

PPP MNA administered oath
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Makhdoom Tahir Rasheeduddin, a newly elected member of the PPP, took his oath on Saturday. Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah administered the oath. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari congratulated Makhdoom Tahir Rasheeduddin on his decisive victory in the NA-171 Rahim Yar Khan by-election.



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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting on use of electric vehicles.

IHC stops law enforcers from arresting Afzal Marwat

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Saturday stopped the law enforcers from arresting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat without permission in any case.

After hearing the plea filed by the PTI parliamentarian, the IHC has issued notices to the Ministry of Interior secretary, Islamabad inspector general, Punjab inspector general and Federal Investigation Agency in this regard. The court has directed relevant authorities to submit paragraph-wise comments on Marwat's petition and also sought details of the cases lodged against him.

Issuing a written order on the PTI leader's plea, Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz directed not to arrest the senior lawyer in any case without the court's permission. Marwat had filed the plea through his counsels Adil Aziz Qazi and Riasat Ali Azad.

Police on September 9 arrested PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan and lawmaker Marwat from outside the Parliament House, for allegedly violating the newly enacted public gathering law during the party's power show in the federal capital on September 8. Marwat had resisted the arrest and asked the police to show arrest warrant.

He was arrested for violating regulations devised under a new law —Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024, and also accused of clashing with police personnel on the rally day. It should be noted that at least 10 PTI lawmakers, who were arrested from the premises of Parliament House, were brought to the lower house on September 12 after their production orders were issued by National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq.

Speaking on the NA floor, PTI firebrand politician Marwat thanked the speaker for issuing the production orders. "The police have not returned my personal pistol and five Kalashnikov — kept in car at the time of arrest." Rejecting the cases registered against him, Marwat said he was booked for tearing uniform of a police officer.

PM directs E-Vehicles policy finalization by Nov

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif on Saturday instructed relevant authorities to formulate a detailed financial framework for electric vehicles by November this year and streamline licensing regulations for their manufacture in Pakistan.

Chairing a meeting in Islamabad, the prime minister instructed that essential consultations be held with the Finance Ministry, the State Bank of Pakistan, all provinces, federal units, and relevant stakeholders concerning the electric vehicles policy.

Shehbaz Sharif emphasized, "The government is prioritizing the promotion of electric vehicles in the country." He highlighted, "These vehicles will not only conserve valuable foreign exchange by reducing imports of petrol and diesel but also offer environmental benefits."

The prime minister announced plans to distribute e-motorbikes to exceptional students from government schools, following a model similar to the laptop scheme. The prime minister stated that, moving forward, all federal government institutions would exclusively purchase electric motorbikes to conserve national resources.

He had instructed that directives be issued to all federal ministries accordingly. Additionally, he directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to develop a detailed plan for implementing electrified public transport in Islamabad. During the briefing, it was reported that, since 2022, 49 licenses had been issued for the local production of two-and three-wheeled electric vehicles, with 25 factories were already operational.

The forum was informed that the first

license for the domestic production of four-wheeled electric vehicles was issued in September this year, and the first locally manufactured electric car is expected to be available in the market by December.

The meeting was informed that the country currently has 45,000 two-and three-wheeled electric vehicles, as well as 2,600 four-wheeled electric vehicles. Additionally, it was told that the installation of recharging stations for electric vehicles would be prioritized along motorways, GT Road (National Highway 5), and National Highways 65 and 70.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Power Owais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik, Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ihsaan Afzal, and other senior government officials.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned terrorist attack on police vehicle in Quetta's Kuchlak area in Balochistan province.

The Prime Minister's Office issued a statement expressing the prime minister's condolences and prayers for the souls of the martyred policemen to rest in peace. He also extended wishes for strength and patience to bereaved families during this challenging period. The prime minister promised to swiftly hold terrorists accountable and reiterated the nation's unwavering dedication to supporting security forces in combating terrorism.

Imran's tweet an attack on democracy: Bilawal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Saturday condemned a tweet by the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) calling it an attack on democracy.

Addressing in the National Assembly on a point of order, Bilawal Bhutto referenced a statement allegedly made by "Prisoner No. 804," accusing him of undermining every constitutional institution for personal political gain and to seek relief from ongoing cases. Bilawal Bhutto urged the PTI leadership to verify whether the tweet was genuinely from their founder.

He emphasized that, until recently, the country had been progressing positively, with efforts made to strengthen democracy

through legislation. However, he accused the PTI founder of showing contempt of court by attacking the Chief Justice and making politically motivated allegations against the Chief of Army Staff, with the aim of creating controversy around the position.

If the statement was indeed made by the PTI founder, Bilawal said he must face the consequences under the Constitution and laws of Pakistan. If not, he called on PTI's leadership to clarify the matter. He said that it was the responsibility of the Leader of the Opposition or the party chairman to explain whether the account was being managed by Ali Amin or Mr. Marwat. Bilawal Bhutto highlighted that these actions are part of a broader pattern that has emerged since the no-confidence motion ousted the

Prime Minister.

He noted that PTI had previously rejected the motion, which Bilawal described as a violation of the Constitution under the pretext of Article 5, and accused the party of attempting to make the appointment of the Army Chief controversial.

During his speech, Bilawal also congratulated Makhdoom Tahir Rashiduddin on his recent election to the National Assembly and expressed gratitude to the people of Punjab and Rahim Yar Khan for their support of the PPP. He said that their support had helped end the politics of hate and division.

Bilawal Bhutto praised the PPP's organization in South Punjab, commending their dedication in overcoming political challenges through the power of the people.

Imran booked for controversial media post

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Friday registered a case against incarcerated PTI founder and former premier Imran Khan, this time on the charge of inciting a government officer to mutiny.

An FIA team visited Adiala Jail to probe the PTI founder in connection with a controversial post shared on his official X account, but the team returned unanswered after the former premier denied interrogation without the presence of his lawyers.

Meanwhile, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said the FIA would investigate the PTI founder's social media accounts which, he alleged, were being used to create chaos and anarchy in the country, and undermining the national security.

He hinted that it would be investigated who was the handler of his social media accounts, and whether such posts were being made at the PTI founder's behest or someone else was pulling the strings.

"A botched attempt had been made to conspire against the sitting chief justice and heads of other institutions. The PTI founder tried to mobilise the people against two major state institutions, which was highly condemnable," he added. Tarar said the message posted on social media from the PTI founder's account was "tantamount to sedition, and creating an anarchy" in the country.

Marri: 'KP CM mentally unstable'

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior Shazia Marri on Saturday schooled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, saying that the latter was "mentally unstable."

Addressing a presser in Islamabad, Marri said: "Ali Amin Gandapur has hurled foul language at the journalists. It is an injustice for the masses of KP to appoint Ali Amin Gandapur as the chief minister of the province. This [Ali Amin Gandapur] has once again wanted to create a situation similar to the events that transpired on May 9."

She lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, saying, "The PTI founder has endorsed the statement of Ali Amin Gandapur instead of opposing it. The only thing that the PTI founder had done in the country was to spread unrest." Marri lamented the situation in KP, saying, "The situation in KP is alarming. The PPP has never supported the governor rule. However, the situation in KP can lead to it."

Reserved seats verdict
SC slams ECP's 'dilatory tactics'

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In yet another landmark verdict, the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Saturday declared the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) plea seeking clarity on reserved seats' ruling a ruse to delay implementation.

The court also ordered the election watchdog to implement the initial verdict in letter and spirit to avoid repercussions. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah issued the four-page detailed judgement on the ECP petition, seeking clarity on SC's earlier verdict on the reserved seats.

A 13-judge full bench of Supreme Court on July 12 last had declared that the PTI was eligible to receive reserved seats for women and non-Muslims both in the National as well as provincial assemblies. The apex court, in its majority 8-5 decision, announced that the conduct of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding reserved seats was unconstitutional. The July 12 verdict was a major setback for the ruling coalition and made the PTI the single largest party in both houses of parliament. The apex court had also declared the PTI a legit parliamentary party despite being denied its iconic symbol bat. "The petition of ECP seeking clarification of SC order on reserved seats is hindrance to the implementation of judicial order," said the apex court in the detailed judgement issued on Saturday. The ECP itself accepted Barrister Gohar as party chairman, the Supreme Court observed.

"The ECP can also face the constitutional and legal consequences for not implementing the SC order," it said. It is completely wrong not to accept the affidavits submitted by the PTI members in the ECP,

the apex court observed in its detailed verdict. The Supreme Court rejected the attempts made by the ECP to create confusion in strong words in its judgement issued on Saturday.

The Supreme Court directed the ECP to implement its order immediately to avoid any legal consequences. "As per the position so determined, the said returned candidates were and are the returned candidates of PTI and thus members of the parliamentary party of PTI in the National Assembly and provincial assemblies concerned, for all constitutional and legal purposes," said the judgement.

"The attempt by the commission to confuse and cloud what is otherwise absolutely clear as a matter of the Constitution and the law must therefore be strongly deprecated," the judgement added. On July 12 this year, a 13-member full bench of the apex court ruled that the Imran Khan-founded party was eligible for the allocation of reserved seats for women and non-Muslims in the national and provincial assemblies. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 majority verdict, nullifying the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order wherein it had upheld the ECP's decision denying the reserved seats to the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) The other seven judges who supported the verdict include Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A Malik, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan. The PTI candidates contested the Feb 8 elections as independents after the top court upheld the ECP decision to deprive the opposition party of its iconic bat electoral symbol over "unlawful" intra-party polls.

2 cops killed in Kuchlak explosion near Quetta

F.P. Report

QUETTA: Two police officers were martyred in a bomb explosion targeting a police mobile in the Kuchlak area, located in the suburbs of Quetta.

The blast, caused by an improvised explosive device (IED), claimed the lives of assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Zainuddin and constable Tahir Ali, according to police officials. The explosion, which was remote-controlled, occurred near a police mobile while it was on patrol. The bomb had been planted in the ground, with the intention of targeting the police vehicle.

The injured officers were immediately shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment. The bodies of the two martyrs were also transported to the hospital by the police. Following the explosion, personnel from the Bomb Disposal Squad, along with police and Frontier Corps (FC) officials, arrived at the scene to collect evidence. An investigation is underway to determine the full circumstances surrounding the attack.

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Saturday condemned a bomb blast near police mobile at Ziarat

Road area of Kuchlak in Quetta. According to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Secretariat, Mr Bugti said that the immortal sacrifices rendered by security forces, including Balochistan Police and Balochistan levies, in the war against terrorism could not be forgotten. He said that the whole nation was standing shoulder to shoulder with their valiant forces in the war against terrorism. Paying glowing tributes to the sacrifices of martyrs, he said, "We will breathe a sigh of relief after rooting out terrorists and their facilitators".



QUETTA: Rescue workers shifting bodies to hospital after a bomb explosion near police vehicle in Kuchlak Town.

Bill in line with COD endorsed by all parties including PTI: Dar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in the Senate and Deputy Prime Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar on Saturday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that the Constitutional Bill was in line with the provisions of the Charter of Democracy (COD) endorsed by all the political parties including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The Leader of the House was addressing to the 10th meeting of the 342nd Senate session held under Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani. Senator Ishaq Dar underlined that there was a disconnect between the Leader of the Opposition's party leadership in the Senate and the National Assembly.

"It was the third in camera meeting of the Special Parliamentary Committee in the Parliament which was participated by Chairman PTI, Barrister Gohar Ali and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly, Omar Ayub Khan who was absent in the previous two meetings. There have been discussion on different agenda items," he said. He added that the Opposition Leader should seek

details from his colleagues on the special committee meetings.

Senator Dar informed the House that the issue emerged after Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari made a statement for joint efforts to restore the prestige of the Parliament and proposed a committee of all political parties on the arrest of some members of the lower house of the Parliament.

"I on behalf of the government instantly endorsed the suggestion and after the House resolution, a committee was formed and all political parties in the National Assembly have their representation. I would request that committee to give representation to the Senate as it's a special body on general issues and the resolution TORs entitled matters pertaining to the parliament, parliamentarians, constitutions and rules and business of procedures," the Leader of the House said. The issues pertaining to the Constitutional Bill have been discussed in the Special Committee, the Opposition Leader should get details from his colleagues, he said, adding, "Under the Charter of Democracy, the article four demanded a constitu-

tional court in the country to hear constitutional petitions and dispose of them. The elite class in the country gets swift petition hearings whereas 60,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court including 25% constitutional petitions and 50% constitutional petitions in the High Courts."

The charter was not done by two political parties whereas after few weeks all political parties were convened, and they endorsed the document including the then PTI Chairman, and founder, he added. "The Constitutional Court is not new but rather it was appreciated widely world over. The PTI founder and prime signatories have signed the document so there is nothing hidden. I am not privy to the Bill and it's the prerogative of the Law Minister," he added.

The Leader of the House said it was not something procedure but rather a routine legislative practice done in any government. "We all should unite to resolve the delay in dispensation of justice in constitutional petitions. The Opposition should support the government and I assure the opposition that there would

be no surprise in the legislation as we have to resolve public issues and this country has potential to reemerge as a succeeding nation," he said.

He emphasised that the Opposition and Treasury benches should cooperate on the public and national interest matters as there would be nothing repugnant to it in the Bill. Earlier, Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani clarified that there was a court case against him in Karachi, where the court sought three queries from him pertaining to the numbers required for constitutional amendment, whether it was for the CJP, and the details of the Bill.

"I assured that if there was no majority then no bill would be tabled in the Parliament. Senator Farooq H Naik was with me. They asked that was it for CJPI told them that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in his statement clarified that it was not person specific but in the interest of the nation and the country. However, I still do not know about the Bill. The law minister would provide his explanation after tabling the bill in the National Assembly," the Chairman Senate said.

He informed the House that the

1973 Constitution was passed by 128 votes of the House and the rest were in the east Pakistan. "After the restoration of the Constitution in its original form, it was bicameral system and not a unicameral system which was passed unanimously by 446 members of the Parliament. We ended 58 2(B) to establish supremacy of the Parliament then the then President SC Bar Aasma Jahangir told me that do not be glad on it as it would be exercised by the judiciary and I was disqualifed graciously and then Mian Nawaz Sharif faced it," he said.

He added that there were limitations in certain provisions of the law mistakes and all would have to rectify it whereas the government should respond on it. Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Shibli Faraz replying to the Leader of the House said, "Put your money where the mouth is..as the famous proverb goes."

He read the article 63A of the Constitution in response to Senator Ishaq Dar's request for the support of the legislation stating, "

63A.Disqualification on grounds of defection, etc.

(1)If a member of a Parliamentary Party composed of a single political party in a House-

(a)resigns from membership of his political party or joins another Parliamentary Party; or

(b)votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction issued by the Parliamentary Party to which he belongs, in relations to-

(i)election of the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister; or

(ii)a vote of confidence or a vote of no-confidence; or

(iii)a Money Bill or a Constitution (Amendment) Bill;"

"So it says very clearly and I rest my case," he added.

Senator Ishaq Dar said this constitutional amendment did not imply earlier on the matter which was added after the 18th amendment as it was limited to three items, election of PM and CM, Vote of No Confidence and Money Bill. But we debated during the 18th Amendment Parliamentary Committee to add the fourth item as constitutional amendment was important to limit trampling of the party line as the party may move reference for disqualification of the said members.



LAHORE: A shopkeeper is arranging decorative items in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) as Muslims celebrate Eid Milad un Nabi (PBUH), on the 12th day of Rabi' al-awwal in the city.

Azma Bukhari criticises KP CM statement against foreign policy

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said speaking against national policy by any chief minister is tantamount to being anti-state. In response to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government spokesperson Barrister Saif's statement, She said KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur had already clarified why he was going to talk to Afghanistan. He himself stated that he did not consider federal government and its foreign policy, she recalled. "Such a statement falls under the category of rebellion," she added.

Azma said the KP chief minister said he would make his own decisions. She asked Barrister Saif to tell his chief minister that the foreign policy was formulated by the federation, and not by provinces. Meeting with ambassadors for betterment of one's province was a good thing, she said adding that foreign visits with the prime minister were meant to strengthen the federation.

The Punjab information minister said that any chief minister speaking against national policy independently was equivalent to being anti-state. A chief minister meeting with representatives of another country, bypassing the federation, raises many questions, she added.

Brothers assault sisters

LAHORE (APP): Brothers assaulted their sisters over demand for their share in the property in Nawab Town area here.

Due to the Virtual Women Police Station established in Safe City, the accused were apprehended by the police. According to details, the brothers assaulted sisters after they requested their share in the property. The victims were dragged out of the street by their hair, and one woman lost consciousness due to the violence.

As soon as a call was received on 15, the Virtual Women Police Station quickly sent police and rescue services to the scene. Initial reports indicate that two sisters had asked their brothers for their share in the property. Enraged, the brothers and their wives began violently attacking the sisters with slaps and bricks.

NGO donates 100 wheelchairs, stretchers to LGH

LAHORE (APP): The Muslim Hands Organisation, an NGO, donated 100 wheelchairs and 100 stretchers to the Emergency Department of Lahore General Hospital to assist patients in need, at a ceremony held at the LGH, on Saturday.

