

Polio worker, cop shot dead
F.P. Report

KHAR: At least two people including a police constable, escorting anti-polio vaccination team and anti-polio worker were killed when unknown armed men fired at them in Salarzai area of Bajaur district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday. Police said the vaccination team, escorted by the police, was on duty in Salarzai area when armed men opened fire at them.

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Bilawal calls for focus on serving people

— Appeals National Assembly members to eliminate personal animosity among politicians

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in his address to the National Assembly on Wednesday, referred to the students seated in the galleries, stating that the future of the country is present in the Parliament today.

Bilawal said he reflected on what the youth might be thinking about the future of the country. He remarked that not many of them would aspire to become politicians. Being a member of the House is a matter of prestige and honour in any democratic country. Politics has become a curse, but it is the same politics that will bring employment to the youth, economic justice to the people, and govern the country. The country is currently facing multiple crises, but when today's children grow up, it will lead the region.

Bilawal stressed that without establishing the supremacy of the Constitution, no institution can function. The representatives of the House must maintain a working relationship. If the government is constantly engaged in firefighting, and the Opposition continues to curse, make hue and cry, and act below the belt, they cannot fulfill their duty of holding the government accountable. If they claim the government's economic or security policies are flawed, they must also propose solutions. Failure to fulfill their responsibilities means the Opposition will not achieve its own objectives. While it is expected for the Opposition to raise the matter of their imprisoned leaders, the more pressing issues for the people they govern include unemployment, inflation, education, health, and terrorism.

Bilawal recalled that during Imran Khan's tenure as Prime Minister, the PPP did not harbour any personal grudges against him. Their only concern was protecting the Constitution

Shehbaz, Bilawal political situation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan Peoples Party delegation, led by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, on Wednesday met Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the country's political situation.

During the meeting, PM Shehbaz highlighted that the PPP was a big coalition partner of the government which had consistently supported its initiatives for economic stability. The prime minister lauded Bilawal Bhutto for floating the idea of 'Charter of Parliament' as it would help promote democracy and supremacy of the Parliament. The PPP delegation members Syed Naveed Qamar and Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab also commended the government's policies to bring economic stability. Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Law and Justice Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, and Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan also attended the meeting.

and democracy, for which his family and party had sacrificed, and to solve the problems of the people. He mentioned that this was the reason for the signing of the Charter of Democracy between Shaheed Mohtama Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. Previously, the Election Commissioner was appointed by the government, but their amendments allowed the Opposition Leader to play a role in the process, as is the case with the appointment of the interim government.

While we have criticised the government's economic policies, the House should commend the reduction in inflation, and now everyone must contribute their input, Chairman PPP said. He further said that from 2008 to 2013, the government operated with consensus, engaging with the same Opposition responsible for keeping his father in jail for over a decade. They developed a revolutionary, consensus-based document that strengthened all constitutional institutions. A lobby exists against this consensus, seeking to undermine it to create more space for anti-democratic forces. One such effort took shape under Iftikhar Chaudhary, and another involved intelligence officers backing a political party, pushing the political sys-

tem to a point where even basic cooperation is elusive. This, Chairman Bilawal warned, is playing with the destinies of future generations.

Bilawal urged the Speaker to restore the functionality of the House, as a functional Parliament is essential for a functional country. He expressed disappointment regarding the resignation of a senior politician, particularly one who had played a significant role in the politics of Balochistan. "All it takes for evil to succeed is for good men to do nothing," Chairman Bilawal expressed over Mr. Mengal's decision to resign and emphasised the need for all members to take responsibility. He reminded the House that during the PDM government, he had advised against boycotting the assemblies. Now, both the Opposition and the country are suffering as a result.

Bilawal suggested the Speaker form a high-powered committee to help restore the functionality of the House. He reiterated that the responsibility of Parliament is not only to legislate but also to create a conducive environment. The cycle of political rallies against one another must end, and the focus should shift toward serving the people and safeguarding their rights.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

NEPRA notifies major increase in power tariff

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has notified a major increase in power tariff, across Pakistan, including Karachi.

According to NEPRA's notification, the price of electricity was increased by Rs. 1.74 per unit for the April-June quarterly adjustment. The notification stated that the additional revenue generated from the tariff increase will be collected over the next three months, from September to November. This major price hike will result in an additional burden of Rs. 43 billion and 23 crore on consumers, as per the notification.

Two killed in mortar blast

F.P. Report

WANA: In a tragic incident near the Pak-Afghan border in the Angoor Adda region, two laborers were martyred and eight others injured after a mortar shell struck their tent including a 22-year-old woman was injured, on Wednesday.

All the victims belonged to the same family from the Gangi Khel tribe. The deceased have been identified as Gul Zadin, son of Khana Din, and Khake Deen, son of Aamil Khan. Their bodies have been transported to their native village, Zam China, for burial.

The injured were immediately rushed to the District Headquarters Hospital for medical treatment. Officials reported that the group of laborers had set up temporary tents in the Zoba mountain range, where they were engaged in harvesting pine nuts.

The fatal incident occurred late last night when a mortar shell hit their tent, resulting in the loss of two lives and injuries to eight others, including Bibi Roya. The injured individuals, identified as Wali Muhammad, Aqal Muhammad, Muhammad Rasool, Sakhi Muhammad, Bakht Alam, Hakeem Muhammad, and Gul Muhammad, are said to be in stable condition according to hospital sources.

KP CM says two systems, two Pakistans cannot run

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has said that lawyers are an important section of the society who have the most important responsibility of providing justice and fairness, merit, justice and rule of law are indispensable for any human society because the same nations.

They develop where justice prevails. Any society is peaceful and contented when people are sure of justice. He expressed these views while addressing the Bar Associations function as a special guest on Wednesday. Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam, Speaker Provincial Assembly Babar Saleem Swati, members of Provincial Assembly and lawyers participated in the ceremony. Ali Amin Gandapur appealed to the lawyers' fraternity to support the right, not to defend any case against justice and merit because without the true rule of law we cannot move forward.

The Chief Minister fur-

ther said that due to the lack of a fair system of punishment in the country, the constitution has been repeatedly violated, which is a matter of concern for us as a nation. He clarified that the religion of Islam has given us a clear path and a plan of punishment and punishment, by following which a just society can be established. Our religion teaches us to speak the truth, stick to the truth and raise our voice against oppression. We have to rise above personal interests and political affiliations and continue to fight for justice and the rule of law.

The Chief Minister said that if we do not identify wrongdoings and wrong elements, how will the path of reform be paved. He said that two laws, two systems and two Pakistans cannot run. If we really want to put the nation on the path of development and want a prosperous and peaceful society, then it is necessary that there should be the same law and a system for all, with no room for per-

sonal vendettas and likes and dislikes. Not present.

The Chief Minister said that we have to end this series and start from ourselves and take this country forward. The Chief Minister clarified that he has always spoken of truth, justice and justice and discouraged the use of institutions for personal vendetta. We have proved this by our actions and after coming to the government in the province, we did not take revenge from anyone nor did we use the provincial institutions for personal revenge.

The Chief Minister further clarified that we do not want to create hatred as it harms the country. However, we will not give up on speaking for our right, justice and true freedom, the constitution allows us to defend our rights. Ali Amin Gandapur said that if we want to get the nation out of the current crisis and put it on the path of development, then we have to make a decision and redefine the priorities.

Fazl stands firm despite govt's 'sweet-talk'

ISLAMABAD: Amid government efforts to muster support of its allies and disgruntled partners ahead of potential judiciary-centric legislation, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has stated that he will not support any legislation contradictory to Constitution and remain part of the opposition.

"I am and will remain part of the opposition," the veteran politician said during a meeting with former senator Muhammad Ali Durrani, who called on him at his residence in Islamabad. His remarks came days after the veteran politician apparently lowered his rhetoric against the coalition government led by the PML-N after months after accusing it of coming to power via rigging in the February 8 elections.

Addressing the National Assembly session last

week, Fazl had said that they had to accept the present "Form 45 or 47" parliament — reference to the alleged manipulation in the election results — and use it to address all the national issues. Fazl's statement received scathing criticism from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) who termed it an act of legitimising the current regime amid parliamentary cooperation agreement among the two parties.

Sources told media that Muhammad Ali Durrani held a lengthy meeting with JUI-F chief at the latter's residence on the night between Tuesday and Wednesday. During the meeting, both politicians discussed ongoing political issues and future course of action, the insiders added. Durrani also took Fazl into confidence over his political interactions.

Speaking on the occasion, the JUI-F chief claimed that the incumbent rulers would not be able to gain support for a legislation "that contradicts the Constitution of Pakistan and democracy." Furthermore, he said, the government's existence and its actions were contradictory to the interests of the people. "Supporting such a government is tantamount to make the people angry."

"We want to come into power only with the votes of the people of Pakistan," Fazl said, reiterating that they will not allow anyone to steal their mandate once again. Durrani, while responding to JUI-F chief's remarks, said that he was "standing on the right side of history", adding that Maulana has always remained "faithful" to political traditions and democratic values. — Agencies

PM pays tribute to Kulsoom

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday paid tribute to Kulsoom Nawaz, the former first lady and wife of Pakistan Muslim League-N President Nawaz Sharif, for her services to the country and democracy.

The prime minister, in a statement on her sixth death anniversary, said the whole family could not yet grasp the grief of the passing of Kulsoom Nawaz. Remembering her as the "mother of democracy", he said that as a wife, mother, sister and political leader, the late Kulsoom Nawaz set an unforgettable example of courage and steadfastness and acted as a shield for Nawaz Sharif.

She said that the late first lady's memorable movement against the dictatorship was a bright chapter of Pakistan's political history. "Love and devotion to Islam, the Holy Quran and Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) remained the norm of Kulsoom Nawaz's life.

No member arrested within premises of Parliament: Tarar

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, said on Wednesday that CCTV footage confirmed that no member of Parliament was arrested within its premises.

Responding to a point raised by PTI's Ali Muhammad Khan, he said, that all records related to the arrest were available in the Speaker's chamber. He said that the arrests took place outside the Parliament building. He said that the entire house stood in support of the Speaker and said no one had asked him to refrain from engaging opposition members.

The minister invited opposition members to examine the footage present in the Speaker's chamber and expressed disappointment that PTI members lacked the courage to listen and engage in meaningful dialogue. He reiterated that constructive conversation remains the key to

resolving political issues.

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar also suggested the formation of a special parliamentary committee, including members from the opposition, to raise awareness and tackle the implementation issues surrounding women's inheritance rights.

Responding to a calling attention notice about the non-enforcement of court orders concerning women's legal share of inheritance in the Islamabad Capital Territory, he urged the chair to notify a committee comprising members from both the Senate and National Assembly. He fully supported Nafeesa Shah's suggestion to include Senate members in the committee and requested that the process be expedited.

The minister said, that his ministry will launch awareness campaigns to educate the public in this regard. He said that Islam mandated inheritance rights

for women. He said that officials from National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and the Revenue Board would also be invited to participate in the committee's discussions.

He said that dowry has no place in Islam or inheritance law, and pointed out the need to change societal mindsets that deprive women of their legal inheritance rights. "It is unfortunate that women continue to be denied their rightful inheritance. To change this mindset, we must address the cultural barriers," Tarar said. "We must accept that women deserve their rightful inheritance. When this house raises its voice, the mindset will change."

He highlighted recent reforms that allow the NADRA to issue succession certificates, simplifying the inheritance process with only four key documents: a Family Registration Certificate (FRC), a death certificate, a succession certificate, and an affidavit.

Pentagon: US relies on 'over the horizon' strategy for Pakistan-Afghanistan terror threats

F.P. Report

WASHINGTON DC: During Pentagon briefing, General Patrick Ryder, the spokesperson for the US Department of Defense, responded to a pointed question by this correspondent of The Frontier Post highlighting remarks made by Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir, who urged the Taliban leadership not to support the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The question also referenced comments from Pakistan's current Deputy Prime Minister, Ishaq Dar, who criticized former ISI Chief General Faiz Hamid's presence in Kabul during the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, attributing this to political point-scoring against former Prime Minister Imran Khan and confusing the sensitive issue of terrorism.

General Ryder, in his response, underscored the US confidence in its "Over The Horizon" (OTH) capabilities to safeguard American interests in the region. He reiterated that the US remains vigilant about the evolu-

ing threat landscape in Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly with the resurgence of terrorist activities. General Ryder emphasized that the US is closely monitoring the situation, maintaining its readiness to act against any threats to its national security.

The correspondent's question brought to light the complex and often convoluted interplay of military, political, and intelligence dynamics in Pakistan. Army Chief General Asim Munir's call to the Taliban not to harbor the TTP reflects Pakistan's internal struggle with terrorism and the need to secure its borders against extremist threats. Meanwhile, Ishaq kDar's comments about General Faiz Hamid's presence in Kabul seem more driven by political rivalry than genuine security concerns. Dar's statement appeared to be an attempt to score points against Imran Khan, without acknowledging the broader strategic realities at play.

(Continued on Back Page)

FP questions Pentagon on Kabul withdrawal, calls for fresh probe

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: In a pointed exchange during a Pentagon press briefing, this correspondent of The Frontier Post challenged Pentagon Press Secretary General Patrick Ryder on key issues surrounding the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, particularly in light of the recently released report by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Congressman Michael McCaul.

The Frontier Post raised critical questions about the timing and decisions made by the State Department and US military leadership during the chaotic exit from Afghanistan in August 2021.

The Frontier Post emphasized that the timeline of diplomatic representation in Afghanistan was crucial to understanding the failures of the withdrawal. The last US Ambassador to Afghanistan, John Bass, served until January 2021, after which Charge d'Affaires Ross Wilson assumed the role of acting ambassador. No new ambassador was appointed by the State Department from January to August 2021, a period during which significant developments were unfolding in Afghanistan. The lack of a permanent diplomatic presence during these crucial months raised questions about the

US government's preparedness and coordination leading up to the withdrawal.

Further compounding the issue, The Frontier Post highlighted that the US embassy in Kabul officially closed on August 15, 2021, the same day the Taliban seized control of the Afghan capital. However, US servicemen remained in Kabul until August 26, 2021, when a deadly attack at Hamid Karzai International Airport claimed the lives of 13 US Marines and many Afghan civilians. This correspondent questioned why US military personnel were left vulnerable for 11 days after the diplomatic mission had ceased operations, suggesting a disparity in the prioritization of US diplomats' safety over that of military personnel.

During the briefing, The Frontier Post directly asked General Ryder whether the life of a US diplomat was considered more important than that of a US soldier, given the circumstances that unfolded in Kabul. General Ryder firmly responded that the US military values the lives of all US personnel equally, whether they are soldiers or government officials. He reiterated that a thorough investigation into the airport attack was conducted by US Central Command (CENTCOM), concluding that no further inquiry was warranted.

Iran gives Russia missiles in exchange for nuclear and space support: Pentagon

F.P. Report

WASHINGTON DC: At a press briefing today, Pentagon Press Secretary General Patrick Ryder revealed that Iran has recently supplied Russia with missiles possessing a range of 70 miles.

According to General Ryder, this development marks a significant deepening of military collaboration between the two nations, with Russia expected to assist Iran in advancing its nuclear technology and space capabilities in return. Although General Ryder refrained from delving into intelligence specifics regarding the methods of shipment or the exact number of missiles provided, he emphasized that these weapons are likely intended for use against Ukraine, raising serious concerns about the ongoing conflict.

This transfer of missiles highlights the increasingly complex web of international alliances influencing the war in Ukraine. The involvement of external players such as Iran suggests that the conflict is not only a battlefield struggle but also a geopolitical chess game with far-reaching implications. Analysts are divided on the broader impact of these developments. Some argue that the war has evolved into a strategic effort to inflict maximum financial damage on opposing nations, reflecting a shift from conventional military objectives to economic attrition. In contrast, others point to the thriving global defense industry, which has seen a surge in demand and profitability amid these prolonged conflicts.

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KARACHI: An illuminated view of a mosque located in Karachi named Kinzul Eman, decorated with colorful lights in connection with upcoming Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations. —INP Photo

LESCO detects 443 power pilferers

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has detected a total of 443 connections from where people were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts (Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara) during its anti-power theft campaign in last 24 hour.

A LESCO spokesman told the media here on Wednesday that the company also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 194 FIRs were registered in respective police stations, while 19 accused have been arrested by the respective police.

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

During last 24 hours of the anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, large commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units. Among the seized connections 09 were commercial, 02 agricultural, and 432 domestic, and all these connections were disconnected and charged with a total of 427,991 units as detection bill amounting to Rs 14,177 million.

During the 346 days of the grand anti-theft campaign, the spokesman mentioned, the LESCO detected pilferage on 126,250 power connections and 112,700 FIRs have been registered against electricity thieves in the relevant police stations, while 38,220 accused have so far been arrested by the police. The LESCO has so far charged a total of 137,881,882 detection units worth Rs 4,963,229,184 to all the power pilferers.

CM reviews law, order in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz presided over a special meeting here on Wednesday to comprehensively review law and order situation in the province.

The CM said, "Protecting the life and property of people of Punjab is my foremost responsibility. We will do whatever is necessary to safeguard public life and property."

The CM directed the authorities concerned to take indiscriminate action against criminals and anti-social elements. She said police should be able to take proactive action without waiting for a crime to be committed. She added attackers of police check posts should be given such a stern response that they do not dare to attack again.

CM Maryam Nawaz said police patrol should be arranged between police check-posts and directed the police officers to ensure foolproof security on Eid Milad-un-Nabi by visiting the scholars themselves.

She approved a proposal to increase number of provincial border posts, and directed the police authorities to immediately conduct special training of the police personnel posted at border posts. She also directed the relevant authorities to provide armored personnel carriers (APC), bullet-proof vehicles and jackets to police personnel. She highlighted strengthen and improve border security check posts besides restructuring and modernizing the Border Military Police.

The CM directed the relevant authorities to install body cameras on police force on duty, and intensify the campaign to eliminate illegal arms from the province. She was briefed by the authorities concerned that a strict ban has been imposed on the use of social media and cameras by on-duty police personnel.

The CM also approved a grant of Rs 1 billion for the police force in the meeting.

Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb, Information & Culture Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari and MPA Sania Ashiq attended the meeting. Brigadier (ret'd) Babar Alauddin, Chief Secretary, Home Secretary, IG Police, Additional IG and other police officers were also present.

Admn completes delivery of textbooks to schools

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh Textbook Board administration has completed the delivery of textbooks to Sindh government schools at the district and tehsil levels, while visiting teams are ongoing to review the process of distribution to the schools.

Chairman of the Sindh Textbook Board Jamshoro, Abdul Aleem Lashari, stated that Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah are making efforts to

provide education to every child under the banner of "Sindh will learn and Sindh will grow." They are actively involved in the process of delivering free textbooks to every child.

Chairman Abdul Aleem Lashari stated that, for the first time in history, the process of distributing textbooks on time has been completed transparently. A total of 4,453,686 sets of books were printed, including 24,351,475 individual books, and these have been delivered to the children on time.

He said that after com-

pleting the book distribution process in Sindh government schools, including Sindh Education Foundation schools and Karachi Municipal Corporation schools, our teams began daily visits to textbook warehouses and schools across Sindh. They reviewed the ongoing work of providing free textbooks, and this process is still continuing. Wherever there is a greater need for books, we are delivering them. When the children of Sindh receive education, Sindh will develop further and move forward.

1300 staff to be recruited for TEVTA institutions

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain on Wednesday reviewed the performance of TEVTA, rationalization of human resources in institutions and decided to start new recruitment to overcome the shortage of human resources in TEVTA's institutions.

It was decided that after the approval of the Chief Minister, 1300 teaching

and non-teaching staff will be recruited for TEVTA's institutions.

The meeting also decided to amend the rules to improve the organizational structure of TEVTA. It was also decided to start 8 short courses of construction and 3 short courses of hospitality in institutions of TEVTA under the Chief Minister's Skilled Development Program.

These courses will be of 3 to 6 months duration

and after the approval of PC One, the courses will be started in December. Under this program, 5850 children will be trained in construction and 200 in hospitality sector in 3 years.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister Shafay said that for the development and prosperity of the country, it is necessary to prepare skilled manpower according to the needs of the global market.

once the medical board's report was received, adding that the geofencing report was also not yet clear. Following the completion of arguments, the bench granted bail to Afnan.

The Defence C police had registered the case based on a complaint filed by Rafaqat Ali, who lost his wife, Rukhsana Bibi (45); son, Husnain (25); daughter-in-law, Ayesha (23); son-in-law, Sajjad (30); four-month-old grandson, Huzaifa; and granddaughter, Anaya (4) in the tragic accident. In addition to Afnan, his father Shafqat Ali, and his friends Ali Abdullah, Muhammad Saad, and Muhammad Ibrahim were also charged with multiple offenses in the police challan.

The investigation report alleged that Afnan and his friends first harassed female passengers before colliding with their car. Shafqat, a real estate dealer, was accused of allowing his underage son to drive illegally.

Govt respects views, proposed amends to IRSA Act: CM

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday said that provincial government will respect the views of the assembly members and the people of the province regarding the proposed amendments to the IRSA Act, just as it did in the case of the Kalabagh Dam.

He said this while talking to the media after offering dua at Mazar-e-Quaid. He was accompanied by Sindh Governor Muhammad Kamran Tessori and his cabinet members.

The CM stated that the opinions of the assembly members and the people of the province would be sincerely respected regarding the proposed amendments to the IRSA Act. Murad Shah said that the assembly has passed a resolution regarding the proposed amendment in the IRSA

Act which is the reflection of the public opinion.

"Sindh assembly has already passed a resolution for the implementation of the 1991 water accord", he said. Shah said that due to climate change, the region has received more than average rains which have damaged road infrastructure all over Sindh. The coastal districts of the province like Badin, Sujawal and others have been inundated, he said.

Similarly, on the left bank of the river, the hill torrents in Khirthar Range have also caused damage to the entire infrastructure, he said and added that the government machinery was assessing the damages caused by the rains so that the necessary reconstruction could be carried out.

Discussing Karachi, the CM stated that Karachi Mayor through a letter had requested sanction of spe-

cial funds to repair the damaged infrastructure in the city. He mentioned that he would release the funds but expressed concerns that the defective drainage system could keep damaging the roads again and again.

"I have directed the mayor to develop a plan and the feasibility of improving the city's drainage system to permanently resolve the issue", he said.

Sindh CM Syed Murad Ali Shah said that on the 76th death anniversary of Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he along with his cabinet visited Mazar-e-Quaid to honour his memory and contributions. "This annual tribute serves to recognize the founder of Pakistan and his significant role in the nation's establishment," he said.

Shah said that his great leaders, Shaheed Zulfikar

Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto carried forward the vision of the father of the nation and further strengthened it. "Let us set aside all our personal and political differences and strengthen the country as per the vision of Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah", he maintained.

During the visit, the CM and the Cabinet members laid floral wreaths at the Mazar, offered prayers, and recorded his impressions in the visitors' book reflecting on Jinnah's leadership and vision that led to the establishment of an independent homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent.

This visit serves as a reminder of the enduring legacy of Quaid-e-Azam and the importance of continuing to honour his contributions to the nation, the CM concluded.

Secretary General of the Int'l Maritime Organisation arrived in Pakistan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Arsenio Dominguez, has arrived in Pakistan for a three-day visit.

He will participate in a three-day conference and exhibition organized by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs.

The conference will be held in Islamabad on September 12 and in Karachi on September 13



and 14. This is the first time an IMO Secretary-General

has visited Pakistan. During his visit, he will

also hold meetings with the President of Pakistan, the Prime Minister, and the Chief of Naval Staff. Upon his arrival at Islamabad Airport, he was welcomed by officials from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and other authorities.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaisar Ahmed Sheikh, remarked that this is a proud moment for our maritime industry, and we extend a warm welcome to the IMO Secretary-General.

Azma paid glowing tribute to Kulsoom

ISLAMABAD (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari on Wednesday paid glowing tribute to Begum Kulsoom Nawaz, wife of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on her 6th death anniversary.

According to PTV, she stated that, "Kulsoom Nawaz was a champion of democracy, bravely standing against Musharrarf's fascism and leading the fight for democratic victory."

Begum Kulsoom Nawaz was born on March 29, 1950, in a Kashmiri family. Kulsoom passed his graduation from Islamia College Lahore and completed MA in Urdu poetry from Punjab University. She also received a Ph.D. degree.

She had the honor of serving as the first lady thrice. Begum Kulsoom diagnosed with throat cancer on August 17, and died of cancer in London on Sept 11, 2018.

Traffic warden saves man

LAHORE (APP): A heroic act by a traffic warden prevented a potential tragedy at the Ek Moria bridge and swiftly saved an elderly man, who had collapsed on the railway tracks and was unconscious.

According to a spokesman for the Traffic Police Department, passengers on a train passing over the bridge alerted the people after noticing the elderly man lying on the tracks. Acting quickly, Traffic Warden Mukhtar climbed up a pole to reach the railway tracks and removed the man from danger.

The elderly man, later identified as Amin Dad from Mardan, was found to have been deprived of his mobile phone and wallet, who might have been a victim of theft or substance abuse. Lahore Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Ammara Athar praised Warden Mukhtar for his quick response and bravery, announcing a commendation certificate for his action.

