by the United States and South Korea, according to a statement carried by KCNA. The foreign ministry described the activities as "reckless moves of the hostile forces disturbing the regional strategic stability and increasing the possibility of a nuclear clash".

"The DPRK will continue to take practical measures to cope with the long-term nuclear confrontation with the U.S.," the ministry said, using North Korea's official name. Meanwhile, North Korea continued its campaign of launching trash balloons towards South Korea for the fifth consecutive day, the Yonhap news agency reported, citing the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Xi, Putin send greetings to North Korea's Kim

SEOUL (Reuters): Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin sent greetings to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on the occasion of North Korea's founding anniversary, state media KCNA said on Monday.

"I am sure that the comprehensive strategic partnership between Russia and the DPRK will be strengthened in a planned way thanks to our joint efforts," Putin said, according to KCNA. DPRK is short for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name.

Xi called for deeper strategic communication and cooperation with North Korea in his message, KCNA said.

Ukraine attacks oil storage depot in Russian border

KYIV (Reuters): The governor of Russia's southern Belgorod region said Ukrainian forces attacked a fuel depot, triggering a series of fires after Moscow and Kyiv accused each other of launching overnight attacks on border regions.

"The Ukrainian military, aided by lethal drones, attacked a fuel storage site in Volokonovsky district," Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote on Telegram, referring to an area near the border. "Several reservoirs caught fire in an explosion. Firefighting crews are putting out the blaze."

Gladkov also reported drone attacks on three other localities. There were no casualties reported in the incidents. In the overnight air attacks, Ukrainian officials said two people died and four were injured in Sumy region. Gladkov reported three civilians were injured in Belgorod. Two children were among those injured in Sumy, the military administration of the northeastern Ukrainian region said on Telegram. Several homes and cars were damaged.

In Belgorod region, three civilians, including two children, were injured. Gladkov said two residential buildings were destroyed and more than 15 buildings in total were damaged. The Russian defence ministry said it had destroyed one drone over Belgorod region and another over Kursk region, where Ukrainian forces launched a cross-border incursion last month. It said two drones were intercepted over Belgorod overnight. Reuters could not independently verify the reports. Border regions on both sides have been subject to frequent attacks. Both Moscow and Kyiv deny targeting civilians, saying the attacks are aimed at destroying each other's infrastructure critical to war efforts. Thousands of civilians have died in the war, which Russia started with a full-scale invasion on Ukraine in February 2022. Millions of Ukrainians have also been displaced, while their cities and villages have become piles of rubble.

India records first suspected mpox case

NEW DELHI: India's health ministry says it has recorded a suspected case of mpox found in a man who recently travelled from a country suffering an outbreak of the virus. The young male patient has been isolated in a hospital and is in stable condition, the ministry said in a statement, adding that the world's most populous nation had "robust measures" in place.

"The case is being managed in line with established protocols, and contact tracing is ongoing to identify potential sources and assess the impact within the country," the health ministry added. The ministry did not specify which strain of the mpox virus the patient might have, but tests were being conducted to confirm the infection. The clade 1b variety of mpox has triggered global concern because it seems to spread more easily through routine close contact.

A case of the variant was confirmed last week in Sweden and linked to a growing outbreak in Africa. India has detected 30 cases of an older strain, known as clade 2, between 2022 and March 2024. Formerly called monkeypox, the virus was discovered in 1958 in Denmark, in monkeys kept for research. It was first detected in humans in 1970. It is caused by a virus transmitted to humans by infected animals, but can also be passed from human to human through close physical contact. Usually mild, it is fatal in rare cases. It causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions on the body.

Last year, the World Health Organization (WHO) changed the name monkeypox to mpox, saying the name of the disease appeared to be "racist". Last month, the global health body declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern after the new variant was identified. — Aljazeera



HAI PHONG: Men collecting debris on a flooded street after Super Typhoon Yagi hit the city of Hai Phong, Vietnam.

HK domestic helpers welcome rare rape conviction

HONG KONG: A 36-year-old foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong was on her way to throw out the rubbish when her Swedish employer arrived home late one night in October 2022. X, as she was known in court to protect her identity, said he appeared to be drunk.

Soon he was demanding sex. She said she tried to reason with him, rejecting his advances. But he dragged her into his bedroom and raped her, despite her repeated calls to stop. "He told me he also wanted my daughter. He also said: 'I'll kill you, I'll hit you,'" X recalled, speaking via an interpreter at Hong Kong's High Court in August.

"I was terrified and frozen with fear," the domestic worker said, stressing she had never consented to having sexual relations with him. Unlike other domestic workers in similar situations, X decided to act. She moved out of the family's flat the next morning and went to the police despite being the sole breadwinner for her four children and knowing she would lose her job and her home. Nearly two years on, a jury last month found X's employer guilty of one count of rape and one count of buggery without consent.

"I am grateful to God that I am alive and to the Hong Kong government that justice was served," X told Al Jazeera shortly after the verdict. "I am also very thankful to the social workers and everyone who helped me during this two-year-journey." X's case is one of the few successful rape prosecutions involving a foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong, shedding light on the challenges faced by migrant women in securing justice. Experts say many victims do not press charges, but they hope X's win may encourage other survivors to come

forward. "We can say this is a victory not only for the victim but also for all domestic workers in Hong Kong and around the world," said Sarah Pun, vice-chair of the Union of Nepalese Domestic workers in Hong Kong.

She noted that X faced many challenges in pursuing justice, including trauma, being apart from her family, and not having an income. "We are proud of the victim and her strength for having pursued this case until the end," she added. Dolores Balladares, chairwoman of United Filipinos in Hong Kong and spokeswoman for the Asian Migrant Coordinating Body, agreed: "It is a positive development because justice is hard to get for domestic workers. The burden of proof is always on our shoulders."

Balladares notes it is particularly difficult to report a rape case, "as many people will blame the victim". X's victory came about a month after a domestic worker from the Philippines - known in court procedures as CB - lost a civil claim of 1.06 million Hong Kong dollars (\$135,982) against her British employer in the Chinese territory for alleged sexual assaults. She has since lodged an appeal. CB's employer, who initially represented himself, had been sentenced to 30 months in jail on two counts of indecent assault in 2021. He was later acquitted of all charges after a retrial on procedural and technical grounds, including issues related to admission of evidence.

A spokeswoman for the Hong Kong Police told Al Jazeera that from January 2019 to June this year, the force received 310 reports involving employers of domestic workers, and that 87 of those cases were related to sexual abuse. According to the officer, 194 employers were arrested for various offences following investigations, but only 36 were prosecuted. Nine were found guilty and sentenced to up to six years in prison. The spokeswoman did not disclose the number of arrests or prosecutions specifically related to rape and other forms of sexual violence. Advocates said that domestic workers from ethnic minority backgrounds, like X who is an Indian national of Nepali origin, have been particularly vulnerable to abuse.

There were 363,576 migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong as of the end of August. According to a spokesman for the city's Immigration Department, nearly 56 percent hailed from the Philippines, followed by about 42 percent from Indonesia. The rest were from countries such as India and Thailand. Manisha Wijesinghe, executive director of Hong Kong charity HELP for Domestic Workers, said those in crisis usually turn first to their peers. But for those from smaller migrant communities, it can be hard to find other workers from the same country and even the NGOs may not be able to provide them with an immediate response due to language barriers. "These women definitely face more problems, but many don't ever come to light," Wijesinghe said. "They spend their time in Hong Kong and eventually leave. They are rarely able to reach out for support."

She said that her organisation receives on average one case of sexual abuse or harassment every month. Research conducted in 2019 by the Progressive Labour Union of Domestic Workers in Hong Kong showed migrant domestic workers were at greater risk of exploitation because their employment and living arrangements - where their income, food and accommodation depend on their two-year work contract - create a power imbalance. — Aljazeera

Spain to grant asylum to Venezuelan opposition leader Edmundo

MADRID: Madrid says it would grant political asylum to Venezuelan opposition leader Edmundo Gonzalez, who has arrived in Spain after a month in hiding in the crisis-hit South American country. Gonzalez, accompanied by his spouse, travelled on a Spanish military aeroplane which landed around 4pm (14:00 GMT) at the Torrejon air base near Madrid, the Spanish foreign ministry said.

Spain's Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares said that Gonzalez had requested political asylum in the European country, and that Spain would "obviously" grant it to him.

Caracas said it had agreed to his safe passage to travel to Spain. Gonzalez, who disputed

President Nicolas Maduro's July 28 re-election, left Venezuela after ignoring three successive summons to appear before prosecutors, arguing that attending the hearing could have cost him his freedom.

"After taking refuge voluntarily at the Spanish embassy in Caracas a few days ago, [Gonzalez] asked the Spanish government for political asylum," Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodriguez said on social media, adding that Caracas had agreed to his safe passage. Venezuela has been in crisis since authorities declared Maduro the winner of the July 28 presidential election but did not release the detailed results. The opposition cried foul, claiming it had evidence that 75-year-old Gonzalez had won by a comfortable margin.

Meanwhile, Venezuela revoked Brazil's authorisation to represent Argentinian interests in the country, including running the embassy where six opposition figures are sheltering, the Venezuelan government said. The country broke relations with Argentina immediately after the election. Brazil, like Colombia and Mexico, has asked the Venezuelan government to publish the full results of the vote. Gonzalez had been in hiding for a month after prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for him over his insistence that he was the rightful winner.

At least 27 people have been killed and 192 injured in protests since the election. Maduro's government

says it has arrested some 2,400 people. Prior to the election, Gonzalez was a little-known retired diplomat. He became the last-minute presidential candidate after main opposition figure Maria Corina Machado was banned from running by state institutions seen as loyal to Maduro. After Venezuela's last election, in 2018, Maduro was proclaimed winner amid widespread accusations of fraud.

He has led the oil-rich but cash-poor country since 2013. His tenure, which has suffered from domestic economic mismanagement as well as international sanctions, has seen GDP drop 80 percent and more than seven million of the country's 30 million citizens emigrate. — Aljazeera

Latvia, Romania say Russian drones breached airspace

BUCHAREST: Latvia and Romania, NATO members who are allies of Ukraine, have said that Russian drones violated their airspace. Romania said a Russian drone entered its airspace during nighttime attacks across the Danube River in neighbouring Ukraine, while Latvia said one crashed in the eastern part of the country a day earlier.

Romania's Ministry of National Defence said that Bucharest deployed F-16 fighter jets to monitor its airspace and that a search for the weapon's debris was under way at a potential crash site near the border. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. Bucharest strongly condemned the "renewed violation" brought on by

Moscow's "illegal attacks". Latvia's President Edgars Rinkevics, meanwhile, said a Russian military drone had crashed in the eastern part of its territory.

The Defence Ministry said that the drone had flown into the country's airspace from Belarus and crashed around Rezekne, a town of about 25,000 people some 55km (34 miles) west of Russia and 75km (47 miles) from Belarus, a close ally of the Kremlin. While the incursion into Latvian airspace appeared to be a rare incident, Romania has confirmed drone fragments on its territory on several occasions since Russia began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Romania shares a 650km (400 mile) border with Ukraine. Mircea

Geoana, NATO's outgoing deputy secretary-general and Romania's former top diplomat, said the military alliance condemned Russia's violation of Romanian airspace. "While we have no information indicating an intentional attack by Russia against Allies, these acts are irresponsible and potentially dangerous," he wrote on the social media platform X.

Russia has carried out repeated nighttime attacks on cities across Ukraine, frequently targeting its Danube River ports, which are just a few hundred metres from Romania. Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrii Sybiha condemned the breaches of Romanian and Latvian airspace, calling them "a stark reminder that

Russia's aggressive actions extend beyond Ukraine". He added on X that Ukraine needed concrete action from its allies.

"A brave collective decision to use partner air defence to intercept Russian missiles and drones over Ukraine. Stronger and faster military aid for Ukrainian warriors. Lifting restrictions on Ukraine's use of weapons. Act now," he said. Poland has also recorded at least two cases of its airspace being violated by Russian missiles or drones attacking Ukraine, most recently in December. Romanian lawmakers plan to consider legislation at their current session on enabling Romania to shoot down drones invading the country's airspace in peacetime. — Aljazeera

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US ramps up 'national security' extortion racket

FOLLOWING its earlier decision to stop exporting state-of-the-art extreme ultraviolet lithography systems to China, the Dutch government announced on Friday it would expand those controls to deep ultraviolet immersion lithography tools.

The idea is to serve Washington's purpose of curbing Chinese chipmaking capabilities.

Netherlands-based ASML is the major manufacturer of the world's most advanced chipmaking equipment. The company has thus found itself a hostage in the United States' geopolitical game. For its use of US-developed technologies, ASML has been under mounting pressure from Washington to facilitate its alleged strategic competition with China.

That the Dutch government has finally chosen to surrender a significant national economic interest to meet a US demand is certainly another very bad precedent for international trade. It undermines Chinese and Dutch national interests as well as their normal economic and trade ties, and will have greater negative impacts in the years to come.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry was correct in stating that the move harms the "common interests of Chinese and Dutch enterprises", which are obviously multidimensional. To justify such anti-market behavior, Washington has put its competition with China, so far mostly in trade and technology, as driven by "national security" concerns. So did the Dutch trade minister on Friday. But this is just a fig leaf to conceal the US' real intent. As ASML CEO Christophe Fouquet said, "To make the case that this is about national security is getting harder and harder". That is because the continuous US push for more and more restrictions has, as he said, become "economically motivated".

The Dutch government is in fact sacrificing tremendous national economic interests — by confining an otherwise thriving domestic business and its foothold in a profitable market — to make sure the US benefits economically. After all, ASML is in a global market where there is no meaningful competition, and China remains its largest market. Beijing is clear-eyed about the Dutch government's latest export controls being part of the US' designs to bring the export rules of allied countries in line with its own, for the sole benefit of itself.

In recent years, in order to maintain its global hegemony, the US has continued to "coerce certain countries to tighten export control measures on semiconductors and (related) equipment", the Chinese Ministry of Commerce said. But the US' bid to form a "small yard with a high fence" is only driving China to double down on developing its domestic capabilities. The hegemonic attempt to hobble China's technological development will ultimately fail, but in the meantime, the US' cash register is ringing as it extorts money from others.

Promoter of peace, not prolonger of conflict

SPEAKING to the media in Oslo on Friday, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg once again accused China of being a "decisive enabler of Russia's war against Ukraine".