Speaking at the event, Post Graduate Medical Institute (PGMI) Principal Professor Dr. Al-Fareed Zafar praised the efforts of those who contribute to the welfare of society, calling them "the real capital of the society and our bright face." He emphasised that such acts of kindness and philanthropy represent a collective social responsibility, and those who assist suffering humanity are greatly rewarded both in this life and the hereafter.

LBA delegation meet Punjab Governor

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore Bar Association (LBS) delegation, led by President People's Lawyers Forum (PLF) Punjab and Member Punjab Bar Council Raheel Kamran Cheema and Information Secretary PLF Punjab Azeem Hafeez, called on Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at the Governor's House on Saturday.

The Governor said that the lawyers' community had always remained at the forefront in the struggle for the supremacy of the Constitution and democratic values.

He said that Lahore Bar and People's Lawyers Forum played an impor-

tant role in maintaining the rule of law and Constitution and ensuring the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. The Governor vowed to take the vision of President Asif Ali Zardari and Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto to every bar of Punjab. He added that the doors of the Governor's House are always open for the lawyer community across Punjab.

The delegation informed the Governor about several important issues including a controversial notification of the Judicial Division and the need for improvement in the Lawyers Welfare Fund. The Governor assured the delegation that

he would do his best to resolve the issues on a priority basis.

LBA President Munir Hussain Bhatti and other members of the Bar Cabinet were also present.

Meanwhile, the Governor also congratulated the newly elected office bearers of the Health Reporters Association and expressed good wishes to them. He congratulated President Health Reporters' Association Bilal Chaudhry, Secretary General Zulqarnain Rana, Senior Vice President Hasan Hafeez and other office-bearers. He hoped that the newly elected officials of the association will play a positive role in health matters.

Punjab govt announces a reduction in court fees

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government on Saturday announced a reduction in the court fees infrastructure.

The Punjab government has reduced the court fees, fee foe certified copy and other court matters and after the signing by the Governor of Punjab, the Board of Revenue has issued a notification for this reduction.

One-time court fee has been fixed at Rs.100 for a certified copy of an order or judgment from civil court, one-time court fee for a certified copy of an order or judgment from high court will be Rs.500.

Meanwhile, court fee for a certified copy is Rs.10 per page instead of Rs.100.

According to the notification, a one-time court fee of Rs 500 has been set for a revision application to the Board of Revenue and Commissioners under the Punjab Tenancy Act 1887.

According to which, a one-time court fee of Rs 500 will be charged for a revision application in the High Court under CPC Section 15. Likewise, court fee has been reduced from Rs 100 to Rs 10 on application in Customs, Excise, Land Revenue, Civil

Court cases with value less than Rs 10,000.

Similarly, court fee on court revenue or rent application will be reduced from Rs.500 to Rs.10, and court fee on request for transfer of case to court or authority will be Rs.100 instead of Rs.500.

The notification further read that court fee on case transfer request in High Court has been fixed at Rs.200, while court fee of Rs.10 will be charged on request for subpoena. According to the notification, the court fee for submission of affidavit or power of attorney in Civil, Criminal Court, Revenue Court is fixed at Rs.100.

While court fee for filing affidavit in High Court or Board of Revenue will be reduced from Rs.500 to Rs.200. The court fee has been completely abolished on the lawyer's letter, the court fee was reduced from Rs500 to Rs10 on the application for injunction. It is worth mentioning here that on the demand of lawyers' community, a committee headed by Federal Law Minister Nazir Tarar made recommendations and sent them to the Punjab government, which were accepted.

Minister orders keeping roads dust-free to prevent smog

LAHORE (APP):Punjab Minister for Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD) Zeeshan Rafique has ordered for swift removal of dust, accumulated along roadsides, following end of the monsoon season.

During a video conference meeting with chief executive officers (CEOs) of various waste management companies, held at the Civil Secretariat here on Saturday, the minister emphasised the

significant role of dust in environmental pollution and its contribution to smog.

The meeting, which was also attended by Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmed Mian and Special Secretary Asiya Gul, reviewed the performance of solid waste management companies and discussed new projects. The LG&CD minister said that maintaining cleanliness was a key focus of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz

Sharif. He urged all CEOs to meet their cleanliness targets, highlighting that it is their responsibility to ensure a clean and healthy environment for citizens.

CM seeks plan for pink salt export

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, chairing a meeting on mines and minerals sector development here on Saturday, sought a comprehensive plan to advance the export of pink salt.

She stressed the need to ensure safety of mining workers and to consider the use of modern technology for mineral extraction in Punjab.

The chief minister directed the authorities concerned to take swift measures to impose a ban on the export of raw pink salt, stressing that the country's valuable resources should not be sold at throwaway prices. She highlighted the significance of pink salt as a treasure for Pakistan.

CM Maryam Nawaz reviewed proposals for generating revenue from pink salt and considered plans to establish a value-added industry for the mineral. Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Zahid Bukhari, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Dal and Secretary Minerals Babar Aman Babar attended the meeting.

40 new dengue cases reported

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Health Department confirmed on Saturday that 40 new cases of dengue were recorded across the province in the last 24 hours.

According to the latest data, Rawalpindi reported 37 cases, while Lahore, Mianwali and Bahawalpur each reported one case.

Over the past week, 207 new cases of dengue virus infection have been identified, bringing the total number of cases in Punjab for the year 2024 to 632.

In light of the rising number of cases, the Health Department has issued an advisory urging the public to maintain clean and dry surroundings to help prevent the spread of the Dengue virus. The department further emphasized the importance of citizen cooperation with health teams actively working to control the outbreak.

Security plan for Eid Milad finalised

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Police have finalised security arrangements for celebration of Eid Milad-un-Nabi and the inspector general of police (IGP) Punjab has said that full security will be provided for the celebrations across the province.

He said that security would be on high alert, miscreants and anti-national elements would be kept under close watch, while more than 55,000 officers and workers would be deployed for security of 1,581 meetings and 2,467 processions across the province.

According to the Punjab Police data, 255 processions and more than 225 Milad gatherings would be held in Lahore on Eid Milad-un-Nabi, while more than 10,000 officers, officials and volunteers would perform security duties in the city.

KP CM Gandapur should focus on his own performance: Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Engr. Amir Muqam, on Saturday said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur should focus on his own performance rather than attacking national institutions.

Speaking in the National Assembly on a point of order, the minister stressed that the Chief Minister needs to adopt a constructive approach to address the province's challenges.

Amir Muqam said that the sacrifices made by the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for peace should not be undermined, and no one will be allowed to sabotage these efforts.

He praised the role of the armed forces in maintaining law and order in

the province, noting their continued sacrifices during difficult times.

The minister strongly condemned the unfortunate incident that took place in Parliament and expressed dissatisfaction with opposition leaders who persist in criticizing political figures.

Amir Muqam also voiced concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, highlighting that some residents are afraid to leave their homes at night.

Condemning Gandapur's remarks against Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the minister stressed that women should be treated with respect and their dignity upheld.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Mustafa Kamal remarked that

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan must understand the ground realities and work towards the country's betterment.

Mustafa Kamal warned that failing to recognize the current situation could lead to widespread disillusionment among PTI members, potentially causing them to leave the party.

He emphasized the importance of directly engaging with party leaders to address these issues, rather than relying on ineffective indirect communication.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Shazia Marri said that protecting democracy and the Parliament would serve the country's best interests. She urged unity and the need for constructive measures to help the country emerge from its current crisis.

Murad opens café, Khudee, run by differently-abled persons

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurated Pakistan's first café, Khudee, staffed by differently-abled persons stating that the café represents a milestone and serves as a shining example of what can be achieved when individuals can develop their skills and improve their career prospects, while also experiencing personal growth that goes beyond vocational training.

The CM was accompanied by provincial ministers Saeed Ghani and Zulfiqar Shah. The CEO of the KVTC Senator Haseeb Ahmed and others briefed the CM about the initiative.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Shah said that Karachi Vocational Training Centre (KVTC) has long been serving hope and empowerment for the differently abled community, focusing on providing invaluable vocational training programs. He added that the KVTC programs

were not just about imparting skills; they were about transforming lives. "Through programs like the ones we see today, particularly in culinary arts, KVTC has equipped students with practical skills that prepare them for the demands of professional environments," he said.

The CM appreciated the dedication of KVTC's team. "Your commitment to empowering these students, to helping them discover their potential, is nothing short of extraordinary," he said and added that because of the KVTC team efforts, the students were not only learning, but they were thriving.

Shah said that the students were demonstrating remarkable progress, breaking barriers with the right guidance and opportunities provided to them.

The launch of Khudee - Bakery & Café is proof of that progress, the CM said and added that it was more than just a café- it was a

milestone, a shining example of what could be achieved when individuals were allowed to grow. "This initiative offers our students a real-world professional setting, one where they can grow their skills and further enhance their career prospects while experiencing personal growth in ways that go beyond vocational training," he said.

The CM said that he was delighted to be part of an initiative that uplifts individuals, one that provides dignity through work and opportunity. "Khudee - Bakery & Café stands as a shining example for our society, reminding us that inclusion and empowerment are not just ideals, but achievable goals," he said.

Shah hoped that the launching of the café would inspire others to follow in their footsteps. "Let's continue supporting our differently-abled community and giving them the platforms they need to thrive," the CM concluded.



LAHORE: Railway staffers on rail cart on railway track to check the track at Cantt station. —APP Photo

VACANCIES ANNOUNCEMENT

Finance Division, Government of Pakistan invites applications from the interested candidates fulfilling the prescribed eligibility criteria for various positions on contract basis for an approved PSDP funded project titled, "Capacity Building of Finance Division for Implementation of Policy Framework in Federal Government" for period of One year (Extendable on Performance basis)

Sr. No	Vacancies	No. of Positions
1	Cash Forecasting & Management Specialist (PPS-9/10)	01
2	Internal Audit Specialist (PPS-9/10)	01
3	Economic Analyst (PPS-9/10)	02
4	Senior Data Analysts (Banking and Budgeting) (PPS-8)	01
5	Assistant Director (Data Analyst) (PPS-7)	01
6	Naib Qasid (PPS-1)	01

- Details of required qualification and professional experience can be downloaded from the website of the Finance Division (www.finance.gov.pk).
- Qualified and eligible interested candidates should apply online through "National Job Portal" (<http://nipsiov.pk>) till 29.09.2024.
- Incomplete applications and those received after the closing date will not be entertained. Only short-listed candidates fulfilling the laid down criteria will be called for an interview. No TA/DA will be admissible.
- The Finance Division reserves the right to cancel the recruitment process at any time without assigning any reason.

SECTION OFFICER (PFMR-I)
051-9217872 PID(I)1885/24

IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL JUDGE (CUSTOMS & TAXATION), KARACHI

Special Case No.145/2019
FIR # ASO-187/2019-HQ
P.S. CUSTOMS, KARACHI.

The State.... Versus... Ahsanullah Khan S/o Khalil Ullah Khan

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

Whereas, complaint has been made before me that namely Ahsan Ullah S/o Khalil Ullah Khan, R/o Muhallah Khan, Ghaly Ghal Tehsil & District Swat, CNIC No. 15602-4880079-9 has committed an offence of smuggling and it had been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person cannot be found and whereas it had been shown to my satisfaction that the above mentioned accused person absconded to avoid the service of the said warrant.

- Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused is required to appear on 09.10.2024 at 09:00 am before this Hon'able Court to answer the said complaint.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 05.09.2024.

—sd—
Special Judge
Special Court
(Customs, Taxation & Anti-Smuggling-II)
Karachi

از دفتر ایڈیشنل انسپکٹر جنرل آف پولیس
CTD خیبر پختونخوا پشاور

ٹینڈر نوٹس

زیر دستگی کو برائے مالی سال 2024-25 کیلئے سرکاری گاڑیوں اور موٹر سائیکلوں کے انجن
آور ہالنگ، ٹائر ٹیوب، بیڑیاں، ہاؤزی ڈیفنٹ پیٹ اور دیگر متفرق سپارز/مرمتی کیلئے
ٹینڈر مطلوب ہے، جوڑ دستگی کو 2024-10-02 بوقت 10:00 بجے تک پیش جانی
چاہیے، ٹینڈر ای دن 11 بجے ٹینڈر ہندنگاں یا ان کے مجاز نمائندے کی موجودگی میں
کھولے جائینگے۔

شرائط و ضوابط ذیل ہیں:۔ (1) تمام ٹیکیدار/فرم (Revenue)
KPR Authority اور GST کیساتھ رجسٹرڈ ہونے چاہیے۔ (2) نرخ آئٹم کے حساب
بشمول تمام ٹیکسز درج کئے جائینگے۔ (3) ٹینڈر کیساتھ مبلغ 5 لاکھ روپے (500,000)
کال ڈیپازٹ بینک ڈرائٹ کی شکل میں بنام Addl:IGP,CTD,KP
منسک ہونی چاہیے، بغیر کال ڈیپازٹ کے ٹینڈر ناقابل قبول ہونگے۔ (4) منظور شدہ
کنٹر ایکٹر کے بل سے کوئی قانون کے مطابق ہوگی۔ (5) ٹینڈر کے متعلق تفصیل اور ٹینڈر
فارم کی کپی دن دفتری اوقات میں MTO سی ڈی ہیڈ کوارٹر پشاور سے حاصل کی جاسکتی
ہے۔ (6) ٹینڈر فارم میں دی گئی اشیاء کے نمونہ جات منظور شدہ کنٹر ایکٹر سے دفتر ہذا میں جمع
کردائے جائینگے۔ (7) ٹینڈر میں دی گئی قیمت مورخہ 30/06/2025 تک کارآمد ہونگے۔
(8) منظور شدہ کنٹر ایکٹر زیر دستگی کیساتھ سامپ پیپر پر برائے مالی سال 2024-25 کیلئے
معادہ تحریر کریگا۔ (9) ٹینڈر کو ٹینڈر ہند قانون میں بذریعہ کو ریزروں مندرجہ ذیل پتہ پر
ارسال کریں۔

شوکت عباس پی ایس پی
ایڈیشنل انسپکٹر جنرل آف پولیس
(سی ٹی ڈی، خیبر پختونخوا پشاور)
INF(P)2417/2024

CC RTO assures of measures to resolve businessmen issues

PESHAWAR (APP): The newly appointed Chief Commissioner of Regional Tax Office (RTO) Peshawar, Yasir Ali has assured of taking all possible steps for the resolution of problems being faced by the business community of the province.

According to a press release issued here on Saturday, Yasir Ali expressed these views while talking with the Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi who called on him at his office.

Chief Commissioner RTO told Coordinator

PAJCCI that business community can contact him at any time and he will try to his utmost to provide maximum relief to them.

Yasir Ali said facilitation of the business community is the main objective of the post he is holding and will fulfil his professional responsibilities.

Earlier, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi who also holds offices of Member Advisory Committee and Honorary Coordinator Media Affairs in the Federal Tax Ombudsman office, congratulated Yasir Ali on assuming of his duties in RTO Peshawar.

He also offered his services for close coordination between tax department officials and the business community of the province.

Zia Sarhadi also made some suggestions for simplification of tax collection procedures, resolution of problems being faced by taxpayers and reforms in the taxation system.

Chief Commissioner RTO supported the suggestion made by Zia Sarhadi and said steps would be taken in light of views expressed by him for the betterment of the taxation system and for providing ease of doing business to the trading community of the country.

BF accelerates electioneering ahead of SCCI’ elections



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Electioneering of the Businessman Forum – a largest group in the upcoming election of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is gaining momentum in Peshawar.

A 10-days are left in holding of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry for 2024-26, former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour-led businessman forum has accelerated campaign woo voters and visited different bazaars and markets in the city.

The campaign was spearheaded by former FPCCI president Ghazanfar Bilour, president SCCI Fuad Ishaq, senior vice president Sanaullah Khan, vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi, Anjum e Tajran Lifetime president Haji Muhammad Afzal, Anjum e Tajran KP chairman Shuakat Ali Khan, president Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zulfiqar Ali Khan and traders’ leader Inayat Khan.

Former president SCCI Faiz Muhammad Faizi, former vice presidents Javed Akhtar, Abdul Jalil Jan and Fazal Muqeem, Nadeem Rauf, Saddar Gul, Fazal Wahid, Sherfarzand, Husnain Sheraz, Shehryar Israr, Tajir Insaif President Shahid Khan, Faizullah Saraf, Aftab Iqbal, Fahad Amin, Naumanullah Haq, Farooq Ahmad, Ishtiaq Paracha, Malang Jan, Saifullah and others were also accompanied during the campaign.

Leaders of the Businessman Forum received a rosy welcome on Saturday by bazaars and markets and traders organization presidents, office bearers and members during their visit Saddar Road, Suneehri Masjid Road, Time Centre, Bilour Plaza, Shafi Market, Andar Shehr, Karachi Market, Ramdas Bazar, Circular Road along with different bazaars and market in connection of electioneering and wore them flower garlands.

Traders on the occasion

raised full-throated slogans in favour of the Businessman Forum former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour and expressed full confidence over his leadership and announced full support for the Businessman Forum in upcoming Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry elections.

Ilyas Ahmad Bilour, leader of the businessman forum had left no stone unturned in providing relief to the business community and played a pivotal role in resolution of issues, the traders said.