Man held for attempt to assault girl

LAHORE (APP): A man, who attempted to assault a young girl playing in the neighborhood street, is now in police custody due to the Virtual Women Police Station.

PHC intensifies crackdown

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) has ramped up its anti-quackery campaign, conducting raids on 4,705 treatment centres across Punjab and sealing 970 illegal healthcare facilities.

The raids, carried out over a six-week period, targeted a variety of establishments, including clinics, laboratories, and aesthetic centres, according to a PHC spokesperson on Wednesday.

Among the facilities inspected, 633 centres had undergone business changes, likely in response to the PHC's stringent measures. Meanwhile, 2,945 healthcare establishments were placed under surveillance, as they were found to be run by qualified professionals at the time of the raids. "This ongoing initiative underscores the PHC's commitment to safeguarding public health and ensuring that only qualified and licensed professionals deliver healthcare services in Punjab," stated Dr. Muhammad Saqib Aziz, CEO of the PHC.

The Lahore district

recorded the highest number of closures, with 108 illegal treatment centres shut down.

The crackdown also

extended to other districts, with 88 closures in Faisalabad, 57 each in Kasur and Sialkot, 53 in Gujranwala, 42 each in Narowal and Pakpattan, and 41 in Okara.

IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL JUDGE (CUSTOMS. TAXATION). KARACHI

Special Case No. 34-A/2020-FIR# ASO-P-01/2020-W/WPS CUSTOMS, KARACHI

The State Versus **Habib Jan & Others**

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON UNDER SECTION 87 Cr. PC.

Whereas, complaint has been made before me that namely **Habib Jan S/o Wahab Jan CNIC No. 16102-3039431-1 passport No. FD8794311 Nationality Pakistani**, has committed an offence of smuggling and it had been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused persons cannot be found and whereas it had been shown to my satisfaction that the above mentioned accused persons absconded to avoid the service of the said warrant.

2. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused is required to appear on **12.10.2024 at 09:00 am** before this Hon'ble Court to answer the said complaint.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 02.09.2024.

--sd--
Special Judge
Special Court (Customs & Taxation)
Karachi



HIRING..!!

INTRODUCTION

A foreign funded project being implemented with the technical assistance of UNDP intends to hire services of a qualified and experienced consulting firms/organizations/ companies for conducting below mentioned activities in the 08 targeted valleys of northern areas, with a particular focus on GLOF risk reduction and adaptation strategies.

S.NO.	NAME OF ACTIVITY	QUALIFICATION & EXPERIENCE
1.	Conducting Impact Study of donor funded project in the 08 targeted valleys of northern areas	The Consulting firm should match the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The consulting firm/ organization/ company must have at least (07) years of overall experience and proven expertise in conducting similar studies regarding Impacts studies in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and climate change context.The consulting firm/ organization/ company must have a team of qualified and experienced experts for the assignment consisting of at least one team lead and five specialists.Requirement of the team; Civil Engineering, Expert of Agriculture Sector, Social Science Expert, Environmentalist, Senior Analyst, and field Survey Coordinator.Minimum three (05) years of experience in conducting socio-economic, and risk assessments under DRR/DRM and Climate Change related work with specific focus on conducting Impact study and/or similar studies.Proven experience and deep understanding of policy recommendations, governance frameworks, and community engagement strategies.Hands-on experience in challenging northern regions and GLOF-prone areas
2.	Implementation of Project Gender Action Plan activities in 08 project valleys in KP	The Consulting firm should match the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The consulting firm/ organization/ company must have at least (05) years of overall experience and proven expertise with at least Master degree in Social Sciences, Gender Studies, Development Studies, Public Administration and in conducting similar studies.Expertise in conducting gender analyses and developing gender-responsive strategies and action plans.Ability to design and deliver training sessions, workshops, and capacity-building activities on gender equality and women's empowerment.
3.	05 Trainings of GIS Cells at field level on Mapping and GIS Cell management	The Consulting firm should match the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The consulting firm/ organization/ company must have expertise with at least Master's degree in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Geography, Computer Science, Remote Sensing, Urban Planning or a related field.At least 5 years of professional experience working with GIS technologies and applications. Demonstrated experience in managing GIS projects, including data collection, analysis, and map creation.Experience working with organizations or projects focused on GIS, mapping, or spatial data management.

Important Instructions/Deadline:

- The consulting firms/ organizations/ companies must be duly registered in Pakistan under the relevant Laws (FBR, SECP etc.) with atleast 5 years of relevant experience, and possess the necessary certifications.
- Firms interested in participating are invited to submit their Expression of Interest via email to procurementglof@gmail.com for detailed Terms of Reference (TORs).
- All proposals must comply with relevant government regulations and standards. The organization reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.
- Interested parties should submit their proposals, including a detailed work plan and qualifications, within 15 days of the date of issuance of advertisement on above email.
- For more information or queries may be submitted to above email address.

Governor signs summary for de-notification of Advisor Mashal Azam

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, signed the summary for the de-notification of Advisor Mashal Azam Yousafzai of the provincial cabinet on Wednesday.

The Governor has approved the removal of Mashal Azam Yousafzai from her position as Advisor to the Chief Minister.

Following the Governor's approval and signature, the summary has been sent back for further processing.

Sources in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that the Advisor to Chief Minister on Zakat, Ushr, Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Mashal Azam was ousted from the provincial cabinet over poor performance and other charges.

Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, has

asserted that the land belonging to the province's universities will not be sold under any circumstances.

This statement was made during a discussion with a delegation from Mardan led by Mayor Himayatullah Mayar.

Governor Kundi criticized the current administration, accusing it of incompetence for attempting to sell university lands.

He emphasized that the provincial government has exhibited extreme mismanagement, noting that there is no provincial Higher Education Commission (HEC) in KP.

He highlighted that 26 universities are operating without permanent vice chancellors and have been forced to accept acting vice chancellors in violation of regulations.

Kundi also pointed out that PPP members of the

provincial assembly have submitted call attention notice against the sale of university lands, and orders for action have been issued from the Governor House.

He assured that as long as he remains Chancellor, he will prevent any sale of university land. The delegation praised the Governor's support and commitment.

Similarly, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, has highlighted the crucial role of literary activities in the development and preservation of nations.

Speaking with a delegation from the Abaseen Arts Council, led by PPP Cultural Wing Chairman Khawaja Yawar Naseer, Governor Kundi stressed that nations detached from their cultural heritage risk losing their identity and existence.

He said that promoting

literary activities is essential, especially following the 18th Amendment, which shifted these responsibilities to the provinces. However, he criticized the provincial government's priorities, saying that they have neglected the arts and those genuinely involved in the field.

Governor Kundi revealed that the Governor House has initiated a series of conferences and is working on inviting Central Asian intellectuals.

He praised the Abaseen Arts Council for its significant role in promoting the arts in the province and assured that the Governor House would support them in every possible way.

He also pledged to address issues related to Nishter Hall and to communicate with the federal government regarding their concerns.



PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Abdul Karim Khan Tordher being briefed during a review meeting.

Governor pays tribute Quaid of nation

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday paid tribute to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah the founder of Pakistan.

On the occasion of the death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, issued a message highlighting Jinnah's remarkable leadership and vision as a luminous chapter in Pakistan's history.

Governor Kundi emphasized that Jinnah's principled politics, selfless leadership, and struggle for a separate homeland for Muslims serve as a guiding light for the nation.

Kundi urged citizens to renew their commitment to strengthening and prospering Pakistan in accordance with Jinnah's teachings.

He recalled Jinnah's lessons on unity, organization, and steadfast belief, underscoring the need to adhere to these principles to address the nation's challenges and propel the country towards development.

The Governor also prayed for Jinnah's soul, praying to Allah Almighty to grant him a high place in Jannat (Paradise).

NA Speaker should lodge an FIR: Saif

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif on Wednesday demanded imposition of the Article 6 on those who barged into the parliament to arrest the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders.

In a statement, Saif slammed the federal ministers for being insensitive and remaining bigoted during this situation, adding that nothing else could be expected from those at the helm.

"We will not let the government pass illegal amendments in the Constitution. The government cried hoarse on false flag operation of May 9 but it chose to remain silent on attack on the parliament," he deplored.

He criticized the ministers for shedding crocodile tears in the name of May 9 while urging the National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq to lodge an FIR against the attackers of the parliament instead of dilly-dallying the matter.

PHC declares detention of four tribesmen null and void under MPO

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has declared the detention of four residents of Kurram district under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) as null and void and ordered their release from prison, on Wednesday.

A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice PHC Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed heard the writ petitions filed by Eid Muhammad resident of Kurram, Niaz Gul, Islam Gul, and Syed Muhammad, residents of Lower Karam, through their lawyer, Danyal Chamkani advocate.

The petitions named the Deputy Commissioner, district police officer Kurram, Superintendent of Central Jail Lakki Marwat, and

Superintendent of DI Khan Jail as respondents.

During the hearing, the lawyer argued that on August 20, 2024, the Deputy Commissioner of Kurram was informed about the deteriorating law and order situation, following which he issued a notification under Section 3 of the MPO and detained the petitioners. Eid Muhammad was sent to Central Jail Lakki Marwat, while the other three petitioners were sent to DI Khan Jail.

The lawyer argued that the Deputy Commissioner's notification was illegal and beyond his powers, as it was based on false information and assumptions. The allegations against the petitioners that they had disrupted the peace were unfounded, and they were detained without

any solid evidence.

The counsel Danyal Chamkani advocate further argued that the petitioners had not been involved in any illegal activities in the past. Issuing warrants for their arrest under Section 3 of the MPO without giving them prior notice or an opportunity to be heard was a violation of their fundamental rights.

The lawyer requested the court to declare the detention of the petitioners under Section 3 of the MPO as null and void and order their release from prison.

Peshawar High Court's divisional comprising of Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad declared the detention as null and void and ordered the release of the petitioners from prison after hearing the arguments.

KPT&GC forms HR panel to run company's affairs

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Transmission and Grid Company (KPT&GC) to form a Human Resource (HR) Committee in order to run the affairs of the company in a better manner.

In light of the proposals, the experienced senior officers with relevant fields related to the sector will be appointed in the company and the business model for the company will be created in order to start practical working on various upcoming projects.

The decision was taken in the 10th meeting of the Board of Directors (BoD) of the company held under the chairmanship of Chairman Board Secretary Energy and Power Nisar Ahmad Khan, said a press release issued here on

Wednesday.

During the meeting, the company's Chief Executive Muhammad Ayub and other members of the board including Advisor on Power Tila Muhammad, Special Secretary Energy Irfan ullah, Additional Secretaries Energy Department Shah Fahad, Abdul Haseeb, Additional Secretary Finance department Asif Rasheed, Chief P&D Kamran Khan, Director HR & Admin PEDO Mohammad Idrees Khattak and Deputy Secretary Energy Ijaz Khan also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the chairman of the board was informed about the progress regarding the recruitment of to run the administrative affairs of the company and other financial matters.

The chairman Nisar

Ahmad Khan emphasized on the implementation of the prevailing laws related to the purchase of vehicles and other essential items for the company. A milestone towards the improvement of the electricity system in the province can be achieved through this company, he added.

Moreover, Nisar Ahmed Khan reiterated his determination that KP Transmission and Grid Company will soon create a new history by transmitting the cheap electricity generated from the completed projects of PEDO through its system, which is no less than an honor for the province and its people.

The BoD approved the assignment of additional charge as company secretary to Deputy Secretary Energy Ejaz Khan.

Fake beverages seized

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority continues its crackdown on adulterated and hazardous food items in various districts across the province.

The Food Safety teams, during their recent operations in Mardan, Nowshera, and Swabi, seized hundreds of liters of fake beverages

and banned China salt. Heavy fines were imposed on violators.

A raid was carried out by the Nowshera Food Safety team in the Pir Sabaq area, where over 800 liters of counterfeit and substandard beverages were retrieved and taken into the custody of food authority. Legal proceedings under the Food Safety Act have been initiated against those involved.

In a similar inspection, the Swabi Food Safety team seized 440 liters of hazardous beverages from a shop in Chota Lahore and issued a warning notice to the shop owner.

The Mardan Food Safety team recovered 100 kilograms of banned China salt from a spice manufacturing factory, where fines were also imposed. Furthermore,

a snacks factory was also inspected and due to poor hygiene condition, owner was fined with hefty amount.

Director General of the Food Authority Wasif Saeed lauded the efforts of the Food Safety teams for their successful raids. He emphasized that the sale of hazardous food items would not be tolerated under any circumstances and that indiscriminate actions against offenders would continue throughout the province.

KP Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru directed authorities to take strict action against those jeopardizing public health. "No leniency will be shown towards individuals involved in such activities," Toru remarked.

Mpox disease case reported

PESHAWAR (APP): A fifth case of Mpox disease was reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as according to the Health Department on Wednesday a 33-year-old man who had recently returned from Saudi Arabia was tested positive and quarantined at home by the health officials.

The affected man stayed at a hotel in Peshawar and went to a private clinic for treatment from where he was referred to KTH. At the hospital blood samples of the patient were sent to the Public Health Reference Lab which confirmed the existence of Mpox virus.

The Health Department said the affected man has been quarantined at his home in Dir Lower adding that the patient did not meet with any of relatives since he returned from Saudi Arabia.

The patient was being strictly monitored by a health team headed by the DHO Dir Lower. He was showing positive signs of recovery, the health officials said, adding that family members of the patient have also been informed regarding the preventive measures to avert the spread of virus.

KP govt prepares draft new policy for small industries' estates

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa prepared the first and basic draft of the new policy for allotment, cancellation, transfer and surrendering of the plots at industrial estates and parks under Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) in the province.

After a thorough review to make it useful and feasible from all aspects, the policy will be presented for approval.

A meeting held here with Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Khan Tordher on Wednesday reviewed the important points of the draft policy and presented proposals and suggestions

to bring further improvement in it.

Besides, Special Secretary Industries, Mohammad Anwar Khan, the Managing Director (MD) SIDB Habib Ullah Arif and Deputy Managing Director (DMD) Sahibzada Zulfikar, other authorities also attended the meeting.

The participants of the meeting were given a detailed presentation regarding the draft of the new policy and were told that after the formal approval, the new policy will be enforced in all prevailing and future industrial parks and industrial estates.

Under the new policy, the applicants for plots at industrial parks and estates will be provided the facility of the submission of online applications while a period

of 20 days would be available for submission of essential documents.

Similarly, in case of application for any plot, the applicants would be required to pay 25% of the total price as down payment. Under the policy, the scrutiny of the applications for plots allotment would be carried out by the concerned forum and provisional allotment letters would be issued after the payment of 75% installments. Under the new policy, a clear procedure has been evolved for cancellation, transfer and surrendering of the plot.

Speaking on the occasion, the Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Khan Tordher expressed

the hope that the new policy would prove helpful and beneficial in the promotion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and facilitation of the industrialists.

He said that focus should be made on the promotion of industrialization and facilitation of industrialists from all aspects and instead of traditional long phases, a simple procedure would be adopted for them in the system.

The Special Assistant emphasized on ensuring the provision of electricity in the new industrial estates and parks on priority basis, saying the issue create unnecessary delay in the establishment of the new industrial units. He further directed the useful utilization of the commercial plots in industrial estates for the sustainability of the board.

KP to reward tax fraud Identifiers with cash to curb tax evasion

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has announced that it will offer cash rewards to individuals who report or identify tax fraud in the province, while keeping their identities confidential.

Regulations to provide legal cover for this reward system, aimed at encouraging public whistleblowers, are in the final stages of development and will soon be implemented as part of efforts to combat tax evasion and fraud with the help of citizens.

This was revealed by the Advisor to the Chief Minister of KP for Finance, Muzammil Aslam, during his visit to the headquarters of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA).

Addressing the KPRA officers, he emphasized that strict action will be taken against those found guilty of tax fraud or evasion based on citizens' reports.

He also announced that individuals who report such fraud will be rewarded with a cash prize, the amount of which will be decided soon.

Director General of KPRA, Fouzia Iqbal, welcomed the Advisor with a bouquet and, along with her team, provided a detailed presentation on KPRA revenue collection for the first two months of the ongoing financial year. The KPRA has been given a



revenue target of Rs. 47 billion for the fiscal year 2024-25, which is approximately 34% higher than last year's target of Rs. 35 billion.

The Advisor was informed that KPRA collected Rs. 7.17 billion in the first two months of the current financial year, reflecting a 45% growth compared to the same period last year.

The Advisor praised the efforts of the KPRA team and emphasized the importance of focusing on this year's

revenue target.

"I am confident that your team will not only achieve the target but surpass it by a significant margin," he said.

He also advised KPRA officers to concentrate on large taxpayers rather than spending time on small businesses. Furthermore, he suggested that KPRA should begin sharing data with revenue authorities in other provinces and develop mechanisms for such cooperation.

Quaid-e-Azam: Honoring legendary leader on his 76th death anniversary with deep reverence

PESHAWAR (APP): A leader of par excellence with numerous qualities of head and heart, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who changed the world map through democratic struggle, was remembered on his 76th death anniversary observed with great respect and admiration in the country on Wednesday.

Stood for unity, faith and discipline, the great Quaid's qualities were highly praised by the world leaders even by the adversaries. "Few individuals significantly alter the course of history. Fewer still modify the map of the world. Hardly anyone can be credited with creating a nation state. Muhammad, Ali Jinnah did all three," said Stanley Wolpert, a renowned US academics, historian and writer about Father of the Nation,

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his famous book 'Jinnah of Pakistan' published in 1984.

Likewise, Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pundit, a prominent figure and Nehru's sister remarked, "If the Muslim League had 100 Gandhis and 200 Azads and Congress had only one Jinnah, then India would not have been divided."

These popular statements of world leaders strongly reflect the fact that it was only Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who bravely led and fought the case of Muslim nationhood in India and won it purely through a democratic struggle and constitutionalism. Wolpert and Pundit have made a praiseworthy endeavour to sum up different aspects of the life, personality and leadership qualities of the great Quaid, who changed the world's

map by creating a separate homeland for the Muslims of Subcontinent i.e Pakistan on August 14, 1947 within seven years following adoption of the historic Pakistan Resolution at Lahore on March 23, 1940.

Following adoption of Pakistan Resolution, Quaid-e-Azam had reorganized All India Muslim League by making repeated visits to all Muslims majority provinces of the British India including NWFP (now renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) to mobilize people and students for accomplishment of his mission for Pakistan.

The legendary Quaid had also visited the historic Islamia College, Peshawar (ICP) in 1936, 1945 and 1948 to acknowledge the outstanding role of its students during the Pakistan Movement.

Impressed by the patriot-

ism, commitment and devotion of its students for Pakistan, the great Quaid had received a rousing welcome when he came to ICP in 1945 where its students and Muslim Students Federation (MSF) presented him Rs8,000 as fund for Pakistan Movement.

The students and MSF assured him to present 8,000 committed educated workers when he came again to this great alma-mater.

The people of KP had showed an immense love for Quaid-e-Azam and that is why AIML secured maximum number of seats in this province in 1946 elections and after that historic victory nobody could stop independence movement of Pakistan from KP.

The arrival of legendary leader committed to a cause of a separate homeland for the Muslims of Subcontinent had moved

people of KP, who decorated their homes, bungalows, bazaars, markets, villages, towns and vehicles with national and Muslim League flags besides holding placards inscribed with different slogans of Pakistan Zindabad and Quaid-e-Azam Zindabad to welcome their beloved leader.

"A sea of people with national flags and portraits of Quaid-e-Azam had arrived from across KP and erstwhile FATA to see glimpses of their beloved leader when he came here in 1945 and later as first Governor General of Pakistan on April 12, 1948," said Muhammad Younas Khan, former chairman Pakistan Studies Department, Islamia College Peshawar while talking to APP.

"The spirit and enthusiasm of people was historic as this ancient city had been

beautifully decorated with national flags hoisted atop of all major buildings and vehicles wearing a festive look." He also paid his last visit to ICP as first Governor General of Pakistan on April 12, 1948 and presented glowing tributes to services of its students towards making Pakistan in these words.

"I am indeed very happy to be present here today and to have the privilege of addressing students of this great Darul Uloom, who are the future builders of Pakistan."

He reminded the students, "we have achieved the national goal of Pakistan and now it was our collective responsibility to work hard in our respective professions with a high-level of dedication, commitment and sincerity to make it one of the greatest country of the world."



In brief

Citizen killed during dacoity F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: A senior citizen was murdered during dacoity and dacoits looted more than Rs. 15,00,000/- cash on broad day light on Gujranwala Road in precinct of Police Station Sadar Hafizabad. According to details, an old man Zafar Iqbal Joya was on his way to his village on motorcycle from Hafizabad to Harchowki when he reached near Iqbal Nagar on Gujranwala Road, two unidentified dacoits stopped him on gun points and snatched more than Rs. 1500000/=. When he put resistance, dacoits shot to death him and fled away. It was told that Hafizabad police was engaged in welcoming RPO Gujranwala when dacoity incident occurred. Meanwhile, Regional Police Officer Gujranwala Range has urged the people to cooperate with police to eradicate menace of narcotics, illegal arms and other crimes from society for making the area abode of peace.

Rs4 crore from challans recovered F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Traffic Police Officer Toba Tek Singh Asif Rahim Butt said that the traffic police issued 85,856 challans and 4 crore 26 lakh 7 thousand 350 fines for violating traffic rules across the district. He further said that we have taken actions against over speed, over loading, pressure horn, one wheeling, dangerous driving, traveling without driving license, smoke emitting vehicles, underage drivers, motorcycle riders without helmets and using mobiles phone fines imposed while driving. Apart from this, an 115 FIR has been registered against those violating traffic rules. In the end, he said that people should follow traffic police rules to avoid challans and fines.

Man tortures son to death

GUJRANWALA (INP): A pitiless man tortured his eight-year-old son to death over domestic disputes and secretly buried the body. Police arrested the accused. According to details, the incident took place in jurisdiction of Cantt police station in Gujranwala the other day where accused Hamid over differences with wife brutally tortured his minor son which resulted in his death. The culprit secretly buried the body of the minor child. The police on secret information arrested the murderer of son. A case was registered into the incident and body of the child will be exhumed for conducting the post-mortem after which legal action would be taken against the murderer.

5 injured in hand grenade blast F.P. Report

TURBAT: Five men sustained injuries due to the explosion of hand grenade lobbed by unidentified motorcyclist near National Bank area in main city of Turbat on Wednesday. According to rescue sources, hand grenade lobbed by unidentified motorcyclist exploded near National Bank in main city area of Turbat, resultantly, five persons sustained injuries. The injured, identified as Zareef son of Muhammad resident of Turbat, Zafar son of Roshan, Adnan son of Abdul Aziz resident of Absar Turbat, Awais son of Rasool Bakhsh, resident of Turbat and Nusrat son of Mola Bakhsh resident of Khushkalat Turbat, were rushed to Civil Hospital Turbat for treatment.

Muslims urged to follow in life the examples set by Prophet (SAW)

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The youth affairs department, education department and tehsil municipal administration on the instruction of deputy commissioner Lower Dir Muhammad Arif Khan arranged a 'Rahmatul-lil-Alameen Conference' at the district assembly hall here on Wednesday. Besides others, deputy commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan, district police officer Saleem Abbas Kulachi, additional deputy commissioner Bashir Khan, area elders, teachers and students attended the event.

School students took part in the declamation contest including 'Husn e Qirat, Naat and quiz competition, and got applause from the audience. Appreciation certificates and cash prizes were distributed among the position holder students on the occasion.

The DC, while shedding light on the importance of the topic, asked the Muslims to strictly follow

the footprints set up by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He said that the life of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW), the last Prophet of Allah, was the best example for all mankind. He said that teachers and parents played an important role in the education and nurturing of children.

The DC said the parents and teachers should guide the children according to the examples set by the Prophet of Islam. "Teach your children the religion and the life of Muhammad (SAW)", the DC said, adding that the parents would be asked about the education of their children on the Day of Judgement. Giving examples from the life of Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the DC said that forgiveness, tolerance and love were the characteristics of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Speaking on the occasion the ADC Bashir Khan reminded the audience the ignorance prevailed in the

Arab society when the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was tasked to guide them on the right path. The ADC said the Prophet of Islam abolished all evil customs and tradition from the Arabs within a few years through his strong commitment, actions, love and devotion.

Dr Mufti Abdul Haq, teacher of the Islamic Studies department, University of Malakand explained the life history of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in detail and said that all Muslims should follow the Prophet's model. He said that 'Rahmatul-lil-Alameen' meant that Allah, the creature, sent Muhammad (SAW) as a mercy to all mankind. He said that Muslims should do so for the benefits of all human beings. "There are two important areas of life, one is education and the other is good manners. Young people should focus on education", he said, adding the first revelation started from 'Iqra' means 'read'.

Plantation a key to fight climate change: Speakers

F.P. Report

LARKANA: A seminar on tree planting was organized in the main Arja campus of the Martyr Benazir Bhutto Medical University, in which Prof. Fateh Muhammad Marri, vice chancellor of Sindh Agricultural University, Tando Jam, participated as a special guest while the seminar was presided over by Benazir Medical University.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nusrat Shah and on the other hand, agricultural experts Prof. Noor Nisa Memon, Prof. Inayatullah Rajpar and Forest Department Officer Arshad Haider were among the appointees. Addressing the

seminar, Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agricultural University, Tando Jam, Prof. Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri said that I am happy that I am present today in the university which was established after the name of the great martyr of the world Ms. Benazir Bhutto.