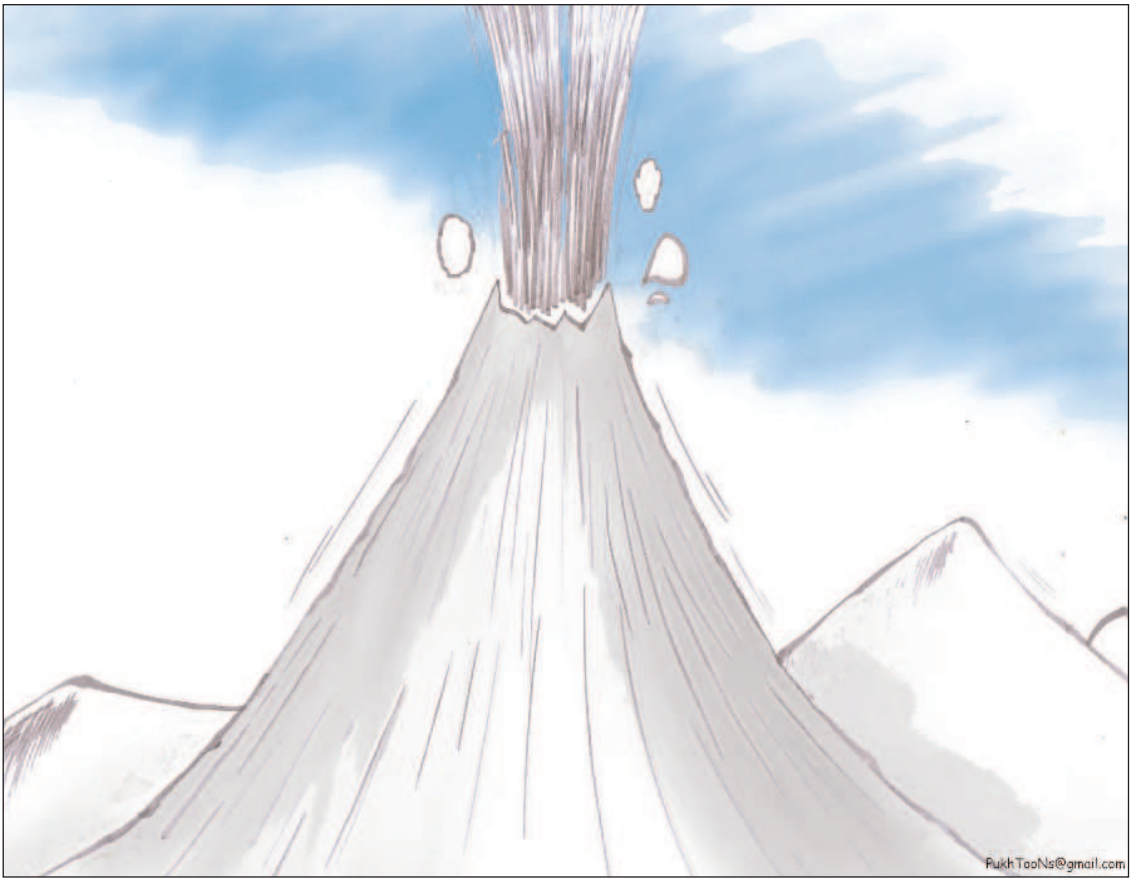
This unwarranted allegation echoes sentiments expressed by Western politicians attempting to falsely portray China as a significant force behind the ongoing military conflict in Eastern Europe. This is part and parcel of the United States' efforts to obfuscate the true agent provocateur prolonging the hostilities; which is the US itself.

It is essential to differentiate the robust trade relations between China and Russia from the arms deals of the Western countries, led by the US, which are sustaining and upgrading Ukraine's combat capabilities with arterial supplies of weaponry. China upholds friendly diplomatic ties with both Ukraine and Russia and has made repeated efforts to encourage them to talk to secure a negotiated end to the bloodshed. That is in stark contrast to the active involvement of the US and other NATO members that are supporting Ukraine in the prejudiced pursuit of an enervated Russia.

The notion that China possesses the leverage to pressure Russia into halting its military actions against Ukraine is not only unfounded, it also wrongly characterizes Beijing as acting in the same way Washington does. The Global Security Initiative that China has put forward clearly shows that rather than using a select group of countries as blasting barrels in pursuit of selfish objectives, China seeks to promote common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and acts in accordance with a security path that calls for dialogue over confrontation, partnerships rather than alliances, and win-win collaborations over zero-sum confrontations. Its stance on the need for a cease-fire and talks to achieve a political settlement to the Russia-Ukraine conflict underscores its commitment to diplomacy and dialogue as the primary means to address international disputes. It is not hard to find evidence of the US' murky motives for prolonging the hostilities. Reports dating back to 2023 suggest that the escalating tensions have resulted in a surge in revenues for US defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics. The US Congress' allocation of substantial funds to support Ukraine's ability to fight has been channeled back into the US defense industry, creating a lucrative opportunity for bolstering domestic defense capabilities. The complex web of interests intertwined in the US' support for Ukraine in the conflict underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the geopolitical dynamics at play. While Stoltenberg's warnings about the repercussions of China's alleged involvement are noteworthy, a comprehensive analysis must also scrutinize the role of other stakeholders, including the US, in perpetuating the conflict. It is imperative to move beyond the simplistic "Ukraine and NATO good, Russia and China bad" narrative. Only through a comprehensive understanding of the complexities at hand can meaningful progress toward peace and stability be achieved.

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UK suspension of Israel arms licenses a meager step

Chris Doyle

IF any other state were accused of perpetrating genocide and the crime of apartheid, a decision to suspend arms sales and military cooperation would not be a tough call for politicians. Israel is the exception.

In a belated decision, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy last week announced the suspension of 30 out of 350 arms licenses to Israel. This seems a meager step, totally inadequate for the scale of the atrocities being inflicted on the Palestinians in Gaza. The grounds are laid out in the export licensing criteria that the government should "not issue export licenses if there is a clear risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law".

Crucially, for the first time, the British government has publicly conceded that there is a serious risk Israel is violating international law in its current military operations in Gaza. It comes nearly 11 months later than any decent human rights group, but finally it has made such a determination public.

A major drawback is that all the UK parts for the F-35 fighter program will be excluded. Many see this as a way just to mollify the US. Human rights groups are continuing to contest the legality of this decision.

Yet, in the context of a state, Israel, which is so used to getting away with

what it wants to do regardless of international law, these arms sales suspensions are not insignificant. Could more follow?

One has to wonder why more arms-exporting states have not done likewise. So far, Canada, Belgium and Spain have restricted sales. But nothing smacks of complicity more than the Biden administration's refusal to stem the deluge of lethal weaponry it gives to Israel. Declarations of concern regarding Israeli behavior look hollow while this lethal pipeline continues. Meanwhile, Germany supplies about 30 percent of Israel's arms imports but it is also yet to act.

Amazingly, the new Labour government in the UK seemed embarrassed by its own decision. Lammy mentioned the deaths of Palestinians as if they were collateral damage. So nervous was he that he had to state he had been a life-long Zionist.

He was at pains to stress "this is not a blanket ban or an arms embargo." The defense secretary reassured doubters that Israel remained a "staunch ally" of the UK, while not being the least bit embarrassed that a so-called ally is on trial for genocide.

What is extraordinary is that Israel's conduct provided the foreign secretary with so many justifications for a full ban. He mentioned the conditions of detention but not the use of

rape of Palestinian detainees who are held without trial. No mention of torture. He did not cite the willful destruction of civilian infrastructure in Gaza. He did not cite the genocidal comments that Israeli leaders routinely make. Perhaps Lammy knows that, if he were to cite the full force of the evidence of the scale of the Israeli crimes and atrocities, everyone would then demand the full arms embargo he failed to introduce.

Also remember that major legal bodies provide maximum legal cover. The International Court of Justice in January found plausible grounds that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza.

It has gotten far worse since then. The same court has also issued a historic advisory opinion that determined the Israeli occupation was illegal, that all Israeli settlements must be evacuated and that reparations must be paid to the Palestinians. Meanwhile, the International Criminal Court's prosecutor has found enough grounds against both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant to seek arrest warrants against them.

Is it any wonder that Israel and its backing chorus of willing ciphers attacked with glee, scenting this weakness and nervous-

ness? Israel has learned that the best form of defense is offense. Netanyahu called the decision "shameful." Israeli officials do not bother trying to justify what they are doing, but rather just accuse Britain of abandoning Israel in its fight against Iran and Hamas.

Foreign Office sources have also confirmed, including to the author, that previous Foreign Secretary David Cameron had been given practically the same legal advice earlier this year and just sat on it. Back in January, the former prime minister had mumbled and stumbled in front of a parliamentary committee as to whether he had received advice on whether international law had been breached.

He stunningly stated: "I can't recall every single piece of paper that is out in front of me." This is indicative of the sheer complacency and disinterest in ending war crimes against Palestinians that has so contaminated British politics.

Will there be more action? There should be. This government has so far refused to build on the sanctions regime imposed on just eight settlers and two settler groups. It is lagging behind both the US and the EU on that front.

For the moment, Palestinians and human rights advocates will have to content themselves with these micro-victories. They matter, but so much more is needed.

Bridging the continental gap, from railway to rice

Song Wei

AFTER the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the nation quickly forged strong political relations with African countries. The relationships between China and African countries were built on the shared historical experience of fighting against colonialism and imperialism. This common struggle prompted both China and Africa to pursue political autonomy and economic self-sufficiency.

During the 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia, then Chinese premier Zhou Enlai held detailed talks with African leaders to understand the needs and aspirations of the African countries.

Equally important, the conference's final communiqué endorsed the China-proposed Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. These principles have since become the cornerstone of China-Africa relations.

By 1963, more than 30 African countries had gained independence from the European colonial powers, with 12 of them establishing diplomatic relations with New China. Zhou Enlai led a Chinese delegation on a groundbreaking tour of 10 African countries, which began in late 1963 and ended early the following year. The visits helped build a new type of China-Africa relationship.

During his visit to

Ghana, Zhou introduced the "Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries", laying emphasis on respect for the sovereignty of recipient countries and the absence of political conditions or special rights. Despite its relatively weak economic position at the time, China made serious efforts to help the African countries, exemplified by the construction of the TAZARA Railway, which links the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania with the town of Kapiri Mposhi in Zambia.

On their part, many African countries supported Beijing's rightful representation at the United Nations and advocated for the expulsion of Taiwan's representatives from the UN. In the 1980s, as China's reform and opening-up policy expanded and its economic strength grew, the focus of China-Africa cooperation shifted toward economic and social fields, while the two sides continued to maintain close political and strategic relations. And by the 1990s, about 90 percent of African countries had recognized and established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

That led to China identifying economic and trade cooperation with Africa as a strategic priority, leading to significant growth in

trade and investment. In 1950, China-Africa trade was worth just \$12.14 million. By 2008, two-way trade had surpassed \$100 billion. And from 2009 to 2024, China has remained Africa's largest trading partner, with their trade volume reaching \$282.1 billion in 2023.

The high level of complementarity between China and Africa in terms of resources and industrial structure has been a key factor driving the growth of trade, which has contributed to both sides' development. As China's economic power continues to grow and the concept of a China-Africa community of shared future evolves, cooperation between the two sides has entered a new phase.

Leveraging the Belt and Road Initiative, China is now making substantial investments in Africa's infrastructure sector. It is applying the principle of "to get rich, first build roads" to build major infrastructure projects, including highways, railways, power stations and industrial parks. The Belt and Road Initiative offers African countries a compelling alternative to Western aid, as Chinese loans and investments come without any political strings attached and focus on large-scale infrastructure projects.

Chinese-built industrial

parks, such as the Eastern Industrial Zone in Ethiopia, have created many jobs, increased local tax revenues, and even promoted gender equality. To further boost trade, China in 2021 announced zero tariffs on 98 percent of products from Africa's least-developed countries.

With the circumstances changing, the China-Africa partnership is set to deepen, transitioning from large-scale projects to smaller, more refined initiatives. By focusing on projects that cater to local needs, China aims to provide practical benefits for African communities. And on Thursday China has also proposed 1,000 "small and beautiful" projects aimed at improving local African residents' livelihoods, as well as strengthen agri-cooperation to benefit more local farmers.

For example, amid the global food security crisis exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, China has used its expertise in agriculture to help African countries increase their rice and millet production, and established farms tailored to local conditions.

Moreover China's super rice variety has been successfully introduced in more than 20 African countries, significantly enhancing food security. This evolving partnership promises to enrich and expand the shared future of China and Africa.

World leaders are taking Harris seriously. Trump should too

Raghida Dergham

THE contours of the US presidential election in November will become clearer after the televised debate between Democratic nominee Kamala Harris and Republican candidate Donald Trump on Tuesday night.

How the media and the public perceive the outcome of the debate will depend largely on the "performance" of both candidates. This is especially the case after President Joe Biden's poor showing in his debate against Mr Trump in June forced the then Democratic Party's presumptive nominee to step aside for Ms Harris.

Policy pronouncements are important, of course, especially if the candidates present new proposals to address domestic issues and foreign policy challenges. However, what American viewers will be most focused on is

scriptions to resolve them – are likely to help some voters make up their mind on whom to vote for in November.

Mr Trump has hinted at new proposals to end the war in Ukraine, but he will probably address the issue with caution to avoid appearing pro-Russia. While many Americans question the US-led support for Kyiv, there is also widespread and deep-rooted suspicion of Moscow's strategic aims.

Ms Harris will conceivably boast of the Biden-Harris administration's success in strengthening Nato in its bid to counter Russia. She is also likely to accuse Mr Trump of being friendly with strongmen around the world.

Mr Trump will repeat his claim that if he had been in power, neither the Ukraine war nor the Gaza conflict would have erupted. He will present himself as the candidate with a roadmap to end the

Ms Harris, who has plenty of experience as a prosecutor, has been coached by Karen Dunn, who previously advised Hillary Clinton.

Reports indicate that Ms Harris has spent five days strategising with her advisers and preparing key points. Mr Trump, on the other hand, may not follow the traditional debate preparation process, but his advisers are urging him to avoid personal attacks on Ms Harris and focus, instead, on highlighting her weaknesses. As has been the case in the past, foreign policy is unlikely to dominate the debate. With the exception of the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, most issues pertaining to foreign policy are unlikely to draw widespread attention.

performance.

Ms Harris's performance will be scrutinised as she is new to the presidential debate stage, while Mr Trump will probably attempt to undermine her at every opportunity, portraying her as unfit for leadership. Conversely, Mr Trump's performance may veer into dangerous territory, potentially exposing him to accusations of racism, arrogance and condescension – both towards Ms Harris and, by extension, women.

Both candidates have reportedly prepared extensively for the debate.

Ms Harris, who has plenty of experience as a prosecutor, has been coached by Karen Dunn, who previously advised Hillary Clinton. Reports indicate that Ms Harris has spent five days strategising with her advisers and preparing key points. Mr Trump, on the other hand, may not follow the traditional debate preparation process, but his advisers are urging him to avoid personal attacks on Ms Harris and focus, instead, on highlighting her weaknesses.

As has been the case in the past, foreign policy is unlikely to dominate the debate.