The business community said BF will sweep the SCCI election on the basis of good performance and opponents will face humiliating defeat.

The BF leaders thanked the business community for giving assurance for vote and support in the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry election and assured that the forum will continue selfless services and resolve issues on priority basis in future.

Governor expressess condolence over deaths

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday expressed grief over the death of five family members in a roof collapsed in Turangzai areas of Charsadda.

Expressing grief over deaths, he prayed for eternal peace of departed souls.

The Governor also directed authorities to start relief work and provide assistance to bereaved family.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister KP, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur has expressed grief over the death of five family members in a roof collapsed in Turangzai areas of Charsadda.

Expressing grief over deaths, Chief Minister prayed for eternal peace of departed souls.

He also directed authorities to start relief work and provide assistance to relatives of ill-fated family.

Ministers crying hoarse: Barrister Saif

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif on Saturday dubbed criticism directed by the federal and provincial ministers at KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur after his meeting with the Afghan consul general ‘ridiculous’.

In a statement on Saturday, Saif said that the 18th Amendment mandated CM to hold talks with Afghanistan regarding law and order situation, adding the CM could travel anywhere for the benefit of his people.

Lashing out at Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Saif said when Sharif was Punjab CM, he used to go all around the globe, signed trade agreements and made huge kickbacks while asking how many foreign ambassadors met incumbent Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz.

Saif stated that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa CM would hold meetings with foreign ambassadors in future as well, stressing that social and economic relations with Afghanistan needed to be strengthened.

CM Advisor appointed Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur has assigned the portfolio of ‘Health’ to his advisor, Ihtesham Ali.

According to a notification issued here on Saturday, Mr. Ihtesham Ali has been appointed as Minister for Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with immediate effect.

However, Syed Qasim Ali Shah who held the Health Ministry, has been assigned the portfolio of Social Welfare.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur being briefed about newly established Chief Minister’s Policy Office.

Experts call for awareness of HPV vaccine among women

PESHAWAR (APP): Welcoming the participants, Ms. Shermeela Rassool, Deputy Country Representative Unicef Pakistan informed about the threats posed by cervical cancer which only in Pakistan is affecting around 5008 women annually with around 3197 deaths.

“To contain second most common cancer among women its need of the hour to raise awareness about importance of HPV vaccine used for prevention of cervical cancer,” Shermeela stressed.

It requires a comprehensive solution which is difficult but not impossible and if we did not take action, the country would pay for the future losses, she warns.

Dr. Zafar Iqbal Channa, Director Technical Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI) termed cervical cancer as ‘silent killer’ of women.

He apprised the participants that Pakistan government has planned to formally roll out HPV vaccination in the year 2025 in phased manner.

In the first phase, starting from second quarter of 2025, vaccination will be made in Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province will be covered for HPV vaccination in year 2026 while Baluchistan and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) in the year 2027, Dr. Zafar added.

He informed that a cohort of girls from the age of 9 to 14 will be administered HPV vaccination with the objective of protecting future mothers from this deadly cancer.

“Cervical cancer is very deadly which must be eliminated and its high time to raise awareness about importance of its vaccination,” stressed Nadia Bibi, Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in National Commission on the Rights of Child.

Through rolling out of HPV vaccination we can protect our female from this perilous disease and can also eradicate from our country.

Nadia Bibi also laid stress on awareness session because access to diagnosis and prevention is very limited especially in rural settlements.

Fahmida Khan, Gender and Development Specialist Unicef in her presentation shed light on importance of HPV vaccination for adolescent girls.

Fahmida said in Pakistan female population is 48.7 percent out of which 22 percent are adolescent girls from 10 to 19 years.

Among these 22 percent adolescent girls, 88 percent are living in poverty, raising their vulnerability to contraction of cervical cancer due to illiteracy and lack of resources.

In Pakistan 26.2 million children are out of school and out of which 13.7 million are girls.

If we become successful in coverage of adolescent girls by administering them HPV vaccination, we can protect future mothers of the nation, Fehmida commented.

She said the cost of HPV vaccination at private clinics is around Rs. 8000 and very difficult for people to get them vaccinated due to high cost.

She also suggested for involvement of institutes engaged in imparting skills through Non Formal Education for conveying message regarding importance of HPV vaccination among millions of out of the school girls.

During panel discussion, panelist also laid emphases on strong advocacy for removing misconceptions among people about vaccination.

The vaccination drive can face hurdles due to suspicion among people’s mind and such hindrances need strong advocacy messages and articulation through involvement of media, religious leaders, teachers, politicians, CSOs, community leader, social media influencers etc, they added.

Dr. Amina Khan, Country Director Jhpiego, said her organization is already providing technical assistance in introduction of HPV vaccination and will continue support in promotion of vaccination in the country.

Jhpiego has also completed a knowledge survey on advocacy of HPV and soon its finding would be shared with the stakeholders, she added.

Prize distribution ceremony organized

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Happy Day School System Peshawar Cantt, a prize distribution ceremony was held among the students who took the 1st, 2nd and 3rd position in the matriculation examination 2024. Rs.1 lac cash prize to 1st position holder, Rs.50,000 to 2nd position holder and Rs.25,000 was given to 3rd position holder.

Parents of the position holders were also participated in the ceremony.

Hard work and excellent performance of the teachers was also appreciated.

Special guest Syed Daud Bukhari inaugurated the event.

The principal of the

ZAB murder case: Let history be the best judge

Khawaja Wajih-u-Din

A nine-member Supreme Court bench, headed by Honorable Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, on March 6, 2024, unanimously, delivered opinion on Presidential Reference. PPP government on April 02, 2011, had filed a reference under clauses 1 and 2 of Article 186 of the Constitution for revisiting the case of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in the apex Court to reopen case of former prime minister and founder of PPP, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged on April 4, 1979, in Rawalpindi. Short order was announced on 6.3.24 and detailed reasons were given on 5/7/24. It may be noted here that seven hearing of the matter took place during its pendency in the Supreme Court for years, majority of them during the present incumbent of the Court. The proceedings of the reference were broadcast live on the official channel, social and broadcasting media by the Supreme Court, which was appreciated by all and sundry. Having listened to the arguments on the website of the august Court, I must say that the Amicus Curiae(s) appointed by the court did a remarkable job

in assisting the court for reaching at the conclusion especially a former Honorable judge of the August Court Manzoor Malik.

The 48-page judgment was authored by Honorable the Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and four honorable judges of the Supreme Court added additional notes to it. The apex Court held that the trial and appellate Courts, which conducted the “trial and heard the appeal, were not true courts under the Constitution. The country was captive to Martial Law and so too were its Courts. “The detailed reasons were under the headings reopening of investigation, reinvestigation by the Federal Investigation Agency, transfer of case to the High Court, prejudice caused to the accused /convict (Mr. Bhutto), constitutional safeguards disregarded, right of appeal lost, right of fair trial and due process, basis of conviction, the approver, conscience and convenience, lack of evidence, negative forensic report, unsubstantiated inferences, motive corroboration, motive vitiated by Kasuri, failure to establish the motive, the first information report, the reconstitution of Supreme Court, the co-accused, the bias of Maulvi, Mushtaq and the trial Court, peoples mandate, adulation and praise for the dictator and absence of feared trial and due process. On the basis of these findings it can be safely stated that the entire edifice of the conviction has crumbled.

Summary of the points adjudicated in the judgment is as under:

a) When the judges take an oath of allegiance to the dictators, the courts are no longer of the people.”

b) The Supreme Court held that “due process and fair trial were not complied with in the murder trial of founder Pakistan Peoples’ Party Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto by the Lahore High Court (LHC) and of appeal by the apex Court.”

c) The Honorable court held that “no attention was paid to the exceptionalism, and untouchability of General Zia ul Haq, the Chief Martial Law Administrator, who had gathered in himself, all the powers of an absolute monarch.”

The judgment said that the “trial court, which had tried and convicted Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, and the Appellate Court, which had dismissed his appeal, were operating when there was

and admittedly, the trial was conducted and the appeal heard without Bhutto having the constitutional protection of the Fundamental Rights and other rights guaranteed in the Constitution.

f) Any single one of the aforesaid noted transgressions may have vitiated the trial and the conviction, however, cumulatively they destroyed any semblance of due process and fair trial, and revealed that innocent men were rushed to the gallows.

We are all familiar with the norm that Justice should not only be done but seen to have been done. Many people in the legal fraternity argue that now justice is done, but it doesn’t seem to have been done.

In my entire Judicial career spreading over 30 years, not even once case law of murder of the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (popularly known as judicial murder) was cited as a reference in arguments by anyone from the bar either from the side of the Prosecution or the accused. This is despite the fact that the judgments of the High Court and Supreme Court are binding in nature as per 2004 Yearly Law Reporter page 47.

As students of law the

authorities quoted in Pakistan Law Digest 1965 dacca 156 and Pakistan Law Digest 1958 Karachi 175 were imbibed in our minds. These authorities held that all the executive powers must be based on contemporaneous law. The principal laid down in these judgments has always been a guiding principle for people associated with field of law.

During my service I became familiar with the basic principle of case law reported in Pakistan law digest 1958 of Supreme Court pages 104, wherein it was held that all the super structure falls, if the basic order is without lawful authority. I remember questioning my senior on the judicial murder of the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. I still remember his reply stating that there will be one day when the history will be corrected.

I also learned the concepts of total justice. Total justice is a “super-principle” that has gathered momentum over the past century. Its arrival reflected a sea change in legal culture, that itself reflects profound changes in the organization of society.

Similarly, is another term used for Dispensation of justice is, “technicalities should not defeat the ends of justice. There are many authorities of the courts in Pakistan to that effect.

There cannot be an iota of doubt that no prejudice shall be caused to anyone due to the fault of the Court. The legal maxim is ‘actus curiae neminem gravabit’. In this regard, we may usefully refer to a passage from Kalabharati Advertising, (2010) 9 SCC 437:

“The maxim ‘Actus Curiae neminem gravabit’, which means that the act of the Court shall prejudice no one, becomes applicable when a situation is projected where the Court is under an obligation to undo the wrong done to a party by the act of the Court. In a case, where any undeserved or unfair advantage has been gained by a party invoking the jurisdiction of the Court, and the same requires to be neutralized, the said maxim is to be made applicable.”

Pakistan law digest 1965 Lahore 628, Pakistan Lahore digest 1962 Lahore page 92 are some of the authorities in Pakistan in this respect. The legal circles argue about the applicability of principle of total justice in its true spirit and if, due to the act and preju-

dice of the trial and appellate courts an innocent person was sent to the gallows, why action has not been taken against them due to technicalities as they have defeated the ends of justice. They also ponder over the fact that when the action of the executive was not based on contemporaneous law, what punitive actions were taken.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan in its detailed reasons made material remarks on the conduct, approach and modus operandi of everyone involved in the shameful exercise of power by the then executive, judges etc., but fell short of stopping their pension, or least some fine, or made example by removing their pictures from Government offices, court rooms and libraries of the courts. It could have also directed the government to notify them as not good judges as a symbolic implication in its verdict.

Be as it may credit goes to the Supreme Court today for adjudicating upon the ignominious blunder of the trial and appellate courts, in the matter, under the martial law. Let history be the best judge.

(The writer is former Registrar Peshawar High Court)



In brief

Two children die of malaria

KHAIRPUR (INP): Two children died of malaria in Simon Khan Channu village of Rasoolabad near Khairpur, local said on Saturday. According to report a number of children are suffering from malaria in the area. The deceased children were identified as 3-year-old Nishat and one-year-old Ilyas. The death of two children in the same village caused panic in the village and the villagers protested against the incompetence of the health department. The villagers said due to the malaria, our children have died and many children are still suffering from malaria but no team has been sent by the health department. We have informed District Health Officer a week ago about spread of malaria among the children in the village and despite that no team has come due to which our two children died, they further said. However, Commissioner sent a team to our village after taking notice, the villagers said.

Plastic bags confiscated

KHANEWAL (INP): The district administration confiscated over 600-kilogramme plastic bags after a ban was imposed by the Punjab government on single-use plastic and shopping bags with a thickness of less than 75 microns. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali Bukhari said that the teams were strictly monitoring across the district. He said that Rs 44,000 fine was also imposed on shopkeepers over violation. He urged the citizens and shopkeepers to avoid use of shopping bags. Meanwhile, Assistant Commissioner Sunbal Javed along with Deputy Director Environment Sarfraz Anjum conducted a raid at Al-Jannat Road. They inspected the polythene wholesale and dealers shops and confiscated 38 kg prohibited polythene bags from Haji and sons plastic store. DC directed the ACs to launch crackdown and tighten noose against shopkeepers involved in sale and purchase of plastic bags.

Floodwater cuts off 250 villages

QUETTA (INP): Around 250 villages were completely cut-off from Khairpur Nathan Shah area after local rescue teams diverted the floodwater which entered from Balochistan hit Bara area. Sources said that local administration with the help of rescue teams used heavy machinery to divert the flood water which also collapsed with Flood Protection Drain. Union Council also destroyed a bridge which was built with the help of local residents to save them from flood water. Relief teams are providing every possible support to flood victims of the area.

Brother acquitted

MUZAFFARGAH (INP): A district and sessions court in Muzaffargarh ordered release of Abdul Basit who murdered his three minor sisters in Thermal Colony on Saturday. According to police record, on July 18, 2023, the accused brutally slaughtered his three sisters who were identified as Abhi Fatima who was seven years old, Zohra was eight years old while Arisha was 11 years old. Their bodies were found in a quarter located beside their house. Soon after the incident police arrested their real brother Abdul Basit who admitted killing his three sisters. Sources further said that later parents of the deceased girls pardoned their son and filed a settlement petition in the court and withdrew their case.

Govt prioritizes education, health sectors: Saira



F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Former Federal Minister and Chairperson Chief Minister's Special Initiatives Saira Afzal Tarar has said that provision of better health-care and educational facilities is the top priority of the Punjab government and added that under construction 400 beds District Headquarter Hospital will be completed in its original design and specification.

She expressed these views while visiting under construction building of DHQ hospital and University of Hafizabad being constructed with the cost of more than Rs.15. Deputy Director Development Hafizabad Tasawar Abbas, district leader of PMLN Mian Tahawar Hussain Tarar, Muhammad

Zaman Bhone, Khalid Mehmood Butt, Muhammad Hanif Toor and Shoaib Ullah Tarar were also present on this occasion.

Saira Afzal Tarar said that some anti-government of PMLN elements are making baseless propaganda about decreasing number of beds and reshaping of the hospital project. She said that new DHQ hospital would be a state-of-the-art project and all kinds of treatment facilities would be available to people at same place.

She directed the offices of building department and contractor to complete first phase of this project at the earliest so that treatment facilities could be provided to patients soon. During the visit of under construction University of Hafizabad, she directed the officers

and contractor to ensure completion of admin block at the earliest so that classes could be launched from next academic year.

RTA commits for road safety: Secretary Regional Transport Authority Hafizabad Madam Aqsa Riaz visited Jalalpur Bhattian-Kot Hara Road along with Motor Vehicle Examiner and Traffic Police to check overloading and excel load management and imposed Rs. 13,30,000/- fine to drivers involved in overloading.

Aqsa Riaz said that on the directions of the government, implement on excel load management would be ensured at all cost. She warned the drivers that punitive action would be taken against those who found involve in violation of excel load management.

Opening of Angoor Adda crossing demanded

F.P. Report

WANA: A large rally held in a protest against closure of Angoor Adda crossing. The rally organized by various political parties, in which large number of public including tribal elders, political leaders and people from every walk of life participated in favor of their demands.

The speakers including Khial Muhammad, president of the Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party, Asadullah, general secretary Jamaat-e-Islami, Imran Mukhlis, general secretary People's Party, Usman Khan, local activist, Haroon; Saifur Rehman and president of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and Dr. Abdul Qadeer, a prominent figure from the border area addressed the participants.

During the speeches, leaders highlighted the sacrifices made by the people of South Waziristan for

Pakistan's sovereignty. "The people of this region have always stood at the forefront, defending the country at critical junctures," said Khial Muhammad. "From the fight against Soviet forces to the defeat of the United States in Afghanistan, our people have played a pivotal role, yet the continued policies look to oppress us economically."

The closure of the Angoor Adda Gate, which has been shut for the past 11 months, was a focal point of the protests. The speakers emphasized that it is the primary source of livelihood for many in the region. The prolonged closure has plunged the area into severe economic hardship, forcing many to consider migration, said Asadullah. "If these patriotic Pakistanis are driven to leave, it could raise questions about the national development and progress."

The rally's participants

also pointed to what they described as an emerging conspiracy to reignite conflict in the area, fueled by global powers. There are deliberate attempts to sow discord between the tribes of South Waziristan and the state, with foreign interests at play, claimed Usman Khan.

While clarifying their stance, the speakers stated they are not opposed to the implementation of visa and passport regulations. However, they rejected their enforcement on the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe. The Wazir tribes, living across the border in Afghanistan's Birmal region, have deep-rooted ties to Pakistan. They own property here, and their interests are interwoven with this land," said Dr. Abdul Qadeer. The government must take concrete steps to address these concerns and avoid alienating these tribes, whose loyalty has spanned centuries.