The leader of the university is also a female professor, Dr. Nusrat Shah, and she is more than happy that out of all the public universities of Sindh, the Martyr Benazir Bhutto Medical University is the only medical university that organized a seminar on this topic, she added. If every UC of Larkana district plants ten thousand trees, surely one crore trees will be planted

in the district, or if every student of the university is obliged to plant one tree, hundreds of trees can be added every year, Vice said while addressing the event.

Chancellor Professor Dr. Nusrat Shah thanked Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri and other faculty members from Sindh Agricultural University, Tando Jam and said that we will plant saplings every year but this is the first time that the university is using trees. A seminar has been organized on, our university is a medical university, so we understand that trees are health and more and more trees can make hospitals deserted.

2 nurses, 3 attendants suspended

F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: Commissioner Kohat Division has suspended two male nurses and three ward attendants for negligence during his surprise visit to the District Headquarter Hospital Parah Chinar. He has also sought a report from the Medical Superintendent.

According to details, Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Muatassim B Allah made a surprise visit to the District Headquarter Hospital Parah Chinar last night. During the visit, he found two male nurses and three ward attendants absent from duty, following which he immediately suspended them. He also directed the Medical Superintendent to

submit a report to his office.

Commissioner Kohat Division visited the hospital on Tuesday night as part of the "Public Agenda" initiative launched by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Deputy Commissioner Karam, ADC Karam, and MS were also present during the visit.

The purpose of the visit was to review the facilities provided to patients, inspect medical equipment, and ensure the best possible care for patients. During the visit, Commissioner Kohat checked the attendance of staff on night duty and suspended two male nurses and three ward attendants for negligence and lack of cleanliness.

He also reviewed the overall situation of the hospital and discussed measures to improve healthcare facilities.

2 shot dead

F.P. Report

SWABI: Two people were killed in a firing incident which took place in a shop located in Dagailar area of Swabi on Wednesday.

Residents of the area said that a police van was also patrolling at the time of the firing. The accused escaped successfully after the firing incident. The deceased persons were later identified as Rowaz Khan and Waqas. Rowaz Khan belonged to Manera while Waqas was from Supwana area.



SWABI: KP Ministers Fazal Hakeem Khan, Aqib Ullah Khan and Adviser to CM Zahid Chen being briefed during their visit to Kundal Dam.

Enrollment drive underway F.P. Report

BUNER: Under the leadership of District Education Officer Umar Farooq awareness walks and events are being organized to conduct enrollment campaign in government schools till the last day of September and to enroll more school age children in schools.

In this regard, a function was held at Government Primary School Dewana Baba and a walk was held in which DEO Umar Farooq along with other officers of the education department, school teachers, students and local leaders participated.

Speaking at the event, DEO Umar Farooq said that education is the beauty of man and every child's basic right and it is the responsibility of parents to enroll their children in the nearest government school when they reach school age so that they can get education.

By doing it for yourself, the family, the village, the region, the nation and the country become useful for the reform of the society and play your role in the development of the nation and motherland as well.

Five killed in armed clash

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): Five people were killed in armed clash between two groups over karo-kari dispute in Machaka police station jurisdiction, police said on Wednesday.

According to details, armed men of two groups which were in dispute over karo-kari issue traded heavy fire in Daulatabad area of Rahim Yar Khan.

The cross firing led to killing of five people and culprits managed to escape from scene. Heavy contingent of police reached the scene and cordoning off the area. The bodies were shifted to hospital for post-mortem.

RTI held 'Kuli Katcheri' for women

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Women empowerment is linked to exercising Right to Information (RTI), as it empowers them to keep an eye on public entities in managing public affairs. RTI sensitizes public office holders to ensure merit in disbursement of resources and opportunities among the masses, on Wednesday.

This was stated by Syed Saadat Jahan, Deputy Director Communication, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission (KPIC) while addressing the participants of 'Women Khuli Kachehri', arranged by the District Administration Kohat in collaboration with SRSP and GIZ here at Neshtar Special Education Centre, Kohat. Women from diverse walks of life, disabled persons from all across the district Kohat, and Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram along with representatives of the line departments of the district Kohat participated in the Khuli Kachehri.

Emphasizing the role of RTI in women empowerment, Mr. Jahan in his address to the participants said that RTI is a strong voice for voice less, and ensures equal citizenship. "If you think, any kind of injustice is going on in any public entity, file an

RTI request. RTI curbs the menace of corruption and wrong doings. Jahan also enlightened the participants on the procedure and filing of RTI request to public entities. While RTI awareness material was also provided to Women Facilitation Desk.

Special people deserve special attention: Deputy Commissioner Kohat under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Program "Awami Agenda", held a first-of-its-kind Kuli katchery for the special persons in Nishtar Special Education Complex Kohat on Wednesday which besides the heads and representatives of line departments was largely also attended by the social workers and disabled men and women.

The participants presented their problems openly and thanked the district administration for providing a platform for deserving section of the society to present their problems directly to the authorities. Most of their problems were related to economic depression.

Addressing the Kuli Katchery, Deputy Commissioner Kohat said that the holding Katcheries meant to address the problems of all sections of the society directly at local level. He said that the special persons are the most

deserving section of the society, so their problems should be given top priority. He directed the heads of all departments to remove the deprivations of special persons preferably and evolve a workable strategy for it. He also appealed to the philanthropists to play their due role in providing financial support to disabled people in their sphere of influence.

DC specially directed the heads of health and education departments to give special attention to special people in their fields. He also inspected various sections of the complex and expressed satisfaction over the facilities available for education and training of special children.

Later, Deputy Commissioner Abdul Akram also visited Rescue 1122 Kohat and reviewed its control room, staff attendance and services provided to the public. The officers of Rescue 1122 Kohat gave a detailed briefing to the Deputy Commissioner Kohat about its emergency services in Kohat so far it provided besides giving information about the equipments in the fire vehicle and ambulance. He was told that international standard free services are being given to the people on which the Deputy Commissioner praised the Rescue 1122.

Lack of attention put Bara college students' future in risk

F.P. Report

BARA: Lack of teaching facilities and inadequate services of transport and building hindering learners of the lonely government college in Bara to get knowledge.

The views were expressed by the students union President of Government Degree College, Kohi Sherhaider, Shah Saud while addressing a press conference held in Bara press club last day.

He said that classes of BS had been suspended for the last eight years for unknown reasons and only FA and FSc level studies were continued that deprived hundreds of students of degree level learning. He maintained that construction work on the college building had been launched in 2016 but ironically it had not been completed in 2024 that put a question mark on the efficiency of the concerned departments.

The college bus had been missing for the last four years that deprived students of remote villages of cheap transport facility, he opined. He threatened that if BS classes were not resumed besides transport facility was not placed and building works were not completed in near future then the union with support of all students would begin indefinite protest in favor of their demands.

1000 solarized tube wells to be installed, claims Minister

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Agriculture Minister Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal has said that necessary steps are being taken to promote agriculture in the province and provide facilities to farmers. He expressed these views while addressing a kisan open katchri organized by Agriculture Department in Mardan here on Wednesday.

On the occasion, Chairman Standing Committee on Agriculture Abdus Salam Afridi MPA, Secretary Agriculture Attaur Rehman, Director General Agriculture Extension Abdul Qayyum, officials of Agriculture Department, Water Management, and Soil Conservation, along with the framers of Mardan participated in large numbers.

The provincial minister claimed that 1000 tube wells would be installed in different parts of the district. He pointed out that open katcheries were being held continuously to get awareness of the problems and difficulties of farmers.

On this occasion, the farming community mentioned various problems and difficulties related to the Department of Agriculture and other allied departments. The zamindars presented demands for setting up of agriculture offices in Katlang and other tehsils of Mardan, installation of solar tube wells, proper

use of machinery, provision of interest-free loans to the zamindars, completion of incomplete water courses, provision of certified seeds and other facilities.

The Agriculture minister also answered the questions of the participants of the open katcheri. He said that purpose of organizing the open forums under the public agenda of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is to make plans according to the needs of the people and to ensure their implementation.

"We believe in practical work rather than mere announcements. We all have to make joint efforts for the development of agriculture," the Minister Agriculture said, adding that the development of Mardan was among the priorities of provincial government that was why measures were being taken to cultivate olive plants and saffron in other suitable areas in Rustam area of Mardan.

He issued instructions to the concerned officers to provide training to the farmers regarding use of machinery and other matters. The Agriculture Minister further said that the use of government resources in the better interest of the people will be ensured in a transparent manner.

The Department of Agriculture is determined to make it more efficient. Sajjad Barkwal said that they are working at a high level to extend the duration of ongoing projects

with the support of the World Bank to benefit the people here from the World Bank projects. He instructed the officials present in the occasion to investigate the use of tractors of the agriculture department in brick kilns and other complaints.

DYO commits for welfare of orphans: District Youth Officer Mardan Usman Khan has said that serving the suffering humanity should be our motto, we all should go forward to help the orphans and helpless children, the poor and the poor as a service to humanity. We should and should support the helpless people who are a part of our society. He expressed these views during a meeting with Chairman of Zamong jazba Welfare Society Mardan Muhammad Parvez in his office. Briefing District Youth Officer Usman Khan, Parvez said that Hazmong jazba Welfare Society (Registered) is a welfare organization which has been helping hundreds of orphans and deserving widows in Mardan district since 2010 with the support of various dignitaries according to a schedule. Providing basic needs and amenities at homes free of charge.

Zamong jazba Welfare Society is committed to the welfare of society in spite of limited resources in areas such as education and health as well as better environment, natural calamities, culture and skilled and self-reliant employment programs for deserving women and widows.

The facilities that the society is providing to orphans and helpless children on an annual basis include, among other facilities, providing annual educational package and Ramadan package.

Every year, when the school results of all orphans and helpless children are released and these children enter new classes, these deserving children are provided with a package for their educational needs, and food ration is given in the month of Ramadan. District Youth Officer Usman Khan said that we have to support orphans and helpless children according to Islamic teachings, which is the success of both worlds. Helping orphans and helpless children is no less than worship and those who are performing this duty are commendable, the selfless service of suffering humanity has the status of worship in the true sense and those who perform this service deserve congratulations.

MMC removes encroachments: The management of Mardan Medical Complex removed the illegal encroachments inside the hospital premises while the illegal electricity and gas connections were cut from the canteen.

According to the MMC administration, on the instructions of the hospital director Dr. Gulzar Ahmed, the administration took actions and cleared the encroachments established by the canteen administration in the hospital premises. The encroach-

ments were not only causing problems to the patients and their caregivers on a daily basis but also affecting the traffic of the hospital as a result of which the administration carried out an operation to end the encroachment.

In this regard, hospital director Dr. Gulzar Ahmed has said that illegal encroachment is not allowed in the institution and strict legal action will be taken against those involved in such activities. He said that the accident department in the hospital is a very sensitive place due to the encroachment there the patients have to face problems in transportation, due to which not only the illegal encroachment was immediately removed and the government land was handed over, but also the canteen administration cutoff illegal electricity and gas connections; he said that misuse of hospital resources will not be allowed.

FANSA arranges workshop: A pivotal workshop was held On Wednesday, organized by the Fresh Water Action Network South Asia (FANSA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter. The event focused on enhancing the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to monitor and advocate for inclusive and equitable sanitation and hygiene services under the Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) framework.

The workshop convened members of the District Coordination Council, CSO/CBO representatives, the WASH Network, the CWIS Task Team, and Trade Unions. The primary goal was to institutionalize the CWIS plan, a key initiative aimed at addressing citizens' demands for improved sanitation and hygiene services with a strong emphasis on equity and inclusion, especially for marginalized communities.

By equipping CSOs and CBOs with the skills and tools to track progress, identify service gaps, and advocate for swift action, the workshop seeks to accelerate improvements in sanitation and hygiene services across Mardan. These efforts are in line with the government's commitment to ensuring universal access to safe sanitation, safeguarding public health, and upholding every citizen's right to proper sanitation.

"The safe management of sanitation services is an urgent challenge in our city, and collaborative efforts are essential to overcoming it," said Shah Nasir, Regional Co-convenor of FANSA. "Today's workshop is a vital step toward recognizing community needs and developing practical solutions to ensure access to safe, inclusive sanitation services. We look forward to continued partnerships with CSOs and CBOs to create lasting progress and enhance the quality of life for our citizens."



Trump insists Russia’s war should end

WASHINGTON (AP): Former President Donald Trump spoke heatedly in presidential debate about wanting Russia's war in Ukraine to be over - but twice refused to directly answer a question about whether he wanted US ally Ukraine to win.

Trump also falsely claimed that the war had killed "millions" since Russia invaded Ukraine 2 1/2 years ago, while the UN says 11,700 civilian deaths have been verified. And he claimed without evidence that Vice President Kamala Harris, his Democratic opponent, had bungled a diplomatic mission just days before Russia launched the invasion.

Trump's comments are likely to heighten concern among Ukraine and its supporters that his return to the White House could push Ukraine into a losing peace deal with its stronger neighbor, Russia. Western-allied Ukraine depends on US military and financial aid to keep up its fight against Russian forces, and it would have grave difficulty withstanding their attacks if the US were to pull that support. It's "a very simple question. Do you want Ukraine to win this war?" moderator David Muir of ABC News asked Trump in debate, the first of two times he pressed Trump for a direct answer.

"I want the war to stop," Trump responded. "I want to save lives," he added, going on to claim falsely that "millions" were dying in the conflict. Muir then asked him again, questioning whether Trump believed "it's in the US best interest for Ukraine to win this war."

The Republican former president responded, "I think it's the US best interest to get this war finished and just get it done." Trump has said repeatedly he would have a peace deal done between Ukraine and Russia within a day if he is elected, although he doesn't say how. The fear of Ukraine's supporters is that the kind of deal Trump is talking about would amount to the country's democratic government capitulating significant territory and sovereignty to Russia's harsh

demands. Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier this year insisted Ukraine must give up vast amounts of territory and avoid joining NATO simply as a condition to start negotiations.

"The reason that Donald Trump says that this war would be over within 24 hours is because he would just give it up," Harris said. She accused Trump of being in "what you think is a friendship with ... a dictator who would eat you for lunch." Trump has a long history of admiring comments about Putin, including calling his tactics in the 2022 invasion of Ukraine "genius" and "very savvy." Trump expresses no such warmth for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, calling him a "salesman" for his appeals to allies for weapons.

The Biden administration says a victory in Ukraine would embolden Putin to move against other Western-allied democracies in Europe. President Joe Biden and his top officials were key players in rallying international support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia since even before Russian forces rolled into Ukraine. The US spurred allies into action by pointing to declassified intelligence showing Russian preparations for the invasion. Just days before the invasion in late February 2022, Biden sent Harris to the annual Munich Security Conference in Germany, a high-profile mission to consolidate support for Ukraine among European and NATO leaders. Harris met on the sidelines with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump during the debate linked the timing of Harris' trip to Europe to Putin's sending troops into Ukraine days later. "They sent her in to negotiate with Zelenskyy and Putin. And she did. And the war started three days later," he said. However, the US government said the Russian troops massing on Ukraine's border and intelligence assessments already pointed to an imminent invasion. And Putin was not at the security conference in Germany, and Harris didn't meet with him.

expanding renewable power capacity - a development applauded by environmental groups. Greenpeace has argued that a decentralized solar power network - which would be harder to damage with Russian missile and drone strikes - could rapidly help repair domestic capacity, and is urging the government to make a bolder expansion into green energy.

The group is calling for internationally backed investments worth nearly 4.5 billion euros (\$4.9 billion) through 2030, focusing on renewable projects dominated by the solar photovoltaic sector. "Our research says that the current targets, which the Ukrainian government set for reaching solar energy by 2027, could be increased at least fivefold. This is a very conservative evaluation," Natalia Gozak, head of Greenpeace in Ukraine, told The Associated Press after the group opened an office in Kyiv. According to the United Nations and the World Bank, Ukraine lost

Ukraine braces for hardest winter

KYIV (AP): Ukraine's prime minister warned that the country could be facing its toughest winter since the full-scale Russian invasion began, as airstrikes against the country's beleaguered energy infrastructure intensify.

Russian attacks continue to hammer Ukraine's energy generation capacity, leaving the country heavily reliant on its three functioning nuclear power stations and electricity imports from European Union countries. "Energy resilience is one of our greatest challenges this year," Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal told a news conference in Kyiv.

"We successfully got through what was essentially two and a half winters. We will get through three, with this upcoming heating season likely being just as difficult, if not the hardest," he said. Shmyhal said Ukraine's government, helped by European countries, was urgently developing initiatives to decentralize its power generation, to make it less vulnerable to attacks. That includes

more than half of its power-generating capacity in the first 14 months of the war, with the situation continuing to deteriorate. Much of the country's solar power generation was also lost because areas in the south of the country with more abundant sunlight came under Russian occupation.

The pre-war power mix in Ukraine was heavily dominated by traditional sources of energy, with coal, oil, natural gas and nuclear making up nearly 95% of the total, according to the two bodies. Alexander Egit, an executive director at Greenpeace for Central and Eastern Europe, urged Western donor nations to back projects focused on renewable energy during and after the war. "We expect billions of euros to be invested in Ukraine's reconstruction by the European Union and beyond," he said. "Greenpeace's role is to advocate for decentralized renewable energy to ensure Ukraine is rebuilt as a modern, green, and independent nation."

ICC prosecutor seeks to confirm death of Hamas leader Deif

THE HAGUE (Reuters): Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) are looking into the reported death of Hamas military leader Mohammed Deif and will withdraw their case against him if they can confirm it, legal filings made public showed.

Deif, 58, was believed to be one of the masterminds of the Oct. 7, 2023 assault on southern Israel which triggered the Gaza war, and since then had directed Hamas military operations against Israeli forces in the Palestinian enclave. Israel said he was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis on July 13. Hamas has neither confirmed nor denied that.

"The prosecution will withdraw its (arrest warrant) application against Deif if sufficient and reliable information confirms his death," said the legal document, filed under seal on August 2 but only revealed. Last Friday the ICC announced it had terminated proceedings against Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, who was assassinated in Iran on July 31. The ICC is currently weighing a request for arrest warrants against Israeli and Hamas leaders made earlier this year.

In May, ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan asked for arrest warrants for Haniyeh, Deif and the current head of Hamas, Yahya Sinwar, for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the Oct. 7 attacks on Israel. The prosecutor is also seeking warrants for the arrest of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his defence minister Yoav Gallant for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity during Israel's Gaza offensive. "Unfortunately, we have seen from the beginning that the proceedings in The Hague are politically biased and have no professional legal basis whatsoever", Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

Netanyahu said he rejected the comparison the ICC prosecutor has made between Israeli officials and "war criminal Sinwar", which he called a "moral disgrace of the highest order". Hamas also denounced the arrest warrants when they were first applied for. There is no deadline for when judges must decide on the applications. In previous cases judges have taken anywhere from one month to up to eight months to issue requested warrants.



HANOI: People removing fallen trees following the impact of Typhoon Yagi, in Hai Phong, Vietnam.

Putin casts naval exercise with China as bid to counter US

MOSCOW (Reuters): President Vladimir Putin warned the United States against trying to outgun Moscow in Asia as Russian and Chinese warships held joint drills as part of the biggest Russian naval exercises since the Soviet era.

Putin said the wider "Ocean-2024" strategic exercise would be conducted from the Mediterranean to the Pacific and would test units' combat-readiness and the use of high-precision weapons, including promising new types. It would also incorporate lessons learned from Russia's "special military operation" in Ukraine.

"We pay special attention to strengthening military cooperation with friendly states," he told military officials in televised remarks at the launch of the manoeuvres. "Today, in the context of growing geopolitical tensions in the world, this is especially important. We see that the United States of America is trying to maintain its global military and political dominance at any cost." Putin said Russia should be ready for any developments and would keep strengthening its naval forces, including their nuclear component, in the face of what he

described as an arms race driven by Washington.

"Under the pretext of countering the allegedly existing Russian threat and containing the People's Republic of China, the United States and its satellites are increasing their military presence near Russia's western borders, in the Arctic, and in the Asia-Pacific region," he said. "The United States and its allies are openly declaring their plans to deploy medium- and shorter-range missiles in the so-called forward zones."

The United States says its alliances in the Pacific, such as the AUKUS partnership with Britain and Australia, are aimed at deepening military cooperation to promote regional stability. AUKUS last year announced a joint plan that would provide Australia with nuclear-powered attack submarines from the early 2030s to counter China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific. "With its aggressive actions, the United States is trying to achieve a tangible military advantage, thereby breaking the existing security architecture and balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region," Putin said.

Navy commander Alexander

Moiseyev reported to him that four Chinese vessels and 15 planes were exercising with Russian forces. China's official Xinhua news agency said the aim was to deepen "the level of strategic coordination between the Chinese and Russian militaries and enhance their ability to jointly respond to security threats". The drills with China are part of much larger Russian manoeuvres that will run until Sept. 16 in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans and the Mediterranean, Baltic and Caspian seas.

Moiseyev told Putin that these would involve more than 90,000 Russian servicemen, over 400 vessels, 125 aircraft and more than 7,500 units of weaponry. Russia's armed forces have been heavily stretched on land and sea for the past two and a half years by its war in Ukraine. Ukrainian forces, despite being vastly outgunned in naval firepower, have managed to inflict damaging blows on Moscow's Black Sea Fleet. Russia has nevertheless continued to stage large-scale military exercises - including thousands of miles away in its far east - in order to project power and build defence ties with partners, especially China.

Jamaica to deploy soldiers and police to help fight gangs in Haiti

SAN JUAN (AP): Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced that his country would send two dozen soldiers and police officers to Haiti this week to boost a UN-backed mission led by Kenya to fight violent gangs.

The 20 soldiers and four police officers are scheduled to arrive Thursday and will join nearly 400 Kenyan police who arrived earlier this year and are working alongside Haitian police and military, said Vice Admiral Antonette Wemyss-Gorman, chief of defense staff for Jamaica's military. The Jamaicans will be responsible for providing command, planning and logistics support, Holness said at a news conference.

Jamaica had pledged a total of 170

soldiers and 30 police officers, but Holness said it wasn't possible to deploy them all at once. "It's not practical," he said, adding that facilities to host those arriving and a command structure need to be in place before the full number pledged is deployed. "We want a very successful operation." The initial number of police and soldiers announced by Holness surprised many and comes at a time when the US government has warned that the Kenyan-led mission lacks money and personnel as it considers a UN peacekeeping mission as one way to secure more resources.

In recent days, the UN and Ecuador circulated a draft resolution obtained by The Associated Press asking the UN to start planning for a UN peace-

keeping operation to replace the current mission. Such a proposal would have to be decided by the UN Security Council, which experts do not believe would approve it. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said "it's very strange" that there is apparently no money available to support the Kenyan-led mission. "I think countries should assume responsibilities and should come and provide the necessary funding," he said.

Holness did not comment on the possibility of a UN peacekeeping mission but said the current mission "can be a long and extended process." He added that the mission is not the only or final solution to problems in Haiti, where gangs control 80% of the capital of Port-au-Prince.

US-Russia battle for influence in Africa plays out in Central African Republic

BANGUI (AP): Hours after Russian mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin rebelled against his country's top military leaders, his private army's biggest client in Africa panicked, turning for help to his foe in the West.

Officials from Central African Republic, where some 1,500 of Prigozhin's shadowy Wagner Group mercenaries were stationed, wrote a letter that day, requesting to "rapidly" arrange a meeting with a private US security firm to discuss collaboration. Dated June 23, 2023, the day Prigozhin launched the armed rebellion, the letter sparked a series of private meetings, culminating in a deal with the central African nation and Bancroft Global Development. That sparked backlash from Russian mercenaries, according to a dozen diplomats, locals, and analysts.

The tensions in Central African Republic are a window into a larger battle playing out across the continent as Moscow and Washington vie for influence. The Russian mercenaries - using success in staving off rebels in this impoverished nation as a model for expansion - have long been accused by locals and rights groups of stripping natural resources such as minerals and timber and are linked to the torture and death of civilians. In the wake of Prigozhin's rebellion and suspicious death in a plane crash, the Russians are recalibrating their Africa operations. The United States, which has been largely disengaged from the region for years, is attempting to maintain a presence and stymie Russian gains as it pushes African countries to distance themselves from the mercenaries.

US officials blame Russia for anti-American sentiment in the region and say they're trying to shift the narrative. "If the US can't regain a foothold, it could give Russia greater economic and political leverage," said Samuel Ramani of the Royal United Services Institute, a defense and security think tank. "If Russia loses Central African Republic, its flagship model on the continent, there could be a domino effect in other

countries." In recent years, Russia has emerged as the security partner of choice for a growing number of governments in the region, displacing traditional allies such as France and the US. Moscow aggressively expanded its military cooperation by using mercenaries like Wagner, who have operated in at least half a dozen countries since around 2017. They're tasked with protecting African leaders and in some cases helping fight rebels and extremists. They're also plagued by their human rights record. Two years ago in Mali, Wagner and the army were accused of executing about 300 men - some suspected of being Islamist extremists, but most civilians - in what Human Rights Watch called the worst single atrocity reported in the country's decade-long armed conflict. And in Central African Republic, mercenaries train the army on torture tactics, including how to cut hands, remove nails, throw fuel and burn people alive, according to watchdog The Sentry.