With the exception of the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, most issues pertaining to foreign policy are unlikely to draw widespread attention. Iraq, for example, no longer occupies the spotlight in presidential campaigns as it once did. Libya, another country that continues to wrestle with internal problems as an outcome of western-led intervention, is also for the most part forgotten.

The US's reputation of abandoning its allies is a sore point with many governments around the world. But most American voters may not remember, or even know about, Washington's myriad mistakes on the global stage and impact they continue to have today.

This is primarily because large sections of American society care little about these misadventures. Some of this is reflected in the biased and self-serving coverage of these issues in many of the mainstream US media outlets.

Of course, the ongoing wars – and the respective candidates' policy pre-

Ukraine conflict, probably proposing a deal to prevent Kyiv's Nato membership and balance its territorial integrity with the identity of those areas that Moscow insists must remain under its control.

On the issue of Israel and its war on Gaza, both candidates will probably attempt to woo the Jewish-American vote. They will look to prove their loyalty towards Israel by pledging to continue providing military and financial support to it while condemning Hamas for its actions on October 7.

Ms Harris may reaffirm her commitment to Palestinian self-determination and dignity while acknowledging the war's heavy toll on Palestinian civilians. Mr Trump, on the other hand, will probably focus on empowering Israel to "finish the job" and eliminate Hamas, as it sees fit. He is unlikely to commit to a two-state solution, and while Ms Harris may avoid wholeheartedly endorsing it, she will reaffirm her commitment to the principle if asked.

America, in real terms, seems to be abandoning the two-state solution. Washington no longer challenges Mr Netanyahu on the issue, despite his government's rejection of a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Leaders around the world will watch the debate with the expectation that, eventually, Ms Harris will win the presidency. The Vice President has attempted to position herself as more adaptable and agile than Mr Trump, who is nearly 18 years her senior. In the process, she has captured global attention, particularly with some of the initial enthusiasm for Mr Trump having waned.

If we were to examine Russian President Vladimir Putin's tone when he recently said that he supports Ms Harris for president, we would be able to see that he was only half-joking. There is little doubt that governments in countries such as Russia and China have begun planning for a possible Harris administration.

The greatest gift Mr Trump could give Ms Harris during the debate, therefore, would be to underestimate her as a serious candidate.

Dire warnings of regional war ... but is anybody listening?

Baria Alamuddin

IF the Gaza protagonists succeed in **grudgingly inching toward a ceasefire, despite most of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's conflict objectives remaining unmet, the question then would be: what next?**

Following weeks of intensified skirmishes across Lebanon's southern border, Hassan Nasrallah's speech in late August anticipated this question.

In language wholly disconnected from reality and signaling his desperation to avoid provoking widened conflict, the Hezbollah leader declared that Lebanon could now "take a breath and relax."

Several observers noted that, while Tehran was willing to stand by and allow a major degradation of Hamas' military capabilities, it did not want to see a comparable defenestration of Hezbollah, or other paramilitaries in Syria and Iraq.

This meant that Hezbollah and Iran had to stomach assassinations of their senior military echelons, including the humiliation of Hamas leader Ismael Haniyeh being killed in Tehran itself, with only token gestures of retaliation. Iran's massive April fusillade against Israel was remarkable only for more than 300 missiles failing to reach their targets.

An unprecedentedly direct exchange of fire with Israel may have accelerated Tehran's drive toward acquiring nuclear weapons, something that Netanyahu has always been unequivocal about intending to forcibly prevent.

Extremist Israeli Cabinet hawks are goading Netanyahu into countenancing radical moves to save his own political

skin, including exploiting the conflict's momentum to decisively cut Tehran and its paramilitary allies down to size.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir called for a "decisive war against Hezbollah that will remove the threat in the north and allow the residents to return home safely," echoing broader media criticism that Netanyahu has failed to make Israel's north and south safe to live in.

This is despite incessant strikes against Lebanon and targeted attacks against Hezbollah, Hamas and Revolutionary Guards personnel.

Israel has specifically indicated that a Gaza ceasefire would not necessitate a halt to strikes against Lebanon and elsewhere.

Although Israel's armed forces are exhausted from grinding battles on several fronts, Netanyahu knows that, if he triggered war with Iran, it would force America and its allies to enter the conflict: just witness how Western forces instantaneously mobilized to neutralize Iran's missile barrage in April.

Netanyahu may cynically believe that provoking a war could fatally undermine US President Joe Biden and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris on the eve of the presidential election, ushering in a more favorable US administration.

Sources categorize relations between Biden and Netanyahu as being in a downward spiral, as Israel and Hamas escalate their ceasefire demands.

The region bristles with US aircraft carriers, munitions, missile systems and additional

forces, ready if Israel's war spirals further out of control.

Meanwhile, Israel has been quietly preparing for a regional war: stockpiling food and water, installing backup power supplies, cybersecurity precautions and measures for the wider mobilization of reservists and citizens.

The Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a neoconservative US think tank, has issued an extensive report warning that, while the US has focused on slowing Tehran's rush to enrich uranium to 90 percent purity, Iran has pursued other nuclear weaponization activities — including developing devices for delivering a nuclear payload.

The installation of 1,400 advanced centrifuges at its Fordow enrichment plant this summer is just one measure for accelerating Iran's race toward nuclear breakout.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog, has meanwhile been sounding the alarm regarding the curtailed access of its inspectors to Iran's nuclear sites.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned that Iran required just "one to two weeks" to produce sufficient weapons-grade uranium for a nuclear weapon.

He had less to say about what the US would do about this.

Iran's latest consignment of missiles to Russia is a further example of how Tehran's large weapons programs pose a direct threat to global security. Iran has also become a foremost state for cyberwarfare and malicious attacks on election processes and civil infrastructure.

The US has responded

to incessant rocket and drone strikes on its bases in Iraq by agreeing to a full pullout of its forces during 2025-2026, representing a major victory for the Iran-backed forces that are increasingly the dominant power in Iraq — politically, economically and militarily.

Disjointed Western responses to Houthi rocket attacks on shipping have similarly only served to embolden battle-hardened militants into believing that they can halt global trade with impunity.

Iraqi paramilitary figures were caught red-handed conducting a surveillance operation from the office of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani. Almost the entire top echelon of political and judicial leaders was found to have been under surveillance — excluding Al-Sudani's closest supporter, Qais Al-Khazali and his Asa'ib Ahl Al-Haq militia, while including several of Al-Khazali's paramilitary rivals.

Iran hurriedly deployed a delegation to Baghdad to try and hush up this shocking discovery.

This scandal highlighted the manner in which Tehran-backed militias have relentlessly expanded their control over the security and intelligence apparatus in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen.

As well as exacerbating prospects for civil strife, this remorselessly expanding power grab also affords these forces greater freedom of action for staging attacks on their many regional enemies.

Hence, a combination of gradual US disengagement and Israeli saber-rattling has encouraged Iran and its paramilitaries to become even more

brazen in building up their military and strategic capabilities, weaponizing large parts of the region.

Nobody knows whether we are genuinely on the cusp of a ruinously destructive regional conflict, but provocative and escalatory moves by both Iran and Israel have brought us to the brink. The US and its allies are broadly culpable through decades of unwillingness to confront or rein in either party, making the eruption of such a conflict merely a matter of time.

As we have seen, that would immediately bring in Western states, with long-term destabilizing consequences for global security. Rather than sitting back and hoping for the best, America, Europe, China, Russia and regional powers should be energetically staking far more political capital on trying to stave off region-wide Armageddon.

My friend, the journalist Roula Khalaf, conducted a fascinating interview for The Financial Times with the heads of the American and British intelligence services, Bill Burns and Richard Moore, in which they both voiced dire concerns about the risks of regional conflict and emphasized how the chronic absence of a ceasefire in Gaza — or indeed a two-state solution to the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict — has made worst-case scenarios far likelier.

Moore stressed that a broader regional conflagration would be "vastly worse" than what had already occurred in Gaza. And the two men warned that the world order was under threat in ways not seen since the Cold War.

With these heavyweight figures issuing such dire warnings, is anybody listening?

Jordan's stability is necessary for Arabs, Palestinians alike

Ghassan Charbel

WH O E V E R knows Jordan knows that its fate is tied to the Palestinians. It cannot abandon the open Palestinian wound and does not even want to. The establishment of the two-state solution is in Jordan's interest. Keeping the bleeding wound open makes worry a daily part of life in Jordan.

The fate of Jordan and the Palestinians are interlocked and cannot be broken. Whoever knows King Abdullah knows that the two-state solution is a fixed article on the agenda of all the meetings he holds with guests and in his vast network of international relations.

Jordan believes the two-state solution is necessary to end the injustice the Palestinians have had to endure for centuries. It believes it is necessary for the stability of Jordan and to repel extremism. It believes that the two-state solution is a Palestinian, Jordanian, Arab and international need. The persistence of the conflict will keep the threat of instability alive. It forces the countries involved to deplete their resources in helping ease or deepen their concerns.

Jordan believes that the two-state solution is a condition for building stability in a region that has been on edge since the establishment of Israel. A Palestinian state will fortify the region against projects that rely on the Palestinian oppression in order to achieve agendas related to expanding influence or strengthening roles.

The truth is that the world committed a grave sin when it did not rush to douse the flames of the war on Gaza.

By "the world," we mean major influential countries and others involved in the war. It was never a secret that the war on Gaza is bigger than Gaza and that leaving the war raging for nearly a year now only raises the risks in other regional arenas.

The war took a more horrific turn when the Israeli army decided to uproot resistance hubs in the West Bank. The scenes of the open massacre underway in Gaza are fueling rage across the region. Whoever has followed past Israeli-Palestinian clashes is not at all surprised that the systematic killing and destruction is threatening to spark conflicts beyond Gaza.

The most dangerous aspect of Sunday's King Hussein Bridge incident, which left three Israelis dead, is that it took place while a reckless, extremist Israeli government is in power. This government believes that the current confrontation must end with a knockout blow. Advocates of this position believe that Israel cannot accept a solution that could leave the possibility of a new war erupting in the future.

This is why Israel is trying to take Gaza out of the equation and turn it into a pile of rubble where life is not possible. It has also now turned to the West Bank to strike fear into its residents of the possibility that the horrors in Gaza could be replicated in their homes and villages, so that Israel can impose a new status quo on the ground.

No less dangerous is the Israeli opposition's inability to oust Benjamin Netanyahu, whom it accuses of prolonging the war. This internal failure has been accompanied by an external one. The Biden administration in the US has been incapable of reining in Netanyahu or of organizing a coup against him. Netanyahu is growing more extreme and he is taking America along with him, to the brink of a regional war that Washington has so far averted.

The Netanyahu government is acting as though the current war is an existential one and

Israel decided to launch a war against the Palestinians, going beyond a response to or punishment for Al-Aqsa Flood.

Since the beginning of the destructive war on Gaza, Jordan has sounded the alarm on the dangers of the spillover of the conflict in the region. It has coupled its warnings with constant relief efforts and mounting condemnations of Israeli policies. Jordan sensed the rising danger as Israel moved its war on Gaza to war on the West Bank. Its concerns are not limited to fear over the displacement of West Bank residents, but extend to the fear that Israel will impose new realities on

The truth is that the world committed a grave sin when it did not rush to douse the flames of the war on Gaza. By "the world," we mean major influential countries and others involved in the war. It was never a secret that the war on Gaza is bigger than Gaza and that leaving the war raging for nearly a year now only raises the risks in other regional arenas. The war took a more horrific turn when the Israeli army decided to uproot resistance hubs in the West Bank. The scenes of the open massacre underway in Gaza are fueling rage across the region. Whoever has followed past Israeli-Palestinian clashes is not at all surprised that the systematic killing and destruction is threatening to spark conflicts beyond Gaza. The most dangerous aspect of Sunday's King Hussein Bridge incident, which left three Israelis dead, is that it took place while a reckless, extremist Israeli government is in power. This government believes that the current confrontation must end with a knockout blow. Advocates of this position believe that Israel cannot accept a solution that could leave the possibility of a new war erupting in the future.

that it believes the human and financial losses and the harm to Israel's international and regional relations are therefore justified. Netanyahu has managed to make Israel wage a long war, when it was used to waging short ones. He has effectively managed to embroil Israel in a multifront war that has reached Yemen and Iran. It is an open war that has included costly assassinations in Beirut and Tehran.

The incident on the King Hussein Bridge took place amid this strained climate. Israel can exploit the incident to tighten its grip on the West Bank and isolate it even further as it continues to reel from the raids by Israeli tanks, drones and bulldozers.

We can say that the Netanyahu government viewed Operation Al-Aqsa Flood as a declaration of war, not an attempt to pressure it to hold a prisoner swap. Since the operation, it has sought to highlight Iran's role in the current confrontation in order to avoid dealing with the essence of the Palestinian conflict. It has framed the operation as an attempt to uproot the Israeli state by the Palestinians, with the backing of Iran and Hezbollah and all other members of the so-called Axis of Resistance. So,

the ground that will make the two-state solution impossible. This means eliminating the Palestinian cause and ending all hope, leaving open confrontation as the only available option.

Jordan is aware that it is being targeted. It has long resisted Israeli calls to resolve the Palestinian problem at its expense. It is being targeted because it shares the longest border with Israel. It is being targeted because it has opted for moderation in its regional and international relations and because it is firmly committed to the freedom of its decision-making, shunning geographic and regional pressure, including from Iran.

It is no exaggeration to say that Jordan's stability is a Palestinian and a Jordanian need alike. A stable Jordan will help end the oppression against the Palestinians. A stable Jordan is a pressing Arab need because an absence of this stability would create a major and dangerous imbalance in regional equations.

Jordan is an example of living amid dangers. Its realistic policies and a constant maintenance of international relations have protected it, so has its united security institution, which has been trained in living amid regional fires.

Two positive signals from China-proposed resolution on international AI cooperation

TH E U N G e n e r a l A s s e m b l y (U N G A) recently unanimously adopted the resolution entitled " E n h a n c i n g I n t e r n a t i o n a l C o o p e r a t i o n o n C a p a c i t y - B u i l d i n g o f A r t i f i c i a l I n t e l l i g e n c e ". Among hundreds of resolutions passed by the U N G A each year, this resolution, which was widely covered by major international media, has received special attention. Governments worldwide, especially those of the Global South countries, as well as AI-related institutions

and companies, speak highly of it. The resolution, proposed by China and co-sponsored by the US, is the UN's first resolution focusing on international AI cooperation. That partly explains why it has attracted so much attention and two signals it sends are particularly noteworthy.