6 killed as bus plunges into ditch in Sherani

F.P. Report

QUETTA: At least six people were killed and several others injured after a passenger bus fell into a ditch in district Sherani's Danasar area of Balochistan's Zhob.

The ill-fated bus was going from Islamabad to Quetta, said Levies. Those injured in the accident have been transferred to the hospital. Meanwhile, the Balochistan government has ordered probe into the deadly accident.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the tragic traffic accident in Sherani district of Balochistan. In a similar incident on May 21, at least 20 persons died and 21 more were wounded when a bus fell into a deep ravine in Diamer, a city in Gilgit-Baltistan province.

The accident occurred

on the Karakoram Highway in Yashukhaldas area of Diamer. The bus was travelling to Hunza from Rawalpindi when it fell into a gorge after the driver lost control. The bus was carrying more than 35 passengers to Hunza.

Man gunned down on Sibi road: Unidentified pillion riders shot dead a man near Chezal Shah Landi area in Sibi district on Saturday. According to police, the pillion riders gunned down Amir Khan Gishgori on Mul Road Sibi near Chezal Shah Landi area in Balochistan province. The criminals managed to escape after committing the crime. The body was shifted to Civil Hospital Sibi where after completion of necessary medico-legal formalities. It was handed over to the heirs after fulfilling necessary medico-legal formalities.

The incident has created

a mourning atmosphere in the victim's home. Further investigation was being conducted by the authorities of Police Station Sibi, however, a motive of the incident could not be ascertained till filing this report.

Meanwhile, unidentified bandits kidnapped a person possessing Rs17 million on Quetta-Chaman highway near Saranan area of district Pishin on Saturday.

According to a report, a gang of unidentified armed bandits kidnapped a man, Mehmood Ashezai Achakzai, son of Haji Abdul Haq Ashezai Achakzai, at gunpoint on Quetta-Chaman highway in Saranan area of District Pishin. The relatives of the hostage called on Deputy Commissioner Pishin and other concerned authorities to seek recovery of hostage and the money. Further investigation was being conducted by the authorities.

Heavy rainfall damages crops, livestock

F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: The speedy winds and heavy rainfall causes massive damages to crops and orchards in Takht Bhai, area of Mardan while a large number of Livestock has also been affected.

According to details, severe damage has been caused to standing crops and orchards in various areas of Takht Bhai due to the stormy winds and heavy rainfall. The affected areas include Jalala, Shergarh, Madi Baba, Peer Sadi Takkar, Shah Nur Pul Garoon, Shah Par Khaw, Dheri, Sri Bhullol, Jehangirabad, and others. Local farmers say that the damage to fruit orchards, vegetables, and especially sugarcane and corn crops is estimated to be in crores. The crops in the fields, especially vegetables and corn, have been severely affected.

Compared to last year, this year's strong winds have caused more damage to the crops. The farmers in Takht Bhai are demanding that the government declare the area as calamity-hit and provide aid to save their crops and prevent economic exploitation and hardship. The damage to solar panels installed to meet electricity needs is also estimated to be in lakhs.

Balochistan Minister visits Khana Farhang

F.P. Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Education Minister Rahila Hameed Durrani visited Khana Farhang, Iran, a statement issued on Saturday said. Upon the Minister's arrival, Director General Khana Farhang Syed Abul Hasan Meri warmly welcomed the distinguished guest.

The two leaders agreed to increase cooperation between Balochistan and Iran in educational activities along with the exchange of students and teachers. Director General Khana Farhang Iran stressing the need for enhancing cooperation between two countries announced a scholarship program for Balochistan students from Master's degree to PhD in Iranian universities.

On this occasion, the provincial education minister Rahila Durrani said that there are deep cultural, historical and cultural relations between Pakistan and Iran. "The student exchange program between Balochistan and Iran and the training of teachers in Iran will be a milestone in the educational development of the province," she hoped.

FMA demands abolition of taxes

F.P. Report

SWABI: Frontier Miner Association (FMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a meeting held here on Saturday has demanded abolition of taxes being imposed by industries and environmental departments.

The meeting was chaired by District President FMA, Haji Sarzameen and attended by office bearers of miner association. They demanded to end taxes and said that survival of the industry would be difficult if these taxes were not revoked. They said that mining industry is passing through difficult phase and imposition of these taxes would deprive livelihood from thousands of people that are associated with mining industry. Meeting urged authorities to take notice of miners and provide them relief besides addressing their issues and problems.

2 cops killed

GUJARAT (INP): Two police officers riding a motorcycle were hit by a high-speed Mazda in the limits of Rahmania police station, killing both cops.

According to the police, two youths riding a motorcycle were on UC patrol when a high-speed Mazda hit the motorcycle-riding policemen due to a burst tire. According to the rescue officials, the bodies of the police officers were shifted to the hospital. Police have started an investigation into the incident to ascertain the cause of the tire burst.

Five beggar's dead in thunder storm hits their residence

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Five persons were killed when Lightning strikes fell on a residence located on a mountainous area on Rustam-Buner road near Bagh-e-Jibrani at Surkhahi village. The tragic incident took place at 1:30 a.m. on the night between Friday and Thursday.

The officials of rescue-1122 told that the rescue-control room received a phone call at mid-night that a residence had been gotten fire owing to lightning strikes. After receiving information about the incident, they claimed that a large number of rescue-1122 personnel along with fire fighter vehicles and medical teams rushed to the spot to launch rescue-operations.

The relevant officials began their rescue activities to quench the fire on house but the fire-fighting vehicle was unable to reach the spot owing to narrow path in the mountainous area,

they said, adding that the rescue-personnel used traditional way to quench the fire as well as to take the injured persons to type-D hospital in Rustam tehsil.

The police officials and locals of the area concerned claimed that the five dead persons were identified as beggars who were residing in the said affected house (Malang Khana). Two of the victims belonged to Peshawar district, two hailed from Charsadda district and the last one was the resident of Mardan district.

The slain beggars were identified as Imdad Bacha, Naeem Shah, Hayat Malang, Ikram Baba and Ali Baba alias Kabali Baba. The police handed over dead bodies to their family members after completion of medico-legal procedure of the victims.

Khyber society America awarded Lal Muhammad: Khyber Society of America awarded an award to Deputy

Director NCHD Lal Muhammad Toru welfare services, last day, in a ceremony, President of Khyber Society of America Zaman Afridi presented an award to Deputy Director NCHD Mardan Lal Muhammad Toru.

Addressing the program, President of Khyber Society of America Zaman Afridi said that Lal Muhammad Toro has played an important role in cooperating with Khyber Society of America in the educational and social works of Pakistan through his philanthropy.

They have helped the flood victims in every possible way. Lal Mohammad Toro thanked Khyber Society of America President Zaman Afridi and Chairman Taj Akbar Lala and all the members and said that for delivering aid to the flood affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The role of Khyber Society of America is significant.

Residents hold protest against police

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The residents protested against police torture at Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bakrani on complainant for registering robbery case against the influential culprits, on Saturday.

According to details, the victim was taken to Chandka Medical College Hospital Larkana by his family members due to the severe violence of DSP Bakrani's reader and policeman, who came to give a statement about the robbery in DSP office Bakrani.

The relatives of the villager, Ayaz Ali Magrio, Hafiz Muhammad Ismail Magrio, Abdul Wahid

Magrio and others relatives protested before journalists against the police officials and said that on August 28, the accused had stolen from the house.

A case was registered against 6 robbers at the university police station. However, due to the fact that the accused were influential, the police took their side and tortured the victim. He further said that if any delay in this case we will be filed case against police in the High Court of Sindh at Karachi, for justice.

Fine imposed on medical store: The team of health department raided the medical stores of the Dokri city of district Larkana, they were fined for selling expired and fake

medicines. Sahib Khan Mirani, Assistant Commissioner Farzana Mirani and other officials raided more than 20 different medical stores in the city from where many medical store owners fled.

The Medical store's owners were fined Rs 50,000 for selling expired and fake medicines and not keeping special medicines in the air-conditioner and for lack of cleanliness. Strict instructions have been issued to the store owners that any medical store outside the period, sampling and selling fake medicines, a case will be registered against the owners under the Medical Act because human lives are precious.

Locals MPs fail to resolve issue of Koki Khel IDPs



F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The local members' of parliament have failed so far to resolve the issue of Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Koki Khel and resuming Pak-Afghan highway for traffic movement.

Addressing to a press conference held in Landi Kotal press club Pakistan People Party (PPP) district Khyber head Shah Rehman Shinwari flanked by district spokesperson of Peoples Labor Bureau Gul Bahadar, PPP Tehsil Chief Fateh

Rehman and others said that Koki Khel Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) had a genuine demands however their prolonged protest sit-in multiplied problems of residents of Landi Kotal besides sufferings of Pak-Afghan bilateral trade.

He criticized the parliamentarians of Khyber for their neglected attitude towards the Koki Khel issue and said they had been elected to raise voice for their rights at the parliament floor and not to collect incentives from the government. If the Koki

Khel IDPs was not addressed and the supply line was not resumed to Landi Kotal then the road blockade would cause intra-tribesmen clashes, he added.

The PPP Khyber chief demanded of the concerned authorities to resolve the matter of protestors and recommence routine life activities at Pak-Afghan highway. He threatened of planning an indefinite agitation against the authorities concerned if the Koki Khel issue was not resolved in near future.

'Applications for Green Tractor Scheme to be invited soon'

MULTAN (INP): Punjab Agriculture Secretary Ifkhar Ali Sahu said on Saturday that applications for the Chief Minister's Green Tractor Scheme, offering a subsidy of Rs one million per tractor, would be invited soon.

This initiative is aimed at promoting mechanized farming across the province. He made the announcement while presiding over a review meeting on cotton at MNS Agricultural University, Multan, where efforts to boost cotton production were also discussed.

The meeting was attended by Special Secretary for Agriculture South Punjab, Sarfraz Hussain Magsi, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Rajwana, Focal Person for Cotton, Dr. Muhammad Anjum Ali, Director General Agriculture Extension, Chaudhry Abdul Hameed, Director General Agricultural Information

Punjab, Naveed Asmat Kahloon, Director General Pest Warning, Dr. Amir Rasool, Director General Crop Reporting Service, Abdul Qayyum, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Bandesha, and leading farmers including Khalid Mahmood Khokhar and Syed Hassan Raza.

Secretary Sahu directed the timely issuance of advisories for cotton care and stressed awareness campaigns on clean picking, storage, and transportation. He also called for proper documentation of cotton arrivals at ginning factories. Proposals for transforming Bahawalpur Division into a cotton valley were discussed.

The Secretary stated that both the public and private sectors were tasked with developing high-quality cotton seeds. He further mentioned that the distribution of Kisan Cards was ongoing, with 850,000 farmers already registered

under the program. The Kisan Card initiative received an overwhelmingly positive response from farmers.

Man shot dead in Burewala

BUREWALA (INP): A man was shot dead and another injured by unknown outlaws at Chak No 291-EB in tehsil Burewala.

According to police sources, unknown outlaws intercepted two citizens named Saif and Ghulam Dastgir. They opened fire and killed Saif. However, Ghulam Dastgir, sustained injuries. Saif allegedly had criminal record and belonged to Shiekhpura. Police is investigating the incident whether it was dacoity or enmity.

AC inspects THQ hospital various wards

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Assistant Commissioner and Administrator Municipal Committee, Iqra Nasir paid a surprise visit to Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Kamalia and inspected various wards in the hospital, on

Saturday.

AC meet with the patients and asked about provision of medical facilities in the hospital. She inquired about the medicines in the hospital specially reviewed sanitation system including quality and availability of water.

Speaking on this occasion, Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir said that the performance of all other departments, including the health sector, is being checked on a regular basis, the main objective of which is to ensure the availability of full relief to the public.



Russia produces kamikaze drone with Chinese engine

KYIV (Reuters): Russia started producing a new long-range attack drone called the Garpiya-A1 last year using Chinese engines and parts, which it has deployed in the war in Ukraine, according to two sources from a European intelligence agency and documents seen by Reuters.

The intelligence – which included a production contract for the new drone, company correspondence on the manufacturing process and financial documents – indicated that IEMZ Kupol, a subsidiary of Russian state-owned weapons maker Almaz-Antey, produced more than 2,500 Garpiyas from July 2023 to July 2024.

The existence of the new Russian drone incorporating Chinese technology has not been previously reported. IEMZ Kupol and Almaz-Antey did not respond to requests for comment. The two intelligence sources said that the Garpiya, which means Harpy in Russian, has been deployed against military and civilian targets in Ukraine, causing damage to critical infrastructure as well as both civilian and military casualties.

They shared with Reuters what they said were images from Ukraine of the wreckage of a Garpiya, without providing further details. Reuters found information that reinforces this conclusion, but was unable to confirm the images independently. The sources asked that neither they nor their agency be identified due to the sensitivity of the information. They also asked that certain details, such as dates, related to the documents be withheld.

Samuel Bendett, an adjunct senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, a Washington DC-based think tank, told Reuters that Garpiya, if confirmed, would mark a departure from Russia's reliance on Iranian designs for long-range drones. "If this is happening, it could indicate that Russia can now rely more on domestic development as well as, obviously, on China, since both sides in this war depend on many Chinese components for drone production," he said.

Iran, which didn't comment for this story, has supplied more than a thousand Shahed "kamikaze" drones to Russia since the start of the invasion in February 2022, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in May last year. They have been used to exhaust Ukrainian air defences and hit infrastructure far from the front lines. Iran has repeatedly denied sending drones to Russia for use in Ukraine.

Russia's defence ministry did not respond to a request for comment for this story. The Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement to Reuters that Beijing strictly controls the export of



items with potential military applications, including drones. "With regard to the Ukrainian crisis, China has always been committed to promoting peace talks and political settlement," the statement said. It added that there were no international restrictions on China's trade with Russia.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg last week called on China to stop supporting Russia's war in Ukraine and said Beijing's assistance has been a significant factor in the continuation of the conflict. The Garpiya "closely resembles the Shahed" but it has several distinguishing features, including a unique bolt-on fin and Limbach L-550 E engines, the European agency said in a statement to Reuters. The engine, which was originally designed and manufactured by a German company, is now produced in China by a local firm, Xiamen Limbach. The company did not respond to a request for comment.

Reuters reviewed a contract worth more than 1 billion rubles (10 million euros) signed in the first quarter of 2023 between the Russian defence ministry and Kupol for the development of a factory to produce the drones. The intelligence sources said a former cement factory situated in Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic, in western Russia – which was purchased by Kupol in 2020 – is being used to produce the drones.

Using a video of a Russian drone production facility, opens new tab posted on the Telegram messaging app, Reuters was able to identify the site as the factory in Izhevsk from the colour and design of the building's beams and internal architecture which matched file imagery of the site. The location of the file imagery was verifi-

able from nearby buildings, roads, and trees that matched street views and satellite imagery. A prototype of the Garpiya was launched in the first half of 2023, company communications showed. Production reached several hundred in the second half of 2023 and more than doubled to around 2,000 in the first half of 2024, the agency said.

Bendett, the defence analyst, said 2,500 drones per year would represent a sizeable chunk of Russia's output. Ukraine's top military commander, Oleksandr Syrskyy, said last month that Russia has fired nearly 14,000 strike drones since it invaded in February 2022, including the Iranian Shahed as well as the Russian-made Geran-2 and Lancet drones. Corporate documents dated from the second quarter of 2023, reviewed by Reuters, showed that supplier TSK Vektor procured parts from Chinese companies for assembly at the Kupol site; 800 Chinese engines were also to be delivered to the new plant where the production line was due to ready by end of the quarter.

TSK Vektor did not respond to request for comment. The European intelligence service said in the statement it was concerned that Chinese companies were continuing to provide components that enabled Russian production of large kamikaze drones. "The export of the essential components to Russia needs to stop," it said. Washington has repeatedly warned Beijing over its support for Russia's defence industry. It has imposed hundreds of sanctions aimed at curbing Moscow's ability to exploit certain technologies for military purposes. The State Department and the White House did not respond to a request for comment for this story.

Senegal's Faye dissolves parliament

DAKAR: Senegal's President Bassirou Diomaye Faye has dissolved the opposition-led parliament, paving the way for snap elections six months after he was voted in on an anti-establishment platform. Faye said working with the assembly had grown difficult after members refused to start discussions on the budget law and rejected efforts to dissolve wasteful state institutions.

"I dissolve the national assembly to ask the sovereign people for the institutional means to bring about the systemic transformation that I have promised to deliver," Faye said in a brief speech late on Thursday. The elections will be held on November 17.

Observers say Faye's party, PASTEF (African Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity), has a high chance of securing a majority, given his popularity and his victory margin in the March presidential election, which he won with 54 percent of votes. The Benno Bokk Yaakar opposition platform led by former President Macky Sall condemned the move. It said Faye had convened a legislative session under pretences to announce the dissolution and accused him of "perjury".

Faye, 44, won the vote in March to become Africa's youngest elected leader less than two weeks after he was released from prison. His rise has reflected widespread frustration among Senegal's youth with the country's direction – a common sentiment across Africa – which has the world's youngest population and a number of leaders accused of clinging to power for decades.