A soldier who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal confirmed torture tactics and told The Associated Press he saw mercenaries put a fellow soldier into a sweltering container as punishment. He said people could stay locked in containers for three weeks, with many dying inside. Central African Republic was one of the first places the mercenaries entered. The country has been in conflict since 2013, when predominantly Muslim rebels seized power and forced the president from office. Six of the 14 armed groups that signed a 2019 peace deal later left the agreement. Locals and the government credited Wagner with fighting back rebels who tried to overtake Bangui, the capital, in 2021. The Russians soon expanded to Burkina Faso and Niger, and have ambitions for further growth. Russia is refurbishing a military base some 50 miles (80 kilometers) from Bangui. Alexander Bikanotov, Russia's ambassador to Central African Republic, said the base will improve the country's security.

Fidele Gouandjika, adviser to President Faustin-Archange Touadera, said the base aims to have 10,000 fighters by 2030 to engage with more African nations. Some countries see Russia's influence as a threat to their own, but conflict analysts say weakening it will be challenging if they won't offer a similar force to pursue armed groups. Wagner is steeped in Central African Republic's security system, and experts say that will likely prevent Touadera from easily diversifying security partners.

Touadera's office didn't reply to written requests for comment for this story. His adviser to the country's spy agency declined to be interviewed. The US had been pushing Central African Republic to find an alternative to Wagner for years. A December 2022 private meeting sought ways to improve security without the mercenaries but yielded little tangible progress, according to a US official who is familiar with the talks and spoke on condition of anonymity due to the privacy of ongoing discussions. "We never really got past the confidence-building steps," he said. "Steps on how XYZ would replace Wagner were abstract, and the door remains open." The more assertive US approach came as it faced new setbacks and tried to rework agreements in the region. Its troops left Chad and Niger, where they were no longer welcome.

Still, the State Department said in a statement early this year that it wasn't involved in the decision to establish Bancroft Global Development's presence in Central African Republic. But Washington could deny such contracts if it wanted, said Sean McFate, a former contractor in Africa and author of "The New Rules of War." The US has used private military companies to reduce American "boots on the ground" in Africa, McFate said, and companies like Bancroft have to play by Washington's rules if they want future government work.

In response to AP questions, the US official who spoke on condition

of anonymity said it uses private contractors in Africa to help countries operate more effectively, with US government oversight to ensure accountability. The official said the State Department has overseen Bancroft's work in Somalia but not Central African Republic or elsewhere. Washington-based Bancroft is a nonprofit working in nine countries - five of them in Africa. Its longest-standing presence is in Somalia, where it's operated for more than 15 years, in part training troops to fight the militant group al-Shabab. Bancroft's involvement in Central African Republic has been shrouded in secrecy since signs emerged of its presence last fall. During an AP visit months later, rumors swirled about Bancroft's activities, fueling speculation the US was bringing its own Wagner to oust Russia. But according to Bancroft founder Michael Stock, the group entered at Bangui's behest.

"Touadera felt his Russian partners were underperforming and distracted, focused too much on other lines of effort ranging from breweries to cultural centers, rather than confronting the rebels," Stock told AP in his first interview since Bancroft began operating there. Touadera thought diversifying partners would prompt Russia to get in line and give the Americans what they wanted, Stock said. Stock received the letter from the presidency within a day of Prigozhin's mutiny, and the two signed a deal in September, he said. Fewer than 30 Bancroft personnel work there, Stock said, helping Central African Republic with intelligence systems, interagency cooperation and law enforcement.

Bancroft has invested some \$1.4 million there, Stock said. Much of Bancroft's overall funding has come from US and United Nations grants. From 2018 to 2020, it received more than \$43 million from the US, according to audits required as part of tax forms. Amal Ali, former US intelligence analyst, is among critics who say that despite its yearslong presence in Somalia, Bancroft hasn't con-

tributed to any real eradication of terrorism.

Stock dismissed such comments as uninformed and said the Somali and US governments "agree Bancroft has done a great deal to damaging illegal armed groups and developing the capacity of the government to perform its national defense functions professionally." Rights groups say a lack of transparency about Bancroft's operations has fostered an atmosphere of distrust in a country already rampant with armed actors. Wagner, a UN peacekeeping mission and Rwandan troops are all on the ground to try to quell violence. "Operating in a vague and nontransparent way in the Central African Republic only leads to suspicion," said Lewis Mudge, of Human Rights Watch. Stock defended Bancroft's work and policies. "It is perfectly normal for a government not to publicize how it is defending the people and the state," he told AP. Last fall, as reports of possible collaboration with Bancroft emerged, Stock said he positioned a staff member at a hotel in Bangui to wait for Russia's reaction.

"We expected Russia to freak out, so for our lone staff member in Bangui we chose a Russian speaker, who was tasked to do nothing but sit in the hotel garden reading a book all day, waiting for Russians to show whether they wanted to be cooperative, hostile, or ignore us," Stock said. Stock said that weeks later, in January, the employee was detained and questioned for hours by Russian forces and released only when Touadera stepped in. Officials in both Central African Republic and Russia didn't respond to requests for comment on any such incident. Bikanotov, Russia's ambassador to Central African Republic, has said Bancroft's presence had no effect on cooperation with Russia's military.

In the following months, aggression toward Americans and US entities continued. Several American citizens were detained and had their passports confiscated, a diplomat who dealt with their cases said on

condition of anonymity because he wasn't allowed to speak to reporters. Rare anti-American protests erupted outside the US embassy in Bangui, and local youths formed the Committee to Investigate US Activities to monitor Bancroft's movements. Gouandjika, the presidential adviser, said the government has no problem with Americans and those denied entry lacked proper paperwork. As the US and Russia jockey for power, African governments say they want to make their own choices.

Central African Republic officials approached Bancroft, which shows that these governments haven't become Russian puppets, said Jack Margolin, an expert on private military companies. But, he added, Russia's reaction to Bancroft could hurt Moscow's standing with other nations. After Prigozhin's death, Russia moved quickly to take control of Wagner's assets, and the defense ministry told countries where Wagner operated that it would take over. The country and its military intelligence arm have taken a more direct role in Africa operations, deploying more official detachments from its army. Russia is trying to rebrand the mercenaries, creating Africa Corps, a parallel group that could absorb Wagner, said John Lechner, a Wagner expert.

In Central African Republic, it's still unclear how much sway the Russian state has with the mercenaries, who are beloved by many and embedded in society, brewing beer and visiting markets. Still, they largely keep to themselves, walking through streets with faces covered and driving in unmarked cars. For many, Prigozhin was a national hero. Standing at a downtown monument of Russian soldiers, people lay flowers at its feet paying respects, a year after his death. For most people here, there's little interest in squabbles among foreign nations. "There are problems between the Americans and Russians, but that doesn't matter to us," said Jean Louis Yet, who works at Bangui's market.

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Russians at war' glosses over their atrocities

UNDERSTANDING why and how soldiers can commit war crimes - and how the observer can ethically produce work that hears from perpetrators without empathizing with them - has been hotly debated by scholars and analysts since World War II. That debate has returned to the spotlight thanks to the controversial decision by two renowned international film festivals to screen Russian-Canadian filmmaker Anastasia Trofimova's work "Russians at War."

According to the director, Trofimova spent several months embedded with Russian troops in occupied Ukraine, without permission from the Russian Defense Ministry, as an "unauthorized" fly on the wall. The film purports to show the lives and "sacrifice" of Russian troops, whose voices - those of "absolutely ordinary guys" in Trofimova's words - have been neglected. According to the synopsis posted on the Toronto International Film Festival website, "Russians at War" is an exploration of colonization and war, unabashedly billed as an "anti-war" film.

These contentions have led to a flurry of criticism, including from the Ukrainian authorities, accusing Trofimova's work of unjustly privileging Russian experiences and narratives over those of Ukrainian victims. The online fury has only been amplified further by Trofimova's background as a documentary producer for the Kremlin-owned propaganda outlet RT, including a film about female Kurdish soldiers that was released at the height of Russia's violent intervention in Syria. Trofimova claims to have left the RT payroll in 2020 and now works with international funding, including money from the Canadian government.

Putting aside the unproven claims that Trofimova is still a paid-up propagandist, reactions from those who have actually seen the film suggest that its critics have been right to be skeptical. Most egregiously, "Russians at War" does not mention Moscow's invasion of Crimea in 2014, nor does it consider or show much of the effects of violence committed by Russian forces in Ukraine. This suggests that Trofimova's approach has led her into a trap that afflicts every scholar and artist seeking to explore the psyches of war criminals: the fine line between deconstructing or uncritically reproducing the narratives her subjects and their commanders favor.

This issue begins with Trofimova's role in the movie's creation and framing. She has taken pains to stress that the film was made without the Russian state's permission and to distance herself from her own former role with RT (a fact that is omitted from her official biography) and from the murky world of the constant churn of disorienting, contradictory propaganda that emanates from the Kremlin.

Indeed, "Russians at War's" trailer opens with Trofimova addressing the camera to claim that she is traveling to the front "at her own risk, without permission from the [Defense Ministry]. Sort of in secret." This claim hardly stands up to scrutiny: in a country where independent journalism simply does not exist and access to military facilities and positions is tightly controlled, it seems unlikely a filmmaker would have been able to spend months at the front without the authorities' knowledge and therefore implicit permission. It is hardly unreasonable to ask Trofimova to transparently address how she avoided arrest, and vague claims that there was no "dialogue" with the Russian state hardly pass muster.

At best, Trofimova must have been implicitly given permission to work at the front. Her narrative stance resembles more closely that of a Russian "war blogger" than an independent Western journalist (although even Western militaries keep a tight lid on correspondents' movements at the front). The "war bloggers," who run enormously popular Telegram channels, are permitted some access to the front and have relatively free rein to produce material that is sometimes critical of the state's war efforts. While they are keen to assert their independence, these bloggers could not operate without the Kremlin's permission. Indeed, their material is regularly shared by state media channels and some have even met President Vladimir Putin himself. Their work adds to Russia's tapestry of narratives that broadly promote the state's overall narratives while providing an outlet for various groups in society to feel that their voices have been heard. The Kremlin uses these bloggers, then, to create the impression of freedom, while actually adding to confusion about what it really believes and what is real and false.

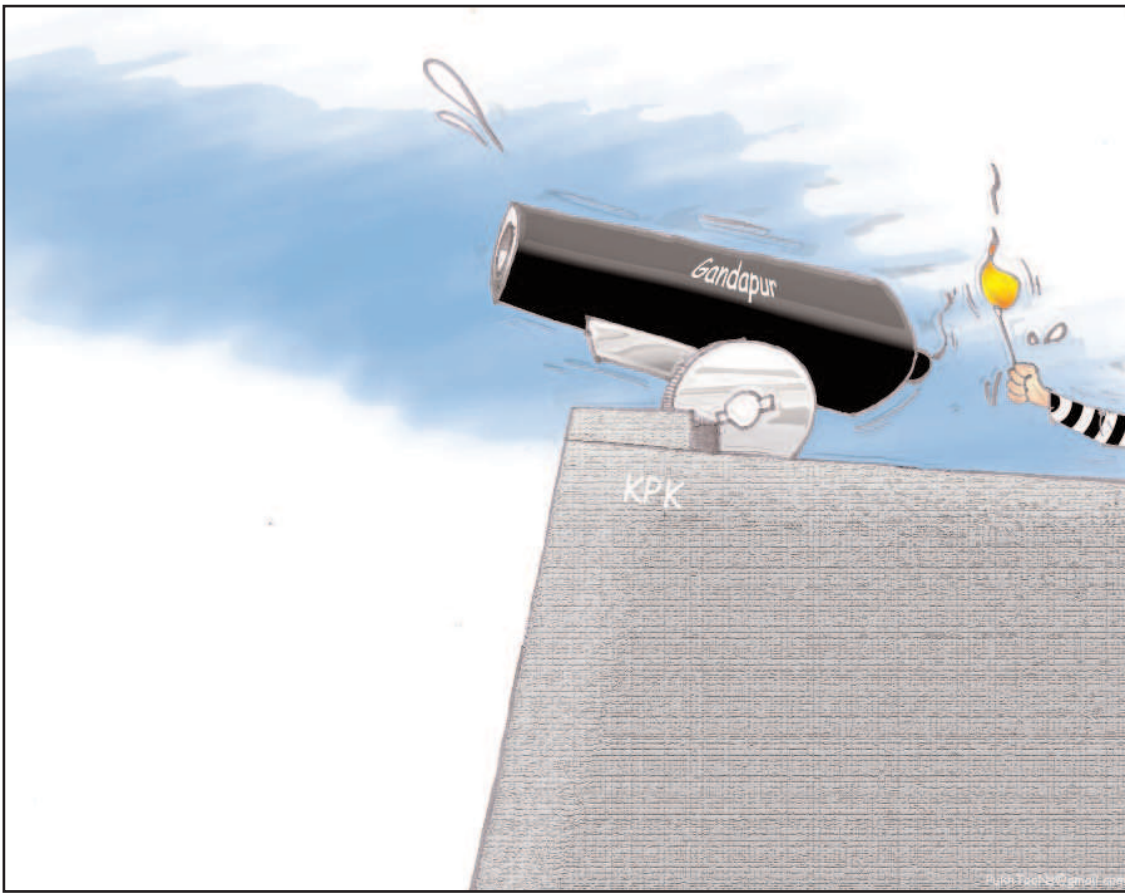
Trofimova, whether wittingly or not, provides another such vent. This time, for a part of Western society keen to hear a supposed hidden side of a violent conflict that has in reality left thousands of Ukrainians dead or subjected to crimes of torture and sexual violence. Her Russian soldiers are transformed into passive vessels of state power: as "pawns in a nefarious game" who simply carry out orders given to them. According to one soldier, they are led "like blind kittens," helpless to intervene in the crimes committed in Ukraine that are totally absent from Trofimova's vision of the war. Thus, Russia's war criminals are transformed from agents into instruments of history - a narrative that absolves them of all moral responsibility in an alarming reiteration of the "just following orders" narratives that were common in early discussions of the role of ordinary German soldiers in the Holocaust.

Gathering the testimonies of war criminals and the enemy played an important role in understanding how ordinary men just like those that Trofimova seeks to center came to commit the most abhorrent of crimes in the 20th century. To understand and explain is not, as Christopher Browning wrote in his pioneering study of ordinary Germans at war, to empathize.

However, exploring the milieu of war crimes requires careful self-examination, an explicit understanding of one's own relation to violence, and critical attempts to deconstruct the justifications given by criminals about their activities. Above all, exploring witness testimony means accounting frankly for the crimes that have been committed. In "Russians at War," Trofimova asserts on camera that "the fog of war is so thick that you can't see the human stories it's made of." Yet through the approach she has taken - which skirts around questions of Ukrainian humanity and suffering, the agency of Russian soldiers and her own documentary process - she is bound to create a film that will do little but thicken the fog of war even further.

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Resetting US-Russia relations would be a mistake

Ruth Deyermond

IS the Biden administration thinking about a "reset" of relations with Russia? A recent Politico article cited Ukrainian sources who said they were told that is the reason why Washington is prohibiting them from using US weapons against targets inside Russia. Figures in the Biden administration have forcefully denied that this is White House policy.

No matter what was said in private, and by whom, there are long-standing indications that Washington is thinking about the need to restart cooperation with the Kremlin on various issues in the medium term. If this is shaping the Biden administration's Ukraine policy, they are making an enormous mistake.

To understand why another reset between the US and Russia is impossible for the foreseeable future, it is helpful to look at the last one. Resetting relations with Russia was the Obama administration's first major foreign policy initiative, launched by then-Vice President Joe Biden in early 2009. The aim was to improve Washington and Moscow's relationship after a period of very bad relations that culminated in the 2008 Russia-Georgia war.

The Reset aimed to do three interconnected things. The first was to resolve issues in the relationship that were priorities for the US, particularly those relating to nuclear weapons and the legacy of its Global War on Terror. The second aim was to stabilize the relationship by creating structures that allowed for routine interaction between the two countries, helping to take the drama out of their relations. Finally, the Reset was intended to improve the relationship so that the US could focus on its main foreign policy concerns without the Kremlin acting as a spoiler.

For two years, the Reset was a success from the Obama administration's perspective. The US and Russia tackled nuclear arms control with the New START treaty. They addressed nuclear proliferation (a major US concern) by cooperating on sanctions against Iran and North Korea. They also secured an agreement to allow US troops and supplies to trans-

it through Russian territory and airspace to Afghanistan. To broaden the scope of the relationship and to make it more stable and predictable, they created the Bilateral Presidential Commission, a reboot of the 1990s Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission.

After 2010, the Reset failed for multiple reasons including the impact of elections in both countries; Vladimir Putin's growing anti-Westernism, disengagement by the Obama administration, and last but

agree on nothing at all. Bilateral US-Russia arms control discussion is not a realistic objective when Moscow regards the US as its primary enemy and Washington sees the Russian government as one of the main threats to global security. "Distrust and can't verify" is not a viable basis for arms reduction.

It is also impossible to see how arms control could work when the security environment has been so badly destabilized that escalation, not arms reduction, is the main preoccupation.

Not only are there no shared interests, there are not even any compatible interests that could make cooperation possible. To make matters worse, each state has greatly strengthened relations with third parties that the other regards as enemies: the US with Ukraine; Russia with Iran and North Korea).

by no means least, Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity and the annexation of Crimea that followed it.

The Reset was a policy designed for its specific moment and it made sense at the time. But the conditions that made it both desirable and possible have vanished. It is impossible to see how it could be revived with the current Russian government.

One reason is that although the US wants to work with Russia on some of the same issues as before, cooperation in these areas no longer serves the Kremlin's interests. Biden's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan has signaled an interest in reviving arms control "without preconditions" but the Russian government takes the view (an understandable one, it has to be said) that negotiations about arms reductions are not possible if the US is behaving like an enemy.

Biden himself has said that states "don't need to agree on everything to keep moving forward on issues like arms control," which is true. But the two sides cannot move forward if they

tion. As long as European states inside and outside NATO are worried about the threat of Russian aggression, this will continue to be the case. The prospects for any reengagement on non-proliferation issues look even worse, given that Washington's primary nuclear concerns for the last 25 years have been Iran and North Korea. These are two of the states on which Russia is now dependent for the conduct of the war against Ukraine.

There is no policy area on which a renewal of US-Russia relations could be built because the two states have moved too far apart in the years since the last reset ended. Not only are there no shared interests, there are not even any compatible interests that could make cooperation possible. To make matters worse, each state has greatly strengthened relations with third parties that the other regards as enemies: the US with Ukraine; Russia with Iran and North Korea).

Even less significant improvements than a Reset 2.0 seem impossible

because détente requires a minimum level of trust that is obviously absent. It is hard to think of a time since the early 1980s, or perhaps even the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when Washington and Moscow have appeared to trust each other less than they do now.

Even if all this could be overcome, there remains the problem that Putin has put visceral anti-Westernism at the center of his presidency. One of the justifications for everything Russia has done since February 2022 is the idea that a US-led West is an existential threat to not just the Russian state but to Russian values and Russian identity. For as long as that continues, a thaw in relations must surely be impossible.

Finally, given the Kremlin's view of the West and the crude, zero-sum version of realism that drives their foreign policy thinking, any US attempt at engagement is highly likely to be seen by the Russian government merely as weakness and credulity to be exploited.

If the Biden administration is limiting Ukraine's self-defense because they want to improve relations with Russia, ironically, their actions are helping to prevent that from becoming a possibility. That is because the only chance for any meaningful improvement in US-Russia relations is a change in the type of regime governing Russia, not just a change of president.

Washington cannot reset relations with a Putin-led Russia or a Russia governed by any individual or group with the same highly aggressive, resentful, paranoid and virulently anti-Western worldview. A reset with Russia would require a reset inside Russia first. And fear of that is one of the main things that has been driving the US and Europe's cautious support of Ukraine.

It may be that no one in the Biden administration is hoping for a reset with Russia. But if they are, it suggests they are either unwilling or unable to understand how much things have changed since the early 2010s. Envisaging a future reset with Russia is not pragmatism. It is wishful thinking. Few things have done more damage to US foreign policy than that.

The Moscow Times

The bar was low for him, but Trump still didn't manage to clear it

Moirá Donegan

THE bar was set low for him, but Donald Trump still didn't manage to clear it. The former president has faced growing concerns from within his party that he no longer has the stamina, stylistic novelty or mental acuity to defeat Kamala Harris, even as polls narrow in the final weeks before November's election. He did little to dissuade those fears on Tuesday, when he delivered a rambling, incoherent, lie-filled exposition of his own grievances in his first debate matchup against Kamala Harris - a crucial moment in the presidential contest that proved to be a disastrous humiliation for him.

Harris, after a beat or two of appearing nervous as the debate began, set about a methodical attack on Trump that repeatedly named him selfish, dishonest and weak. She goaded him with attacks on his ego and his potency - including a transparent but wildly effective remark about people leaving his rallies early from exhaustion - that caused him to explode into paroxysms of nonsensical woundedness. Trump, who initially had tried to land attacks on inflation, was soon reduced to racist ramblings, tangential defenses of his past remarks and records, attacks on Joe Biden, who is not running against him, and old lies about infanticide, fantasies about "world war three", weird comparisons of the United States to Venezuela, a morbidly racist fantasy about immigrants killing and eating white people's household pets, "transgender operations on illegal aliens in prisons", and his false claims to have won the 2020 election.

Trump has had bad debate performances before - including against Hillary Clinton, whom he ultimately defeated in 2016. But there is reason to suspect that his performance on Tuesday may genuinely harm his reelection chances in ways that will be difficult to recover from in the dwindling number of days before voters cast their ballots. The debate, the first since Harris replaced Biden at the top of the ticket, was widely anticipated to be a contest over who could best define the Democratic nominee, a figure many mainstream voters say that they do not know much about.

But Trump failed to convincingly land attacks on Harris, and instead he spent much of the night arguing on the turf that his opponent chose for him. There was no bait she offered him that he didn't take. He kept re-litigating his past remarks, exploring grievances against former enemies living and dead, claiming to have been wronged by vast forces beyond public accounting, and indulging in references to elaborate conspiracy theories about his own righteousness and the nefariousness of his enemies. It is not a version of Trump that has appealed to voters in the past. In 2020, in his first debate against Joe Biden, Trump's aggressive, frantic, shouting performance led the then candidate Biden to say with exasperation: "Will you shut up, man?" It was a moment of vicarious release for the American audience, who were able to see their own exhausted frustration with Trump channeled through an on-screen proxy. In a less spontaneous, more intentional performance on Tuesday, Harris repeatedly cast Trump as a tiresome

relic of an unappealing past - and herself as a refreshing break that can carry the country into the future.

Harris has been criticized by some in her own party for having an insufficiently clear policy agenda, but this is more the argument for her candidacy than any white paper her staff may issue: she wants to meaningfully break from the Trump era - not in a transitional period or interregnum, as Biden did, but by ushering in a new generation of political leadership that can leave Trump more decisively behind. Her debate performance was meant to convey the message that Trump's imbecilic cruelty was not so formidable, not so scary, not so inevitable as Americans have resigned themselves to thinking it was - that it was laughable, small - and that it could be defeated.

Harris's attacks hit Trump where it hurt: in his manhood. She repeatedly referred to American military leaders who had worked with Trump, whom she said had described him to her as "a disgrace". She recast his affinity for strongmen dictators around the world as less a fellowship than as a naïve, even childlike fandom, suggesting his respect for them is not reciprocated and that Vladimir Putin "would eat [him] for lunch".

A friend I watched the debate with, an expert in psychoanalysis, described Harris's tactics as a "symbolic castration". Trump reacted almost as if it were the real thing. He bellowed and ranted with offense, his anger giving credence to Harris's depiction of him as thin-skinned and weak.

Perhaps the highlight of the night came in Harris's response to the debate's second question, about abortion rights. Trump, whose position on abortion changes about as frequently as the tides, claimed his contribution to the end of Roe v. Wade was only fulfilling "what the people wanted". Harris responded with an eloquent, impassioned litany of the material deprivations and indignities forced upon those who seek abortions - from women who struggle to afford the children they already have to those who have been victims of rape. "They don't want that," Harris said of this state of affairs. "That is immoral," she said of the laws she calls "Trump abortion bans": a moving reversal of the anti-choice movement's historical claim to the moral high ground. The moment was a potent reminder of her strengths as a candidate over Joe Biden, whose answer on abortion in the June debate was barely coherent but thoroughly degrading to American women. Finally, it seems, the Democrats are willing to embrace their strongest issue, and American women's interests might be represented on the national stage with something like the gravity and respect that they deserve.