First, it marked the first time that major countries, including China and the US, have reached consensus on strengthening international AI cooperation. As the most dynamic and cutting-edge technology today, AI has

become the pacesetter of the new round of sci-tech revolution and industrial transformation. All parties are competing to invest more in it. China, the US and Europe are all at the forefront of the technological race. Excelling in different technological routes, they all strive to take the lead in this competition that will shape the future of humanity. To win the race, the US has resorted to aggressive measures such as technological blockades, market closures, and economic sanctions against China. Meanwhile, it has

coerced its allies and many Global South countries into picking sides. This has put enormous pressure on Global South countries, because once they choose a side, they may gradually become technologically dependent on that side, and lose autonomy. If they refuse to take a side, they may potentially fall behind in the new round of revolution.

It is at this challenging moment that this resolution, proposed by China and co-sponsored by 140 countries, including the US, was

Vox South

adopted by the U N G A after numerous consultations, bringing a glimmer of hope to the world. It indicates that even in the highly competitive and unpredictable field of AI, people of different countries can set aside differences, build consensus, and blaze a path of cooperation as long as major countries have strong political will and most countries stay united.

Second, early starters in the domain of AI are ready to help Global South countries strengthen AI capacity

building. Throughout history, technological innovations have reshaped the international landscape time and again. The future of a country hinges on whether it masters the advanced technology or not. Unfortunately, many Global South countries missed valuable opportunities for technological progress due to various reasons. For these countries, their backwardness in technology resulted in low productivity and slow social progress. They easily fall in a cycle of "missing one opportunity, missing all opportunities". Today,

AI has emerged as an undeniably important force driving changes in work and life. For Global South countries, strengthening AI capacity building is not only an urgent need to catch up with developed countries and achieve leapfrog development, but also a key way to improve people's livelihood and enhance their quality of life.

Therefore, we sincerely welcome and firmly support the China-proposed resolution. We are full of hope for escaping the fate of being marginalized and becoming equal partners in the development and

sharing of technologies. However, the adoption of the resolution is only the first step. The real challenge lies in translating it into concrete actions at an early date. We eagerly anticipate and call on China and the US to continue to lead by example, drive broader and deeper cooperation among countries worldwide on AI through China-US open cooperation. This is to ensure that this cutting-edge technology is a boon to every country and people, and allows everyone to enjoy the convenience and benefits brought by technological progress.



BF gains support of Small industrialists for elections

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Small factory owners in Peshawar announced their support for the Businessman Forum in the upcoming Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry election.

That assurance was given during a lunch hosted by Small Industrialists Association president Wahid Arif Awan in honour of the leadership of the businessman forum here in the SIE Kohat Peshawar on Monday.

Those who attend the event include FPCCI former president Ghazanfar Bilour, SCCI Vice president Fuad Ishaq, Vice president Ijaz Khan Afridi, Life-time President of Anjuman Tajran Haji Mohammad Afzal, former presidents SCCI Faiz Mohammad Faizi, former SVPs Zia-ul-Haq Border, Shahid

Hussain, Imran Khan Mohmand and Sohail Javed, Aftab Iqbal, Nadeem Rauf, Zahoor Khan, Sadar Gul, Faiz Rasool, Ishtiaq Paracha, Fazal Wahid, Shamsur Rahim, Malang Jan, Ashfaq Ahmed, officials and members of the association, Hakimuddin Dawood, Manzoor Khan and others.

On the occasion former President of Small Industrial Estate Association Kohat Road Peshawar and SCCI Engineer Maqsood Anwar Parvez, President of the SIE Association Waheed Arif Awan, General Secretary Aurangzeb Mohmand and other office bearers expressed full confidence in the leadership of former senator Ilyas Ahmed Bilour.

They hoped that the sun of 25 September 2024 would rise with the success of the businessman forum

and so-called leaders of the trading community fully faced humiliating defeat.

Participants said the businessman forum had never compromised on the rights and interests of the business community and always believed in selfless service to the community and it had proved that practically.

They said the business community recognized the interests and opportunistic elements.

They said the trading community knew well that the businessman forum is the real representative forum which always resolved the problems of the business community and provided them all kinds of relief.

Ghazanfar Bilour said that BF is the real representative platform of the business community, which had taken proactive steps for

the protection of the business community interests that is the reason why the candidates of the Businessmen's Forum have been elected unopposed for the past 24 years.

He claimed BF will sweep in the election on the basis of its good performance.

Ghazanfar Bilour urged the business community to vote and support BF in the elections of SCCI for the year 2024-26, which is scheduled to be held on September 25, 2024 and elect genuine candidates through their votes.

Fuad Ishaq while speaking on this occasion, said that the BF has played a key role in solving the problems of traders' community under leadership of former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour by taking up authorities at provincial and central level.



PESHAWAR: President Small Industrialists Association Wahid Arif Awan presenting a shield to Ghazanfar Bilour and SCCI president Fuad Ishaq. Vice president Ijaz Khan Afridi also present on occasion.

Minister held networking dinner

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh held a networking dinner ahead of commencement of International Maritime Sustainability Exhibition & Conference Pakistan (IMSEC 2024) at Port House, Lalazar.

The Consuls General of United Kingdom, United States of America (USA), Russia, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and other dignitaries.

The event is scheduled to commence from 12 September, 2024 in Islamabad and conclude on 14 September in Karachi. It is a premier gathering designed to propel Pakistan's maritime economy into the future promoting global and regional partnerships and facilitating investments.

Organized under the management of Ministry of Maritime Affairs the event features an investor conference and an international exhibition.

IMSEC aims to foster interaction and collaboration among Pakistani and international maritime companies, policymakers, investors and stakeholder.

PSX witnesses bearish trend

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Monday, losing 282.72 points, showing a negative change of 0.36 percent, closing at 78,615.00 points against 78,897.73 points on the last working day.

A total of 491,124,197 shares were traded during the day as compared to 743,072,057 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 10.124 billion against Rs 12.900 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 443 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 155 of them recorded gains and 228 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 60 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 86,006,041 shares at Rs 1.46 per share, Kohinoor Spinning with 42,932,284 shares at Rs 9.63 per share and Pace (Pak) Limited with 37,264,175 shares at Rs 6.38 per share.

Haleon Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 41.13 per

share price, closing at Rs 453.32, whereas the runner-up was Service Industries Limited with a Rs 29.37 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,039.47.

Pakistan Engineering Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 50.80 per share closing at Rs 898.70 followed by Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs 48.12 decline to close at Rs 7,300.88.

Rupee sheds 14 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 14 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.56.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.85 and Rs 280.35 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.37 to close at Rs 308.21 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.58, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and

closed at Rs1.94, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.97 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs365.22 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs367.19.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise and 05 paise to close at Rs75.87 and Rs74.25 respectively.

Gold rates decline by Rs.1,100 to Rs.260,400

The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,100 and was sold at Rs.260,400 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs. 261,500 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.943 to Rs. 223,251 from Rs. 224,194 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.204,647 from Rs. 205,511, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$7 to \$2,490 from \$2,497, the Association reported.

SBA's Patron-in-Chief, Chairman intensive tour of various markets



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Business Alliance's (SBA) Patron-in-Chief, former Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali, and SBA Chairman Syed Zahir Ali Shah, along with Muhammad Ishaq, toured various markets in Namak Mandi as part of the Sarhad Chamber elections campaign and met with the members.

During this visit, they met Riaz Hussain, the president of Naz Medicine

Market, and also toured markets including GM Market, Shangla Market, Maqsood Market, Rehman Market, Abdul Market, Hayat Market, Humra Market, Makka Tower, Jaleel Market, Shams Market, and Qudrat Market. The market presidents warmly welcomed them in their respective markets, offering garlands and showering flower petals.

The delegation was led by PCDA Chairman Sirajuddin, accompanied by Haji Mamoor, Ashad

Siddiqui, Manzoor Elahi, and other notable figures. SBA candidates including Shahrukh Khan, Bakht Mir Jan, Ghulam Bilal Javid, Adnan Jaleel, Muhammad Ikram, Ikramullah Khan, Riaz Hussain, Dr. Yousaf Sarwar, Sher Zaman Mohmand, and others also actively participated.

Senior SBA leaders, including Muhammad Ishaq, Malik Sajjad, Aurangzeb, Muhammad Iqbal, and other trade leaders, were also part of the campaign.

In Namak Mandi, the business community and members of the Sarhad Chamber gave a grand reception to Haji Ghulam Ali, Syed Zahir Ali Shah, and all the candidates. The streets of the bazaar were decorated with flower petals, and garlands were presented to the guests.

Later, a dinner was hosted in honor of SBA candidates at Senior Leader Luqman Shah's residence. During the event, all the market presidents were briefed on SBA's manifesto. They not only assured their full support but also vowed to stand on the front lines with SBA in every endeavor.

In their speeches, former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Syed Zahir Ali Shah, and Malik Meher Elahi emphasized that candidates with tickets need to work harder. They stated that the goal is to restore the reputation of the Chamber and resolve the traders' issues. They stressed the importance of unity for achieving these objectives and assured that all efforts would be made to serve the business community.

PQFTL introduces instant withdrawal facility

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited (PQFTL), a leading provider of Family Takaful solutions and part of Pak-Qatar Group, Pakistan's premier and pioneer Islamic financial services group, is pleased to announce a unique instant withdrawal facility for its Mahana Bachat customers. This innovative service allows participants to withdraw partial funds in case of emergencies in a matter of minutes with ease and instant access through PQFTL's mobile app, 'Pak-Qatar Financial Solutions' (PQFS) or its online portal.

This is the first time that a Takaful operator in Pakistan has offered such a facility, reinforcing PQFTL's position as a pioneer in the industry. This integration will enable participants to easily draw their funds, enhancing convenience and accessibility for the users.

Waqas Ahmad, CEO of Pak-Qatar Family Takaful, expressed his enthusiasm:

"We are delighted to offer this innovative instant withdrawal service. Our strategic approach not only enhances our end-to-end service delivery but also aligns with our vision to provide innovative and customer-centric financial solutions. We believe this facility will greatly benefit our participants by providing them with unprecedented ease of access to their funds."

This unique facility represents a significant step forward in the evolution of Islamic financial services in Pakistan, providing customers with more flexibility and control over their financial assets.

PQFTL remains committed to driving innovation and excellence in the Islamic financial services industry and this initiative is a display of PQFTL's dedication to prioritizing customer satisfaction and convenience.

Pak-Qatar Family Takaful is part of Pak-Qatar Group, Pakistan's premier and pioneer Islamic financial services group. It provides

comprehensive Takaful coverage that adheres to the principles of cooperation and mutual support, offering innovative and Shariah-compliant savings & protection solutions to individuals, families, and businesses. The company is rated "A++" (having a Stable Outlook) by VIS Credit Rating Co. Limited and Pakistan Credit Rating Agency (PACRA). The Company's paid-up capital is in excess of Pak-Rs. 1.3 Billion.

Pak-Qatar Group stands as Pakistan's premier and pioneer Islamic financial services group, offering a comprehensive range of savings and protection solutions that adhere to the principles of Shariah-compliant finance. With steadfast commitment to excellence and strong emphasis on Islamic values, the group encompasses companies such as Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited, Pak-Qatar General Takaful Limited, Pak-Qatar Investment (Private) Limited and Pak-Qatar Asset Management Company Limited.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, Atlantic Ibis, CP Shenzhen, Kaley and Amir Gas scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Coal and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminals and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Sunday 8th September.

Meanwhile six more ships, Ammos, Clipper Lis, Torm Malaysia, EVA Hongkong, Maya Gas-1 and Sea Density scheduled to load/offload Rice, Palm oil, Chemicals, LPG and Coal are arrived at outer anchorage port on same day.

A total of eight ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Atlantic Ibis, Chemroad Sakura and Hafnia Leopard left the port today morning while another Liquefied Petroleum Gas carrier 'Amir Gas' is expected to sail on today 9th, September 2024.

Cargo volume of 72,547 tonnes, comprising 70,728 tonnes imports cargo and 1,819 tonnes export cargo carried in 450 Containers (343 TEUs Imports & 107 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 10 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them four ships, AU Taurus, NCC Badar, EVA Hong Kong and Sea Destiny carrying Palm oil, Gas oil, Chemicals and Coal are expected to take berths at LCT, FOTCO, EVTL and PIBT respectively on today 9th September. Meanwhile six more container ships, MSC Surabaya-VIII, MSC Capetown-III, Maersk Nyassa, Maersk Hartford, MSC Positano and MSC Ellen are due to arrive at port on Tuesday.

Signing ceremony held between Al Baraka Bank and Peekaboo Guru

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Al Baraka Bank has partnered with Peekaboo Guru (Pvt) Ltd to drive its digital experiences by integrating Peekaboo Connect into its digital channels.

A signing ceremony was held at the Head Office of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited on 6th September 2024. Present at the ceremony from Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited were Mr. Muhammad Atif Hanif - CEO, Mr. Muhammad Zohair Saif - Chief Digital Officer and Mr. Mehdi Hassan, CEO of Peekaboo Guru (Pvt) Ltd, along with Senior Team Members of both organizations.

This integration will enhance customer access to deals, discounts, promotions, and branch services, with more features to come.



Additionally, Peekaboo Guru will onboard merchants to offer exclusive discounts to the Bank's loyal customers. This partnership signifies a commitment to continually improving customer experiences through innovative

products and services.

On this occasion, Mr. Muhammad Atif Hanif said "Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited's vision is to be a digital bank of choice for our key value segments. We will partner with Global and Pakistani Fintechs to

create simpler, better & valuable digital experiences for our customers. Peekaboo Guru (Pvt) Ltd is our digital partner in growth which will further enhance our customer experience on Debit Card's deals and discounts."

Free IT training initiative for women of Keamari launched

F.P. Report

KARACHI: In a significant ceremony with aim to empower women, KPT has officially launched free computer centre at the KPT Industrial Home, Keamari.

The Minister of Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh graced the inauguration ceremony as Chief Guest, accompanied with Chairman KPT Syedain Raza Zaidi. Such an initiative is the vision of the Minister of Maritime Affairs to enhance the skills of women, specially residing in Keamari and nearby areas and providing them with the tools necessary to thrive in today's digital age. This event marks a new chapter in the ongoing efforts

for women empowerment.

Upon arrival, Minister of Maritime Affairs was briefed about the CSR activities being undertaken by KPT in the field of health, education, environment, communication, services and sports.

tion, services and sports.

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 359/1 Institution.18/12/2023

Date of hearing. 20/9/2024. Rozi Akbar VS Dillfaroz etc. Notice to no.3.Shahzeb s/o Shah Bakht Rawan resident of Koz Gokand tehsel Daggar 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 defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 20/9/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

IN the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 97/1 Institution.6/5/2024

Date of hearing. 14/9/2024. Mst Gul Badna VS Bakhtawar Khan etc. Notice to no.1.Bakhtawar Khan. 4.Mohammad Naem sons of Manjawa.6.Abdur Rehman.7.Norur Rehman sons of Nor Mohammad.10.Shahid Zada s/o Sakhi Mohamad resident of Hisar tehsel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 14/9/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Javera Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal. No.22/13. Institution 20/3/2024. Date of hearing. 20/9/2024. Amez Khan VS Qurban Ali

Notice to no 2/1.Gul Rawez Khan. 2/2.Amer Nawaz Khan.2/3. Saranzeb Khan.2/4. Anes Naem sons of Mst Qadar Jan. 2/6.Mst Aamiat. 2/7. Khasiat ds/o Qadar J a n . 3 / 3 . Z a h e r Ahmed.3/4.Awes Khan sons of Mst Zarfarosha. 3/5.Mst Nazia d/o Zarfarosha. 6.Mirza Gul s/o Umbaras resident of Dagai tehsel Khadukhel district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 20/9/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

FCCI demands cut in markup rate to stabilize economy

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has demanded proportionate decrease in markup rate has become imperative after the substantial decline in inflation to stabilize the economy on a solid and sustained basis.