During the presidential campaign, Faye promised widespread reforms to improve the living standards of common Senegalese, including fighting corruption, reviewing fishing permits for foreign companies, and securing a bigger share of the country's natural resources for the population. But six months later, these pledges have yet to materialise.

The president and Ousmane Sonko, the prime minister and a popular opposition figure who helped catapult Faye to victory, have blamed the parliament. PASTEF does not hold a majority in the assembly, which Faye says has blocked him from executing the promised reforms. In June, the opposition coalition cancelled a budgetary debate in a dispute over whether Sonko was required to issue his government's policy roadmap, with him arguing that he was not required to. The assembly has until the end of December to vote on the budget for next year, but new legislative elections might make it hard to meet this deadline. — Aljazeera

North Korea reveals first photos of uranium enrichment facility

SEOUL: North Korea has released the first-ever photos of a uranium enrichment facility, showing leader Kim Jong Un touring it as he called for more centrifuges to boost his country's nuclear weapons arsenal. Pyongyang, which is facing a slew of United Nations sanctions for pursuing its banned weapons programmes, has previously never publicly disclosed details of its uranium enrichment facility since its first nuclear test in 2006.

Kim toured the Nuclear Weapons Institute and the "production base of weapon-grade nuclear materials," the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported. The photos showed Kim walking between long rows of metal centrifuges but it did not say when he visited the location.

Such facilities produce highly enriched uranium, which is needed to manufacture nuclear warheads, by spinning the material in centrifuges at high speeds. It was unclear where the facility is located, but North Korea is believed to operate multiple uranium enrichment facilities, including one at its Yongbyon nuclear site. During the visit, KCNA

reported that the North Korean leader "stressed the need to further augment the number of centrifuges in order to exponentially increase the nuclear weapons for self-defence".

Reporting from the South Korean capital, Seoul, Al Jazeera's Rob McBride said this was the first time that Pyongyang revealed in such detail the "inner workings of its uranium enrichment facility". "This comes as North Korea continues its active development of its nuclear arms capabilities in spite of the international sanctions as well as objections from South Korea."

The images show "how advanced their enrichment capability has become, which gives greater credibility to both their ability and commitment to increasing their nuclear weapons arsenals", Jenny Town, a North Korea expert and fellow at the United States-based Stimson Center think tank, told the Reuters news agency. South Korea slammed the North over the uranium enrichment facility as "a clear violation of a number of UN Security Council resolutions". "Any nuclear threat or provocation by North Korea will be met with an

overwhelming and strong response from our government and military, based on the solid extended deterrence of the South Korea-US alliance," the Ministry of Unification said in a statement published by Yonhap news agency.

Al Jazeera's McBride said photos were also released of Kim witnessing a missile test and training of North Korean special forces apparently held on Thursday. Experts said the sudden public disclosure of the uranium enrichment facility could be intended to affect the US presidential election in November.

The images are "a message to the next administration that it will be impossible to denuclearise North Korea", Hong Min, a senior analyst at the Korea Institute for National Unification, told the AFP news agency. "It is also a message demanding other countries to acknowledge North Korea as a nuclear state," he added. While the UN Security Council has passed multiple resolutions banning North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development, its allies Russia and China have blocked new sanctions and called for existing ones to be rolled back. — Aljazeera

Gambian migrant deportees dream of return to Europe

BANJUL, the Gambia: Ten years ago, Alagie's life in Banjul wasn't easy. Still, he had both his parents, a wife, a home, and a dream of making a better life for them all in Europe. Now the 34-year-old, who asked that his full name not be used to protect his privacy, has lost much of what he had. Alagie left the Gambia in 2014, taking the irregular "backway" to Europe before he was forcibly returned eight years later.

"I wanted the best for my wife and future children," he told Al Jazeera about his decision to leave, looking sadly at the wedding photo on his wall. Although still married, he cannot afford to support his wife and their 10-month-old baby, forcing her to return to her parents' home. "My wife loves me deeply," he said. "If it weren't true love, she would have divorced me and moved on."

When Alagie first left for Europe, he travelled to Morocco by boat, then smuggled himself by land through Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, before crossing the Mediterranean towards Italy. The difficulties started almost immediately. "Many migrants I travelled with from Libya – mostly from Mali, Nigeria, and a few Gambians – drowned. I was among the few lucky ones who made it to Italy," he said. Landing in Italy in 2015, he was immediately placed in a refugee camp for several months. "The easy life I imagined in Europe was nothing like the harsh reality I faced in Italy."

Desperate, Alagie decided to smuggle himself to Germany with others from Senegal, Niger and Nigeria. They thought they would find better opportunities, but after crossing the border, they were picked up by German authorities and sent to another refugee camp. "It was like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. We were packed like sardines, isolated from cities and any social life." Later, Alagie found work as a petrol station attendant, the same job he held back in the Gambia. He'd send money home to his family every other month while striving to secure asylum.

"Life there was hard, but living in the Gambia is far worse than even the refugee camps," he said, preferring the hardships in Europe. But Alagie's days in Europe were numbered. One day in September 2022, while he was making breakfast in the small house he rented with other migrants, plainclothes German police officers burst in. "They handcuffed me like a criminal and held me in a [refugee] camp for two months before putting me on a flight back to the Gambia," he said. Upon arrival in Banjul, he was left with no money or support. "I came home empty-handed, to an empty country."

Irregular migration has long been an issue in the Gambia, with many young people – driven by poverty – risking their lives to get to Europe in search of better opportunities. More than 35,000 Gambians arrived in the European Union between 2015 and 2022,

according to Frontex, the EU border control agency. During peak periods, some 7,000 Gambians attempted to migrate annually, driven by dire political and economic conditions. Under the 1996-2017 regime of President Yahya Jammeh, many people fled autocratic rule and were granted asylum in the West due to political repression. Since the transition to democracy in 2017, more asylum applications from Gambians have been rejected compared to before, as the country is considered more stable.

There has also been increased cooperation between the Gambian government and the EU on migration management, including the "Good Practice Agreement", which outlines procedures around the return of migrants. Since 2017, more than 5,000 Gambians have returned, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Some are deportees, but most are voluntary repatriations, the IOM said. Some returned because of the severe hardships they encountered in Europe, while others had been stranded in Libya, never making it across the Mediterranean to begin with.

Among the Gambians who leave, many say the dire social and economic conditions make them determined to risk the crossing. The Gambia suffers from high youth unemployment, at around 41 percent – a driving force behind irregular migration. — Aljazeera

Russia revokes accreditation of six British diplomats over spying claims

MOSCOW: Russia has revoked the accreditation of six British diplomats in Moscow accusing them of espionage and sabotage. In its announcement, Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said the diplomats carried out "subversive activities and intelligence" gathering, adding that it has "documentary" proof confirming the United Kingdom's "coordination of an escalation in the international political and military situation" in Ukraine.

The British government called the Russian accusations "completely baseless". The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office said that this was a tit-for-tat measure after Western moves against "Russian state-directed activity across Europe and in the UK". The six diplomats have already left Russia and been replaced.

"We are unapologetic about protecting our national interests," said the foreign office statement. The Russian announcement came hours before a planned meeting in Washington, DC, between British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and US

President Joe Biden as they are expected to discuss the Ukraine war. The FSB, the successor of the Soviet-era agency KGB, said the British foreign ministry's Eastern Europe and Central Asia department was coordinating moves aimed at inflicting a "strategic defeat" on Russia.

Reporting from Moscow, Al Jazeera's Yulia Shapovalova said the latest expulsion was "not surprising", adding that diplomatic relations between the two countries are at "a historic low". In May, the UK announced it was expelling the Russian defence attaché for spying, and removed diplomatic premises status from several Russian properties. It also imposed a five-year limit on Russian diplomats' postings, which led to many of them leaving the country.

The Izvestia newspaper cited the FSB as saying the British diplomats had recruited Russian teenagers, organised what it called provocations, and held talks in the British ambassador's Moscow residency with opposition figures. The six diplomats

were named on Russian state TV, which also showed photographs of them. Surveillance footage of them was released to Russian media, including covert video surveillance of one envoy meeting someone.

The spokeswoman of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova, said her ministry agreed with the FSB's "evaluation", adding that "the British embassy has largely flouted the limits set by the Vienna Convention". Since taking office, Starmer has reaffirmed his country's support for Ukraine as "unwavering". He is expected to discuss with Biden whether to let Ukraine use Western-supplied and made long-range weapons inside Russia.

But concerns are already being raised about the political and military repercussions of such a decision, said Al Jazeera's Jonah Hull, reporting from London. President Vladimir Putin warned on Thursday that if Western nations allow Ukraine to use long-range weapons to strike inside Russia then it will mean NATO would be "at war" with his country. — Aljazeera

southern Kherson region. Russia also lost more than 700sq km (270sq miles) in the eastern Donetsk region.

General Ben Hodges, a former commander of US forces in Europe, agreed with Burns' assessment. Ukraine's counter-invasion of Russia last month could legitimately have triggered a nuclear response in accordance with Russian military doctrine, he told Al Jazeera, but it didn't. "Here we are now, two and a half years since the full-scale invasion [of Ukraine] and 10 years since the original invasion by Russia, and we have crossed multiple red lines. Ukraine is inside Russia and Russia is not able to do anything about it," Hodges said. "So I'm hoping that this will begin to erode some of the excessive fear in the White House and some other capitals." Hodges said there was no place along the front line where a nuclear weapon would create an appreciable military advantage to Russia, and said Russians "don't have the troops that are trained and properly equipped to properly exploit contaminated battlefield". In addition, he said, it would isolate Russia diplomatically and economically.

"The Chinese and the Indians have told them not to do it. The US president has said 'catastrophic consequences' if you do it," he said. "I think the Russians would use a nuclear weapon if it looked like the motherland was about to be

destroyed. Like if there was a huge invasion or the threat of a huge invasion by NATO. That's been their doctrine for the longest time. "For the Russians, the benefit is continuing to use the threat ... this is all intended for Western decision-makers."

Russian diplomats have issued warnings in recent weeks that the US was reconsidering its restrictive licence on US weapons. "The West is asking for trouble," Sergey Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, recently said. "The Chinese and the Indians have told them not to do it. The US president has said 'catastrophic consequences' if you do it," he said.

"I think the Russians would use a nuclear weapon if it looked like the motherland was about to be destroyed. Like if there was a huge invasion or the threat of a huge invasion by NATO. That's been their doctrine for the longest time. "For the Russians, the benefit is continuing to use the threat ... this is all intended for Western decision-makers."

Russian diplomats have issued warnings in recent weeks that the US was reconsidering its restrictive licence on US weapons. "The West is asking for trouble," Sergey Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, recently said. Even in Sumy, which had enjoyed a brief period of immunity from air strikes after the Ukrainian counter-invasion, an overnight mis-

sile attack on Sumy city on Sunday killed two people and wounded four.

Two days earlier, Russia dropped three glide bombs on the village of Krasnopillia in the Sumy region, killing a woman. Time is not considered to be on Ukraine's side, as Russia has greater manpower resources and capacity to manufacture weapons. And while it lasts, the war is deepening Russia's ties to its allies, North Korea, Iran and China, who are contributing substantially to its war effort, and receiving sensitive military submarine, space and ballistic technology in return.

The Times on Saturday reported that Iran had shipped 200 short-range Fateh-360 ballistic missiles to Russia across the Caspian, citing a Ukrainian intelligence source. Blinken confirmed that on Tuesday, saying Russia was using the Iranian missiles for targets about 100km (60 miles) from the launch site, saving its own, longer-range missiles for deeper strikes into Ukraine. "Russia has now received shipments of these ballistic missiles and will likely use them within weeks in Ukraine against Ukrainians," Blinken said. Iran agreed to provide Russia with missiles in late 2022, and recent satellite photos have shown that it expanded its production capacity at two sites. Ukraine's armed forces have also reported the use of North Korean ballistic missiles in Ukraine for months.

US hints at allowing Ukraine to strike deep inside Russia, enraging Putin

WASHINGTON: There was a faint glimmer of hope in the past week for Ukraine, that after months of pleading with Washington, it may be starting to move the strategic needle in favour of allowing deep strikes inside Russia using weapons made in the United States. Until now, the US has allowed Ukraine to use its weapons for counter-battery fire at short range across the border.

When asked if he would lift geographic restrictions, US President Joe Biden on Tuesday told reporters, "we're working that out right now". On the same day, his secretary of state, Antony Blinken, told reporters in London that he and British Foreign Secretary David Lammy "will be listening very intently on this and reporting back," during a joint visit to Kyiv this week. Biden and British premier Keir Starmer were to discuss the issue.

"We have continuously adjusted and adapted based on battlefield conditions," Blinken said. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul went further. He believed Blinken would actually deliver the news to Ukraine that restrictions were lifted. "What I've seen and what I've been briefed on, it looks like that's the message they're going to give them, that they can use them cross-border," McCaul said. "It sounded promising to me."

These statements amounted to a change of tone from Washington, after months of insisting there would be no change in policy – something US defence secretary Lloyd Austin repeated, saying the 300km-range (185-mile) Army Tactical Missiles Ukraine wants to use inside Russia would not change the course of the war. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday said that if NATO countries authorised strikes deep inside Russia, they would effectively be involved in the war. "This is not a question of allowing the Ukrainian regime to strike Russia with these weapons or not. It is a question of deciding whether or not NATO countries are directly involved in a military conflict," Putin told Russian state TV.

"If this decision is taken, it will mean nothing less than the direct involvement of NATO countries, the United States and European countries in the war in Ukraine. This will be their direct participation, and this, of course, will significantly change the very essence, the very nature of the conflict." Western weapons have been used since the beginning of the war to sink Russian ships, strike Russian artillery, down Russian planes and take out Russian tanks. NATO countries have also provided the Ukrainian armed forces with target co-ordinates. But Putin said

NATO personnel would now be programming flight paths into NATO-built missiles, and that marked an escalation.

Western self-restraint has been underpinned by a fear of Russia using nuclear weapons. But on Sunday, CIA director William Burns poured cold water on Moscow's threats. "Putin's a bully. He's going to continue to sabre-rattle from time to time," Burns said, seated beside the head of Britain's MI6 in London during a media event. "We cannot afford to be intimidated by that sabre-rattling." Russia had already passed the moment in the war when the usefulness of tactical nuclear weapons was assessed and dismissed, he said.

"There was a moment in the fall of 2022 when I think there was a genuine risk of potential use of tactical nuclear weapons," Burns said. "I never thought ... we should be unnecessarily intimidated by that." A successful Ukrainian counteroffensive recaptured at least 8,000 square kilometres (3,090 square miles) from Russian occupiers in the northern Kharkiv region in late August and early September of 2022. On November 9 that year, as Ukraine rapidly advanced along the Dniro river, threatening to cut off some 30,000 Russian troops on the right bank, Russia pulled back from 1,170sq km (450sq miles) in the

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Mass migration tearing EU to pieces

SO this is how it ends - less with a bang than with a scoolly pragmatic admission of defeat. It was a very Germanic action, calm and orderly. But make no mistake: this is seismic. As casually as if it were announcing extra bin collections, the German government has said that it is preparing to impose tight new controls at all its land borders. From next Monday, German police will begin checking passports at all crossing points and refusing entry to some travellers. Hammered by illegal immigration and facing social meltdown, one of the main motors of the EU project has effectively been forced to abandon a fundamental tenet of bloc membership: free movement of people. And just like that - as if there's nothing at all to see here, folks! - the Brussels dream dies.

Of course, chancellor Olaf Scholz won't want to talk about the profound implications of his government's desperate decision for the future of the EU. The announcement by interior minister Nancy Faeser was firmly focused on the domestic problems plaguing the country. But the drastic steps that are about to be taken to protect Germany from a human tsunami mark a watershed for Europe. This is the moment that the politicians most dedicated to "ever closer union" were forced to accept the painful truth: that doing away with national borders in an age of global migration is a recipe for disaster. That Germany is the place where the citadel has fallen is no surprise. Here in Britain, we may think we have it bad, but none of our governments have been quite as reckless as Berlin.

Back in 2015, the then-chancellor Angela Merkel opened her country's doors to more than a million asylum seekers, blithely declaring that Germany was strong enough to cope. When Russia invaded Ukraine, they took in another million refugees. Since then the flow of migrants from all over the world has failed to cease. Now the third largest refugee-hosting country in the world, Germany is in crisis, with a flatlining economy, soaring crime, and voters in open revolt. No wonder the far-Right are on the march.

While our own government continues to dismantle barriers to illegal immigration and flirt with new "youth mobility schemes" with the EU, the biggest economy in Europe is heading in the opposite direction. In truth, Schengen - the agreement that allows more than 400 million people to travel freely between EU member states - has been quietly disintegrating for some time. Faced with an impossible number of migrants, governments have quietly been taking advantage of a provision in EU law allowing member states to re-introduce border controls for limited periods. So far this year, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, France, Denmark and Sweden have all gone down this route. The "Schengen Borders Code" is crystal clear about the circumstances under which the opt-out can be used, stipulating that barriers can only be reinstated if member states face a "serious threat to public order or internal security". Time and again, it emphasises that such measures are only warranted in what it describes as "truly exceptional" situations and must be considered a "last resort." According to Brussels diktat, the scope and duration of any reintroduction of border controls "must be kept to the absolute minimum" required to address a "specific threat".