Early in the night, in a rare moment of lucidity and honesty, Trump spoke of his own policy plans. "I'm an open book," he said. "Everyone knows what I'm going to do." And it was true, though perhaps not in the way he meant it. Trump is, by now, a thoroughly familiar and predictable character, one you can always rely on to pursue narcissistic gratification and vulgar self-interest. If he's an open book, Americans already know the ending. The Harris campaign is betting that they want to hear a different story.

France's leftwing coalition had a serious chance to change

Alexander Hurst

MY friend Guillaume recently hit on a perfect analogy for French politics: in a scene from Succession, Logan Roy's children ask him why he is putting them through so much misery, and why he won't just turn his company over to them. To which the surly CEO says: "I love you, but you are not serious people."

The beauty of the Fifth Republic's institutions is how flexible they are. When there is a clear majority, the system is presidential. When there's not, it's parliamentary. Except, a parliament with no clear majority requires serious people willing to do the difficult work of forming a coalition that is able to govern. And unfortunately, France's collection of leftwing parties were unable to be serious about what governing entails.

French voters are upset with Macron - and rightly so - for naming the EU's Brexit

negotiator Michel Barnier as prime minister. Barnier's political family, Les Républicains, has only 47 seats (of 577) in the national assembly, and he will only survive no-confidence votes at the discretion of Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) - the party that leftwing and centrist voters voted strategically to block. The disillusionment alone is a vast danger in a time when voters everywhere are losing faith in their democracies. Macron's ego, his inability to accept having been wrong and to learn from it, ultimately swallowed his presidency.

But this situation is also the fault of the far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon's extreme intransigence. The entire left alliance, the New Popular Front (NFP), won more seats in the July elections than any other bloc but still lacks a majority. It has only 182 out of 577 seats in parliament. Of those, 71 belong to Mélenchon's

party, France Unbowed (LFI). And yet, Mélenchon - who is like Macron in one specific way: the widespread rejection he as a person elicits among the French at large - and others in his party insisted that the left would enact "its programme, nothing but the programme, but all of the programme".

There is just as much contempt for democracy in LFI's "our way or the high way" approach as there was in Macron's nomination of Barnier. The difference is that it failed, and Mélenchon's obstinacy torpedoed the one real shot that the NFP had in governing the country and enacting some portion of its programme - Laurence Tubiana.

France has a modern service and knowledge economy, where more than a fifth of the labour force either works for a small

business or is self-employed, and where one of the areas actually growing - tech - requires investors to risk huge amounts of capital for very uncertain future payoffs. The left needs to speak to these people not about what the economy looked like in the 1970s, but about what it is going to look like tomorrow. And yet, in the whole of the NFP's programme, AI wasn't mentioned once.

Not all of this is purely about Mélenchon's left. Even the centre left has failed to offer productive ways to reform the retirement system. The only thing that a majority of parliamentarians and the French public (everyone but Macron's centrist coalition) agree on is their dislike of the retirement reform, which they pledge to repeal. But there's no repealing the maths behind it: there are just fewer workers for every

retiree than there were a generation ago.

Are there ways around this? Undoubtedly. France could, for example, set up a system of public pension funds - modelled on its collection of non-profit health "mutuals" that form the backbone of its well-designed and effective hybrid public-private universal healthcare system - to redistribute market gains back to workers. Or, for a country firmly committed to a retirement system based on "repartition", the centre-left could propose some type of points-based system that applied a multiplier to all years worked prior to the age of 25, to account for the disparity between those who go to university and those who begin working early (most likely in jobs that take a bigger physical toll). Workers could have the choice to take their additional points in either time (departing for retirement at a younger age) or money

(by benefiting from a boosted monthly payment).

France - and Europe - face many challenges. War still rages in Ukraine, and an unreformed unanimous requirement means the EU has no effective foreign policy voice on Gaza. A humanitarian crisis and disaster of massive proportions is happening in Sudan. The EU needs to plan for a worst-case scenario in the US in November. Mario Draghi's report on competitiveness published this week warns of the risk of Europe's decline, and recommends an 800bn-a-year spending boost to maintain the foundation of competitiveness and innovation that can underwrite the green transition and a strong European social state into the future. To act on any of it, though, the French left is going to have to jettison its obstructionists - and become a force capable of building coalitions and governing.

Under Yoon, calls for South Korean nukes ‘normalized’

William Gallo & Lee Juhyun

LESS than two years after South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol pledged his country would not seek nuclear weapons, his newly appointed defense minister is openly envisioning scenarios in which South Korea might reconsider that stance. The comments by Defense Minister Kim Yong-hyun, who took office on Friday, are the latest evidence that the once-taboo idea of nuclear armament has gone mainstream in Seoul, amid growing concerns about North Korea's rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal and the long-term reliability of US protection.

As an academic and retired military officer, Kim has long argued that South Korea may need nuclear weapons in some form to counter North Korea. In recently unearthed footage from a 2020 seminar, Kim warned South Korea has "no survival or future" without such a deterrent. During his confirmation process last week, Kim stood by those comments, saying "all options" should remain open if the US nuclear umbrella proves insufficient.

It appears to be the first time a sitting South Korean defense minister has publicly entertained the possibility of acquiring nuclear weapons, and marks a sharp departure from his predecessor, who repeatedly and firmly rejected the proposal under any condition. Contacted by VOA, a South Korean defense ministry spokesperson maintained there has been "no change in the principle or position" that Seoul relies on US extended deterrence and the US-South Korea alliance to address the North Korean nuclear threat.

"However, if we cannot guarantee the survival and security of the state,

all means and methods are open," the spokesperson added, emphasizing the need to work closely with the United States. A spokesperson for Yoon's presidential office declined to comment for this story.

Most observers doubt South Korea will pursue nuclear weapons any time soon due to the massive economic and national security risks it would entail. Not only would South Korea risk enraging China, but Seoul could upset its alliance with the United States and invite painful international sanctions, all while possibly encouraging others in the region to consider nuclear weapons of their own.

Despite the risks, Yoon continues to drive the once unthinkable idea further into the mainstream, raising concerns that the proposal could become more acceptable - and eventually turn into reality. Yoon himself suggested last January that South Korea could develop nuclear arms if the North Korean threat escalated - raising alarm in Washington, where non-proliferation has long been a priority.

Three months later, Yoon and US President Joe Biden signed what is known as the Washington Declaration, which bolstered US defense assurances while reaffirming South Korea's commitments under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Yoon's appointment of Kim, however, appears to contradict the spirit of that agreement, said Lee Sang-sin, a research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification. What stands out most, Lee said, is the lack of public reaction to Kim's remarks.

Kim's appointment has drawn little attention from South Korean

media and been largely ignored by Western outlets - a possible indication that calls for South Korea's nuclear armament have become routine. "That's what I have warned about," said Lee. "[This conversation] has been normalized."

When contacted by VOA, the White House National Security Council declined to directly comment on Kim's statements, instead emphasizing South Korea's pledge under the non-proliferation treaty as outlined in the Washington Declaration. "We will continue to work with our ROK allies to strengthen our alliance and ensure we are well-positioned to deter nuclear threats," an NSC spokesman added. Polls have long suggested a majority of South Koreans support acquiring nuclear weapons, although such views were once confined to the political fringes.

Under Yoon's presidency, the debate has become so entrenched that even some state-backed research institutions are exploring the possibility of nuclear armament. A June report by the state-run Institute for National Security Strategy recommended that Seoul consider government reviews and public debates on various options, including the redeployment of US tactical nuclear weapons, NATO-style nuclear sharing, and South Korea developing its own arsenal. Such calls are not only coming from Seoul. A growing number of former Trump officials have expressed an openness to the idea, with some even highlighting the geopolitical advantages of South Korea getting its own weapons - an idea that Trump himself once teased.

The possibility of Trump's return,

along with his "America First" stance, has fueled concerns in Seoul that US protection may be less reliable long-term, further accelerating the nuclear debate. Some in South Korea appear eager to capitalize on the trend. In an opinion piece this month, Choi Kang, president of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, an influential conservative research group, argued South Korean nuclear weapons should be presented as beneficial to the US-South Korea alliance. "If a South Korean nuclear arsenal aligned with US security interests and came to be regarded as a 'common asset' of the alliance, then the United States might accept it or even support it," Choi wrote.

But many analysts caution that such statements downplay the risks of nuclear armament. "There really needs to be greater questioning of whether more nukes and more countries with nukes truly increases any country's security situation and a serious examination of what Seoul stands to lose by choosing that path," said Jenny Town, a North Korea specialist with the Washington-based Stimson Center. Others, like Mason Richey, who teaches international politics at Seoul's Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, argue it is unlikely South Korea would pursue nuclear weapons barring profound US-South Korea alliance problems and/or severe regional instability.

"That said, every elite policymaker who engages the South Korea nuclear debate makes it easier to continue down the slippery slope of thinking about nuclear weapons, studying how to develop them, assuring a latent capability, deciding to develop them, and then actually building them," he added.

VOAK

Britain is not a safe place for women

Allison Pearson

WHAT strange, mixed-up times we live in. A 78-year-old farmer has been fined £3,500 and must undergo 25 days of "rehabilitation" for letting his grandchildren ride on his tractor. Howard Walters was handed a prohibition notice by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) four years ago, but was filmed by neighbours (the spiteful sneaks) breaching the notice. An HSE executive explained it was not safe to let children ride on agricultural machinery. Shhhh! Whatever you do, don't tell the HSE that more than 1,700 prison inmates were released early today with a senior government source warning that a high proportion of those let out would be domestic abusers.

Given the choice between sitting in a tractor cab with a fun-loving Welsh grandad and walking the same streets as Dwayne the Impaler, a woman-hating recidivist, I reckon I know which kind of health and safety risk most of us would prefer to run. Unfortunately, we don't have a choice. Jailbirds are being set free across the country after serving only 40 per cent of their sentence, and abused women are glancing nervously over their shoulders, because our prisons are full.

Room must be found for all those hastily-tried, middle-aged white people who posted unpleasant racist remarks on Facebook during the riots which followed a massacre of little girls at a Taylor Swift dance class in Southport.

According to The Sun, leaked documents show that some of the usual checks done prior to release can now be done up to eight weeks after an inmate is let out - ample time to return to their dastardly ways or assault a former partner at their leisure.

Sir Keir Starmer in his sanctimonious, stony way told BBC News that "no high-risk prisoners" will be released. Really, Prime Minister? Among those who were scheduled to walk free today are a man who told his partner he was "enjoying" attacking her and another who strangled his girlfriend and broke her jaw.

Another beneficiary of the early-release scheme (due out in December, nine months earlier than scheduled) is Martin Underwood who, in 2021, repeatedly punched his partner, Elizabeth Hudson, in the stomach, hit her in the face with a phone, slashed her arm with a knife and told her he was going to kill her, then himself and make their young children "orphans". Hudson, who says she would have died if she hadn't escaped from the attack, has called the early-release scheme "unbelievably cruel".

The Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood claims she aimed to reduce the number of domestic abusers set free, announcing that those serving time for coercive control, stalking, harassment or breach of a restraining order as well as non-fatal throttling would be exempt. Are we reassured by the temporary exclusion of non-fatal throttlers? I fear not. Some of the UK's worst criminals were released early from jail. In 2022, Jordan McSweeney had been free for just nine days when he sexually assaulted and murdered Zara Aleena, a 35-year-old law graduate.

Time and again, we have seen that one man's benefit of the doubt is another human being's avoidable death. This reckless, under-supervised mass early release of prisoners (another 5,500 will be let out through September and October) comes at a time when a record 88,521 are behind bars.

The situation could be alleviated immediately if some of the 10,000-plus foreign nationals currently in prison in England and Wales were repatriated. Admittedly, it's not straightforward, but there appears to be a curious lack of will to do anything. Sometimes, the home country - Pakistan, Jamaica and Romania are the prime offenders - simply refuses to take them. Or, predictably, the FNO (Foreign National

Offender) claims his human rights won't be respected in his home country; his failure to respect human rights in ours doesn't count, of course.

It doesn't help that our Home Office is notoriously feeble in these matters. As Kemi Badenoch explained recently, many staff in that department have worked previously for refugee charities. According to Badenoch, they are more "activists" than civil servants. In practice, the result is that thousands of young males arriving illegally in the UK from lawless, misogynist countries are given leave to stay, and to hell with the Britons they endanger. (France's grant rate for asylum seekers is 27 per cent; the UK's is 57 per cent. Why do we accept double the number the French take if being a soft touch is not official policy?)

Were it not for those Home Office activists, a wonderful young man called Tommy Roberts, an aspiring Marine, would be alive today. Tommy's killer, an Afghan asylum seeker called Lawangeen Abdulrahimzai, arrived in the UK in 2019 on the back of a lorry having been refused asylum by a non-pushover country, Norway. He told Border Force officers he was 14 and fleeing the Taliban. Had Abdulrahimzai claimed to be gay and a Christian convert, he would have had a full house on the asylum seeker's Bingo card.

In fact, he was at least 19 and a double murderer. But where age is in question, case workers are under instruction to give the benefit of the doubt. It's not easy to get up-to-date figures, but Alp Mehmet of Migration Watch tells me that between 2012 and September 2021, of the asylum cases where age was disputed and which were resolved, 5,500 of the asylum seekers claiming to be children were over 18. (If the disputed claims being resolved continued at the 2021 rate, there would be a further 4,000-5,000 lying, cheating Abdulrahimzais living as "children" among us. A horrifying thought.)

It gets worse. Deemed to be 14, Lawangeen Abdulrahimzai was placed with a foster carer and given a place at a secondary school in Bournemouth. None of the teachers or teenagers had any clue that the new classmate had killed two fellow Afghans in Serbia with a Kalashnikov rifle. In January 2020, a dentist said Abdulrahimzai was older than he claimed. While the authorities agreed an age assessment was required, they felt that a mental health assessment was needed first. Once again, the needs of an illegal migrant were deemed paramount.

Try getting a mental health assessment for a British teenager. From 2020 onwards, there were several incidents of Abdulrahimzai carrying knives with which he was obsessed. He was accused of assaulting a student. Frankly, it's a miracle no children were killed.

In January 2022, the grievously complacent authorities confirmed an age assessment would finally be carried out because Abdulrahimzai had been "bringing females back to his placement". Just two months later, police received a call about a youth carrying a machete-style knife in public. In the early hours of March 22 2022, Abdulrahimzai got into an altercation with a friend of Tommy Roberts. Tommy intervened to protect his mate and Abdulrahimzai stabbed him to death.

The catalogue of errors is grotesque. Only after Tommy Roberts's murder was Interpol contacted and Abdulrahimzai's criminal record revealed. A heartbroken Roberts family was dumbfounded to discover their beloved boy lost his life because Border Force had neither checked the Afghan's age nor his identity, and failed to share the fingerprints which would have revealed both. Last year, a pre-inquest hearing was told that a review commissioned into the Home Office's role in processing Abdulrahimzai's immigration status had been completed but would

remain confidential as it contained details of the procedures used when processing applicants, which were "highly sensitive".

I bet they were. We don't want the public finding out how insanely negligent and pro-migrant is the system which is supposed to protect us, do we? Angry people might, you know, take to the streets and get arrested for being the PM's favourite whipping boys - "far-Right thugs". To rub salt in the family's open wound, last week Rachel Griffin, senior coroner for Dorset, ruled that there was no need for a full inquest into the circumstances surrounding Tommy Roberts' death. Griffin said the case did not meet the criteria because, although there were "individual errors", they "do not amount to a systemic failure".

Would that be the same system which was so hoodwinked, so hellbent on accommodating an illegal arrival from a dangerous country that it allowed a murderer to attend school with innocent British children? Any fair person would call that a "systemic failure", I think.

L a w a n g e e n Abdulrahimzai is now a Foreign National Offender, serving 29 years in our overcrowded prison system. We don't want him. He should never have been here in the first place. Ten days ago, Germany deported 28 hardened criminals to Afghanistan after secret talks with the Taliban. Among the deportees were an Afghan found guilty of raping an 11-year-old girl, and another who took part in a notorious gang-rape where the victim was 14. Sexually assaulting Western girls is practically a perk of illegal migration. What do we expect? Afghanistan is now the world capital of misogyny.

A hellish Handmaid's Tale of a place where women are lower than livestock. Not only must they cover every inch of themselves, they are no longer permitted to speak in public or sing, let alone dance to Taylor Swift.

One in five of the young males arriving every day on small boats crossing the Channel is Afghan. Does Yvette Cooper, the Home Secretary, think their misogyny magically dissolves on arrival at Dover? Does she believe it's consistent to announce she's thinking of making extreme misogyny a terrorist offence while continuing to grant admission to some of its foremost exponents?

If Germany can deport those varmint to Afghanistan while still under the European Convention of Human Rights, what excuse does the British Government have? Afghanistan is the largest single recipient of our aid - to my astonishment, I learnt the country received £350 million of taxpayers' cash in 2022-23. Is it really beyond the wit of the Home Office to leverage our largesse and get Kabul to take back its criminals and make Britons safer? Across Europe, liberal politicians who have been disastrously soft on migration are rapidly changing their tune. Talking about the Afghan deportations, Nancy Faeser, German interior minister, declared: "Our security is what matters. Our state has shown that it can act." Germany is also tightening its borders.

Our Home Office has taken the opposite view: Refugees Welcome, Tough Luck, Britons. Tommy Roberts deserves a full inquest to reveal how those deluded activists betrayed him.

I was talking the other day to a friend who works internationally in the field of VAWG (violence against women and girls). She said it was increasingly accepted that the rapid influx of migrants from countries that don't share Western values was "gradually limiting the space in which women and girls can safely exist". I flinched because I suppose I knew it was true. We all know it's true, which is why we are angry and so helpless. A country obsessed with health and safety has let in the biggest risk of all. From naively welcoming dangerous foreigners to releasing domestic abusers, Britain no longer feels like a safe country to be a woman.

Britain now stifles peaceful dissent like a repressive regime

Linda Lakhdhir

IN December 2023 when Stephen Ginnell was sentenced to six months in prison for slow marching for half an hour on the Holloway Road in north London, the sentence was considered shocking. Unfortunately, it is far from the exception. In fact, my organisation, Climate Rights International, has spent the past eight months looking into restrictions on climate protests among western democracies and has found that the UK - mostly under the Conservatives - has introduced some of the harshest anti-protest legislation in recent years.

You may remember Morgan Trowland and Marcus Decker, who were sentenced to multi-year prison sentences in April 2023 for climbing the cables of the Queen Elizabeth II bridge to object to new oil, gas and coal projects. The three-year sentence imposed on Trowland was, at the time, the longest ever for a climate protest in the UK. But, it has since been surpassed. In July, in a case that made international headlines, five fossil-fuel protesters were sentenced to four- and five-year sentences after participating in a Zoom call about staging climate protests on the M25.

These sentences are longer than those imposed on many of those involved in violent acts during the recent racist riots in Southport. They are the kinds of sentences that western governments routinely denounce when they are imposed on peaceful protesters in places such as Cambodia and Russia. While climate protesters are being sentenced to long prison terms, UK prisons are full to

the brim - with the government even releasing some violent offenders early because of overcrowding.

The UK government seeks to penalise climate protesters for absurdly low-level disruption. In 2023, the then home secretary, Suella Braverman, introduced legislation allowing police to stop protests if they interrupt people going about their day-to-day activities "to more than a minor degree". Arguably, this is the point of protest - a protest that causes no disruption is likely not an effective one. But after Braverman's changes to the Public Order Act were rejected by the House of Lords, the government pivoted to using regulatory powers to impose the definition that it sought - because regulatory powers receive less parliamentary scrutiny.

A court invalidated the regulations in a challenge by the human rights organisation Liberty, finding that the government had acted outside its powers. "More than minor" is not within the scope of the word "serious", the court concluded. You would hope that the Labour party would have changed tack since being elected. But in late August, the new home secretary, Yvette Cooper, decided to continue with the prior government's appeal of that ruling.

Laws have also been changed so that now, protesters who "lock on" to an object, land, or another person with some form of adhesive or handcuffs face up to four and a half years in prison. All they have to do to land that kind of sentence is cause "serious

disruption" to two or more people or an organisation. This is more than twice as long as the maximum sentence for racially aggravated assault in the UK. These penalties authorised and being imposed in the UK exceed those we have found in any of the other countries we examined.

We should be alarmed by this: a country that holds itself up as a beacon of the rule of law, bound by international commitments to freedom of expression and the right to assembly, is taking draconian steps to curb protest activities. And the example it is setting is one that will be followed by authoritarian countries eager to justify their own crackdowns on protest. And yet, these aren't even the worst or most innovative ways in which the UK has recently cracked down on climate protesters. People can now be prosecuted if their protest veers from its approved route or timing, even for those breaking the rules unintentionally. Violating protest conditions in England and Wales can now land a person in jail for four and a half years - quadruple what the sentence was in 2021.

There's more. In March 2023, members of Insulate Britain were jailed for seven weeks for contempt for mentioning that their actions were motivated by the climate crisis. The Just Stop Oil defendants were forbidden by the judge in their case from mentioning the climate crisis in their closing statements. Why shouldn't a jury be told why someone chose to block a road or march in protest before they make their decisions?

They are trying to highlight the devastating impacts of the climate crisis and the failure of the government to act. Their reasons for acting and their belief in the imminent threat posed by the climate crisis should be a legitimate factor for judges and juries to consider.

There was also the case of Trudi Warner, who faced contempt charges for standing outside the courthouse during a climate protest trial holding a sign that read: "Jurors, you have an absolute right to acquit a defendant according to your conscience." While the case against her was dismissed, with the judge calling it "disproportionate", 11 protesters who held similar signs outside the courthouse during the Just Stop Oil trial in July will face contempt hearings next month. Whether one likes the tactics of climate protesters or not, peaceful protest - including peaceful civil disobedience - is a basic right. Those engaging in civil disobedience are willing to risk consequences. But, in a democratic society, the laws and their enforcement should be reasonable, and the consequences proportionate.

In more than 10 years of research and advocacy on the right to protest, I have seen how restrictions on that right lead to a stifling of civil society and a government that insulates itself from criticism by its citizens. If the UK wants a healthy democracy, where people can peacefully express their discontent with government policies, it needs to start by rolling back draconian anti-protest legislation and protecting the right to protest.

US adversaries step up efforts to influence results of next election

Jeff Seldin

RUSSIA, Iran and China are ramping up efforts to impact the outcome of the US presidential election and down-ballot races, targeting American voters with an expanding array of sophisticated influence operations. The latest assessment from US intelligence agencies, shared Friday, warns that Russia remains the preeminent threat, with Russian influence campaigns seeking to boost the chances of Republican presidential candidate and former US President Donald Trump over Democratic candidate Vice President Kamala Harris.

Russian actors, led by networks created by the Kremlin-backed media outlet RT, are supporting Moscow's efforts to influence voter preferences in favor of the former president and diminish the prospects of the vice president," a senior intelligence official told reporters, briefing on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information. "RT has built and used networks of US and other Western personalities to create and disseminate Russia-friendly narratives while trying to mask the content in authentic Americans' free speech," the official said.

And RT, the official added, is just part of a growing Kremlin-directed campaign that is looking to impact not just the race for the White House, but smaller elections across the United States, with an added emphasis on swing states. "Russia's influence apparatus is very large and it's worth highlighting that they have other entities that are active," the official said. "Russia is working up and down ballot races, as well as spreading divisive issues."

Tracking the Russian influence

efforts has become more difficult, with US officials saying that there is a greater degree of sophistication and an increased emphasis on amplifying American voices with pro-Russian views rather than seeding social media with narratives crafted in the Kremlin. "It's not just about Russian bots and trolls and fake social media persona, although that's part of it," White House national security spokesperson John Kirby told VOA Friday.

"We're not taking anything for granted," he added. "There's no question that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin has every intent to try to sow discord here in the United States, to try to pump disinformation and Russian propaganda through to the American people, through what he believes were our credible sources, be they online or on television and we have to take that seriously." The intelligence officials declined to share additional specifics about Russia's network of influence operations. But indictments Wednesday from the US Justice Department have shed some light on the scope of the Kremlin's recent operations. In one case, the US charged two employees of RT with using fake personas and shell companies to funnel almost \$10 million to Tenet Media, a Tennessee-based company producing videos and podcasts for a stable of conservative political influencers.

The aim, prosecutors said, was to produce and disseminate content promoting what Moscow viewed as pro-Russian policies. In a separate action, the US seized 32 internet domains linked to an operation directed by a key aide to Putin. The aim, US officials said, was to mimic

legitimate US news sites to spread Russian-created propaganda.

US intelligence officials, however, said it would be a mistake to put any faith in Putin's words, including public comments Thursday expressing support for Harris. The US intelligence community "does not take Putin's public statements as representative of Russia's covert intentions," the senior official said. "There are many examples over the past several years where Putin's public statements do not align with Russian actions. For example, his comments that he would not invade Ukraine." US intelligence agencies Friday emphasized Russia is not alone in its effort to shape the outcome of the US elections in November, warning both Tehran and Beijing are sharpening their influence campaigns with just about 60 days until America voters go to the polls.

"Iran is making a greater effort than in the past to influence this year's elections, even as its tactics and approaches are similar to prior cycles," the intelligence official said, describing a "multi-pronged approach to stoke internal divisions and undermine voter confidence in the US democratic system. US intelligence agencies previously assessed that Iran has focused part of its efforts on denigrating the Trump campaign, seeing his election as likely to worsen tensions between Tehran and Washington. US officials last month also blamed Iran for a hack-and-leak operation targeting the Trump campaign, though they said that Iran-linked actors have also sought to infiltrate the Harris campaign.