Addressing a hurriedly-called press conference here on Monday, FCCI Senior Vice President Dr Sajjad Arshad that improvement in one indicator is not enough and the government must take necessary measures to cut down markup rate to pro-

vide cheap finances to the industrial sector enabling it to import machinery and create maximum jobs for the unemployed youth.

He said that FCCI had already highlighted the issue of IPPs. All chambers have a unified stand about the IPPs as well as reduction in markup rate from the platform of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry.

A petition was also pending in the Supreme Court about the IPPs and we are still pressing hard to conduct a forensic audit so that 240 million people of

Pakistan could know how these agreements were inked and by whom, he added. He said that now we are demanding substantial decrease in markup rate so that the industrial sector in general and SME in particular could import the latest machinery to cut down its production cost.

Responding to a question, he said that the finance minister in his budget speech had announced the provision of electricity to the industrial sector at 14 cent per unit but a notification in this regard is still awaited.



In brief

Affan bags Scrabble C'ship title

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's 16 years old Affan Salman had won the 19th World Youth Scrabble Championship 2024 title in Sri Lanka. Affan Salman was crowned the World Youth Champion after 23 of the 24 games played as he had an unassailable lead, said a press release. Affan's brother Ali Salman won the World Youth title in 2022 providing the only instance of two brothers winning the world Youth championship in history. Pakistan won a host of prizes and awards including the team trophy for being the No. 1 team as four players from Pakistan finished in the top ten. Bilal Asher finished 5th, Ibrahim Mansoor 8th and Aehzam Ahmed 10th. Bilal Asher also won the under 14 title while Zayan Zaman won the trophy for the highest single move score. The side tournament for adults was won by Waseem Khatri of Pakistan.

Kane set to become 10th player to win 100 caps

LONDON (Reuters): England captain Harry Kane will earn his 100th cap for his country when they host Finland in the Nations League at Wembley on Tuesday, becoming the 10th player to reach the mark. The Football Association (FA) said on Monday. The 31-year-old Bayern Munich striker, who has scored 66 goals in 99 appearances for England since his debut in 2015, is the first player to become an England men's centurion since striker Wayne Rooney in November 2014. "The FA will pay tribute before the UEFA Nations League fixture with a special pre-match ceremony that will include the presentation of a gold cap," the governing body said in a statement. Before kick-off, the FA will also pay tribute to former England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, who died at the age of 76 last month.

Pak team gears up for SAFF C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan football team is undergoing intensive training at the Kunj Football Ground, Abbottabad in preparations for the upcoming SAFF U17 Championship at Bhutan. The training camp, which kicked off recently, features 26 probables competing for a spot in the final squad, said a press release. The team's participation in the championship, scheduled to take place from September 20 to 30, is subject to government's approval.

Afghanistan v NZ opening day's play called off

NEW DELHI (Reuters): A wet outfield caused by overnight rain prompted match officials to call off the opening day's play in the one-off test between New Zealand and Afghanistan in Greater Noida on Monday. Heavy rain in the last 10 days had left little prospect of any action on the opening day at the stadium in Greater Noida, near Delhi, which has only a basic drainage system. While there was no fresh shower on Monday, the outfield and the bowler's run-up area were both wet and the umpires undertook several inspections before calling off the day's play. Afghanistan play their 'home' matches at the venue because touring teams are not ready to visit the country over security concerns. The match marks the first of New Zealand's six tests in Asia in the next two months, including two in Sri Lanka and three against India.



LONDON: Angelo Mathews and Pathum Nissanka secured Sri Lanka's win in the Oval Test.

PCB Chairman meets with Champions Cup team mentors

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Monday visited Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad and met mentors of the five teams of the Champions One Day Cup. The inaugural Champions One-Day Cup is set to begin in Faisalabad on September 12 with the first match between Wolves and Panthers.

Wolves mentor Misbah-ul-Haq, Stallions mentor Shoaib Malik, Lions mentor Waqar Younis, Dolphins mentor Sarfaraz Ahmed, and Panthers mentor Saqlain Mushtaq held a detailed consultation with PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi regarding the

arrangements for the Champions Cup. The mentors declared the Champions Cup an important tournament for domestic cricket and suggested improvements for the pitches and ground of Iqbal Stadium.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi assured that the standards of pitches and grounds would be improved and stated that players would be given equal opportunities for practice. He issued instructions to Director Domestic Cricket and Director High Performance regarding the arrangements. He further emphasised that all team players would be provided with the best

gym facilities to work on fitness. The Champions Cup will bring new players to the forefront, giving them opportunities to progress based on their performance.

Backup players will be prepared for the national team for all three formats. The Chairman further said that the aim is to establish the Champions Cup as a brand of Pakistan, and the mentors have a significant responsibility in this regard.

Advisor Bilal Afzal, PCB Directors Domestic, High Performance, International Cricket, PSL, Senior General Manager Domestic Cricket, and other officials were also present on the occasion.

Relaxed Murray surprised he does not miss playing

LONDON (Agencies): Andy Murray has revealed retirement has been "the complete opposite" to what he expected and that he is not missing tennis like he thought he would.

The 37-year-old Briton, a three-time Grand Slam champion, called time on his illustrious 19-year career after the Paris Olympics in August. Murray underwent a hip resurfacing operation in 2019 and had various injury struggles during the final few years of his career.

"Since I've stopped, I feel really free and have got lots of time to do whatever I want," Murray told BBC Radio 4's Today programme. "I can dedicate time to my children and have free time to play golf or go to the gym on my own terms. "It is really nice and I didn't expect that. I was expecting to find retirement hard and be missing tennis a lot and wanting to get back on the tennis court on tour.

"So far it has been the complete opposite to what I was thinking." The 37-year-old won his first Grand Slam in 2012 at the US Open before ending Britain's 77-year wait for a men's Wimbledon champion in 2013 when he defeated Novak Djokovic, before winning it again in 2016.

"I would feel guilty leaving my children," Murray, who won Olympic gold in the singles at London 2012 and Rio 2016, played the final match of his career at Paris 2024, losing in the doubles quarter-finals after epic comeback wins in the previous two rounds.

He acknowledged there was no "perfect ending" for a tennis player but revealed he was now feeling guilt-free around his four children and wife Kim. "The thing that I always found difficult in recent years was that there was always a guilt associated with what I was doing," Murray, who played 1,001 singles matches in his career, added. "If I was going away for a trip of like three to four weeks I would feel guilty leaving my children at home or being away from my wife for a long time with them, so missing the kids I found hard.

"But if I was at home with the kids then I was running around and spending a lot of my time on my feet after training. "I was then thinking 'is this going to affect my training or performance the next day, should I have my feet up?' I found that stuff difficult over the last few years."

"Tennis is a very lonely sport"

It was not just the latter years of his career Murray found difficult, with the media criticism in his glory days also presenting struggles. The Briton felt even though he was "extremely successful" there was something he was "failing at" because of the high expectations put upon him. "It was really hard for me at times, reaching the final at Wimbledon and being criticised for your work or feeling you are not good enough," he added.

"Which I think is wrong and I don't know if that would be the case in every country. "It might have not been the case, but my perception was I was feeling I was being attacked even when I was doing really well, and that was pretty hard."

Nissanka stars as Sri Lanka end 10-year wait for Test win in England

LONDON (AFP): Pathum Nissanka's superb unbeaten century guided Sri Lanka to an ultimately commanding eight-wicket win at The Oval on Monday as they ended a decade-long wait for a Test-match victory in England.

Sri Lanka, set a target of 219, reached that total for the loss of two wickets before lunch on the fourth day, with Nissanka 127 not out and Angelo Mathews 32 not out in an unbroken stand of 111. Victory gave Sri Lanka just a fourth Test win in England and first since a 100-run success at Headingley back in 2014.

England, however, took this three-match series 2-1 after wins at Old Trafford (five wickets) and Lord's (190 runs). But defeat meant England, who whitewashed the West Indies 3-0 earlier in the season, failed to achieve a first home campaign clean sweep since 2004, when Michael Vaughan oversaw seven successive wins.

Nissanka, named player-of-the-match after also making 64 in the first innings, told Sky Sports: "It was a great opportunity to play in England and I enjoyed that innings."

"I just wanted to play my normal game and I have done that," added the opener, who spent two years out of the Test side. And for Sri Lanka captain Dhananajaya de Silva, there was no doubting the significance of leading his country to only their fourth win in 21 Tests in England.

"This is one of the happiest moments in my career

and my life," said De Silva. "We had a tough time in the last two weeks so to come here and get a win in English conditions against an English team, it is a very good moment for me, my team, and my country as well."

Sri Lanka resumed on 94-1, already well-placed to end a run of seven straight Test defeats by England. Nissanka, recalled at Lord's, was 53 not out and Kusal Mendis unbeaten on 30.

Mendis, however, had added just nine runs to his score when he hooked a Gus Atkinson bouncer to fine leg where Shoaib Bashir, doing well to sight the ball on a gloomy morning, held an excellent low catch diving to his left.

Sri Lanka were now 108-2 as Mathews, who made a brilliant 160 in their Headingley success a decade ago, walked in to bat. England captain Ollie Pope, with Sri Lanka making good progress against the quicks at 137-2, brought on off-spinner Bashir.

Bashir, however, promptly conceded 10 runs in an over, Nissanka pulling a dragged down ball to square leg and Mathews sweeping another four.

The diminutive Nissanka's punched three off Atkinson through point saw the 26-year-old complete an excellent 107-ball hundred including 11 fours.

And having reached the landmark, Nissanka hooked fast bowler Olly Stone for two sixes.

Nissanka ended the match by cutting Bashir for four, having already surpassed his previous highest Test score of 103 against the West Indies at North Sound in 2021.

England 'shot ourselves in the foot'

England squandered several strong positions, including collapsing from 261-3 to 325 all out in their first innings despite 154 from Pope — his first century since stepping in for the injured Ben Stokes as skipper at the start of this series. They also allowed Sri Lanka to recover from 93-5 to 263 in reply, with Pope deploying an all-spin attack after tea on a gloomy second day.

England led by 62 runs on first innings. But their top-order batted as if they had double that lead second time around, with England collapsing spectacularly to 82-7 before being dismissed for 156 in just 34 overs on Sunday.

Lahiru Kumara took 4-21 and left-arm swing bowler Vishwa Fernando 3-40 including the prize scalp of Joe Root for just 12.

Only wicketkeeper Jamie Smith's counter-attacking 67 off 50 balls, including 10 fours and a six, ensured Sri Lanka were chasing more than 200 for victory. "It's disappointing not to be on the right side of the result," said Pope. "Day three (Sunday), we probably shot ourselves in the foot a little bit. "We weren't at our best and credit to Sri Lanka. The way Nissanka played was high-class and they deserved to win this Test."

Pakistani team shines by grabbing two bronze medals in Nomad Games



MULTAN (APP): Pakistani team shone on opening day of 5th World Nomad Games, by securing two Bronze medals in Mas-Wrestling being held in Astana.

Pakistani team celebrated a triumphant start at the 5th World Nomad Games with outstanding performances in Mas-Wrestling on the tournament's opening day.

The team secured two bronze medals, showcasing their exceptional skills and determination.

Shaffat Ullah led the charge by clinching the first bronze medal of the games in the 70 kg weight category.

Demonstrating remarkable prowess and strength, Shaffat Ullah overcame

formidable opponents from Australia and Kazakhstan, and secured his bronze medal by defeating Mongolia in a thrilling bronze medal match.

Adding to the day's successes, Muhammad Asim earned the bronze medal in the 80 kg weight category. His path to victory included impressive wins over athletes from Iran and Uzbekistan, culminating in a decisive victory against Poland in the bronze medal bout.

In a statement on Monday, Nawab Furqan Khan, President Pakistan Mas-Wrestling Federation, expressed his pride and excitement: "Our athletes have delivered exceptional perform-

ances on the first day of the Games.

Shaffat Ullah and Muhammad Asim have showcased not only their skill but also their dedication and hard work.

These achievements reflect the strength and spirit of Mas-Wrestling in Pakistan. We look forward to even greater success as the games continue and are proud to represent our country on this prestigious stage."

The success of the team is a testament to the exceptional leadership and support provided by Coach Muhammad Saad and Official Ch Ihtsham Akmal, he noted.

Their guidance and strategic planning were instrumental in achieving these remarkable results.

These achievements highlight Team Pakistan's commitment to excellence and their growing prominence in the global Mas-Wrestling arena.

The team's stellar performance on the first day sets a strong foundation for the remainder of the games, and their dedication continues to inspire, he concluded.

National Men's U19 tournament to begin on Tuesday

LAHORE (APP): The National Men's U19 three-day Championship and One-Day Cup are set to begin on Tuesday, 10 September. Each round of the three-day games will be followed by the One-Day games. As such, a total of 98 matches each will be played over a 61-day period.

Eighteen teams of 16 regions will participate in the tournament, whose one-day final will be held on 22 October and the three-day final from 6-9 November. Venues of the final will be announced in due course.

The 18 regional teams will be equally divided into three groups with the matches to be played on a single-league basis till 12 October.

The next phase will

include one-day matches between three group toppers on a single-league from 16-22 October, followed by three-day matches between the group toppers again on a single-league basis from 25 October to 9 November.

Peshawar will defend the three-day title, while Karachi Whites are the reigning one-day champions.

The squads have been selected following the Regional Inter-District U19 Tournament from 23 May to 10 June in which 104 district sides had participated.

The National Men's U19 Championship and Cup is expected to provide the budding and emerging teenagers to prove their mettle and stake a claim in

the Pakistan U19 team for the upcoming tri-nation 50-over series in November in UAE, which will be followed by the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup 2024.

Groups: Group A (matches in Karachi): FATA, Islamabad, Karachi Whites, Larkana, Multan and Quetta regions

Group B (matches in Abbottabad, Charsada, Peshawar and Raisalpur): Abbottabad, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Karachi Blues, Lahore Blues and Rawalpindi regions

Group C (matches in Faisalabad, Sardogha and Sheikhupura): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Dera Murad Jamali (DM Jamali), Hyderabad, Lahore Whites, Peshawar and Sialkot regions.