In reality, what was originally designed as an emergency opt out is fast becoming a permanent necessity for certain member states, as a tidal wave of migrants puts intolerable strain on public services and social cohesion. How long before Brussels drops the pretence that these are only temporary measures? A number of countries - including Germany - are already using the provision several times a year. The great irony is that the one European government that has yet to do anything more than talk tough on illegal immigration is Great Britain. Here we are, post-Brexit, voluntarily exercising far less control of our borders than we did in 2016, when 17.4 million people voted to leave the EU. If Germany can take back control of its land borders with nine neighbouring countries, surely we can at the very least stop the boats? Announcing her open doors policy back in 2015, Merkel famously declared: "Wir Schaffen das": we'll manage. Well, they demonstrably haven't - and neither have we.

Always pause at commas

TURTLES have been around for 200 million years — a testament to how well adapted to this planet they are. But over the past century of human progress, their numbers have dwindled. Perhaps if turtles had developed the ability to fly, to run, or dash underwater, they would not be quite as endangered as they are today. Indeed, we humans, who have been around for just 200,000 years, have discovered ways to fly through the air, speed over land, and propel ourselves underwater. Our adaptive minds have allowed us to evolve quickly, setting us apart from other species.

As humans leapfrogged ahead, we began to compete with nature itself. We drink water that has been converted from seawater, grow crops immune to pests and diseases, and study distant planets that could some day be a new home. The pace of human innovation and progress appears to have no limits, making us feel as though we are perfectly in control. But as we rush to read the next sentence, we occasionally forget to pause for the commas. Indeed, in grammar, commas allow us to consider more deeply what came before, and what may come after. The Industrial Revolution gave us steam and combustion engines that powered mass production and connected whole continents. It brought electric lights to our homes and mass communications, allowing us to cooperate at a planetary level.

Today we have supersonic planes, rockets carrying humans into space, life-extending medicines, and every comfort our ancestors could only have dreamed of. But for all our great achievements, could we humans be the authors of our own destruction? The fossil fuels we have burned, our rapacious exploitation of natural resources, the waste and pollution that are byproducts of our over-consumption, and the destabilization of systems that nature has relied on for hundreds of millions of years mean we not only risk destroying the world's biodiversity, but also ourselves. Had we learned to pause at every comma, we could have seen this coming. But we are in such a hurry that we race through every sentence. The turtle, with its slow pace, stopping at every comma, has withstood the test of time because it is so well adapted, living in harmony with its ecosystem and perpetuating the slow march of its species. Only humans have managed to endanger its continuity. I am not saying we must become more like turtles. But I believe we must pause and take a step back to consider the impact of progress that we have so far overlooked. Progress means allowing human ingenuity to advance while respecting the world that sustains us. So let us pause at the commas, take some time to process events, and then move ahead more responsibly.

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Future of Philadelphi Corridor crucial to Gaza ceasefire talks

THE **Saladin Corridor, as Arabs call it, or the Philadelphi Corridor, as it is known by Israelis, is a narrow strip of land along the border separating the Gaza Strip from Egypt. Despite its small size — it is just 14 km long and 100 meters wide — this corridor is playing a central role in determining the course of war and peace in the region. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's insistence on maintaining the presence of Israeli forces in this area has sparked widespread internal and external controversy. This insistence impacts not only the future of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but also affects regional relations, particularly with Egypt, as well as the US' mediation role in the conflict.**

Netanyahu's insistence on keeping Israeli forces in the Philadelphi Corridor appears to be a cornerstone of his security vision, political goals and personal interests. He argues that Israel controlling this narrow strip would limit Hamas' ability to smuggle weapons from Sinai into Gaza, thereby strengthening the group's military capacity. Netanyahu promotes the idea that this corridor is Hamas' "life-line," which it uses to smuggle weapons and equipment via an extensive tunnel network. He justifies his position by claiming that remaining in the corridor is essential for maintaining Israeli security.

However, some analyses, both inside and outside of Israel, suggest that there are internal political motives behind this decision. Netanyahu faces pressure from his right-wing political allies, such as Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, who oppose any security concessions in the ceasefire negotiations, fearing such concessions could undermine the governing coalition. Internal opposition also argues that Netanyahu is using the Philadelphi Corridor issue as a political tool to keep the far right aligned with him and prevent the collapse of his government. More importantly, this stance allows him to remain in power as prime minister, which grants him immunity from facing political and criminal accountability on various charges and accusations.

The presence of Israeli forces in the Philadelphi Corridor is a major obstacle in the ceasefire negotiations with Hamas. The Palestinian

movement insists on a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, including the Philadelphi Corridor, arguing that a continued Israeli military presence in this area would reinforce the siege imposed on Gaza. Hamas believes that an Israeli withdrawal from the corridor is a necessary step for achieving calm, beginning the reconstruction of Gaza and allowing displaced people to return to their homes.

A high-ranking Egyptian official commented on Netanyahu's statements about weapons smuggling through Egypt's borders, calling them "unrealistic" and accusing Netanyahu of trying to shift the blame for his failure to achieve his objectives in Gaza, which has witnessed "genocide."

Israel's presence in the corridor also complicates negotiations on the prisoner exchange deal involving the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas. The Israeli opposition accuses Netanyahu of constantly introducing new demands whenever negotiations make progress, thereby hindering a comprehensive agreement. Furthermore, the insistence on keeping forces in the corridor is seen by some as a way to prolong the war without making tangible progress on the exchange deal, especially since the ongoing conflict harms Palestinian civilians and exacerbates the suffering of Gaza's population.

The Philadelphi Corridor also risks significantly damaging Israel's relationship with Egypt. Relations between Egypt and Israel, governed by the 1979 peace treaty, have already witnessed significant tension due to Netanyahu's stance on this issue. Cairo rejects any Israeli military presence in the corridor, seeing it as a threat to Egypt's national security and a hindrance to its role as a mediator in negotiations between Hamas and Israel. Egypt views the Philadelphi Corridor as a sensitive area that affects the stability of its borders, particularly in light of the security threats posed by militant activity in Sinai.

Additionally, a continued Israeli presence in the corridor would limit Egypt's ability to control the Rafah Crossing, the only lifeline for Gaza's residents to move and receive humanitarian aid. Cairo believes that Israel seeks to undermine its role as an influential regional mediator, especially after

Egypt's extensive efforts to calm the conflict in Gaza and find a permanent political solution.

Amid this tense atmosphere, the significance of last week's surprise visit to the Gaza border by Lt. Gen. Ahmed Khalifa, chief of staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces, cannot be overlooked. The visit aimed to "inspect the security situation and secure Egypt's borders with the Gaza Strip," according to a statement from the Egyptian military spokesperson. Khalifa emphasized that "the primary mission of the armed forces is to defend the nation's borders on all strategic fronts, and the armed forces personnel are fully capable of protecting the homeland's borders, generation after generation." Such visits carry important symbolic weight.

Another critical question arises: Is the US making sufficient efforts to convince Israel not to stay in the Philadelphi Corridor? While the US plays a key role in mediating between Israel and Hamas, its efforts to persuade Israel to withdraw from the Philadelphi Corridor are yet to yield results. Washington recently presented a new proposal for a ceasefire and the release of hostages, which included solutions to several points of contention, such as the Israeli military presence in the Philadelphi Corridor. However, Netanyahu remains firm in his stance, impeding significant progress in these negotiations.

The US is coordinating with Egypt and Qatar to push the parties toward a compromise and has proposed international monitoring systems to protect the border and prevent smuggling, which could convince Israel to withdraw its forces. Yet, so far, American efforts have been thwarted by Israeli intransigence. Some analysts argue that Washington has not applied enough pressure on Netanyahu, possibly due to America's focus on other regional issues or because of its reliance on Israel as a strategic security partner in the Middle East.

There is no doubt that both Israel and Hamas are exaggerating their demands regarding the exchange deal and ceasefire, which complicates efforts to reach a compromise. Israel demands a complete halt to rocket fire, the destruction of Hamas' tunnel network and the

return of all Israeli hostages held by Hamas. In contrast, Hamas insists on a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, including the Philadelphi Corridor, as well as a lifting of the years-long siege.

Both sides aim to secure greater gains at the expense of the other. Israel seeks to regain its soldiers and stop rocket attacks while maintaining its security control, whereas Hamas aims to achieve a political victory by forcing Israel to withdraw completely from the territory. Furthermore, regional players like Egypt and Qatar have their own interests, adding to the political complexity of the situation.

The new American proposals aim to offer practical solutions to the contentious issues between Israel and Hamas, including the Philadelphi Corridor. It includes the deployment of international monitoring systems along the border to prevent weapons smuggling through tunnels, which could convince Israel to withdraw its forces. The proposal also involves some concessions from Hamas, such as agreeing to a temporary ceasefire, during which the siege on Gaza would be lifted.

However, the success of the American proposal largely depends on the willingness of both parties to make concessions. If Israel agrees to withdraw its forces from the corridor, this could pave the way for progress on the exchange deal and a ceasefire. On the other hand, Hamas must accept compromises that ensure some of its demands are met without jeopardizing the ceasefire. The Philadelphi Corridor is more than just a narrow border strip; it is a symbol of the political and military complexities that govern the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Netanyahu's insistence on keeping Israeli forces in this corridor reflects the challenges Israel faces in securing its borders on the one hand and maintaining internal political balance on the other. Meanwhile, Hamas remains steadfast in its demands, making it difficult to reach a compromise.

The US' role in this crisis could be decisive in bridging the gap between the two sides, but it requires more pressure on Israel to make concessions. The question remains: Will the international community succeed in resolving this complex crisis and achieving lasting peace in the region?

Arab News

Myth of 'our' NHS has now collapsed

Allision Pearson

WELL, that was quick. From "envy of the world" to broken-down shambles delivering an appalling standard of care, particularly to those who need it most: children and the elderly. The report by Lord Darzi into the NHS should have caused national shockwaves, but it confirms what we suspected. The myth of Our NHS, so assiduously burnished and jealously guarded by Labour and its media acolytes, has been crumbling for a long time.

Those of us who have occasionally dared to raise the awkward matter of the UK coming in the bottom three of 18 developed countries in survival rates for the common cancers, strokes and heart attacks have been shouted down as heretics. Why are Brits so much more likely to die of these diseases than the Portuguese or the Italians? We're not supposed to ask. Remember, ladies and gentlemen, it's our job to Save The NHS not wonder why it's so terribly bad at saving us.

"You hate the NHS," was an accusation spat at me the other day. Quite right, I loathe it. Who in their right mind could love a Soviet Socialist healthcare system, a monster of ineptitude and indifference, that Darzi found was responsible for 14,000 avoidable deaths a year caused by agonising waits in A&E alone? And all those tumours blooming like evil cauliflowers inside younger people, like Jon Chappell who told me he thought that, if his growth was really serious, the doctors would act quickly. Wouldn't they? By the time they operated, a year later, Jon had Stage 4 cancer. The NHS was responsible for his death sentence at the age of 32. You could fill a library with heartbreaking stories like that.

"But Tory cuts!" squeal the NHS zealots. It's certainly true the Conservatives did nothing over 14 years to reform a system which was clearly on the verge of major organ failure. It's also fair to say that if a Tory minister had plucked up the courage to say half the things about the NHS that Sir Keir Starmer and Health Secretary Wes Streeting have mentioned since entering government they would have been hit with strikes and a furious backlash from the BBC and media signed up to the myth.

But what about those evil Conservatives underfunding the NHS? Not according to the International Health Care Outcomes Index. Between 2020-2021, the UK saw the biggest increase in health spending as a proportion of GDP of any country in a global league table. The UK is now 10th out of 19 comparable countries for spending on its health system as a percentage of GDP, putting us mid-table. But we get terrible value for money: the British taxpayer gives the NHS £165 billion quid a year. In return, the NHS gives us the second-worst life expectancy among 19 similar countries.

Why is NHS CEO Amanda Pritchard not sacked immediately by Wes Streeting for gross mismanagement? No private-sector boss could survive a report as devastating as Lord Darzi's. No

accountability, no consequences, no improvement. Until today's report, the public could not possibly deduce from all the slavish propaganda and I HEART NHS fatuities how dire things really are. We still have many fantastic doctors and nurses and they know. It mortifies them. This is what Jeremy wrote: "I've worked in the NHS for 35 years (22 as a consultant) and it is a system that just doesn't work. But, now, it's just awful, Allision. AWFUL. European colleagues used to laugh and poke fun about the NHS and me being a British cancer specialist. 'Jeremy, you won't be getting this cancer drug for a few years... Ha ha!' Now, those foreign colleagues don't laugh any more. They simply DO NOT BELIEVE how bad UK healthcare is. 'People with critical coronary artery diseases have to wait a year for surgery, Jeremy?' [Such surgery should happen within hours or a day at worst.] Non, c'est pas possible!"

Non, c'est pas possible. Not in France it isn't, not in Germany, not in Australia, not anywhere in fact with a decent health service funded by mixed provision (state and private) and with providers in competition. A health service which puts patients before ideology and backside-covering managers. Just think of it. The National Health Service used to be a joke in international oncology circles; now we are objects of pity.

And the human suffering, my God, the suffering. A lady in her eighties (my mother's friend) left lying on the floor a month ago with a broken femur for twelve hours as she waited for an ambulance.

Charlotte told me about her daughter Emilia, who was in agony. After hours in A&E, with her mother hassling and begging for a CT scan (refused), the GCSE student was diagnosed with constipation and sent home. Soon after, the pain returned and mother and daughter were back in the A&E warzone. Emilia lay on a makeshift bed of chairs for nine hours, vomiting and crying out for someone to please help her. "No one came to our aid, it was unbelievable." It turned out the sixteen-year-old had ovarian cysts which had twisted and one ovary had also twisted, cutting off the blood flow. "She would have been experiencing pain similar to a heart attack," a doctor told Charlotte when they were finally allowed a scan. Emilia lost one of her ovaries; the fate of the other is in the balance along with her fertility. No follow-up. Course not; it's Our NHS. Count yourself lucky to get out alive.

It has taken a report by a Labour lord to challenge the Left's precious NHS myth and to finally get the media posing questions those on the Right were vilified for even asking. Don't get your hopes up. "Nothing that I have found draws into question the principles of a health service that is taxpayer funded, free at the point of use, and based on need not ability to pay," says Darzi. Nothing except the fact that the NHS doesn't work, and will never work, and the British people will go on suffering and dying before their time. Non, c'est pas possible!

Can Turkiye now be part of the Arab regional system?

Sinem Cengiz

IN March 2010, Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa proposed expanding the group to include Turkiye — as a friendly neighboring major power with significant historical, cultural, and economic ties to the Arab world — in a strategic dialogue. The proposal was postponed and was never realized because of the Arab uprisings that began nine months later.

This proposal was part of Moussa's "Arab neighboring policy," which was aligned with Turkiye's "zero-problem with neighbors" policy, but both policies were tested by critical regional shifts after 2011.

Thirteen years later, a Turkish foreign minister was invited for the first time to attend the Arab League Foreign Ministers' meeting in Cairo. Hakan Fidan's participation demonstrated the group's recognition of Turkiye's importance in regional affairs as Ankara's

efforts to normalize relations with its Arab neighbors since 2021 began to yield results.

As Turkiye enters a phase of normalization with regional states, there has been a concerted effort to substantiate this new era on a more institutional basis, with economic and security interests the main pillars. In this context, Turkey and the GCC states adopted a joint action plan for 2023-2027, showing their commitment to deeper relations. This was followed by an agreement to begin formal negotiations for a free-trade agreement. Turkiye and the GCC states also decided to resume strategic discussions, both institutionally and bilaterally.

Fidan said the next Turkish-Arab Economy Forum would be held in Istanbul in October. This is noteworthy because, in 2013, amid severe regional polarization over developments in Egypt — the headquarters of the Arab League — the Turkish-Arab Cooperation

Forum was left in limbo, with no Arab country offering to host that year's meeting. The forum was set up in Istanbul in 2007 with an agreement signed by Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan and Moussa. Its first meeting was in Istanbul in 2008, and the second in Damascus in 2009.

The forum is an avenue for foreign ministers to discuss regional and international affairs. It was established to develop political, social, economic and cultural relations between Turkiye and Arab League members. The forum is important because it focuses on the non-conventional aspects of Turkish-Arab relations, such as social and cultural interactions. Turkiye's relations with Arab states, especially those in the Gulf, need social and cultural elements. The recent normalization between Ankara and Cairo has been a catalyst for Turkiye's reintegration into the Arab regional system.

Egypt's pivotal role and central position in the region have influenced the Arab League's acceptance of Turkiye. This normalization, marked by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's long-awaited visit to Ankara last week, facilitated Fidan's participation in the summit.