As for China, US intelligence officials said it appears Beijing is still

content to stay out of the US presidential race, seeing little difference between Trump and Harris. But there are indications China is accelerating its efforts to impact other political races. US intelligence "is aware of PRC [People's Republic of China] attempts to influence US down-ballot races by focusing on candidates it views as particularly threatening to core PRC security interests," the official said. "PRC online influence actors have also continued small scale efforts on social media to engage US audiences on divisive political issues, including protests about the Israel-Gaza conflict and promote negative stories about both political parties," the official added.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington, Friday, rejected the US intelligence assessment. "China has no intention and will not interfere in the US election, and we hope that the US side will not make an issue of China in the election," spokesperson Liu Pengyu told VOA in an email.

Liu added that accusations Beijing is using social media to sway US public opinion "are full of malicious speculations against China, which China firmly opposes." While US intelligence officials have identified Russia, Iran and China, as the most prominent purveyors of disinformation, they are not alone.

Officials have said countries like Cuba are also engaging in influence operations, though at a much smaller scale. And other countries are edging closer to crossing that line. "We are seeing a number of countries considering activities that, at a minimum, test the boundaries of election influence," according to the US assessment. "Such activities include lobbying political figures to try to curry favor with them in the event they are elected to office."



SCCI moves PHC against IPPs agreements

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday filed a writ petition in Peshawar High Court against Independent Power Producers agreements.

In the writ petition, the SCCI prayed for conducting a forensic audit by reviewing all IPPs contracts.

The petition furthermore pleaded to take immediate steps to tackle the issue of IPP Payouts in accordance with correct parameters and bring about substantial relief for all categories of power consumers.

The writ opposed renewal and signing new agreements with IPPs.

It also called for implementation of recommendations of the Special meeting of the Senate's Standing Committee on Power regarding excess profits paid to RFO based IPPs.

This was told at a news press conference by Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fuad Ishaq along with vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi, Anjum e Tajran Lifetime president Haji Muhammad Afzal,

former SCCI' presidents Riaz Arsahd, Malik Niaz Ahmad and traders leaders, held today here at the chamber house.

Fuad during the presser said IPPs agreements unbeneficial for the country's economy and FPCCI and chambers raised proactively voice against them.

Today, he said SCCI has formally filed a writ petition against IPPs agreement in PHC.

The SCCI president called IPPs a major obstacle in economic growth, which has brought stagnation in industries, business and commercial activities.

He furthered said IPPs is a biggest issue for Pakistan and the coming generation and its elimination become essential. He added IPPs had been installed which are excessive of the country's requirement.

Presenting figures before the reporters, Fuad Ishaq informed that the total installed capacity of electricity in Pakistan is 45,000 megawatt.

He explained Pakistan's hydel power generation remained 11,000 megawatt in the last year while

nuclear 3,500MW and green energy and solar energy 3,000MW.

The SCCI chief accused that IPPs agreements were made with blue-eyed people. He mentioned that agreements would be made for more than 12 new IPPs.

Following the protest of FPCCI and chambers, he said renewal of six IPPs has been stopped.

Every year, the cost of payment on head of capacity charges is increasing and this year the government will pay Rs2800billion to IPPs on head of capacity charges, Fuad told the media.

He elaborated according to SCCI's research, capacity payment to IPPs is being made as Rs24/kw against Rs17.31/kw as per report of NEPRA, which is clear contradiction of the agreement that had been made with IPPs, which is biggest burden on exchequer that had been collecting from poor people pockets.

Fuad Ishaq said Pakistan is being cheated in name of IPPs agreement wherein over invoicing and less heat value are being shown.

Furthermore, he said IPPs in their own balance

sheets showed that their profits from 36 to 45 per cent against 15 to 17 per cent profit that had been indicated in the agreement.

He called for conduct of forensic audits and abolishing of IPPs contracts.

Presser also attended by SCCI former SVP Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, former VP Abdul Jalil Jan, Khalid Sultan Khawaja, executive members Haji Ghulam Hussain, Fazal Mugeem, Ismail Safi, former provincial chairman APCEA Mushtaq Ahmad, Fahad Amin, Ihsanullah, Rashid Iqbal Siddique, Sadder Gul, Faiz Rasool, Fazal e Wahid, Ishiaq Paracha, Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan, and Secretary Sohail Anjum and others.

The SCCI chief gave reference to a report of NEPRA, in which Rs53billion till June 2022 had been collected from people under the Economic Merit Order. He said decisions were made on adhoc basis in Pakistan, resultantly bringing negative economic growth and business and commercial activities to standstill the situation and increase de-industrialization.



PESHAWAR: President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fuad Ishaq addressing a press conference at Chamber's House. Vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi also present on occasion.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Seven ships, MSC Surabaya-VIII, Maersk Nyassa, Maersk Hartford, MSC Capetown-III, Da Heng Shan, Simaisma and Al-Diab-II scheduled to load/offload Container, Bitumen, LNG and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Elengy Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Ab Serena and Lusail with Chemicals and LNG are arrived at outer anchorage port on Wednesday.

Forty ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, MSC Surabaya-VIII and Diamond Globe left the port on today morning, while eight more ships, Maersk Hartford, Maersk Nyassa, MSC Capetown-III, Eva Hong Kong, Sea Destiny, Ncc Bader, Al-Diab-II and Au-Taurus are expected to sail on Wednesday.

Cargo volume of 277,674 tonnes, comprising 200,007 tonnes imports cargo and 77,667 tonnes export cargo carried in 7,779 Containers (3,992 TEUs Imports& 3,787 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Ten ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them six ships, HPC Vision, New Levant, Torm Malaysia, Khairpur, Mayagas-1 and Lusail & three more ships, CI Anzi He, Marathopolis and CMA CGM La Scala carrying Fertilizer, PEAS, Palm oil, Mogas, LPG, LNG, Coal and Container are expected to take berths at FAP, LCT, FOTCO, EVTL, PGPC, PIBT and QICIT respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile another containers ship 'ONE Recommendation' is due to arrive at port on Thursday.

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 634 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 634.94 points, a negative change of 0.80 percent, closing at 78,651.80 points against 79,286.74 points on the last working day.

A total of 532,732,689 shares were traded during the day as compared to 509,490,385 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14.735 billion against Rs.13.763 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 333 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 114 of them recorded gains and 209 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 10 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 80,930,490 shares at Rs 1.52 per share, Pak Elektron with 42,596,524 shares at Rs.26.85 per share and Waves Home Appliances with 34,023,632 shares at Rs.9.42 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maxi-

mum increase of Rs.23.01 per share price, closing at Rs 17,392.00, whereas the runner-up was Bata Pakistan Limited with a Rs 18.54 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,658.96.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 93.03 per share closing at Rs 906.93 followed by Mari Petroleum Company Limited with Rs 82.86 decline to close at Rs 2,586.20.

Rupee gains 07 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 07 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.54 against the previous day's closing of Rs278.61.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279 and Rs 280.25 respectively.

The price of Euro remained unchanged and closed at Rs307.51, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen went up by 04 paise and closed at Rs1.97, whereas a decrease

of 41 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs364.34 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs364.75.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 02 paise and 03 paise to close at Rs 75.83 and Rs74.23 respectively.

Gold rates up by Rs2,300 to Rs264,000

The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.2,300 and was sold at Rs.264,000 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 261,700 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.1,972 to Rs. 226,337 from Rs. 224,365 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.207,476 from Rs. 205,668, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,900 and Rs.2,486.28 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$23 to \$2,523 from \$2,523, the Association reported.

Voters to revitalize Sarhad Chamber with their power on Sep 25 polls



F.P. Reort

PESAHWAR: We have no personal grievances, but we will no longer allow anyone to undermine the dignity of the Sarhad Chamber and Peshawar's business community. Merit and only merit will prevail, said Haji Ghulam Ali, addressing the event.

At a dinner organized by the Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association, the attendance of hundreds of voters resembled a referendum in favor of the Sarhad Business Alliance (SBA). "The business community has already decided in our favor," expressed Syed Zahir Ali Shah, Muhammad Ishaq, and Malik Meher Elahi in their speeches.

Peshawar: Former Governor and SBA Patron-in-Chief Haji Ghulam Ali, along with Syed Zahir Ali Shah, Muhammad Ishaq, and Malik Meher Elahi, referred to the dinner hosted by the Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association, attended by hundreds of Sarhad Chamber voters, as a referendum in SBA's favor. They said that Peshawar's business community has already delivered its verdict, and on

September 25, voters will breathe new life into the Sarhad Chamber with their vote, paving the way for true change.

They shared these views last night during the dinner hosted by the Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association, addressing a large gathering of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry voters who expressed their support for the SBA. Leading figures from the association, including Chairman Siraj-ud-Din, Provincial Chairman Mubeen Khan, Aslam Perviz, former Chairman Muhammad Iqbal, and other prominent members, were also present.

The SBA leadership received a warm welcome with a guard of honor and flower petals showered upon their arrival at the venue. The event represented every sector of the business community, adding further significance, raising spirits, and igniting new hopes. During their speeches, the Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association leaders emphasized the crucial need for SBA leadership, particularly Haji Ghulam Ali, at this juncture. They expressed their

commitment to standing alongside him to liberate the Sarhad Chamber from self-serving interests.

They lamented how, for the past ten years, the traders and industrialists of Peshawar have suffered without support from the chamber's leadership, who are now adopting a superficial "sacrifice" approach as elections approach. However, this deceptive behavior will no longer work. Under the leadership of Haji Ghulam Ali, known as the people's governor, the alliance will move forward united and confidently toward victory on September 25.

When Haji Ghulam Ali was called to speak, the hall erupted in applause. In his address, along with Syed Zahir Ali Shah, Muhammad Ishaq, and Malik Meher Elahi, they commended the Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association for organizing a historic event and for the massive turnout of voters, calling it nothing short of a referendum.

They assured the audience that they understand the pulse of the business community and will fulfill every promise made. Haji

Ghulam Ali highlighted how SBA had chosen candidates based solely on merit and competence, devoid of personal connections or friendships. He promised that once elected, they would also reverse the decision by the Chinese Embassy to blacklist the Sarhad Chamber. "We will restore the chamber's dignity by inviting the Chinese Ambassador to visit the Sarhad Chamber, ensuring that no one will face difficulties in obtaining visas again."

He called on voters to support the SBA panel and its commitment to merit and real change on September 25. During the event, for the first time in history, all SBA candidates' names, photos, qualifications, and certificates were displayed continuously as slides on a projector, ensuring complete transparency for the voters, who appreciated the gesture and expressed full confidence in SBA.

Cars' sale up 27%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of cars during the first two months of the current financial year 2024-25 increased by 27.70 per cent compared to the same months of last year, a recent data released by Pakistan Automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA) said.

According to the data, as many as 12,274 cars were sold during the months under review as opposed to 9,611 units in the same months of last year. The breakup figures showed that 1,863 units of Honda Civic and City were sold during July-August 2024-25 compared to the sale of 700 units during July-August 2023-24. Toyota Corolla and Yaris cars sales increased by 22.18 per cent as it went up to 2,671 units from 2,186 units in the previous year.

Suzuki Swift's sales also rose by 40.52 per cent as its sales surged from 755 units to 1,061 units this year.

Sale of Suzuki Cultus declined to 227 units during the first two months of the current year, whereas during the same months last year, the sale was recorded at 482 units while the sale of Suzuki WagonR also decreased to 329 units from 604 units last year.

Indonesian Charge d'Affaires for further promoting mutual trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Indonesia, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma, on Wednesday, stressed the need to further promote bilateral trade between Pakistan and Indonesia for the mutual benefit of the people of both countries.

During his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Rahmat Hindiarta highlighted the historic bilateral trade, diplomatic relations, and economic cooperation between both countries and emphasized the need to explore other avenues to strengthen trade and economic relations.

He urged Pakistani businessmen to explore Indonesia's potential for international trade and investment, emphasizing the importance of strengthening business-to-business relations between the two nations, said a press release.

He stressed the need to utilize the existing Indonesia-Pakistan Preferential Trade Agreement and work towards a Free Trade Agreement.

He also highlighted

Indonesia's strategic location and established trade ties with the ASEAN region, offering Pakistani businesses access to a market of over 650 million consumers in ASEAN.

The diplomat noted that Pakistan could become a trade hub for Indonesia in Central Asia, benefiting both countries through comprehensive planning. He praised ICCI's contributions to fostering economic linkages between the two nations and invited members to attend the 39th Trade Expo Indonesia from October 9-12.

He further emphasized the need for increased joint events to foster greater awareness and understanding between the two nations, leading to enhanced business and tourism opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari highlighted Pakistan's status as Indonesia's 6th largest trade partner in Asia, with relations based on mutual trust and confidence. He underscored the need for regular trade delegation exchanges and reaffirmed

ICCI's commitment to strengthening cooperation with the Indonesian Embassy.

Bakhtawari noted that collaborative efforts and mutual understanding are key to overcoming trade challenges and that working together can unlock new opportunities and enhance economic prosperity.

He emphasized the importance of increasing bilateral trade volume, which is currently below its potential, and highlighted the role of Central Asian markets in further boosting trade relations.

He also underlined the need for direct flights between the two countries to further strengthen bilateral trade and investment relations.

Secretary General of the United Business Group, Zafar Bakhtawari, stated that the similarities between the two countries, along with their strategic locations—Pakistan at the crossroads of Asia and Indonesia at the heart of Southeast Asia—have helped foster a strong bond between them.

US consumer inflation rises 2.5 per cent

ISTANBUL (APP): Consumer inflation in the US annually rose 2.5% in August, marking the slowest annual increase since February 2021, according to data released Wednesday.

CPI, which measures changes in the prices of goods and services from a consumer's perspective, came in line with market estimates, and showed a significant slowdown from a year-on-year increase of 2.9% recorded in July.

The figure is also a sharp decline from the 9.1% annual gain recorded in July 2022, which was the highest since November 1981. CPI showed an increase of 0.2%, and came in line with market expectations, following also a 0.2% gain in July.

Stocks, dollar diverge before key US inflation data

LONDON (AFP/APP): Major stock markets and the dollar diverged Wednesday before US inflation data that could help indicate the size of an expected interest-rate cut from the Federal Reserve next week.

In Europe, London's share-price gains were capped in midday deals by official data showing Britain's economy stalled in July. Paris and Frankfurt grew by bigger amounts as investors in the eurozone geared up for the European Central Bank's interest-rate decision Thursday.

Asia's main equity indices closed lower with a strong yen weighing on Tokyo's market, while Chinese stocks were knocked by concerns over

China's struggling economy, analysts said.

The US consumer price index later in the day will be pored over for an insight into the Fed's rate decision on September 18 and what it could mean for the global economy. "The die has been cast for a rate cut by the Fed next week," Mark Zandi at Moody's Analytics told AFP.

Wednesday's inflation print "would have to be well above the current consensus... to dissuade the Fed not to ease" by 25 basis points.

"While a 50 basis-points cut is possible, it is less than likely, regardless of the CPI print, as the Fed would cut that much only if something in the economy

or financial system was going off the rails. That isn't happening," Zandi added. The Fed is expected to cut borrowing costs for the first time since inflation rocketed and then fell in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The European Central Bank is expected to reduce eurozone interest rates again on Thursday.

Elsewhere Wednesday, the yen hit a nine-month high after a Bank of Japan official hinted at more monetary tightening.

The Japanese unit was boosted also by bets on a Kamala Harris presidency after she was considered to have come out on top in her US presidential debate with Donald Trump and follow-

ing her endorsement by superstar Taylor Swift.

The chances of Trump losing weighed on bitcoin after he had previously vowed to be a "pro-bitcoin president" if elected in November.

Another round of subpar US jobs data last week revived worries that the world's top economy was slowing more than expected and could be on course for a recession.

Investor uncertainty over the United States is compounded by the struggles of China's economy, as leaders there try to kickstart growth in the face of a crisis in the huge property sector, tepid consumer activity and soaring youth unemployment.



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)'s Tax Education Department organized a training session at Iqra University, Islamabad, which was attended by the students and faculty members of the university.

The FBR team that visited Iqra University, Islamabad, included Secretary Tax Education Muhammad Alamzeb

Khan, Second Secretary Ms. Angel David, Second Secretary Muhammad Zahid Awan, Inspector Salman Khaliq, and Coordinator Muhammad Zia Farooqi. Secretary Tax Education Muhammad Alamzeb Khan and Ms. Angel David briefed the participants about the importance of a tax culture and emphasized that as taxpayers, we should fulfill our national responsibilities. The Dean of Social

Sciences at Iqra University, Dr. Aitzaz Ahmed, addressed the participants of the session and appreciated the efforts of FBR in promoting a tax compliance culture in the country.

A question and answer session was also held, during which attendees asked questions related to taxes, which were answered satisfactorily.

Prizes were also distributed among the students on the occasion.



FAISALABAD Captains of five cricket teams unveil Champions' Cup trophy at Iqbal Stadium for one-day Champions' Cup to be played from September 12 to 29, 2024. —APP Photo

Champions One-Day Cup kicks off Thursday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The University of Management and Technology (UMT) Markhors (previously Wolves) will face off against the Panthers in the opening match of the Champions One-Day Cup at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad on Thursday.

Mohammad Rizwan will captain the UMT Markhors, with Misbah-ul-Haq serving as their mentor, while the Panthers will be led by Shadab Khan, with Saqlain Mushtaq as their mentor. The season-opening event boasts a total prize pool of PKR49 million, with the tournament winner on 29 September set to take home PKR30 million and the runner-up receiving PKR15 million, according to a press release.

On Friday, Mohammad Haris' Allied Bank Stallions will clash with Shaheen Shah Afridi's Nurpur Lions, followed by Saturday's fixture between Saud Shakeel's Dolphins and Shadab Khan's Panthers. All five teams have been in Faisalabad for the past five days, participating in extensive training sessions to prepare for this newly launched tournament, which features the best of the country's top cricketers.

The tournament has been planned with an eye on next year's ICC Champions Trophy 2025, with stand-out performers looking to strengthen their chances of breaking into the national side that will compete in ODIs in Australia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, and a home tri-series against New Zealand and South Africa in the lead-up to the biggest ICC Event of 2025.

White-ball head coach Gary Kirsten will be in Faisalabad to observe the 50-over tournament, which will be played on a single-round basis. Later in the competition, red-ball coach Jason Gillespie will also join Kirsten in Faisalabad.

In this high-stakes tournament

where every match counts, the top-four sides will progress to the play-offs, culminating in the final on September 29.

UMT Markhors captain Mohammad Rizwan said, "A high-quality domestic event like the Champions One-Day Cup is the lifeblood of any leading cricket-playing nation, as it provides equal and fair opportunities for both established and emerging cricketers to strengthen their claims for national selection. With that in mind, I am eagerly looking forward to this tournament and am confident it will meet all its strategic objectives.

Panthers captain Shadab Khan said, "We've trained hard in Faisalabad and now it's time to translate that effort into positive results. We need to bring intensity and passion every time we step onto the field, as this tournament will not be easy to win. Only the team that will show consistency will come out on top, and I firmly believe we have what it takes to be that team.

Fixtures from Thursday-Sunday (all matches will begin at 3pm):

Thurs, Sep 12 – UMT Markhors v Panthers. Aleem Dar and Asif Yaqoob (on-field umpires); Waleed Yaqub (third umpire), Zulfiqar Jan (fourth umpire); Ali Naqvi (match referee).

Fri, Sep 13 – Allied Bank Stallions v Nurpur Lions. Aleem Dar and Waleed Yaqub (on-field umpires); Asif Yaqoob (third umpire), Zulfiqar Jan (fourth umpire); Ali Naqvi (match referee).

Sat, Sep 14 – Dolphins v Panthers. Asif Yaqoob and Zulfiqar Jan (on-field umpires); Aleem Dar (third umpire), Waleed Yaqub (fourth umpire); Bilal Khilji (match referee).

Sun, Sep 15 – UMT Markhors v Allied Bank Stallions. Aleem Dar and Rashid Riaz (on-field umpires); Waleed Yaqub (third umpire),

Zulfiqar Jan (fourth umpire); Bilal Khilji (match referee).

16-player squads- Dolphins: Saud Shakeel (captain), Asif Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Hurraira, Muhammad Akhlaq, Muhammad Riazullah, Noman Ali, Qasim Akram, Sahibzada Farhan, Sameen Gul, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Sufiyan Moqim, Umar Amin and Usman Qadir; Mentor – Sarfaraz Ahmed.

Lions: Shaheen Shah Afridi (captain), Aamer Yamin, Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Ahmed Daniyal, Faissal Akram, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Asghar, Mohammad Taha, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Omair Bin Yousuf, Rohail Nazir, Sajjad Ali Hashmi, Sharoon Siraj and Sirajuddin; Mentor – Waqar Younis.

Markhors: Mohammad Rizwan (captain), Abdul Samad, Akif Javed, Ali Usman, Bismillah Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haseebullah, Iftikhar Ahmed, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Faizan, Mohammad Imran Jnr, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Sarwar Afridi, Muhammad Imran, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Shahnawaz Dahani and Zahid Mehmood; Mentor – Misbah ul Haq.

Panthers: Shadab Khan (captain), Abdul Wahid Bangalzai, Ahmed Bashir, Amad Butt, Ararat Minhas, Azan Awaiz, Haider Ali, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Umar, Mohammad Zeeshan, Mubasir Khan, Rizwan Mehmood, Saim Ayub, Umar Siddiq, Usama Mir and Usman Khan; Mentor – Saqlain Mushtaq.

Stallions: Mohammad Haris (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Adil Amin, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Huseain Talat, Jahandad Khan, Mehran Mumtaz, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Amir Khan, Saad Khan, Shan Masood, Tayyab Tahir, Ubaid Shah, Yasir Khan and Zaman Khan; Mentor – Shoaib Malik.

tant referee review.

Captain Rodriguez sent Aston Villa goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez the wrong way from the spot to score the 60th-minute winner. "I don't think I've ever scored against them - there's a first time for everything," said Rodriguez.

"We want to get used to playing finals. Today was just another game, but against a team that has won everything - this victory tastes even better."

Elsewhere, midfielder Manuel Ugarte, who joined Manchester United last month from Paris St-Germain, started for Uruguay in their 0-0 draw at Venezuela. Argentina remain top of the 10-team table by two points from second-placed Colombia.

The top six teams automatically qualify after 18 rounds of fixtures, which carry on until September 2025. The seventh-placed side go into an intercontinental play-off against a team from another confederation. In Asia's World Cup qualifiers, Australia were held to a 0-0 draw at Indonesia on Tuesday, having lost 1-0 at home to Bahrain in their opening match last Thursday.

Japan, also in Australia's group, were 5-0 winners away to Bahrain as Premier League trio Wataru Endo (Liverpool), Kaoru Mitoma (Brighton), and Daichi Kamada (Crystal Palace) all started for Japan. South Korea recorded their first win in World Cup 2026 qualifying, beating Oman 3-1 with Tottenham captain Son Heung-min and Wolves forward Hwang Hee-chan on target.

Asian Champions Trophy: Pakistan defeat Japan 2-1 to register first win

HULUNBUIR CITY (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan on Wednesday defeated Japan 2-1 to register their first win of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy at the Moqi Hockey Training Base in Hulunbuir City, Inner Mongolia, China.

The first goal was scored by Nadeem Ahmed in the first quarter but later it was equalised as Japan scored a goal in the second quarter.

In the 10th minute of the

second quarter, Sufyan Khan scored a goal to restore Pakistan's lead which was enough to secure a win. It must be noted that Pakistan's first two games ended in a draw.

The Green Shirts' clash against South Korea on Monday ended in a 2-2 draw after they failed to defend their two-goal lead.

South Korea took the lead by scoring a goal in the second quarter, which

remained intact until the third quarter. Pakistan's team could not score any goals up to the third quarter and was losing by one goal.

However, in the fourth quarter, the Pakistan team made an impressive comeback, with Hanan Shahid scoring two quick goals.

But before the match could end, Korea scored another goal to level the game. On Sunday, Pakistan's match against Malaysia also

ended in a 2-2 draw.

Pakistan will play China on September 12 followed by India on September 14.

Pakistan's Asian Champions Trophy Schedule
vs Malaysia (2-2) — September 8
vs South Korea (2-2) — September 9
vs Japan (2-1) — September 11
vs China — September 12
vs India — September 14.

Babar, Rizwan, Shaheen move up in ICC Test rankings

DUBAI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's trio of Babar Azam, Mohammed Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi have improved their rankings in the latest ICC Test rankings.

Pakistan's white-ball captain Babar Azam, despite having a dry run in the red-ball format, climbed up one place to 11th in the latest ICC Test rankings for batters.

He now has 712 rating points - eight points short of number 10 Marnus Labuschagne of Australia.

Babar, who is the ranking leader in the ODI rankings, had dropped out of the top 10 in the Test rankings last week for the first time in almost five years.

The right-handed batter was placed 9th before the second Bangladesh Test, but dropped three places to 12th, after a poor string of scores in the home series.