HULUNBUIR CITY (Monitoring Desk): South Korea came from behind to hold Pakistan for a draw in the fourth match of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy here in Inner Mongolia, China.

Pakistan's second fixture in the ongoing tournament also ended in a 2-2 draw as they failed to defend their narrow one-goal lead in the final quarter.

South Korea opened the scoring in the dying minutes of the second quarter, courtesy of Hyun Jigwang. Their lead remained intact until the third quarter and it appeared that Pakistan were closing in on their first defeat in the ongoing tournament.

The national team, however, made an astounding comeback as Shahid Hanan scored back-to-back last-

minute goals to give the Green Shirts what appeared to be a decisive lead.

But just a few seconds before the final whistle, South Korea equalized through Kim Sunghyun and denied Pakistan a victory.

Pakistan tasted the same fortune in their Asian Hockey Champions Trophy opener against Malaysia.

They started their campaign with a 2-2 draw despite dominating the majority of the match.

The Green Shirts started the game strongly, taking the lead in the second quarter, thanks to a goal by Sufyan Khan.

In the third quarter, Nadeem Ahmed extended their lead with another goal, before Malaysia made a comeback with a goal from the penalty corner.

Pakistan were cruising

towards victory with a 2-1 lead, however, Aiman Rozemi's late goal helped Malaysia level the scores in the dying minutes of the game.

Meanwhile, in other Monday fixtures of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy, India outclassed Japan 5-1 while China crushed Malaysia 2-0.

The ongoing tournament is the 8th edition of the Asian Champions Trophy. Pakistan have won the tournament in 2012 and 2013, while India have won in 2011, 2016 and 2023.

The 2018 edition saw Pakistan and India jointly sharing the trophy as the final was forfeited due to persistent rain. Defending champions India won the prestigious tournament last year by defeating Malaysia 4-3 in the final.



In brief

15 arrested for holding illegal arms

RAWALPINDI (APP): In a successful operation, Police have arrested 15 illegal arm holders and seized arm, ammunition from their possession here on Monday, informed police spokesman. During operation, Naseerabad police held six illegal arm holders namely Obaiddullah, Ismail, Shoaib, Hasnain, Ali Raza, Jahanzeb and confiscated 06 pistols 30 bore from their possession. Similarly, Rawat Police nabbed Sagheer with a 12-bore rifle and 02 pistols 30 bore were recovered from Kamran and Aziz. Additionally, Ratta Amaral Police arrested Ahmad Khan and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his custody. Following operation, Sadiqabad Police held Abdullah and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession. Cantt police found 01 pistol 30 bore from Umar's possession. Airport Police recovered 9mm pistol from Amir. Taxila Police arrested Subhanullah and recovered 01 pistol from his possession. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation has been started. Divisional SPs commended police teams adding that strict action will be taken against those carrying illegal weapons.

IRSA releases 222,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 222,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 201,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1550.00 feet (maximum conservation level) and was 152.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 123,300 cusecs and 122,800 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1228.00 feet, which was 180.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 28,400 cusecs and 8,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 145,700, 131,700, 177,400 and 131,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 29,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 12,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Two snatchers held

RAWALPINDI (APP): In a significant crackdown, Police have successfully arrested two accused who snatched vehicle from citizen after taking lift. According to police spokesman, Saddar Barooni police held those who were identified as Farhat and Nauman. The accused were apprehended after allegedly snatching a vehicle from a citizen who had given them a lift. The police recovered the snatched vehicle and also seized weapons from their possession. The accused had reportedly threatened the vehicle owner at gunpoint and demanded Rs. 5 lakh for the vehicle's return. Following the report of the incident, the Saddar Barooni Police promptly registered a case and carried out the arrests. SP Saddar Mohammad Nabil Khokhar praised the police team for their swift action. He emphasized that strict action would be taken against those who deprived citizens of their valuable assets.

Ulema's role pivotal in upholding peace: Governor

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan on Monday termed the role of Ulemas as pivotal in upholding peace in the society. He underlined the need of increased responsibilities particularly in countering the hostile agenda to sabotage interfaith harmony in the country.

The governor remarked this during his visit to Madrassa Taleem ul Quran where he met with the Molana Ashraf Ali, the head of the madrassa.

He appreciated the role of the madrassa with respect to the Khatam e Nabuwat (The Finality of

the Prophethood) SAW. He said the historic madrassa has been engaged in the service of religion since the establishment of Pakistan. He presented a special tribute to the services of Maulana Ashraf Ali.

The governor said Pakistan is the only country that came into being in the name of Allah and His Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). He stressed for joint efforts to defeat the notorious designs of the enemy of the peace in the country.

"We all have to thwart the plans of the enemies together", he said. Later, talking to the media, Governor Sardar Salim

reiterated his commitment to serving the people. Responding to a question, he said that the doors of Governor House are open for CM KPK.

"I will ask Ali Amin Gandapur to refrain from spreading unrest", he said adding that politics could n't be run by aggressive slogans.

"Politics can't be run by raising Mola Jutt slogans", he said and asked the KPK CM to avoid irresponsible behavior.

The governor condemned Gandapur's statement regarding journalists saying it an 'irresponsible' statement.

Govt to introduce legislation for economic development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry on Monday said that the government would introduce legislation for the betterment of economy, political stability and eradication of terrorism.

Talking to the media, he said that despite preparations for six months the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) could manage to hold just a small show near Sangiani on Sunday. The people had rejected the party as evident from the fact that it had failed to fill the small ground.

The nation, in fact, want-

ed accountability of the PTI leadership for May 9 riots, besides corruption scams of 190 million pounds, Toshakhana, tsunami tree programme and the Peshawar Metro, he added.

Senator Talal said that the PTI leaders were doing politics of protests, sit-ins and violence. Its activists attacked the personnel of Islamabad Police on Sunday night and they would have to face legal action on that count.

He claimed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur only knew to play gimmicks and over-

play serious issues, and condemned him for using derogatory language in his speech at the Sangiani meeting.

Talal alleged that the KP government used public money and machinery for the PTI meeting instead of using the same for the uplift of the deprived people of province. He said the PTI leaders would have to face the consequences for violation of the law.

The government, he said, would not allow anyone to create chaos and hurl threats to the national institutions in the name of so-called peaceful protest.

Commerce Ministry to hire company for branding Pakistani products abroad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday informed the National Assembly that the ministry was in final stage to hire a company for branding and promotion of various Pakistani products abroad especially at various new markets under commerce marketing and branding mechanism.

Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said that around 20 foreign chefs who participated at the food exhibition recently held at Karachi, also appreciated promotion of Pakistani mangoes. He said this year mangoes' export not only witnessed sharp increase but there also were visible difference in its value addition.

He said during the current year, Pakistani mangoes were marketed across the world as a mangoes' diplomacy. For the first time, all Pakistani missions organized special one or two-day events featuring mangoes diplomacy, he said and added that 100-300 people including ambassadors were invited to these events for promotion of Pakistani mangoes and products prepared from it.

However, he said that American and European countries have some certain quality compliance requirement process as these were included in per-

ishable items, he added.

Regarding date, Jam Kamal said that Pakistan has huge potential of various varieties of date at Khairpur and some other areas including Balochistan. Soon after, assuming a charge of the Ministry of Commerce, a plan has been chalked out by the Horticulture Department in order to reach out to the farmers so value additions of various products including date besides international compliances could be enhanced.

The minister said that the Trade Development Authority did remarkable job in last 8-9 months especially in agricultural sector under trade diplomacy. The commerce ministry organized a food exhibition at Karachi in which over 850 delegates participated. Some 150 delegates were from European countries, China, South America, German and Africa, he added.

Jam Kamal said around 6000 business to business (B2B) agreements were signed during the exhibition. Pakistan exports to Germany were around \$ 2 billion plus and import stood around \$ 700 million, he added. He said we have taken various initiatives to further enhance our trade with Germany and German Trade Minister also visited Pakistan.

Trade Development

Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) regularly participates in various exhibitions and during FY 2023-24 eleven trade fairs were successfully organized in Germany, he added.

The minister said TDAP has planned nine international exhibitions and two outgoing delegations for Germany for B2B engagements. TDAP regularly conducts the series of webinars and seminars for market awareness. German trade delegations have also participated in TEXPO, FoodAg and Engineering and Healthcare exhibitions in Pakistan.

He said B2B meetings were arranged between German International Chamber and Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Responding to GSP plus status, he said Secretariat of National Compliance Centre would soon be functional which would help cope with the emerging challenges especially to textile sector.

He said a concept of National Compliance Centre mechanism was developed to address reservations of European Parliament regarding human rights, right to information and other international compliance etc.

He said the ministry was engaged with all stakeholders including provinces and we were all on the same page.



ISLAMABAD: Scavengers collect recyclables from a garage dump near the Fruits and Vegetables market. —APP Photo

Muqam holds meeting with NGOs working for welfare of refugee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr Amir Muqam on Monday held meeting with representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working for the welfare of Afghan Refugees.

Chairing meeting, he said that today's meeting was aimed to strengthen working coordination between Ministry and Non-Governmental Organizations, said a press release. "Our priority must be to provide assistance and help to maximum people," he said.

The minister said that NGOs should keep in mind the requirements of the present day and concentrate on the implementation of projects. He said that the ministry would also provide all possible assistance and coordination.

The Federal Minister also said that in order to extend assistance to maximum needy people NGOs should identify the issues

currently faced and utilize the funds accordingly.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, States and Frontier Regions Zafar Hassan, Joint Secretary SAFRON Agha Waseem Ahmad and Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees Abbas Khan.

The representatives of NGOs briefed in details Federal Minister about their respective fields of working including livelihood improvement and vocational skills Training projects for Afghan Refugees and support for income generation activities, GBV, WASH, Psychosocial Support, education, and health for refugees.

They highlighted the role of NGOs in national development and humanitarian response in Pakistan. Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam appreciated the briefing given by representatives NGOs about their respective areas of working.

Muqam condemn CM KP statement about national institutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam here on Monday strongly condemned the statement of Chief Minister of Khyber Pukhtunkhaw Ali Amin Khan Gandapur about the top brass of Pakistan Muslim League as well as National Institutions.

Addressing a joint press conference with Info Minister, Amir Muqam said that CM KP badly failed to show his provincial government performance instead of that criticizing the performance of federal regime and Punjab government. The minister highlighted that CM KP used a derogatory language about the CM Punjab Marium Nawaz which was very shameful act as public had rejected the yesterday power show of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI).

Muqam underlined that Pakhtoon have a good norms, culture and respect of women in their customs but CM KP had violated all custom using the negative remarks about the females in the public gathering. It was a very alarming situation as the government of PTI in KPK using all the resources of the government for vested interest and party promotion campaign.

Muqam blamed that PTI did massive used rescue vehicles, ambulances, government funds for yesterday PTI public gathering and forced the government employees of the province to attend the public gathering otherwise they will be fired.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr Amir Muqam chairs a meeting of representatives of different NGOs. —APP Photo

Anti-polio campaign starts to vaccinate 7,86000 children

RAWALPINDI (APP): The 7th anti-polio campaign begins in Rawalpindi with a target population of 7,86,000. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Engr Amir Khattak inaugurated the anti-polio campaign by administering immunization shots to young children here on Monday.

According to the details, 245 UCMOs and 870 area in-charges have been appointed across the district for the campaign. There are 3675

mobile teams, 330 fixed points and 163 transit points established in the entire district to achieve the target.

During the five day campaign in Lahore Rawalpindi and Faisalabad and 7 days in other 12 districts of Punjab, 13.9 million children of age less than or equal to 5 years will be vaccinated including in Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Chakwal, Attock, Okara, Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, Multan, Bahawalpur,

Bahawalnagar, Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rahim Yar Khan, and Rajanpur. On the first day, 01 lakh 60 thousand children in Rawalpindi district are given polio vaccine.

Talking on the occasion the commissioner said that the districts have been selected on the basis of the degree of spread of polio cases. He said that polio eradication is the top priority of the government for which the micro plan has

been restructured. "Special monitoring teams have also been formed to ensure the quality of the anti-polio campaign", he said.

He urged the parents to cooperate with polio workers to secure the future of their children. Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema, the Director of Health, the Coordinator World Health Organization, and other relevant officers were also present at the inaugural event.

Police nab 3 dacoits

ISLAMABAD (APP): The investigators of the Homicide Investigation Unit (HIU) of Police Station Shams Colony on Monday have successfully solved a shopkeeper's murder case by arresting three dacoits.

According to Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police spokesperson, following the special directions of Inspector General (IG) of Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the HIU police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending three wanted members of a snatcher gang. He said the HIU arrested three suspects in connection with the murder of a shopkeeper brutally killed during a robbery in Shams Colony on resistance. The accused were identified as Usman Ali, Samar and Gul Rehman, he added.

HIU recovered snatched cash, documents, motorbike and weapons used in crime from their possession, he said. During the preliminary interrogation, the accused confessed to being involved in numerous snatching activities in the premises of Shams Colony police stations, spokesperson said and added several cases have been filed against the suspects at Shams Colony Police Station.

BISP to empower adolescent girls through SOPRAN project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) held its first National Steering Committee meeting on the Adolescent Girls' Nutrition project on Monday.

The meeting, presided over by Director General BISP (NSER/CCT), Naveed Akbar, was organized to discuss the SOPRAN project, which leverages social protection initiatives to improve adolescent girls' nutrition and empowers them as change agents in their communities.

The key stakeholders present included representatives from GIZ, Nutrition International, CERP, provincial Departments of Education, Health, and Food Authorities, along with other national and international partners.

In his opening remarks, Naveed Akbar emphasized the critical importance of addressing the widespread malnutrition among adolescent girls in Pakistan. With over 50 percent of girls affected by anemia and a significant portion suffering from other micronutrient deficiencies, this initiative is timely and essential.

The DG highlighted the project's focus on integrating nutrition into social protection, such as the provision of iron-folic acid supplements, and the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in

health, education, and social protection for its successful implementation.

The SOPRAN project, spanning seven districts including Faisalabad, Swat, Shaheed Benazirabad, Quetta, Kotli, Skardu, and Islamabad aims to provide comprehensive nutrition education, access to fortified foods, and community-driven behavior change initiatives.

This approach will enable adolescent girls to become pivotal agents of change in their families, contributing to improved family nutrition through enhanced knowledge, dietary practices, and inter-generational dialogue.

Dr. Franz von Roenne from GIZ and other key partners shared detailed project objectives, including the distribution of iron and folic acid supplements, the fortification of wheat flour, and capacity building for local actors involved in health, education, and nutrition.

The discussions also explored ways to integrate food supplements into local food systems sustainably.

In his concluding remarks, Naveed Akbar stressed the importance of ongoing collaboration and the need for provincial and district-level coordination to ensure the project's success. He called for the nomination of focal persons from all relevant departments to ensure seamless communication

and implementation of the project phases.