Syria approved Turkiye's participation in the Arab League gathering, though it was also claimed that the Syrian delegation left during Fidan's speech — something Turkish sources have denied. Nevertheless, there are continuing efforts to normalize Turkish-Syrian relations, driven largely by Arab states keen to reintegrate Syria into the Arab fold. Turkiye's relationship with the Arab League may advance Turkish-Syrian normalization within the Arab institutional framework. Ankara's efforts to normalize ties with Damascus are progressing

gradually, which is understandable given that the issues in Turkiye-Syria relations are more complex than the ideological or regional dominance disputes Turkey has had with other Arab nations. These relations are multifaceted, involving challenges such as the Kurdish threat, refugee concerns, political opposition, and the presence of Turkish military forces.

In the past decade, in the name of Arab solidarity and sovereignty, the Arab League has consistently criticized Turkiye's operations in northern Syria as illegal. Turkiye's military presence in Libya and Somalia was also criticized. In this new era, it is unlikely that we will see more such criticism, since much of it was voiced during a period of tension between Turkiye and the Arab states. Consequently, the Arab League dissolved its committee exploring "Turkiye's intervention in the internal affairs of the Arab

states" and dropped a related proposed topic of debate for the summit. For the first time in years, the group did not criticize Turkiye in the summit declaration. The Gaza war was the central topic of Fidan's speech. Turkiye is already part of the joint contact group to seek an end to the violence. Fidan asked the Arab ministers to close ranks against Israel, following Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's proposal to form an alliance among Islamic countries with that purpose.

The Gaza war has underpinned the normalization process as Turkiye has supported Arab efforts. This clearly echoes Turkiye's pre-2011 policies in the region, when Ankara aimed to win the hearts of not only the Arab public but also elites. Whether Moussa's "Arab neighboring policy" will finally integrate Turkiye into the Arab regional system remains to be seen, but there is hope for progress.

After Labour’s dour start, there’s still hope for sunshine from Starmer, Reeves

Jonathan Freedland

IT’S hard to say that the honeymoon is over, because it never really began. You can’t blame Labour for that: it warned voters before the election not to get their hopes up, and it has stood firm against the menace of optimism ever since. Keir Starmer’s idea of whispering sweet nothings into the nation’s ear is to tell them that, “Frankly things will get worse” before they get better, that pain is on the way. Just this week, he braced the TUC for “tough decisions on the horizon”. And they say romance is dead.

The new government’s deeds have matched its words. This week, Labour whipped its MPs to vote for the scrapping of the winter fuel allowance for all but the poorest pensioners, not long after those same MPs were barred from lifting the two-child limit on benefits. It came just as the health secretary gave a gloomy prognosis of the state of the NHS. None of this is filling the country with enthusiasm. According to YouGov, just 19% approve of the government’s record so far, dwarfed by the 55% who disapprove.

And yet, there is a way it could all work out, one that might make Labour’s dour start seem less like a mistake than the first stage of a cunning plan. This, admittedly hopeful, view arises from a series of conversations – not, I stress, with people in politics, but rather with those rooted in the economy and finance. If they’re right, this plan will not bear fruit immediately; there will need to be a strategy to tide Labour over in the interim. But there might just be a solution to that too.

The starting point is the brief, catastrophic premiership of Liz Truss. Unexpectedly but clearly, Labour has decided that Truss was not wrong about everything. She was right that the key that unlocks all else is economic growth. But while she was right about the ends, she was disastrously wrong about the means and the time.

Her chosen means was tax cuts, an article of faith on the right. But her timing was awful. She made her move in the autumn of 2022, a period of rising interest rates and high global inflation. Tax cuts mean more money in people’s pockets, more demand, higher prices: inflation, already high, would get even higher. Obligated to keep inflation down, the Bank of England had no choice but to step in and increase interest rates. That didn’t just whack homeowners on a mortgage, it also increased the money the government had to shell out to service the national debt – and, naturally, high interest rates don’t boost growth, they hurt it. It was a negative spiral.

Labour also wants growth, but its chosen means is lower interest rates. That means creating the conditions in which the Bank will feel able to reduce them. On this, Rachel Reeves has got the timing just right. Unlike Truss, acting in a period of high inflation, Reeves has arrived in office just when the trend is in the opposite direction.

Still, the surest way to nudge central bankers into lower interest rates is fiscal tightening: spending less, taxing more. The latter is partly taken care of by a large, if stealthy, set of tax rises that Reeves inherits – namely, the freeing of income tax thresholds, thereby dragging more people into higher brackets, who then pay more – and partly by the tax increases that seem likely in next month’s budget, whether on capital gains, inheritance or pension contributions.

But spending is also part of the equation. That’s where the two-child and winter fuel decisions come in. Reeves is signalling, to the Bank of England but also to the markets, that she is not going to be profligate, that she will not be the Labour chancellor of caricature, bullied by her party’s left into wild spending. It’s partly a performance, the same iron chancellor routine adopted by Gordon

Brown in 1997, when he broke Labour hearts on single-parent benefits and stuck to his promise to stay within Tory spending limits for two years. Reeves’ goal is similarly to reassure the nine members of the Bank of England’s monetary policy committee that it’s safe to reduce interest rates with no fear of galloping inflation.

If she succeeds, and interest rates come down, lots of good things start to happen. Mortgage payments come down, so consumers have more to spend on what they want. The servicing of government debt costs less, so the government has more to spend on public services. Investment becomes attractive, so the economy begins to grow. That brings in more tax revenue, giving the government even more to spend, whether on schools, hospitals or any of the myriad services crying out for cash after a 14-year starvation diet. It’s a positive spiral.

There is an extra prize in sight too. Britain with low interest rates, governed by a new, ostentatiously sensible government with an enormous parliamentary majority, will look like an island of political stability, especially as France and Germany contend with a surging far right. That will attract overseas investment, previously frightened off by the Tory follies of the Brexit years, which means yet more money in Treasury coffers available for public spending.

But there are two big problems. The first is that this process takes time, perhaps a year according to those who know the way bond markets and interest-rate setters operate. The second is that if you are only playing Scrooge now so that you can be Santa later, you cannot say out loud that that is what you are doing. The markets are all about confidence. They had no confidence in Truss, so they panicked. They had confidence in Brown, so gave him room to spend big. Reeves needs them to

believe she is as stingy, heartless and unbending as her worst enemies say she is.

The risk, however, is that, until rates come down and the economy takes off, the public’s impatience will congeal first into disappointment and then disillusion. Some will say that need not matter, that the New Labour precedent suggests that governments with iron chancellors get re-elected. Except Labour won in July with just 34% of the vote. The latest polling has the party at 29%. On the eve of its first conference in power, by contrast, the numbers for Brown and Tony Blair were in the stratosphere.

What, then, can Starmer and Reeves do in this interim period, as they wait for a serious fall in interest rates and all that should follow? Here memories of 1997 can be useful. When it was wearing the straitjacket of Tory spending limits, unable to splash the cash, Labour found cost-free ways to demonstrate that the country was under new management. It was three months in, when, to take one example, then home secretary Jack Straw announced an inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Similarly, the Labour of 2024 should be looking for ways to show that progress is possible that won’t trouble the exchequer. And so it was not just Brussels that was disappointed by Starmer’s rejection last month of a proposal that Britain rejoin the EU’s Erasmus+ scheme, which allows young people to study abroad.

That would have been just the kind of bright, hopeful gesture that would not have broken the bank, but would have signalled that Britain had a new government and that better times were on the way. If everything goes to plan, the economic lift will come. In the meantime, and even if there can be no honeymoon, it wouldn’t hurt for Labour to give the country a small reminder why, back on that summer’s day in July, it said, “I do.”

The Guardian

Afghanistan is America’s shame, however you vote

Luke Coffey

US House Foreign Affairs Committee chair Michael McCaul, a Republican, released a scathing report last week blaming Joe Biden for the disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021. McCaul’s Democratic counterpart on the committee, Gregory Meeks, dismissed the report as a “partisan narrative.”

It was the latest example of the political blame game over the 20-year US involvement in Afghanistan. And there’s plenty of blame to go around: while the chaotic withdrawal happened on Biden’s watch, the groundwork was laid during the Trump administration.

Trump, during his 2016 campaign, promised to end the so-called “forever wars,” with Afghanistan the prime example. By then the conflict had dragged on for 15 years, but it looked very different from the earlier, bloodier years. US troop levels had peaked at over 100,000 during the height of the fighting in 2010–2012, when hundreds of American soldiers were killed every year and the US was spending about \$120 billion a year on the war — \$300 million a day, \$230,000 every minute.

But by the time Trump took office in 2017, this had evolved significantly. The war he wanted to end was not the one the US was then fighting. Casualties had decreased and troop levels were down to about 18,000, mainly trainers for Afghan security forces and counterterrorism operators. The cost had also dropped to about \$18 billion a year. Nevertheless, Trump remained focused on his populist message of ending “forever wars,” which resonated with a significant portion of Americans.

In 2019, his administration initiated direct talks with the Taliban, culminating in a 2020 agreement negotiated without the involvement of the Afghan government that set a timeline for a phased withdrawal of US forces by May 2021. The agreement also included the release of over 5,000 Taliban prisoners in exchange for vague assurances from the Taliban that they would prevent Afghanistan from becoming a haven for transnational terrorist groups. This set the stage for one of the most consequential foreign policy decisions of the past decade.

When Biden took office in January 2021, only 2,500 US troops remained in Afghanistan. While small

in number, they were a stabilizing force. Few believed that 2,500 troops were enough to enable the Afghan government to regain full control, but they were enough to prevent the Taliban from doing so.

Biden repeatedly claimed that his hands were tied by Trump’s deal, but

provincial capitals, and Kabul fell within weeks.

It is hard to argue that today’s Afghanistan, ruled by the Taliban, is preferable to maintaining a small contingent of US troops and contractors, especially given the low cost and minimal risk. It is an option Biden could have chosen, but he didn’t.

Trump now has the

When Biden took office in January 2021, only 2,500 US troops remained in Afghanistan. While small in number, they were a stabilizing force. Few believed that 2,500 troops were enough to enable the Afghan government to regain full control, but they were enough to prevent the Taliban from doing so. Biden repeatedly claimed that his hands were tied by Trump’s deal, but that was not true. He had no problem reversing many of Trump’s other policies, and there was no legal or strategic imperative that forced him to stick to Trump’s withdrawal timeline.

that was not true. He had no problem reversing many of Trump’s other policies, and there was no legal or strategic imperative that forced him to stick to Trump’s withdrawal timeline. The truth is, Biden, who had long been skeptical of the US mission in Afghanistan, saw an opportunity to end America’s involvement once and for all, and he seized it — without fully considering the consequences.

In 2009, during Barack Obama’s Afghan strategy review, Biden, then vice president, had argued for a limited US military presence focused on counterterrorism. His position was opposed by influential figures such as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and CIA Director Leon Panetta, who advocated a surge in US forces based on Gen. David Petraeus’s successful strategy in Iraq. Biden lost that debate. Ironically, by 2021, the US presence in Afghanistan had come to resemble what Biden had advocated in 2009: he essentially inherited his own strategy. But instead of maintaining it, he chose to exit.

He pushed the withdrawal deadline from May to September, and by July US forces had abandoned Bagram air base without notifying their Afghan counterparts. Shortly after, the Taliban began capturing

advantage that no one will ever know what he would have done with a second term. Would he have stuck to his timeline or made adjustments? It’s impossible to say. What we do know is that by the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, the Taliban controlled more territory in Afghanistan than they did on that tragic day in 2001. While Trump’s decision to negotiate with them was reckless, Biden bears responsibility for the disastrous final act.

The consequences of this debacle extend far beyond Afghanistan. America’s adversaries, sensing weakness and indecision, have been emboldened. Months after the fall of Kabul, Russia invaded Ukraine. China is increasingly belligerent over Taiwan. Meanwhile America’s allies are left questioning the reliability of their most important partner.

But the people who have suffered the most are the Afghans. While American politicians engage in finger pointing, millions of Afghans are now living under a repressive regime, facing economic collapse and a worsening humanitarian crisis. No US leader has yet offered a solution, and the lack of accountability is a sad reflection of the state of American foreign policy today.

Deeper Sino-EU cooperation can make bloc more competitive

Chen Weihua

THE European Union’s competitiveness report released by Mario Draghi, a former European Central Bank chief, on Monday is supposed to be a guideline for boosting the EU’s economic growth. But it is also a critique of the bloc’s policy failure over the past five years and more.

The report, in a way, is an acknowledgement of China’s phenomenal transformation over the past decade toward a more sustainable and innovation-driven economy. The sheer fact that China is mentioned many times in the report and that the EU now sees a huge gap not just with the United States but also with China is telling, especially because many Europeans still see China as a country providing cheap labor — although that is no longer true, according to the Draghi report.

A decade ago, when China announced its strategic shift, from investment-driven quantitative economic growth to innovation-led high-quality development, not many people took it seriously. Today, China has become a global leader in research and development, renewable energy including solar and wind energy, and electric vehicles (EVs).

China is catching up fast with the industrialized world, partly by learning from the EU and other developed economies, but more importantly through massive investments in R&D. Who would have thought just a decade ago that China’s robot density would rank fifth in the world, trailing South Korea, Singapore,

Germany and Japan but ahead of the US and the average EU member state?

China is now competing with the EU and other industrialized economies in a number of fields, a fact that the EU should applaud, just as it should celebrate the progress of other emerging and developing economies. The EU should not follow the US in adhering to McCarthyism to portray China’s economic and technological rise as a threat. Instead, it should realize that a rising China means huge opportunities for the EU and the rest of the world.

The EU’s description of China as a cooperation partner, economic competitor and systemic rival since 2019 has caused confusion and impacted Sino-EU relations, rendering their comprehensive strategic partnership, which they inked in 2003, somewhat ineffective. In this regard, it is important to note that the Draghi report says the EU’s “over-regulation” is a major obstacle to overall growth, including the growth of unicorns, or start-ups valued at \$1 billion and above.

Similarly, the EU’s excessive screening over the past few years, which has targeted Chinese investment, has greatly dampened the enthusiasm of Chinese investors to engage with Europe. This is sad, because Chinese investors could contribute to the massive 800 billion euros (\$880.67 billion) annual investment target set by Draghi to boost the EU’s economic growth.

Moreover, China and the EU concluded the negotia-

tions on the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment in December 2020 after seven years, which was hailed by EU trade officials as “the most ambitious agreement that China has ever concluded”. Yet the European Parliament’s refusal to ratify the CAI has wasted many opportunities for EU businesses to cash in on the vast China market. The EU’s “de-risking” strategy, often under US pressure, is also thwarting the bloc’s growth.

The European Commission’s proposed punitive tariffs on Chinese-made EVs risk triggering a trade war between the two large economies, which would hurt the global economy. No wonder Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez told reporters in China on Wednesday that the EU should reconsider its plan to impose tariffs on Chinese-made EVs, reiterating that “we don’t need a trade war”. The EU has often touted its landmark “Green Deal” as a great move toward mitigating the effects of climate change, but the program has been losing momentum of late, especially in terms of implementation.

Better collaboration with China on the green development front, for which EVs and solar and wind energy are indispensable, will not only help the EU achieve its 2050 climate neutrality target, but also set an apt example of global cooperation in the green economy to fight climate change. There is no doubt deepening win-win cooperation with China will make EU more competitive. And that is precisely what seems to be missing from the Draghi report.

Why did Starmer cut winter fuel allowance?

Rafael Behr

AN unwritten law of Westminster mechanics states that power, in the absence of a countervailing force, gravitates to the Treasury. The governing agenda can be set in No 10, but a prime minister has few instruments of control as immediate and far-reaching as the purse strings in a chancellor’s hand.

It is the difference between Keir Starmer specchifying solemnly on the need for difficult choices and Rachel Reeves scrapping winter fuel payments for millions of pensioners. There is no discrepancy in the position but a clear disparity in impact. When dozens of Labour MPs abstained in a Commons vote against the cut yesterday, their quarrel was with the Treasury’s precise implementation of the prime minister’s loose prescription. It was tame, as parliamentary rebellions go. The government whips won the day. But so much queasiness so early on in the journey does not bode well for a government that is promising many more hard yards before good times come into view. Dissent is deferred, not dissolved. Labour MPs have been told not to expect any retreat from austere decisions, but a prolonged backlash could still necessitate palliation for the neediest pensioners. Alongside quibbles with the policy, there is disquiet about the tone of the government’s message. Labour MPs accept that the grim Tory inheritance demands a sombre conversation with voters but wish the mood music could be less funereal.

A tonal adjustment is due at the party conference later this month. The Labour leader’s keynote address has to be upbeat, arranging short-term privations in a narrative arc pointing to a happier horizon. But the government’s fortunes depend a lot less on what Starmer says in Liverpool than on what Reeves does with her first budget six weeks later.

That set piece, the ritual funnelling of all economic policymaking into a

single speech in the Commons, is a major source of Treasury power. It forces every other cabinet minister into weeks of supplication before the chancellor. She then has a special day set aside in the Westminster calendar to dictate the terms of political debate for the ensuing year. The pattern is baked into British political convention. It is intensified in the current government by three factors.