Babar has not managed a half-century in his last 16 Test innings. Meanwhile, wicket-keeper batter Mohammed Rizwan has also moved one place up to the 9th with 720 rating points.

On the other hand, Pakistan's two middle-order batters Saud Shakeel and Salman Ali Agha saw a decline in Test rankings.

Saud dropped to 21st place with 661 rating points, while Agha fell to 32nd place with 606 points.

England's Joe Root holds on to his spot as the No.1 ranked Test batter despite scores of just 13 and 12 at The Oval, although the right-hander does see his rating fall from 922 rating points to 899 and allows the likes of New Zealand duo Kane Williamson and Daryl Mitchell and Australia's Steve Smith to draw closer.

Test rankings for bowlers

Fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has returned to the top 10 in bowlers' Test rankings. He is now placed 10th with 709 rating points.

Sri Lankan bowlers Lahiru Kumara and Milan Rathnayake have also seen improvements on the back of their thumping win in the third Test against England. They are now placed 32nd and 84th places respectively.

England's Olly Stone has risen to 74th following his three wickets in the first innings against Sri Lanka.

Ravichandran Ashwin of India continues to lead the Test bowling rankings with 870 rating points, followed closely by Australia's Josh Hazlewood and Jasprit Bumrah, who share the second spot with 847 rating points each.

Afghanistan-NZ Test faces complete washout

GREATER NOIDA (AFP): The third day of the only Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand was called off because of rain on Wednesday, with the match in danger of being washed out without a ball being bowled.

Afghanistan's adopted home ground outside India's capital at Greater Noida has been beset by problems, with rain falling since Tuesday night on an already waterlogged outfield that caused the first two days to be lost.

The venue, which is hosting its first Test, has come under scrutiny for lacking world-class facilities and basic drainage.

Electric fans have been used in desperate attempts to make sodden patches playable at the ground, which saw dry weather and sunshine on the previous two days.

Ground staff dug up one wet area refilling it with dry soil and laying fresh turf.

Afghanistan have hosted several T20 and one-day internationals since 2017 at

the venue and their cricket board have defended their choice of Greater Noida.

"We considered three potential venues in India — Bengaluru, Kanpur, and Greater Noida," they said Tuesday, noting the first two were "unavailable due to BCCI's domestic matches".

It is only Afghanistan's 10th Test match.

Tim Southee's New Zealand are due to travel on to Sri Lanka for two Tests beginning next week before returning for three more against India.

Man Utd report net loss of £113.2m for 2023-24

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester United have reported a net loss of £113.2m in the year to 30 June, their latest accounts show.

It follows losses of £28.7m in 2022-23 and £115.5m in 2021-22, and their latest figures take total losses over the past five years to over £370m.

Despite the results, United are not expected to breach the Premier League's profit and sustainability rules because not all spending goes against their calculations

and clubs can claim allowances known as 'add backs'. Under Premier League rules clubs cannot lose more than £105m over a three-year period

and Everton and Nottingham Forest received points deductions for being in breach.

"The club remains committed to, and in compliance with, both the Premier League's profit and sustainability rules and Uefa's financial fair play regulations," said United chief executive Omar Berrada.

United's new financial figures cover a period when they finished eighth in the Premier League and finished bottom of their Champions League group, but won the FA Cup. Last season also saw British billionaire Sir Jim Ratcliffe purchase a 27.7% stake in the club. United director Sir Dave Brailsford has led a wide-ranging review of club operations since Ineos' co-ownership of the club was confirmed in December.

In July, it was announced United would cut 250 jobs as part of a determination to slash costs. The club say

they expect to save between £30m and £35m over two years from 2025 due to the 'club-wide cost review'.

In addition to the long standing debt of \$650m (£496.52m), United also have 'total current borrowings' of £35.6m, and the outstanding balance of the revolving credit facility on 30 June was £30.0m.

United say they expect to generate between £650m and £670m in revenue next year after recording a record £661.8m this year, while wages rose 10% to £364.7m. United, who will play in the Europa League this season, have won one of their three Premier League games so far.

They signed five players this summer in Manuel Ugarte, Joshua Zirkzee, Leny Yoro, Matthijs de Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui.

Craig gets 12-month ban after cocaine arrest

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia's Tom Craig has been banned from playing hockey for 12 months after being arrested on suspicion of buying cocaine during the Paris 2024 Olympics.

Craig must serve half of the ban with the remaining six months suspended "contingent upon meeting conduct and behavioural requirements".

Hockey Australia said the ban began on 9 September and that the 29-year-old will be eligible for the 2025 national men's squad, which is set to be announced at the end of the year.

Craig was released without charge but given a warning by a judge after French police detained him for allegedly trying to buy cocaine days after Australia lost their quarter-final in Paris.

"Craig is required to



complete mandatory training and education programmes as part of his sanction," a Hockey Australia statement said.

"Tom has had access to all of the athlete support services under our programme and he will continue to do so throughout his suspension. His welfare remains our priority."

Craig admitted he had "made a terrible mistake"

following his release from custody and apologised to his family, friends, teammates and Australia's Olympic team.

Australia's chief de mission Anna Meares said that Craig is "a good person who made a bad decision".

Craig has made more than 100 appearances for Australia and helped them win silver at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

UAJK concludes Sports C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) successfully concluded the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Inter-University Badminton (Boys) and Cricket (Girls) Championships with a grand closing ceremony held at the Chella Campus on Wednesday. The Vice-Chancellor of UAJK, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, was the chief guest at the event, received a press release here.

In his address, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi congratulated the winning teams and commended the runners-up for their outstanding performances. He emphasized that sports are a vital means of connecting the youth from different regions on a single platform, promoting unity, teamwork, and healthy competition. "I am also a volleyball player and a strong advocate for the promotion of sports," said Prof. Abbasi. "Sports ignite a passion for winning and help us build resilience to gracefully accept defeat." He further expressed his appreciation to all the participating universities and

their officials for their enthusiastic participation and support throughout the championship.

Director of Sports from the University of Poonch Rawalakot, Mr. Muhammad Younis, also addressed the gathering, expressing gratitude on behalf of all the participating universities for the excellent arrangements made by UAJK. He lauded the university's efforts in creating a welcoming environment that ensured a smooth and successful championship. UAJK's Director of Sports, Ms. Nighat Naz Gillani, also spoke on the occasion, highlighting the significance of such events in fostering sportsmanship and unity among young athletes.

In the Badminton (Boys) Championship, the University of Poonch Rawalakot emerged as the champion, while the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) secured the runner-up position, and the Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST) achieved third place. In the Cricket (Girls) C'ship,

the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) stood as the champion, with the University of Poonch Rawalakot as the runner-up, and the Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST) took third place. Following the announcement of the results, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, along with UAJK dignitaries and directors of the participating universities, awarded trophies, certificates, and mementos to the winners and runners-up, recognizing their dedication, hard work, and sportsmanship.

The championship was marked by intense competition and exceptional talent displayed by the teams. The event served as an excellent opportunity to bring together young athletes from various universities, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and mutual respect. The participating universities included Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST), the University of Management Sciences Kotli, the University of Poonch Rawalakot, and UAJK.



NEW YORK (Agencies): Brazil suffered their fourth defeat in five qualifying games with a 1-0 loss to Paraguay as Argentina were beaten 2-1 by Colombia in the latest qualifying matches for the 2026 World Cup.

Inter Miami's Diego Gomez scored the winner for Paraguay in Asuncion after 20 minutes as Brazil failed to register a shot on target in the first half.

Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson, Newcastle midfielder Bruno Guimaraes and West Ham playmaker Lucas Paqueta all started all started for Brazil with the Real Madrid trio of Rodrygo, Endrick and Vinicius Jr in attack.

"I want to apologize to the fans, I know it's a difficult time, but we just want to improve," Vinicius told Brazilian TV channel Globo. The 24-year-old winger has scored over 20 goals for Real in each of the last three seasons but has

only five goals from 35 caps for Brazil and failed to score at the 2022 World Cup.

"I know my potential, what I can do for the national team," he added.

"Of course, it's been a very complicated process because when you don't have confidence, you don't get goals." The result leaves five-time world champions Brazil fifth in the qualifying table with only three wins from eight games.

Manager Dorival Jr was appointed in January and his side lost in the Copa America quarter-finals in the summer. "The coach is still figuring out the best way for us to play and that's reflected in the result," defender Marquinhos said speaking to Globo. "There are a lot of new players, we are lacking confidence."

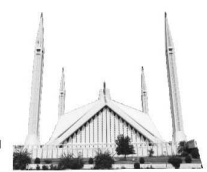
"Qualifying isn't easy, it's a difficult time and we have to know how to manage it. It's a time of transition, we're not feeling con-

fident. We're going to work hard, getting results on the pitch is the best answer."

Messi-less Argentina beaten by Colombia in Copa America rematch

Former Real Madrid and Everton midfielder James Rodriguez was the hero for Colombia as the 33-year-old scored the winner from the penalty spot to down the reigning world champions, who were without Lionel Messi. It was revenge for Colombia who lost to Argentina in the Copa America final two months ago.

Rodriguez, now at La Liga side Rayo Vallecano, crossed for Wolves' Yerson Mosquera to score the opener with a header in the 25th minute in Barranquilla. Nicolas Gonzalez levelled for Argentina three minutes after the break but Nicolas Otamendi then fouled Crystal Palace's Daniel Munoz and a penalty was given after a video assis-



In brief

Police bust criminal gang

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have busted a street criminal gang by arresting two active members of Naeem gang allegedly involved in street and other crimes and recovered cash Rs 70,000, mobile phones, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Race Course police held two street criminals namely Naeem, ring leader and Shehzad and recovered Rs 70,000, mobile phones, weapons and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. The accused are being shifted to jail for an identification parade, he added. Superintendent of Police, Potohar said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang.

193,600 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 193,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 196,000 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 106,000 cusecs and 105,500 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1228.35 feet, which was 180.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 21,900 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 131,900, 102,500, 148,900 and 175,800 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 27,500 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 10,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

RWMC carries out drive

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) continually carrying out the cleanliness activities to make the district free from waste and smog. RWMC spokesman on Wednesday said that on the instructions of the Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, a grand cleaning operation had been started in Rawalpindi to prevent the looming threat of smog this year under the title "Smog Safe Punjab". The objective of the activity was to reach out to a maximum number of people, in order to educate the general public about the precautionary measures to avoid smog, the spokesman said. He said that washing and mechanical sweeping of major roads of the city including Murree Road, Fifth Road, Sixth Road, Fourth B Road, Iran Road, Saidpur Road, Double Road, Old Airport Road, Civil Lines Road, Iqbal Road, Liaquat Road, Rashid Minhas Road and Red Line and Orange Line tracks of Metro bus was being carried out daily to provide a smog-free environment to the residents of the city. In a message, RWMC has appealed to the people to not burn waste and chemicals in the open as they were the major cause of smog, adding burning garbage was a legal offence as smoke and dust contributed to smog which was harmful to the environment and human health. He urged the residents to ensure the spraying of water to prevent dust and to use masks and glasses, adding the promotion of tree plantation was vital for avoiding smog and checking environmental pollution.



ISLAMABAD: A view of a massive traffic jam on Islamabad Expressway. —APP Photo

93 passport offices set up abroad: NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday apprised the National Assembly that a total of 93 passport offices have been set up at Pakistani missions abroad in various countries while no such office was working in Afghanistan.

Replying to various questions during Question Hour, the minister said that the passport offices were set up based on the population of overseas Pakistanis. To a separate question, he said that a total of 625 stalls were burnt due to a fire incident occurred at weekly Bazaar H-9. Due to said incident, the financial loss reached up to Rs 280 million approximately (as per stall holders' statements), he said.

He said an Inquiry was

held under the supervision of Dy. Commissioner, Islamabad and accordingly report was submitted to the Prime Minister's Office. He said three times fire incidents happened at H-9 Bazaar in the last three years and damaged the stalls, resulting in heavy financial loss to government assets and stallholders, he said.

He said the stall holders were also asked to keep fire extinguishers to avert the recurrence of such fire incidents in future.

He said the prime minister has perused the report and directed that CDA/MCI shall develop a Fire Safety Plan and a comprehensive fire safety audit of all Mercantile Bazaars in ICT shall be conducted on the first week of every month in the light of Islamabad Fire Prevention and Life Safety Regulations 2010 and international best practice.

A detailed report of the fire safety audit findings, including identified gaps and recommendations shall be shared with all concerned for implementation, he said. He said the CDA/MCI shall initiate a comprehensive capacity-building program for fire-fighting personnel to enhance their knowledge and skills in fire prevention, detention, and response.

The CDA/MCI shall procure necessary fire safety equipment and ensure its proper maintenance and availability, he added.

To a supplementary question, he said that the interior minister regularly engaged with all law enforcement agencies for the maintenance of law and order besides meeting with families of martyrs across the country. He assured the House that the interior minister would come to this august house.

24 new positive dengue case reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Health Authority, Rawalpindi has reported 24 new dengue cases during last 24 hours. The per day positive cases' ratio has increased making a total of 213 dengue patients in Rawalpindi.

The updated data released by the health authority shows 16 patients were reported from Pothohar Town areas including Chak Jalal Deen, Kulyal, Takht Pari, Dharmyal, Bagga Shiekhan, Gangal, Kotha Kalan, Dhama Syedan and Girja.

Two patients were reported from the Chaklala Cantt Board area and five from Municipal areas. One positive case has also been reported from Kahuta city.

A number of punitive actions against dengue larva detection and violation of SOPs were taken during the last 24 hours. The report shows financial penalties worth Rs.0.45 million were imposed on those involved in Dengue SOPs violations besides sealing the spots and registering FIRs.

Missing boy reunited with parents

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, Sabzi Mandi police station team reunited the missing boy with his parents. An ICT Police Public Relation Officer said, a citizen submitted an application at Sabzi Mandi police station and stated that his son namely Sharif Khan had been missing and could not be traced despite hectic efforts by family members.

He said upon receiving the application the police team registered a case and immediately started the investigation. The police team used technical and human resources and succeeded to trace the missing boy Sharif Khan and reunited him safely with his family, he said. The parents appreciated the police team's efforts and thanked the Islamabad Capital Police for immediate assistance, he added. Citizens are urged to dial the emergency helpline "Pucar-15" or report via the "ICT-15 app".

Police impound 479 unfit PSVs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani have accelerated their ongoing operation against unfit Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) and impounded 479 besides issuing challan slips to 3607.

According to a police spokesman, the Police took action in accordance with the law against the rules violators during the last 17 days. He said that fines amounting to over Rs 3.8 million were imposed on the rules violators.

Police were taking strict action in accordance with the law against unfit commercial vehicles. Rawalpindi district Police under a special campaign launched in Rawalpindi district were taking action against unfit PSVs, checking route permits and licenses of the drivers.

Legal action was taken against 281 drivers for driving vehicles without licenses, he added.

Floods put lives and livelihoods at risk

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Wednesday said that rapid glacial melting and resultant floods in Hindukush Karakoram Himalaya (HKH) region has put lives and livelihoods of nearly two billion people at risk and, pose serious threats to the socio-economic sustainability of the regional countries.

However, tackling effectively these climate change-caused common environmental, social and economic risks through resilience building measures is possible only through close and innovative collaboration among the regional countries in developing, adopting and sharing workable solutions, the PM's aide said here while addressing the inaugural session of the 'Policy Action Dialogue on Tackling Climate Change Impacts'.

The event was organised by the international development and civil society organisations organization in collaboration with federal organisations working on climate change, food security and water conservation.

While addressing participating policymakers, researchers, educationists, development sector experts, environmentalists, students and media at the event, Romina Khurshid Alam remarked that while the global temperatures continued to rise untamed, climate change was having severe and far-reaching consequences in

the Hindu Kush Karakoram Himalaya (HKH) region, which spans across Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China, Nepal, and Bhutan, where consequently glaciers, river water flows, energy supplies and agriculture were being adversely affected, placing the livelihoods of over 240 million people in the mountainous areas, and around 1.65 billion people downstream, at increasing risk.

There is a pressing need for the HKH regional countries to work together to manage shared water resources and address regional climate challenges by fostering cross-border cooperation on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as rivers and glaciers in the HKH region transcend national boundaries, PM's climate aide emphasised.

Addressing the participants, Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General of Kathmandu-based ICIMOD organisation, emphasised in his welcome remarks the vital importance of addressing the complex environmental challenges of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region.

He said, "Pakistan, with 7,253 glaciers—the highest number outside the polar regions—is vulnerable to both floods and droughts. We must improve access to climate data for at-risk communities," he stated, highlighting that although technologies exist, scaling them effectively remains a challenge.

The disaster risk reduc-

tion should focus beyond preparedness and prevention, urging investment in planning and implementation, Dr. Pema Gyamtsho suggested. Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik, Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), also spoke at the event, emphasizing the alarming impact of warming on the glacial regions in the country.

He revealed that glacial melt in the Indus River basin was accelerating at a dangerous rate. He cited a 23.3% decrease in snow cover between November 2023 and April 2024 and an annual glacial melt rate of 3%, with an additional 16% mass loss over the past five years. The NDMA chairman warned that while melting may provide temporary water surpluses, the long-term implications are dire and require urgent attention. He urged on the need for a regional approach to address the cryospheric crisis.

Special remarks delivered by Ms. Aisha Humera Chaudhry, Acting Secretary of MoCC&EC emphasized on the need for making the cryosphere an integral part of the climate discourse in Pakistan.

Ahmed Kamal, Chairman of the Federal Flood Commission and Neelofur Hafeez, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MoNFS&R) highlighted the importance of inter-agency cooperation to tackle the multifaceted challenges of climate change.

New legislation to unlock IT sector's potential

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan Wednesday assured that the government is committed to the IT sector's growth and development and is working diligently to introduce necessary legislation to address digital challenges and promote IT exports.

In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan has announced that the government is set to introduce new legislation aimed at unlocking the full potential of the IT sector, adding, this move is expected to boost IT exports, create jobs, and drive economic growth.

Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan has introduced a bill to regulate artificial intelligence (AI) in Pakistan. The Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Bill, 2024, aims to provide a framework for the development, deployment and use of AI technologies in the country.

The bill will be debated and discussed in the Senate and National Assembly, he said, adding, the bill will be open for public consultation to gather feedback and suggestions from stakeholders.

The bill will be enacted into law after approval from both houses of parliament, he further explained.

Senator Afnan Ullah Khan expressed optimism that the new legislation will bring fruitful results in the coming years, transforming the IT sector into a significant contributor to Pakistan's economy.

The senator was confident that the legislation will enable Pakistan's IT sector to flourish, making it an attractive destination for investment, talent and innovation. The government is working tirelessly to transform Pakistan into a digital superpower with a focus on resolving all issues related to the internet, he said.

This ambitious goal aims to provide citizens with seamless and smooth internet access, driving economic growth, innovation and digital inclusivity, he added. Responding to a query, Senator assured that the government is actively addressing internet-related issues, including connectivity, speed, and affordability.

He emphasized that

these issues will be resolved soon, enabling people to fully leverage the internet's potential.

The senator expressed optimism about Pakistan's digital future, stating that the government's efforts will soon bear fruit, and citizens will enjoy a seamless digital experience.

To another question, Senator Afnan Ullah Khan clarified that the government strongly believes in freedom of expression, but emphasized that baseless allegations without proof can harm the country's image and institutions.

He noted that unfounded allegations can have serious consequences, including damaging investor confidence and tarnishing the country's global image.

The senator emphasized that Pakistan will learn from international best practices and adopt a similar approach to combat cyber-crimes, adding, the government will collaborate with stakeholders, including tech companies, civil society, and experts, to ensure the effective implementation of laws related to social media.

Mobile Registration Vans utilized

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Wednesday said that the Mobile Registration Vans are being utilized to facilitate the registration of eligible individuals in remote areas of Pakistan.

During her visit to the BISP Zonal Office in Skardu, she interacted with deserving women and briefed them about the programme. She also listened to their concerns and instructed BISP staff to address these issues promptly.

The women welcomed Senator Khalid and expressed their gratitude for her commitment to resolving their problems. Senator Khalid also participated in a tree planting campaign by planting a sapling at the BISP Skardu office.

She conducted a thorough visit to the office and met with BISP employees. BISP Director for the Central Zone, Gilgit,

Haider Murtaza, and Director for the Skardu Zone, Wazir Asrar Haider, briefed her on BISP operations in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Additionally, she visited the Dynamic Registry Center established at the Skardu Office.

There, she addressed the women who had come for registration, clarifying that there is no registration fee for the Benazir Income Support Programme.

She emphasized that 8171 is the only official number used by BISP for communication, and any messages from other numbers are fraudulent. She advised contacting the BISP helpline at 0800-26477 to report any issues. In a media interaction later, she explained that the purpose of her visit was to raise awareness about the challenges faced by deserving women.

She highlighted that the Benazir Income Support Programme is working to economically empower women in line with the vision of Shaheed

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. She underscored the significance of the Benazir Kafaalat, Taleemi Wazaif, and Nashonuma programs in improving the lives of impoverished households.

Senator Rubina Khalid also announced the launch of the Benazir Skills Training Program, which aims to teach various skills to deserving women and their children according to local and international standards.

She noted the high global demand for skilled labour and revealed that currently, 9.3 million families benefit from the Kafaalat programme.

The number of eligible families and the stipends provided under Kafaalat are being increased.

She mentioned that following special instructions from the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan, a new banking model has been introduced to ensure that funds are distributed to deserving women in a dignified and transparent manner.

Women must receive their rightful inheritance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, on Wednesday emphasized the importance of ensuring that women receive their rightful share of the inheritance.

Speaking in the National Assembly, Malik highlighted the importance of treating women with the same respect as men and ensur-

ing they are granted their due inheritance rights.

He praised the pivotal role women play in the progress, prosperity, and development of the country, adding that women should be afforded equal opportunities in all spheres of life, including their legal inheritance rights.

"The women of this

country are playing a key role in its development, and they deserve their full legal rights, just like men," the minister said.

He said that the state has a responsibility to create opportunities for the younger generation, adding that he personally ensures that his daughter will receive her full share of the inheritance.

Agha seeks expanded support

KABUL (BNA): Mullah Habibullah Agha, Acting Minister of Education, has requested increased support from Qatar for Afghanistan's educational system during a recent meeting with the Qatari Embassy delegation in Kabul. According to a report from the Ministry of Education, Mullah Habibullah Agha discussed the need for enhanced Qatari assistance with Marduf al-Qashouti, an advisor at the Qatari Embassy in Kabul.

Solar power plan to start soon

KABUL (BNA): Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor, Acting Minister of Energy and Water, has announced that the 10-megawatt solar power project in Naghlu, Sarobi, is set to commence operations soon. According to a report from the Ministry of Energy and Water, Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor, along with several officials and representatives from the contracting company responsible for the project, recently visited the Naghlu area in Sarobi district.

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

Afghan migrants deported from Iran resort to begging

NIMROZ (TOLONews): Some Afghan migrants who have been returned to the country by Iranian police do not have the financial means to return to their homes. These migrants resort to begging to cover the cost of returning to their homes. Hamid, a 52-year-old resident of Ghazni province, along with his two sons, has been returned from Iran to Nimroz province. They do not have the money to return to their home and are begging to find the fare for transportation. Hamid said, "I, along with my two sons, have been sent back to Nimroz province by Iranian forces, and I do not have the money to return home. I am begging to find the transportation fare. I call on the authorities in the caretaker government and aid organizations to address the challenges facing us and other deported migrants."

Another deportee, Mahmood, said, "I have been returned from Iran for a week, but I am begging to get the fare because I do not have the money to return home."

Meanwhile, residents of Nimroz say they witness hundreds of deported Afghans begging every day. Mirajuddin, a resident of Nimroz, said, "We see thousands of people begging daily. They go from shop to shop, house to house, and stretch out their hands to every passerby."

Another resident, Ataullah, said, "Every day, hundreds of young people who are deported from Iran resort to begging. The government should devise a plan to return them to their homes."

Meanwhile, the head of the Nimroz governor's office assures that efforts are being made to return the migrants to their homes. Ibrahim Hamed, the head of the Nimroz governor's office, said: "The local administration of Nimroz province has decided on this matter because people had problems. For the young people entering Afghanistan, we have considered an arrangement through the Nimroz provincial administration to transport them to their provinces through a transportation company."

This comes as the deportation of Afghan migrants from Iran has increased in recent months, and according to statistics, more than 2,000 Afghan migrants are returned to the country daily from the Pul-e-Abrisham border in Nimroz province alone.

Kabul University hosts seminar

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Higher Education has announced the successful conclusion of the first seminar on the application of artificial intelligence in medicine and research at Kabul University of Medical Sciences. According to a report from the Ministry of Higher Education, Dr. Erisan Qazaqistani conducted the seminar, titled "Application of Artificial Intelligence in Medicine and Research," aimed at enhancing students' understanding and capacity in AI technologies. The seminar was held for students of the Faculty of Public Health at Kabul University of Medical Sciences. During the seminar, Dr. Erisan provided insights on how artificial intelligence can be utilized at various stages of research and offered practical training on its applications. Dr. Mufti Asadullah Najat, Acting President of Kabul University of Medical Sciences, also spoke about the significance of public health and emphasized the importance of AI training for students in advancing their educational and professional development.