The meeting concluded with a call to action, emphasizing the need for continued efforts to improve adolescent girls' nutrition and to foster their roles as agents of change in their communities.

Chairperson BISP conducts E-Katcheri session to address beneficiaries' concerns: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid conducted a live E-Katcheri session at BISP Headquarters on Monday to listen to the concerns of beneficiaries.

During the session, Senator Rubina Khalid directly interacted with beneficiaries via BISP's official Facebook account, listening to their concerns and issuing immediate directives for the resolution of their complaints. Over the course of the one-hour live session, 34 people from across the country called in.

The callers asked questions related to their enrollment in the Benazir Income Support Programme, eligibility criteria, and stipend information for the Benazir Kafaalat, Taleemi Wazaif, and Nashonuma programmes. Senator Rubina Khalid addressed their queries in real time and instructed officers to resolve the issues on an urgent basis.

15,000 tons cotton exported

KABUL (BNA): Haji Din Mohammad Ahmadzai, Head of the Northern Cotton Traders Union, has announced the export of 15,000 tons of cotton to foreign markets. Speaking to the Bakhtar News Agency, Ahmadzai stated that most of this cotton was exported from Balkh province to Pakistan and China over the past year. He urged the farmers in Balkh to collect cotton in fabric sacks to prevent quality degradation.

Artifacts handed over

KABUL (BNA): Directorate of Information and Culture in Paktia has officially received 33 historical artifacts recently discovered and transferred them to National Museum. Mawlawi Sawab Jan Islam Yar, head of the Directorate of Information and Culture informed that the artifacts include coins, small pottery items, and statues. The transfer was conducted in the presence of several government officials, emphasizing the cultural significance of these artifacts.

OIC, Turkey discuss Afghan support

KABUL (TOLONews): The special representative of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) Secretary General to Afghanistan, Ambassador Tariq Ali Bakhit, met with Turkey's Deputy Foreign Minister and Director General for South Asia to discuss the situation in Afghanistan.

According to the organization's statement, both sides emphasized their support for the Afghan people and discussed the Doha process on Afghanistan, constructive talks with the interim government officials regarding girls' education, women's rights, counter-terrorism efforts, and humanitarian issues.

The OIC statement said: "Both discussed the UN's

Doha Process on Afghanistan and efforts of the OIC and the Republic of Türkiye to support the Afghan people and pursue constructive dialogue with the de facto authorities on various issues, including girls' education, women's rights, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian aspects."

Tariq Ali Bakhit also mentioned in the meeting that the OIC is working in accordance with the decisions of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation regarding Afghanistan.

But what has been the role of the OIC in addressing Afghanistan's issues so far?

Moeen Gul Samkani, a political analyst said: "The

OIC group, which includes Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Turkey, can initially establish stability among themselves and eventually lead to a meeting."

Fazlur Rahman Oria, another political affairs expert, said: "The challenges Afghanistan faces, especially sanctions and many other problems, have seen the OIC's role as minimal and relatively insignificant in resolving these issues."

Previously, the acting Foreign Minister, in the 50th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, said that Afghanistan has been the target of a propaganda war and biased reports.

Afghan national executed in Iran

KABUL (Khaama Press): The human rights organization Haal-Vash has reported that six prisoners, including an Afghan national, were executed by the Islamic Republic at the central prison in Zahedan.

In a statement released on Monday, September 9, the organization confirmed that the execution of these six individuals, including the Afghan citizen, took place at the central prison in Zahedan.

According to the human rights organization, the Afghan national was identified as Noor Mohammad Noori, who was executed on charges related to drug offenses. He was from Nimroz province and had been detained in 2020 for drug-related crimes.

The organization identified three other individuals executed as Saeed Hosseini, Farzad Sanjooli, and a person with the last name "Rooidini."

The increase in executions in Iran, including those of Afghan citizens, has become a significant concern among human rights organizations. Previously, UN human rights experts had warned about a dramatic rise in executions in Iran, noting that 400 people, including 15 women, have been executed this year alone.

Reports indicate that 11 Afghan nationals were executed last month in Iran on drug-related charges. Human rights organizations continue to call for a halt to the death penalty for all condemned individuals in Iran.

HRC session to begin with focus on Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Acting Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) has announced the start of the 57th council session in Geneva, emphasizing that the human rights situation in Afghanistan will be a key topic of discussion.

In a video posted on X, Nasir Ahmad Andisha explained that the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council began today, September 9, and will continue for the next two days.

He noted that examining the human rights situation in Afghanistan will be one of the main subjects of this session, and the mandate of Richard Bennett, the United Nations Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur, will be extended during the meeting.

Mr. Andisha also mentioned that Volker Turk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, will present his report on human rights violations.

The ongoing session underscores the international community's continued focus on Afghanistan's human rights issues.

Afghanistan, Turkmenistan to expand fiber optic ties

KABUL (TOLONews): Najibullah Haqqani, the Acting Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology, has emphasized the expansion of fiber optic networks in the country.

In a meeting with the Turkmenistan ambassador in Kabul, Haqqani described Ashgabat's relations with Afghanistan as friendly and emphasized the need for cooperation between the two countries in the stable economic sector.

According to Enayatullah Alkozai, the spokesperson for the ministry, the Turkmenistan ambassador also assured the caretaker government of bilateral cooperation in the expansion of fiber optics and cybersecurity during this meeting.

The spokesperson of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology said that Khawaja Awadov, Turkmenistan's ambassador in Kabul, discussed with the acting minister how the project in Afghanistan can



be completed more effectively and successfully. They also discussed future legal issues arising from the expansion of fiber optics and cybersecurity. Some economic experts consider Afghanistan's connection via fiber optics to be beneficial in reducing internet costs and improving its quality. Abdul Nasir Rishitya, an

economic affairs expert, said: "I think if we can connect through fiber optics, both the prices will decrease, and the quality of the internet will increase. When the TAPI project moves forward, the railway line, fiber optic line, and energy will also advance."

Mir Shakib Mir, another economic expert, said: "With advanced fiber optic

infrastructure, Afghanistan's access to digital services such as e-commerce, e-banking, and online education will increase."

Officials at Ministry of Communications and Information Technology also said that the expansion of fiber optics in Afghanistan will lead to a reduction in internet costs and an improvement in its quality nationwide.

WHO donates 20 tons of medicine to Afghanistan



KABUL (Khaama Press): The World Health Organization (WHO) has announced the delivery of approximately 20 metric tons of medicines and medical equipment to health centers in five northern provinces of Afghanistan.

In a statement, the WHO reported on its X page that the medical supplies include pneumonia, measles, and cholera virus kits and surgical and dressing sets.

According to the WHO, these supplies will be distributed to 11 health centers

and 12 hospitals in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. The organization estimates that around 4,000 patients will benefit from these medical supplies and medicines.

Previously, the WHO had also reported sending eight tons of medicine to a hospital in Badakhshan province. With these latest aid shipments, the WHO aims to provide medical services to over 30,000 people over the next three

months. The WHO's continued support highlights the urgent need for medical aid in Afghanistan. The healthcare system has faced significant challenges due to reduced funding and disruptions in aid over the past three years.

These efforts are crucial in addressing the ongoing shortages of medicine and medical equipment and ensuring that vulnerable populations receive the care they need.

Authorities blame UNESCO

GHOR (Khaama Press): The Deputy Minister of Information and Culture of Taliban, Atiqullah Azizi, has stated that international organizations, particularly UNESCO, have failed to protect the Minaret of Jam.

Azizi mentioned that the historic minaret, which recent devastating floods have not damaged, remains at risk from natural disasters.

Reports indicate that Azizi criticized international cultural organizations for not fulfilling their duties in safeguarding this ancient monument during his visit

to Ghor. Azizi traveled to Shahrak District in Ghor with a technical team to assess potential damage and risks to the Minaret of Jam. The Taliban Prime Minister has assigned a delegation led by the Ministry of Information and Culture to find solutions for strengthening and protecting the minaret.

The Minaret of Jam is one of Afghanistan's most significant historical landmarks. It was built around 1194 AD by Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad Ghuri of the Ghurid dynasty. It is

considered a masterpiece of Ghurid Islamic architecture but has been at risk in recent years due to changes in river paths and inadequate maintenance.

The recent criticism highlights the urgent need for international support and action to preserve the Minaret of Jam, a key piece of Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

Ensuring its protection and maintenance is crucial not only for preserving its historical value but also for safeguarding the broader cultural legacy of the region.

Azizi calls for urgent preservation measures of Minaret of Jam

KABUL (BNA): Mawlawi Atiqullah Azizi, Deputy Minister of Culture and Art at the Ministry of Information and Culture, visited the historic Minaret of Jam in the Shahrak district of Ghor province during his recent tour of the region.

According to a statement from BNA, Mawlawi Azizi noted that while recent floods in the Jam River have not caused any apparent damage to the ancient minaret, there remains a significant risk from future floods and natural disasters.

Key areas of concern were identified, and immediate measures are planned to address them.

He further explained that, following directives from the Office of the Prime Minister, a joint technical team led by the Ministry of Information and Culture and involving several other ministries has been formed to develop and implement a comprehensive, long-term plan for the stabilization and preservation of the minaret.



Dismissing rumors about the minaret's structural instability as unfounded, Mawlawi Azizi assured that the monument remains upright and intact.

He also criticized international cultural organizations, particularly UNESCO, for not adequately fulfill-

ing their responsibilities regarding the foundational preservation of the Minaret of Jam in recent years. He expressed hope that these organizations would take tangible actions in the future, emphasizing that their commitments should go beyond mere rhetoric.

Women-only café in Herat offers serene environment



HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): A female entrepreneur in western Herat province has invested 1.5 million afghanis to open a café exclusively for women.

The cafe, named "Café Latte," offers not only food and beverages, but also a serene environment for women to study and exchange ideas.

Despite the overall decline in women's employment following the political changes and re-establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan over the

past three years, statistics show an increase in women turning to small businesses in Herat province.

Marjan Azizi, the founder of Café Latte, shared with Pajhwok Afghan News that she created this café to inspire and provide a supportive work environment for women. Initially starting with a modest setup, the positive reception from female customers led her to expand the business.

Azizi noted that her café, which has been open for

several months, attracts numerous women daily. It offers a range of services, including food, coffee, and access to books in a calm, female-focused setting.

She has invested nearly 1.5 million afghanis in the café and has employed seven women, contributing to local employment.

Azizi emphasized the importance of adhering to government regulations, which has enabled her to successfully establish and operate her business.

She also highlighted the need for continued security and peace to attract both domestic and international customers.

The establishment of this women-only café has been well-received by the local community.

Sara Sadat, a customer, praised the café for its comfort and the absence of male patrons, which she feels enhances the experience for women.

Hasiba Barakzai, another customer, expressed her appreciation for the café, noting that it provides a great space for reading and socializing with friends. She also commended the reasonable prices of the food and drinks.

Officials from the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Investment in the western zone of the country also welcomed the café, noting that it provides a comfortable space for women to dine and study.

Behnaz Saljoqi, head of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Investment in the Western Zone, stated, "We had not invested in the café sector until women managed it. Thankfully, following the success of Café Latte, another women-run café is set to open soon."

Saljoqi added in these cafés offered women served women, enhancing the overall experience.

Khost youth imparts education to dozens of poor children

KHOST CITY (Pajhwok): Dozens of children, including girls, from destitute families and orphans have been provided education opportunity by a volunteer in southeastern Khost province.

The less fortunate and orphaned children belong to internally displaced people (IDPs) from different areas of the province in Farar area of the provincial capital, Khost City. The volunteer youth Abdul Malik Jawhar told Pajhwok Afghan News that he has been teaching these children in morning and afternoon shifts in his house since last two months.

Jawhar said: "These children work labourer during day time and their number exceeds 50, half of

them are girls and we teach them some basics of education such as alphabets, Islamic studies and some other subjects to know their rights and the God almighty."

"As a youth, I consider it my responsibility to convey my education to the next generation," he said. He called on governmental and non-governmental institutions to help him in his mission.

Jawhar added: "Right now the process of children's education runs on our own support and with some assistance of other individuals, we buy stationery and books, the children are in dire economic situation, they cannot support themselves and we even do their hair cut."

The children expressed

their pleasure for being taught and one of them Ehsan, 9, told Pajhwok: "I have been studying here since past two months, I am happy and I can write mine and my father's names in both Pashto and English."

Khkula, an 8 years old girl, said she wanted to become a doctress in the future. She said: "I study here and I want to be a doctress in the future and learn ethics too."

However, local residents say such attempts by the youth do not go in vain, but children of hundreds of families are deprived of education facilities.

A local individual Mohammad Shareef said: "No doubt, these children will learn something and it will leave a positive impact on their future. We hope

that the government or other humanitarian organizations will build a school for these boys and girls."

Local education department officials admit there are 452 local literacy classes in the provincial capital and its districts and nearly 7,000 students are studying in these local classes.

The officials add they plan to set up more community-based classes in areas deprived from such facilities.

Spokesman for Khost education department Qasim Jan Qasimi told Pajhwok: "The education department targeted some deprived areas in a survey, we hope such areas will be included in the framework of the Education Ministry."

Sunday, September 8, marked global literacy day.

Disappearance of four brothers PHC CJ transfer case to court after involvement of cop

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court ordered investigation officer to include Station House Officer Hayatabad into the recovery of four enforced disappeared brothers from Hayatabad, on Monday.

During the hearing of the case, Justice Ijaz Anwar remarked that there is no independent institution in the country, National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has closed its eyes, and the police should be made independent. If the police are not independent, the situation will not improve. Give police the authority so that they do not follow anyone's instructions.

The case has been ongoing for over three months, but the investigation has not been completed yet. The court had ordered the police to recover the missing persons and present them before the court, but the police failed to do so. Therefore, a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) was formed, but the missing persons have not been recovered yet.

The lawyer for the petitioner told the court that six months ago, four brothers, Usman Khan Alkuzai, Muhammad Nasser, Abdul Waris, and Zahoor Shah Alkuzai, were taken from their home in Hayatabad by armed men. Despite the passage of time, it is not known who took them. The court had ordered the police to investigate and recover the missing persons, but the police failed to do so.

Justice Ijaz Anwar said that the country has no independent institutions, and NADRA has closed its eyes. The Chief Justice transferred the case to another court after identifying a police officer involved in the kidnapping.

High Court grants transit bail to Jamshed Dasti till 30th

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim has granted transit bail to Member National Assembly from Muzaffargarh named Jamshed Dasti and a member of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) till 30th September directed him to appear before the relevant courts, on Monday.

Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim of the Peshawar High Court heard three separate protective bail applications filed by Jamshed Dasti. During the hearing, the lawyer for the petitioner, Ali Zaman Advocate, appeared before the court. The counsel told the court that petitioner is a member of the PTI and that the Punjab government has registered three different FIRs against him, including sections related to terrorism. He informed the court that one FIR was registered in DG Khan, one in Rahim Yar Khan, and one in Muzaffargarh, alleging that Jamshed Dasti had committed various crimes on different occasions. The Rahim Yar Khan FIR also includes a section related to terrorism.

The lawyer argued that Jamshed Dasti is a peaceful citizen and has the trust of the people, as he was recently elected as a member of the National Assembly. However, the Punjab government is targeting him for political revenge and has registered three cases against him. On the previous day, he was attending a meeting at the Chief Minister's House in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when he was informed that three FIRs had been registered against him. He then approached the Peshawar High Court for relief. The lawyer told the court that the three FIRs were registered at different locations, and the petitioner needs time to present himself before the courts. The court accepted his request and granted protective bail till 30th September.

Justice Ijaz Anwar said that the police should be made independent so that they do not follow anyone's instructions.

The Additional Attorney General told the court that one of the Alkuzai brothers is involved in the kidnapping and should be arrested. The petitioner's lawyer told the court that the SHO Hayatabad police station where the incident occurred has not been included in the investigation by the JIT.

Justice Ijaz Anwar asked the investigative officer if he had investigated the SHO, to which the officer replied that he had not. The petitioner's lawyer told the

court that the SHO's car can be seen in the CCTV footage, and Justice Ijaz Anwar ordered the investigative officer to provide the footage and include the SHO in the investigation.

The court ordered the SHO of Hayatabad police station to be included in the investigation and to double-check the identification of the accused, and adjourned the hearing of the case.

Moreover, Special Federal Secretary's Interior, Additional Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abid Majeed and Additional Advocate General along with Investigation Officer were present before PHC during the hearing.

State resources being used against PTI, says Shibli

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Senator Shibli Faraz has stated that all state resources are being used against PTI.

Speaking during a Senate session on Monday, the senator remarked that no matter how many figures are manipulated, inflation remains unchecked. "The country is heading towards institutional collapse, and the finance minister is left with no options," he claimed, adding that government members have turned the House into a chaotic market.

He noted that while PTI governed the country for three years, the current government has been in power for 40 years and has led the country to ruin. He told the members of the House don't pass the laws that you have to regret.

Karsaz accident driver denied bail in drug case

F.P. Report

KARACHI: A judicial magistrate on Monday denied post-arrest bail to Natasha Danish — the driver booked in the Karsaz accident — in a case filed against her by the police after her medical report showed she was under the influence of methamphetamine (crystal meth).

After being granted bail by the sessions court, the defence counsel and state prosecutor Muzafar Soomro appeared before Judicial Magistrate (East) Muhammad Raza Ansari to argue on a separate bail application filed in the drug case. The defence argued that the investigating officer had "manipulated the blood and urine samples" taken from his client.

The state prosecutor opposed the bail application and after hearing the arguments the court reserved its order. The order, given today by Judge Ansari, said that Danish's lawyer could not satisfy the court regarding section 11 (drinking liable to tazir) of the

Prohibition (Enforcement of Hadd) Order (PEHO) of 1979, adding that the claim of blood and urine samples being manipulated was false.

"There is nothing as such in the police's file," the court said. It said that the nine objections raised by the suspect's family had "no legal value", adding that it was surprising that a "highly educated woman" was driving under the influence. It observed that granting the suspect bail in the drug case would "have a negative impact on society". The order was subsequently challenged before the Additional District and Sessions Judge (East) Shahid Ali Memon.

Hafiz Naeem blames Sindh govt

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Monday slammed the Sindh government for continuously neglecting Karachi.

The JI emir made these remarks in a press conference in Karachi where he accused the Sindh government of extracting all resources from Karachi and giving nothing in return.

He criticised the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led provincial government for destroying Karachi to the hilt despite being in power for sixteen years, adding that the JI mandate was stolen in the local government elections. He said that the PPP government had not sublet the powers, adding that all those parties ruling in Karachi were responsible for its miserable situation.

Speaking about inflated power bills and discrimination meted out to smaller provinces in the electricity bills, the JI emir said that the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) brought the country on the cusp of danger, adding that former PM Nawaz Sharif announced reduction in power bills alongside his daughter as if he was giving it as a charity.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari interacting with ANP leader, Senator Aimal Wali Khan during a dinner hosted at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

GCC strengthens ties with Russia, India, Brazil at Riyadh summit

RIYADH: The 161st Ministerial Council meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council, chaired by Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani and attended by GCC ministers of foreign affairs, was held in Riyadh on Monday.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the GCC held three separate ministerial meetings with Russia, India and Brazil to open new horizons for cooperation. The seventh GCC-Russia strategic dialogue ministerial meeting was held with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, the GCC-India meeting with Indian Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and the GCC-Brazil meeting with Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed Elkhereiji attended all the meetings. GCC Secretary-General Jassem Albudaiwi underlined that the joint ministerial meetings aim to strengthen strategic relations with countries and organizations. Participants examined GCC-Russian relations and explored opportunities to strengthen and expand cooperation. They also discussed the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis and the international community's efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution and support initiatives aimed at ensuring global peace and security.

The meeting emphasized the need for increased coordination on regional and international issues, as well as the importance of multilateral cooperation and stronger economic collaboration to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals.

Albudaiwi underlined that the meeting is "a continuation of the considerable efforts made by both sides to strengthen friendly relations that fulfill their aspirations, particularly given that this dialogue serves as a permanent platform for discussion at the ministerial level, as it facilitates the exchange of views on key issues of mutual concern, including threats to regional and global security, as well as exploring ways to enhance cooperation in various fields to serve common interests."

He also reaffirmed the GCC's solidarity with the Palestinian people, demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire and an end to military operations by Israel's occupying forces, and stressing the importance of ensuring access to all humanitarian and relief aid and essential needs for the residents of Gaza, alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people. During the first GCC-India meeting, Albudaiwi said that the relations between the GCC countries and India are historical and deep rooted, extending over several centuries and built on foundations of mutual trust and fruitful cooperation, stating that these relations continuously witness significant developments, reflecting the strong will of both parties to enhance the partnership in various fields.

The meeting covered a range of topics, including the joint action plan and ways of bolstering cooperation between the GCC and India. Discussions also focused on reinforcing bilateral and multilateral coordination to enhance international security and peace. Albudaiwi said: "Today's meeting will contribute to strengthen the ties between us and

open new horizons for joint cooperation, as we stand before a great opportunity to enhance collaboration in the various areas addressed in the memorandum of understanding and to implement the joint action plan that has been reached between the GCC and India for the period (2024-2028)."

In his opening remarks, Jaishankar said: "Our meeting today is not just an occasion to reflect on our achievements but an opportunity to chart an ambitious and far-reaching course for the future. "The relationship between India and the GCC is rooted in a rich tapestry of history, culture, and shared values. These bonds have grown stronger with time, evolving into partnerships that span economics, energy, defense, technology, education, people-to-people ties, and beyond," the Indian minister said.

Jaishankar said that the framework to grow GCC-India cooperation details "the three Ps: people, prosperity, progress." He said that close to nine million Indians live and work in the GCC. "Our interactions are key to driving prosperity in the GCC and in India." The Indian minister also emphasized that the GCC is a cornerstone of energy supply. The meeting discussed several reports regarding the implementation of decisions made by the Supreme Council of the GCC during the 44th summit held in Doha in December 2023. The meeting also reviewed memoranda and reports submitted by the ministerial and technical committees and the GCC General Secretariat, as well as topics related to dialogues and strategic relations between GCC member states and various countries and global blocs. — Arab News

Bangladesh to extradite former PM from India

DHAKA: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) says it is taking steps to secure the extradition of ousted leader Sheikh Hasina from neighbouring India. The chief prosecutor of the body said that the legal process to bring Hasina back to Bangladesh, to face trial for the deadly violence waged by the authorities before she was unseated by mass protests in August, has started.

Following weeks of protests and a vicious crackdown by authorities, Hasina fled by a military helicopter on August 5 and landed at an airbase near New Delhi seeking refuge. Her presence in India has affected relations between Dhaka and New Delhi, and a diplomatic dispute is possible as Bangladesh moves to bring her back to face trial. Mohammad Tajul Islam, the ICT's chief prosecutor, said Hasina, accused of ruling the country with an iron fist during her 15-year reign, is being sought for her role in overseeing "massacres" during the uprising.

"As the main perpetrator has fled the country, we will start the legal procedure to bring her back," he told reporters. "Bangladesh has a criminal extradition treaty with India which was signed in 2013, while Sheikh Hasina's government was in power," Islam added. "As she has been made the main accused of the massacres in Bangladesh, we will try to legally bring her back to Bangladesh to face trial."

The ICT was set up by Hasina in 2010 to investigate atrocities during the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan. Accused of widespread human rights

abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killing of her political opponents, Hasina's government was brought down as weeks of student-led demonstrations escalated into mass protests. More than 600 people were killed in the weeks leading up to Hasina's ouster, according to a preliminary United Nations report, suggesting the death toll was "likely an underestimate".

Hasina, 76, has not been seen in public since fleeing. Dhaka has revoked her diplomatic passport. A clause in the extradition treaty between the two countries states that extradition might be refused if the offence has a "political character". However, Bangladeshi officials have made it clear that Dhaka will push hard to bring the deposed leader back to face justice. — Aljazeera

US, UK strike Houthi targets

AL-MUKALLA: US and UK jets struck Houthi targets in Yemen's western province of Hodeidah on Monday, the second wave of strikes on Houthi-held territory in less than 48 hours. The Houthi-run Al-Masirah channel reported that US and UK aircraft carried out one strike on the Al-Jabanah region of Hodeidah but provided no information on the targeted locations, casualties or damage.

The attack in Hodeidah came a day after the Houthis said that the two countries had conducted three airstrikes on unidentified targets in the Maytam region, north of Ibb province. At the same time, US Central Command said on Sunday evening that over the past 24 hours, its forces had destroyed three Houthi drones and two missile systems in a Houthi-controlled Yemeni area, all of which were threatening US-led coalition ships and commercial vessels in international shipping lanes.

Houthi attacks on ships led the US to form a coalition of marine task forces to defend vessels, designate the Houthis as a terrorist group and launch strikes against Houthi-controlled Yemen, including Sanaa, Saada, Ibb and Hodeidah, in collaboration with the UK. Hodeidah, Yemen's only major coastal city under Houthi control, has received most of the US and UK strikes since January, as the militia is said to have used its coasts to launch explosive-laden and remote-controlled boats to attack ships. The Houthis say their forces are only targeting Israeli-linked ships to pressure Tel Aviv into ending its Gaza war. Meanwhile, Yemen's government requested financial assistance from GCC countries on Monday to help shore up its faltering economy, stabilize the currency and pay public employees. — Arab News

Fuel tanker explosion in Nigeria kills 59

NIGER (AFP): A fuel tanker exploded after colliding with a truck carrying passengers and cattle in northern Nigeria, killing at least 59 people, a rescue agency said on Monday. Initially, 48 people were reported killed in the incident in north-central Nigeria on Sunday.

Photographs released by the Niger State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) showed workers burying more than a dozen blackened and charred bodies of victims from Sunday's early morning incident. Images showed burned-out shells of the vehicles, one still billowing with smoke and flames after the incident in Niger's Agaie local government district.

Ibrahim Hussein, the spokesman for the Niger SEMA, told AFP that the number of fatalities had risen to 59 on Monday from an earlier toll of 52 when more victims were discovered in the wreckage and one of the injured died. On Sunday, most of the victims were given a mass burial. "It is possible that more dead bodies could be discovered," Hussein said in a

text message.

The explosion happened after a petrol tanker loaded with PMS (fuel) collided with a trailer truck loaded with travellers and cattle, according to SEMA. Two other vehicles, a crane and a pickup truck, were also involved, it added, while more than 50 cattle were burnt alive. Niger State Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago expressed sadness over the "colossal" loss, urging local residents to remain calm.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's office said that the president had "directed relevant federal agencies in transportation and road infrastructure to redouble their efforts and work with state governments to enhance the safety and security of travellers and residents".

Fuel tanker explosions are common in Africa's most populous nation, where roads can be poorly maintained, and residents often look to siphon off fuel following accidents. According to the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), more than 5,000 people died in road accidents in Nigeria in 2023,

compared to nearly 6,500 the previous year.

However, according to the World Health Organisation, the figures do not take into account accidents not reported to the authorities. It estimates annual road accident deaths in Nigeria to be nearly 40,000, in a report published last year. Deadly fires and explosions also happen in the fuel and oil infrastructure in Nigeria, one of the continent's largest crude producers where petroleum theft is a major issue. Accidents involving tankers are frequent in the country, with the FRSC recording 1,531, causing 535 deaths, in 2020. Two years ago, around 110 people died when an illegal oil refinery exploded in southern Nigeria.

Nigeria recently faced serious fuel shortages after the National Petroleum Company Ltd (NNPCL) said it was struggling with debts to suppliers. A sudden increase in fuel prices by NNPCL last week has added to the financial burden for Nigerians already coping with a cost-of-living crisis.

Israeli attack kills 18 people in central Syria

GAZA: Israeli missiles have killed at least 18 people in central Syria, and dozens have been wounded, the health minister says. A military source told the state-controlled SANA news, the Israeli enemy launched an air aggression from the direction of northwestern Lebanon, targeting a number of military sites in the central region [of Syria].

"Our air defence systems confronted the aggression's missiles and shot down some of them," the source added, without providing further details. Speaking to reporters, Syrian Health Minister Hassan al-Ghabbash described the strikes as a "brutal and barbaric aggression". He said 18 people were killed and nearly 40 people were wounded. Minister of Electricity Mohammad al-Zamel said the strikes had also caused "truly significant" damage to water and

electricity infrastructure.

"This brutal attack targeted civilian targets, and the martyrs were mostly civilians as were the wounded," he said. The attack also sparked a fire and caused damage near the city of Masyaf in Hama province, according to SANA. Two regional intelligence sources said a major military research centre for chemical arms production located near Masyaf had been hit several times. Reuters reported. A team of Iranian military experts involved in weapons production was believed to be working at the site, the news agency added.

Local media also reported strikes around the coastal city of Tartous. On Monday afternoon, a charred car remained at the scene of one strike and smoke was still rising from some spots where fires had been put out. The Israeli military

commonly does not comment on its operations in Syria.

Israeli jets have often launched attacks against Syria from Lebanon, likely in a bid to avoid Syrian airspace, where multiple regional and international forces, including those of Russia and the United States, operate. Throughout Syria's 13-year war, Israel has regularly carried out air raids in the country, mostly targeting Iran-linked sites. Sunday's attack comes amid growing regional tensions with Iranian officials still pledging to respond to the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July.

Iran, which maintains a military presence in Syria, had promised "harsh punishment" for Israel, but no Iranian attack has materialised more than 40 days after the assassination. — Arab News