IEA PM in Turkmenistan for launch of TAPI project



KABUL (Ariana News): Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, arrived in Turkmenistan on Wednesday for the opening ceremony of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project among others. Akhund was welcomed to Uzbekistan by their minister of foreign affairs, Rashid Muradov, and other high-ranking officials. After his arrival, Akhund met with Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the national leader of Turkmenistan, at his residence in Mary. The parties discussed the expansion of bilateral relations and the importance of implementing development and regional projects between the two countries and described these projects as beneficial for the welfare of the people of both countries.

124m Afghanis collected from endowed properties



KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs states that over the past year, it has collected more than 124 million Afghanis from endowed properties in the capital and the provinces. The ministry, in its program detailing its one-year achievements, also mentioned that an additional 35 million Afghanis were collected from arrears owed by tenants of endowed properties. Azizurrahman Mansoor, Deputy Minister for Enlightenment and Management of Religious Sites, said: "200 million Afghanis were paid for mosque electricity expenses; secondly, 150 million Afghanis were allocated for mosque construction." According to ministry officials, sending 30,000 pilgrims to the Hajj ceremony, conducting exams for 23,000 mosque Imams, printing over 56,000 copies of the Hajj guidebook, issuing nearly 18,000 official letters, issuing 353 fatwas on various topics, and registering 93,390 official and unofficial mosques are among other achievements of this ministry. Mansoor added: "17,968 official letters and applications from clients have been processed and completed."

Officials of the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs further stated that 127 acres of land in the provinces of Ghor, Kabul, Sar-e Pol, Kunduz, Jowzjan, Maidan Wardak, and Laghman have been registered for the construction of mosques, schools, and cemeteries. Additionally, 18 acres of land on the highways of Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Zabul, and Kandahar have been registered for the construction of mosques. The Deputy Minister for Enlightenment and Management of Religious Sites said: "Based on the signed agreements, 18 acres of land along the highways of Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Zabul, and Kandahar have been registered and allocated for mosque construction."

Officials of the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs also added that there are 10,500 employees in this ministry, of which 1,882 are civil servants and 7,580 are religious affairs employees.

IE calls UN HR session 'one-sided'

KABUL (TOLONews): The Islamic Emirate, responding to criticism of Afghanistan's human rights situation during the 57th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, claimed that the meeting and its discussions were one-sided. Hamdullah Fitrat, the spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, emphasized the importance of having a representative from the Islamic Emirate at such meetings, arguing that without a representative from the caretaker government, the reports presented are biased. Fitrat further stated: "There is no one representing Afghanistan in this session, and it is conducted in a one-sided manner. Therefore, the reports presented are also one-sided and unreliable, which we cannot endorse. Our demand is that a representative of the Islamic Emirate should be present at all meetings concerning Afghanistan to address concerns and refute any unfounded reports with logical arguments."

Volker Turk, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed concern at the session about the human rights situation, particularly women's rights in Afghanistan, stating that this situation jeopardizes the country's future. Turk also mentioned that they are engaging with the caretaker government to change these policies. "It is essential that Afghanistan uphold the quality of women and men and indeed the rights of all people, my office will continue to engage with the de facto authorities..... and take meaningful steps to fulfill human rights," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights added.

Richard Bennett, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, said that human rights violations in Afghanistan are not limited to the past three years but have occurred over the past four and a half decades, and those responsible must be held accountable. Bennett also said that normalizing relations with the Taliban would be conditional on their respect for human rights.

Richard Bennett said: "Human rights crises in Afghanistan are not three years old, human rights have been violated in four and half decades of conflicts, all parties to the conflict are responsible and must be held accountable."

The Canadian representative at the Human Rights Council session called for lifting the travel ban on Richard Bennett to Afghanistan.

Afghan embassy in Norway ordered by Oslo to close down

KABUL (TOLONews): The Embassy of Afghanistan in Norway has announced that it will close on September 12th at the request of the host country. According to the statement, the embassy's assets in Norway will be placed in the custody of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs until a legitimate government based on the will of the people is established in Afghanistan. This comes as the Afghan Embassy in the United Kingdom also announced it would cease its activities on September 27. Wahid Fakiri, an international relations expert, told TOLONews: "This decision creates problems for Afghan refugees, such as not being able to obtain passports. From my perspective, this may be favorable for the Taliban in some ways."

Salim Paigir, a political analyst, said: "The embassies and consulates are meant to solve the problems of Afghans living in Europe. If they do not interact with the Foreign Ministry, which is currently under Taliban control, it is natural that their documents will not be considered valid. Therefore, European countries have decided that the embassies must engage with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to resolve the problems of Afghans residing abroad."

Previously, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Emirate declared some Afghan embassies and consulates in European countries invalid due to their lack of interaction with the central government in Kabul. Subsequently, a German media outlet reported that the German Foreign Ministry had confirmed the invalidity of Afghan consular services in Berlin and Bonn.

Construction of Kabul-Sayed Abad highway's 2nd route inaugurated



KABUL (TOLONews): The construction of the second route of the Kabul-Sayed Abad highway in Maidan Wardak was inaugurated by the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, urged the contracting companies' officials to build this road with high standards and quality and to avoid causing problems for travelers on the Kabul-Kandahar route during the construction process. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar said that this road, in addition to connecting the capital with the southern provinces, also plays an important role in linking the regional countries. Mullah Baradar said: "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has a strong commitment to the reconstruction and development of transportation infrastructure, and you see that steps are being taken continuously in this regard."

The Ministry of Public Works said that the construction of the second route of the Kabul-Sayed Abad highway in Maidan Wardak, which is 49 kilometers long, will cost three billion Afghanis. Mohammad Esa Thani, the Acting Minister of Public Works, said: "This 49-kilometer road has been awarded to this company."

On the other hand, the governors of Kabul and Maidan Wardak also consider the construction of the Arghandi to Sayed Abad Road important for facilitating the transportation of goods and the movement of passengers on the Kabul-South route. Bakhtiar Maaz, the governor of Maidan Wardak, said: "All the problems of the southern provinces will be gradually resolved with the opening of this road."

Meanwhile, the officials of the contracting company, in the presence of the officials of the Islamic Emirate, pledged that they would complete the construction of the contracted section of this highway within the set timeframe and with standard quality. Shafiqullah Yarmal, an official of a contracting company, said: "The total budget of the project is estimated at about three billion Afghanis."

The deteriorating condition of the Kabul-Herat highway, which also covers several southern provinces of the country, is considered a major challenge for the transportation of commercial and transit goods as well as passenger movement. The Ministry of Public Works has initiated the construction of this highway at the order of the leader of the Islamic Emirate by collecting tolls from drivers at several points.

Construction of girls' school begins in Faryab



FARYAB (TOLONews): The construction of a girls' school has started in the most remote village of Qaisar district in Faryab province of Afghanistan. The Faryab Department of Education said that the land for this school was donated by residents and that the school, costing \$70,000, will be completed within the next six months by the international organization Save the Children. Mohammad Tahir Jawad, the head of Faryab's Directorate of Education, said: "This village is one of the most remote villages in the Qaisar district, where neither the boys' nor the girls' schools had any buildings. Fortunately, today we witnessed the foundation laying off one of these schools, and we assure you that if people send their children to school, we will solve all their problems."

Residents said the construction of this school is beneficial in reducing the challenges faced by students. According to them, in the past two decades, there has been no attention given to education in this village. Faiz Mohammad, a resident of Qaisar district in Faryab, said: "There are about 300 students, but only two teachers. We need more teachers and support. As the number of teachers increases, so will the number of students."

Jamshid Azizi, another resident of this district, said: "For about 20 years, we have not had a school. There were almost 100 students and only two teachers, with no facilities; they were studying under the sun, with no proper arrangements for learning. Recently, the Islamic Emirate opened a school."

According to information from the Faryab Department of Education, there are currently 498 schools in the province, with about 305,000 students engaged in learning.

EU's 100-Ton medical aid arrives in Kabul

KABUL (Khaama Press): The European Union announced that it had sent a third shipment of humanitarian aid, this time containing 100 tons of medical supplies, to Afghanistan. The EU stated on its X page that the essential medical equipment was dispatched to assist needy Afghans. Since 2021, the EU reports sending approximately 1,900 tons of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Over the past three years, the EU has sent thousands of tons of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan through 37 flights. Previously, the World Food Programme reported that the EU had provided 25 million in aid to meet the food needs of hundreds of thousands, including children and pregnant and lactating women. Additionally, in August of this year, the EU contributed over \$1 million to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. Meanwhile, experts believe that spending large amounts on cargo flights for humanitarian aid is costly for the Afghan people and could lead to inefficient fund use. They are calling for greater transparency and accountability from international organizations operating in Afghanistan. "Since each cargo flight costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, wouldn't it be cheaper to ship or simply procure the supplies locally?" Hashmat Ghani questioned. Afghanistan is a poor country, and such high shipping costs are not viable. Instead of spending thousands of dollars on cargo flights, procuring the supplies locally or finding a more cost-effective solution would be more economical.

Processing Afghanistan crude oil started

KABUL (Ariana News): Uzbekistan has struck a deal with Afghanistan to process the country's crude oil. Afghanistan's crude oil will be transported by rail from Hairatan land port to Uzbekistan's Fergana refinery. The first shipments have reportedly already been dispatched. 100,000 metric tons of crude oil would be processed under the deal. Talks between the IEA and Uzbekistan have been ongoing for months amid efforts by the IEA to become self-sufficient.

People of KP needs to open their eyes: Sharjeel

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the people of KP need to open their eyes and see what is happening to them. Despite being in its third term in KPK, the PTI government has failed to provide employment opportunities, forcing people to migrate to other areas for work. The party's founder is not sincere to anyone-not the PTI, the country, the people, or even party members. He is only committed to his own interests.



He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of KPK journalists in Karachi. The journalists met with Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon at his office, where the Minister warmly welcomed the journalists from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on their visit to Sindh.

Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that before the journalists from Peshawar, journalist colleagues from Lahore also visited Sindh to review the ongoing projects. He noted that media reports and speeches often differ, and the Sindh government faces propaganda driven by a well-orchestrated conspiracy. Through this visit, the journalists will witness firsthand the significant work done by the Sindh government.

He stated that Pakistan is currently facing an energy crisis, and coal of Tharparkar is the only solution to this challenge. Work on the Shaheed Bibi Thar Coal project had been initiated, but it was halted as soon as his government ended. In 2008, under the vision of President Asif Ali Zardari, work on the Thar Coal project resumed to honor the legacy of Shaheed Bibi.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that Thar Coal will resolve Pakistan's long-term energy

crisis. Currently, more than 3,500 MW of electricity is being generated from Thar Coal, which serves as the lifeblood of Pakistan's economy. The Sindh government has invested \$2 billion in the Thar Coal project.

He said that the Sindh government is providing valuable services in the healthcare sector. Millions of people are receiving free treatment at the NICVD, benefiting not only residents of Pakistan but also international patients. The CyberKnife technology at the NICVD is serving patients from countries like Afghanistan and

He expressed a desire for journalists from across the country to visit Sindh and review the ongoing projects. He emphasized that public service should not involve spreading hatred, bigotry, or causing divisions. The politics of hatred and prejudice must be replaced with genuine public service.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that work on the K4 project is progressing, and the long-standing water problem in Karachi is set to be resolved soon. During the three years of the PTI government, the K4 plan faced numerous challenges. The population of Karachi is continuously increasing, with millions of people moving to the city daily in search of employment.

He added that Karachi bears the burden of the entire country, leading to numerous problems. The city's population growth and urban sprawl exacerbate these issues, and Karachi is not receiving the equitable share it deserves from the federal government.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the CEC of the Pakistan Peoples Party had declared immediately after the elections that they were ready to negotiate with everyone. However, PTI refused to engage in negotiations with PPP. The PPP is not part of the current government but provided unconditional support to PML-N in the formation of the government.

He highlighted that Sindh is the only province where two cadet colleges for women have been established. Additionally, the Sindh government allocates funds in every budget for the construction of new universities or campuses.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the people of KPK need to open their eyes and see their current situation. Despite being in its third term in KPK, the PTI government has failed to address employment issues, with people still migrating from KP to other areas in search of work. He criticized the founder, stating that he is not sincere to anyone-be it PTI, the country, the people, or party members-only to his own interests.

After the meeting, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon presented traditional Sindh shawls and caps to the distinguished journalists from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In return, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa journalists honored Senior Minister Memon with a souvenir shield, a shawl, and a Pakhtun cap.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur distributing cheques among Bar Associations.

Amna assumes charge as Foreign Secy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Amna Baloch on Wednesday assumed the charge as the 33rd Foreign Secretary of Pakistan after her predecessor Ambassador Syrus Sajjad Qazi relinquished the office on attaining superannuation.

A veteran diplomat, Ambassador Baloch has held several important assignments both in Islamabad and Pakistan's diplomatic missions abroad.

She served as Pakistan's Consul General to Chengdu, China (2014-2017); High Commissioner to Malaysia (2019-2023); and Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg (2023-2024). Holding a degree of Masters in History, Amna Baloch joined the Foreign Services of Pakistan in 1991.

IHC summons IG Islamabad

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court's (IHC) Justice Babar Sattar has summoned the Inspector General of Islamabad Police after expressing frustration over the lack of progress in the investigation of missing citizen Faizan's recovery. The hearing was held on a petition filed by Faizan's father, Usman Khan, represented by lawyers Imaan Mazari and Hadi Chatha. State counsel and police officials were also present in court.

During the hearing, the petitioner's counsel informed the court that Faizan was released on Monday morning. The court then questioned the police on whether any investigation had been conducted to determine who had taken Faizan and where he had been. The police admitted that no investigation had been completed yet, though a video had been uploaded.

Pentagon: US relies

(Continued from Page 1)

General Faiz Hamid, a controversial figure due to allegations of corruption and his perceived support for Imran Khan, has been a lightning rod for criticism. However, as the correspondent pointed out, no Director General of the ISI could have been in Kabul without the approval of Pakistan's military leadership and, likely, US awareness. This scenario underscores the need for a collective approach to Afghanistan, rather than attributing the outcomes to individual actions or decisions. The policy failures in Afghanistan, whether on the part of Pakistan, the US, or other stakeholders, cannot be laid solely at the feet of any one individual. The situation requires a nuanced understanding that goes beyond simplistic political narratives.

General Ryder's remarks about "Over The Horizon" capabilities reflect a broader US strategy of maintaining a watchful presence without extensive on-ground engagement. This approach allows the US to strike targets of interest and keep tabs on terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda, which continue to operate and expand in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. However, there is growing concern that these capabilities might not be sufficient to fully contain the threats posed by a complex and rapidly evolving landscape of militant groups.

PHC adjourns hearing in Senate election plea

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad adjourned further hearing of a petition seeking to hold Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till tomorrow, (on Friday).

The counsel Ali Zaman Ahmed told the court that the petition seeking to conduct Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that the elections were scheduled to take place on 2nd April this year but were postponed.

The lawyer said that the petitioner had filed an appeal in the Supreme Court against the PHC's decision regarding reserved seats. The Supreme Court's decision came in their favor of petitioners Azam Swati along with others. Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim asked the lawyers how many members from the province were currently representing in the Senate, to which the lawyer replied that seven members were representing the province.

Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim remarked that now that the Supreme Court's decision has come, how can a province be deprived from representation? The petitioner's lawyer said that during the previous hearing, the court had said that once the Supreme Court's decision comes regarding reserved seats, they would conduct the elections.

Justice Waqar Ahmed

PHC grants transitionary bails to Omar Ayub, Asad Qaiser

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) here Wednesday approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Omar Ayub, Asad Qaiser, Faisal Amin and Zartaj Gul's petitions seeking transitionary bail in connection with cases filed against them regarding the former ruling party's power show in Islamabad held on September 8.

A single member bench of PHC, Justice Shakeel Ahmed granted the bail after hearing the pleas of the PTI leaders till October 10. In their petition, Omar and Qaiser claimed that cases were filed against them and other party leaders by the Islamabad administration for ending the rally two hours after the scheduled time. The petitioners said that they want to appear in the relevant courts and demanded for transitionary bail in this regard. They also said that they fear their arrest and requested for bail.

Meanwhile, PTI leader Zartaj Gul on Wednesday moved Peshawar High Court (PHC) for transit bail following the registration of case against her in Islamabad after September 8 rally. Zartaj Gul in her plea stated that a case had been registered against her in Islamabad for 'holding a public rally'. Citing, the arrest of many MNAs from the Parliament House, the former minister pleaded with the high court for transit bail. On Monday, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar, Sher Afzal Marwat, and Shoaib Shaheen were arrested. The Capital police arrested MNAs Zain Qureshi and Sheikh Waqas Akram from inside the Parliament House.

asked why they were not conducting the Senate elections now. The Election Commission's lawyer said that the electoral college was incomplete. The petitioner's lawyer said that the Supreme Court had decided in the favor of petitioners, but now they were not following the constitution and law.

The Chief Justice remarked that the issue here is that they only follow what is in their favor and do not follow what is not.

Justice Waqar Ahmed said that if the provincial assembly can conduct presidential elections, then why can't they conduct Senate elections? During the hearing, the lawyers for both sides tried to argue with each other, upon which Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim said that if they continue to argue, they will adjourn the case. He told them to show tolerance and come prepared tomorrow (on Friday) and adjourned further hearing.

Saudi Naval forces team visits Pak Navy at Bahrain

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) delegation, led by the newly appointed RSNF Maritime Component Commander, Commodore Othman Oqab Al Zahrani, met with Commodore Asim Sohail Malik, the current Commander of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), in Manama, Bahrain. Discussions focused on CTF 150's ongoing operations aimed at disrupting illicit activities in the Arabian Sea and ensuring maritime security in the region.

During the meeting, both commanders shared their perspectives on regional maritime security challenges and explored potential avenues for collaboration between CTF 150 and the upcoming RSNF Maritime Component Command to maintain security and stability in the region. They also reaffirmed the excellent relationship between the two navies, emphasizing their shared commitment to fostering regional peace.



Following a comprehensive briefing on CTF 150 operations, the RSNF delegation engaged with the entire Pakistan Navy team currently leading CTF 150 and exchanged views on viable options to counter contemporary maritime security challenges. Commodore Asim Sohail Malik, Commander of CTF 150, assured that his team would continue to strengthen the efforts of this multinational task force to provide robust security in this vital maritime region. He also highlighted Pakistan

Navy's commitment to working with coalition navies to ensure peace and stability within the area of responsibility.

Pakistan Navy has the distinction of commanding CTF 150 twelve times previously. This 13th command is a manifestation of the trust and respect placed in the Pakistan Navy. The visit underscored the strong ties between the two navies and their collective dedication to countering maritime threats through joint and collaborative efforts.

Govt asks SC to release dams' fund amount

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal government on Wednesday demanded release of dams' funds amount collected for construction of Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams from the Supreme Court. "We have submitted a miscellaneous petition," Additional Attorney General Amir Rehman said in the case heard by a four-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

"The amount of the dams'

funds should be released to the federal government and Wapda," AAG pleaded to the court. "The State Bank had opened an account under the supervision of the supreme court," government counsel said. "How many funds are deposited in the dams' funds account," Chief Justice of Pakistan questioned. "There are around 20 billion rupees in dams' funds," Wapda lawyer Saad Rasool replied. "How this case began," CJP Justice Faez Isa asked. "The supreme court had taken notice of the Wapda's

under hearing cases in 2018," Wapda lawyer replied. "Supreme Court's dams funds implementation bench conducted 17 hearings," the lawyer further said.

"There would be other Wapda projects, if the Supreme Court monitor all Wapda projects," Qazi Faez Isa asked. "There were disputes among private parties over the building of dams," Wapda's lawyer said. "The supreme court fixed hearing of disputes in private parties with it," lawyer said.

PTI MNAs move IHC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf's (PTI) Members of the National Assembly Zain Qureshi, Sher Afzal Marawat and Sheikh Waqas Akram on Wednesday challenged their eight-day physical remand before the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

PTI leader Advocate Shoaib Shaheen also approached the IHC against his arrest last day. The IHC clubbed the petitions for hearing together on Thursday. Shoaib Shaheen's lawyer informed the court of Chief Justice Aamer Farooq that he had met his client and also handed over medicine to him.

The chief justice observed that four petitions had also been filed by other PTI leaders against their physical remand granted by the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) to the police which were fixed before the division bench for hearing. MNAs Zain Qureshi, Sher Afzal Murawat and Sheikh Waqas Akram, in their pleas, stated that the ATC had granted the police their physical custody without examining their role in the crime. The ATC also did not write the reasons for the remand in its order, they said, and prayed the court to set aside the decision. Meanwhile, the ATC accepted the post arrest bail of Shoaib Shaheen.

Iran gives Russia missiles

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The war in Ukraine, already marked by extensive human suffering and devastation, now faces additional layers of complexity with the introduction of new weaponry from external sources. General Ryder's statements underscore the growing entanglement of international actors in the conflict and the potential for further escalation.

As the war continues, the broader implications for global security and stability remain uncertain, with each new development adding to the intricate dynamics at play. For many, the intersection of military strategy, economic impact, and industry interests paints a sobering picture of modern warfare and its far-reaching consequences.

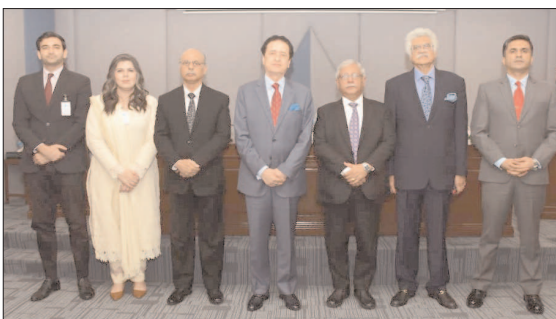
Experts address arms control challenges at seminar

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, hosted a seminar titled "Adapting to Strategic Complexities: Innovating Approaches to Arms Control in South Asia" on 10 September 2024. The seminar explored the intricate dynamics of strategic stability and arms control in the South Asian region, focusing on the impact of Indian belligerence and recent technological developments. Ms Nidaa Shahid, Senior Researcher, CASS Lahore, commenced the seminar with an overview of the event's objectives.

Lt Gen Khalid Kidwai (Retd), Adviser, National Command Authority (NCA), delivered the keynote address. He highlighted that Pakistan's Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) capability, while generally remaining within the larger philosophy of Credible Minimum Deterrence, enables Pakistan to effectively counter aggression through smart deterrence strategies. While discussing arms control and disarmament, he emphasized the difference between the two.

He said that while arms control arguably may be an option without disturbing strategic balance, disarmament for Pakistan is a no-go area. He concluded by stating that Pakistan's policy of FSD ensures that strategic stability in South Asia will continue to prevail irre-



spective of global and regional shifts. India must recognise that political bluster and political rhetoric is not policy and must be dispensed with.

Dr Naeem Salik, Executive Director, Strategic Vision Institute (SVI), provided insights into the complexities introduced by advancements in missile technologies. Examining the impact of these newer technologies, such as Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) and hypersonic cruise missiles, he discussed how they intensify strategic competition and challenge existing arms control frameworks in South Asia.

Ambassador Zamir Akram (Retd), Adviser, Strategic Plans Division (SPD), highlighted that arms control measures can only work when both sides are willing to work together and make concessions. He said that some of the measures that have been on the plate for decades have now become redundant, owing to Indian developments, including the Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)

and Anti-Satellite Weapons (ASAT) test of 2019. He added that even the Indian No First Use (NFU) pledge is conditional to the situation as noted by many Indian leaders.

In his concluding remarks, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President CASS, Lahore, noted the need for a shared modernised strategy, tailored to address evolving regional strategic stability challenges.

He said that the path forward necessitates a steadfast commitment to dialogue, trust-building, and practical risk-reduction measures to secure a more stable and peaceful future for South Asia.

He further said that given the recent actions of the Indian leadership, the responsibility for creating a conducive environment for arms control rests squarely on their shoulders. The seminar probed the imperatives for arms control in South Asia amid strategic complexities, highlighting the critical need for innovative and collaborative approaches to maintain regional security.

Punjab govt ends electricity relief for Islamabad consumers

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Punjab government has discontinued the Rs14 per unit relief for the electricity consumers of the federal capital announced in August for two months, the Islamabad Electricity Supply Company (IESCO) said in a statement on Wednesday.

The power utility said the the consumers will not receive any relief in electricity bills for the month of September. The electricity company also notified that orders have been issued for a change in billing software. The sub-

sidy worth Rs45 billion was announced on August 16 by the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif for Punjab and the federal capital for the months of August and September.

The subsidy was announced for consumers using 201 to 500 units per month. However, the Punjab power consumers would get relief in the next month's power bills. The Punjab government was met with criticism by the opposing leaders of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who at the time stated that

the subsidy was a futile and short-term attempt to provide relief to the masses reeling under sky-high power tariffs.

PPP leader Murtaza Wahab, speaking on the Geo News programme Naya Pakistan stated that every government is responsible for providing long-term relief instead of short-lived measures. The mayor of Karachi, whose party had formed a coalition government with the PML-N in the Centre, also invited the federal government to work on long-term plans to provide relief to the masses.