First, commitment to budget discipline was the fulcrum around which Labour turned its electoral fortunes in opposition. It was central in the campaign to win back public confidence. That installed Reeves as the gatekeeper for manifesto pledges and embedded the shadow Treasury team in positions of structural primacy before they arrived in office. Second, Starmer is not an economist and is happy to delegate number crunching. That isn’t a failing. Prime ministers who try also to be their own chancellors get bogged down and end up fighting the person they appointed to do the job properly. Managerial detachment is one of Starmer’s strengths. He is still the author of Labour’s political strategy. But no one imagines that a measure like cutting winter fuel allowance came out of a drawer in No 10. It is a textbook case of Treasury brain. This is the notorious syndrome that causes clever officials in Whitehall’s smartest department to identify cost savings that look ingenious on a spreadsheet but turn out stupid in the real world. (A famous outbreak, featuring the imposition of VAT on hot takeaways and static caravans, led to the unravelling of George Osborne’s “omnishambles” budget in 2012.)

Treasury brain means prejudice in favour of any action that promises immediate cash for the exchequer and suspicion of any proposal that incurs cost upfront, justified with hypothetical revenues somewhere down the line. Sometimes that cau-

tion is reasonable. But it militates against long-term investment and spending on unquantifiable public goods - preventive healthcare, say, or prisoner rehabilitation - that can save money for future chancellors by reducing the bill for social decay.

That points to the third reason for likely Treasury dominance in the coming years. Whatever else Starmer imagines he might do with his first term in office, this parliament will be largely defined by competing pressures - to plug holes in the public finances and repair public services. The dilemma is mostly a legacy of Tory mismanagement but sharpened by Labour’s pre-election tax and spending commitments. Reeves acquiesced to budget constraints set as a trap by a Conservative chancellor who expected to lose an election and knew the impossible task of implementation would be someone else’s problem. Future historians of the Starmer project can debate whether that compromise was necessary to neutralise voter fear of Labour profligacy. The only scenario we have is the one where the plan worked. No one knows whether the same would have been said of a manifesto that promised to reverse Jeremy Hunt’s national insurance cuts or left open the option of income tax rises.

Reeves’s allies are entitled to feel some frustration at critics whose alternative plans amount to variants of the old recommendation not to start from here. It is easy to find fault with any particular measure, lamenting the cruelty and short-sightedness of each cut. It is easy also to presume that somewhere there lurks a more deserving target. Saying who that should be is the hard bit. But the winter fuel cut has also drawn criticism from Labour MPs who want to be loyal to Reeves and Starmer. Their complaint is that it undermines a story the government wants to tell

about placing the greatest burden on those “with the broadest shoulders”. It is true that plenty of wealthy pensioners, millionaires among them, don’t need their annual energy subsidy. But there are still poorer ones who do.

This will be a recurrent problem. There aren’t enough super-rich people to tap for all the necessary tax receipts. Everyone else can see someone whose shoulders look broader than their own and resent their share of the burden. The big revenue-raising levers - national insurance, income tax, VAT, corporation tax - are the ones Reeves has promised not to pull. The chancellor could also borrow more money, eking out some flexibility in the small print of the fiscal rules she has drafted for herself. But there is a limit, and no one wants to probe it. In highly turbulent times, the Treasury’s morbid terror of some unexpected shock triggering a global debt crisis is not irrational. So there will be a lot of scraping around for cash through cuts that end up having to be reversed or mitigated with ad-hoc pots of compensation. The Treasury brain will conjure up myriad fiddly tax rises with perverse unintended consequences, whipping the targeted group into a frenzy that does political damage out of proportion to the sums being collected.

Starmer, having happily delegated economic policy, will find himself spending a lot of time managing rows that were not made in No 10. Although he is committed to a long-term strategic model of government, ending what he calls “sticking-plaster politics”, he has signed up to a fiscal strategy that could require their frequent application. By all accounts, Starmer and Reeves enjoy a solid and healthy professional relationship. It may well prove resilient in the years to come. But it is about to be stress-tested under an immense mechanical force that has caused many a partnership between prime minister and chancellor to come unstuck.

Talks reduce Sino-US strategic trust deficit

David Gosset

WU Yanan, the commander of the Southern Theater of the People’s Liberation Army, engaged in a conversation via video link with Samuel Paparo, the commander of the “Indo-Pacific Command” of the United States on Tuesday, marking a significant moment in the ongoing efforts of the two countries to normalize bilateral relations by, among other things, improving mutual strategic understanding.

The video call can be seen as a result of the consensus reached during the 2023 San Francisco meeting between the two heads of state, highlighting a concerted effort to address mutual concerns and reduce tensions.

The Western media often highlight the friction between Washington and Beijing, painting a picture of a relationship fraught with difficulties. A prime example of what causes such frictions was the visit of former US House of Representatives speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan in August 2022, which led to a significant deterioration in relations between the two sides. This dangerous, and unnecessary, episode underscored the complexities and potential flash-points in bilateral interactions.

However, the 2023 San Francisco summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart Joe Biden has opened avenues for dialogue and cooperation, suggesting a shift toward a more constructive engagement. Such constructive engagements are good news for the world.

In May 2024, another pivotal moment occurred when representatives from both countries met in Geneva to discuss artificial intelligence (AI). This meeting was of strategic importance, given AI’s growing influence on global security and economic dynamics. The discussions in Geneva were preceded by US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen’s efforts to improve monetary and economic coordination with China during her meeting with Chinese Vice-Premier He Lifeng in Guangzhou, Guangdong province.

These initiatives reflect broader efforts to manage and harmonize key areas of the US-China relationship. A leadership change will occur in the US in November following the presidential election, and a new president will assume office in January. Hopefully, the

change of administration will lead to better bilateral relations.

US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan’s recent three-day visit to Beijing further underscored the need to improve bilateral relations. Sullivan’s visit was notable not only for his meeting with President Xi but also for his interactions with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and General Zhang Youxia, the first-ranked vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, the highest military body in China. Such high-level engagements are crucial for bridging the gaps and enhancing mutual understanding between the two countries.

The Southern Theater Command, under General Wu Yanan, is responsible for the security of China’s southern region. The region is particularly sensitive because of its geopolitical importance and the ongoing disputes over maritime boundaries and territorial claims between neighboring countries.

The South China Sea, in particular, remains a focal point of international attention due to its status as a critical corridor for global trade and its complex web of

regional disputes.

Ensuring the safety and stability of the South China Sea is thus paramount for both regional and global security. The safe passage of merchant ships through this vital maritime route is essential to the growth of the global economy. Since trade conducted through the South China Sea accounts for more than 60 percent of global maritime trade, it is of the utmost importance that the US and China reach an understanding on maritime security issues and cooperate to prevent any potential conflicts.

Effective communication between the top military commanders of both countries is crucial for ensuring that incidents that arise are addressed promptly and with great prudence. Incidents happen; but it is up to the leaders to deal with them with wisdom. The problems that arise are a test of true leadership.

Interactions like the one between Wu and Paparo are necessary to prevent misunderstandings, which could escalate into larger conflicts. While challenges remain, the engagements between the two countries’ leaders and military commanders offer hope for a more stable and cooperative future.

The China Daily



Minister emphasize need for gradual rollout of licensed fuel stations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Oil Marketing Association of Pakistan, led by its Senior Vice Chairman Tariq Mehmood on Saturday met with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to explore the expansion and development of the fuel oil industry in Balochistan.

The discussions focused on increasing the presence of licensed fuel stations

across the province, aiming to provide quality products and better services for the local population, said a press release issued here.

During the meeting, Tariq Mehmood emphasized the need for a gradual rollout of licensed fuel stations in Balochistan, stating that this would ensure high-quality fuel products for the region and improve overall consumer experience.

He called for increased facilitation to the people through these regulated stations.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan suggested that each oil company should have at least two to three fuel stations in each district of the province to boost business activities

and create employment opportunities.

Such initiatives would support Balochistan's economic growth, he added.

Jam Kamal Khan contacted Chief Minister of Balochistan, Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, during the meeting to seek his support.

The Chief Minister appreciated the idea and assured full backing from the provincial government.

Jam Kamal Khan also reaffirmed the federal government's full support for the Oil Marketing Association's plans.

Jam highlighted that the shift toward licensed fuel stations would benefit both consumers and sellers by ensuring quality control and fostering a competitive

business environment.

"We should gradually move towards a framework of licensed fuel stations, which would create a win-win situation for all involved, ensuring consumers receive high-quality products while boosting business opportunities for station owners," the minister remarked.

In closing, the Federal Minister assured his availability and support for any initiatives aimed at increasing business volume and contributing to the country's economic development.

Jam Kamal expressed optimism about the future of the fuel oil industry in Balochistan and its potential to drive regional growth.



BEIJING: Federal Minister for Investment, Privatization and Communication Abdul Aleem Khan speaking via video message at "Pakistan Investment Conference: Together for a Shared Future" hosted by Embassy of Pakistan at CIFTIS.

Size, speed of rate moves in focus as Fed poised to start cuts

EW YORK (Reuters): The Federal Reserve is in focus next week, as uncertainty swirls over how much the US central bank will cut interest rates at its monetary policy meeting and the pace at which it will reduce borrowing costs in coming months.

The S&P 500 index (SPX), opens new tab is just 1% shy of its July record high despite weeks of market swings sparked by worries over the economy and seersawing bets on the size of the cut at the Fed's Sept. 17-18 meeting.

After fluctuating sharply throughout the week, Fed funds futures on Friday showed traders pricing an almost equal chance of a 25 basis point cut and a 50 basis point reduction, according to CME Fedwatch. The shifting bets reflect one of the key questions facing markets today: whether the Fed will head off weakening in the labor market with aggressive cuts, rather than take a slower wait-and-see approach.

"The market wants to see the Fed portray a level of confidence that growth is slowing but not falling off a cliff,"

ISLAMABAD (INP): Weekly inflation showed a slight increase of 0.01%, with the annual inflation rate recorded at 14.36%, according to the latest report from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

The report highlights fluctuating prices of essential commodities, with some items becoming more expensive while others witnessed a price drop. During the past week, the prices of 15 essential commodities saw an uptick, while 14 items experienced a decrease.

Among the most significant increases was chicken, which became more expensive by Rs16 per kg. The cost of electricity per unit also rose by 26 paise. Staple food items such as daal channa saw a price hike of Rs9.26 per kg, while garlic became more expensive by Rs12 per kg. Meat products also recorded an increase, with beef prices rising by Rs11 per kg and mutton by Rs14 per kg.

On the other hand, there was some relief for consumers as the price of bananas decreased by Rs8 per dozen. Daal maash saw a price reduction of Rs8 per kg, while the price of a 20kg bag of flour dropped by Rs17. Eggs also became cheaper, with the

price per dozen falling by Rs3. The mixed trend in the prices of essential commodities continues to affect households across the country, with fluctuating food costs and rising utility rates adding to the financial strain.

Weekly inflation rises by 0.01%

— annual rate reaches 14.36%

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COURT NOTICES

KOHAT

In the Court of Ms Dua Mehreen Civil Judge VI Kohat, Suit no.59/6 Date of hearing, 09-10-2024.

Titled:- Said Badshah(eto) Vs Gul Nazeer (eto), Notice against:-

(6)Shah Meran (7)Sher Samad Sons of Mir Samand R/o Sayyab Tehsil Gumbat District Kohat Presently R/o (in Abroad Saudi Arabia)(14)Nawab Khan Son of Dar Khan R/o Sayyab Tehsil Gumbat District Kohat Presently R/o (in Abroad Dubai UAE)(16)Yar Said Son of Dar Khan R/o Sayyab Tehsil Gumbat District Kohat Presently R/o (in Abroad Saudi Arabia)(Defendants) Whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a civil suit against you Defendants in which date of hearing 09-10-2024 is fixed for your appearance. Since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you Defendants is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 09-10-2024 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on 12-09-2024(Court/C.J.I/Kohat)

In the Court of Afshen Civil Judge VII/Afaq Qazi Buner at Daggar, Suit No.218/1, Institution 2023. Date of hearing, 24/9/2024. Bakht Zadal VS Saleem. Notice to No.3/1 Noor Wali Khan s/o Nazam resident of Sura Gharhi Hujra at present abroad in Dubai. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 24/9/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

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Removal of Mohenjo Daro from currency note: Sindh writes to SBP

KARACHI (INP): Sindh government has expressed concern over removal of Mohenjo Daro from currency note in a letter to Governor State Bank of Pakistan.

Sindh's Culture and Tourism Minister Zulfiqar Ali Shah, in a letter to the central bank's governor has asked the bank's head to reconsider over removal of the Mohenjo Daro's picture from currency note.

"The picture of the world heritage site was put on Rs ten denomina-

tion currency note in 1970, later it was printed at Rs 20 note," Sindh minister writes in letter.

"We have come to know that the picture of Mohenjo Daro has been replaced with Bab-e-Khyber in new Rs 20 currency notes



In brief

PCB announces commentary panel

MULTAN (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has officially announced a five-member commentary panel and a presenter for the highly anticipated Pakistan vs South Africa Women's T-20 series, set to take place at Multan Cricket Stadium. The three-match series will be held on Sept 16, 18, and 20, 2024. The commentary team includes former cricketers Bazid Khan, Ijaz Ahmed, Hjab Zahid, Kainat Imtiaz, and Sana Mir, while the well-known sports presenter Sawera Pasha will serve as the series presenter. The first two T-20 matches will begin at 7:00 PM, while the third match was scheduled for a morning start at 10:00 AM. The PCB has announced that the fans across Pakistan can catch the action live on A Sports HD, and for those preferring online streaming while the matches will be available on PCB's official YouTube channel. In an effort to encourage live spectators, PCB has announced that entry to the stadium will be free of charge. Fans attending the matches were only required to bring their original CNIC (National Identity Card) for entry into the stadium.

PFF election schedule adjusted

ISLAMABAD (APP): The provincial and territorial elections of the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) will be held on September 19 and 20. The dates have been re-adjusted to observe Eid Milad un Nabi (SAW) on September 17, said a press release. The elections will see the participation of the winning District Football Association (DFA) candidates from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The elections for Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir will be conducted on September 19 while Punjab, Balochistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan are scheduled for September 20. The election cycle began with the publication of the preliminary voting list on August 28, 2024. Candidates submitted their nomination papers by August 30, 2024, and the initial list of candidates was made public on September 3, 2024. The appeal window remained open until September 8, 2024, allowing candidates to raise concerns or challenges. The final list of candidates will be released on September 16, 2024.

Osaka announces split with coach

LOS ANGELES (AFP): Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka is parting ways with Belgian coach Wim Fissette, the former world number one said on Instagram on Friday. "4 years, 2 Slams and a whole lot of memories," Osaka wrote in a post to her Instagram stories. "Thanks Wim for being a great coach and an even greater person. Wishing you all the best," Fissette had two stints coaching Osaka, from 2019 through the summer of 2022 and again when they reunited last year as Osaka launched her return to the game after the birth of her daughter Shai in July of 2023. Osaka won the 2020 US Open and 2021 Australian Open titles under his guidance, and also reached the finals of the 2020 Cincinnati Open and the 2022 Miami Open. But the four-time Grand Slam champion has struggled to put together victories since she returned to the WTA Tour at Brisbane in January.



FAISALABAD: Usman Khan drives through the off side.

India thump Pakistan in Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

HULUNBUIR CITY (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan succumbed to a 2-1 defeat against arch-rivals India in the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024 here at the Moqi Hockey Training Base on Saturday.

Pakistan started the blockbuster clash on a high as they took the lead just 10 minutes into the first quarter, courtesy of a precise assist from Hannan Shahid, who fed the ball inside the circle to Nadeem.

Nadeem effortlessly smashed the ball into the net to give Pakistan a head start. Pakistan's lead, however, was short-lived as India earned a penalty corner. India's skipper Harmanpreet Singh took the penalty corner for India and successfully sent his drag-flick into the bottom-right corner, helping India equalise just a few minutes later.

The defending champions took the lead in the second quarter when Abhishek fed the ball to Harmanpreet near the circle, who similarly converted it into a goal. The remaining two quarters of the blockbuster Asian Hockey Champions Trophy clash between arch-rivals Pakistan and India remained goalless despite both sides making ferocious attacks on each other's goalposts.

The 2-1 victory over Pakistan, meant India won all of their group-

stage fixtures and topped the standings with 15 points. Whereas, Pakistan had two victories and as many draws before their defeat against India.

Remember, Pakistan have already qualified for the semi-final of the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024 after thumping China 5-1 on Thursday. Abdul Rehman opened the scoring for Pakistan before Nadeem Ahmed and Hannan Shahid scored two goals each to secure a dominant 5-1 victory for the Green Shirts. This is Pakistan's second consecutive victory in the tournament as they defeated Japan 2-1 yesterday after two drawn games. Ahmad Nadeem opened the scoring against Japan in the ninth minute after finding Shahid Hannan and sending the ball to the back of the net. Sufyan Khan soon doubled Pakistan's lead in the 21st minute with a sublime drag flick.

However, Raiki Fujishima helped Japan make a subtle comeback six minutes later and reduced the deficit.

Japan made efforts to level the scores, but the Green Shirts' dominant gameplay maintained their lead until the final hooter. Prior to this game, Pakistan's second fixture in the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy ended in a 2-2 draw as they failed to defend their narrow one-goal lead in

the final quarter against South Korea.

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

The national team, however, made an astounding comeback as Shahid Hanan scored back-to-back last-minute goals to give the Green Shirts what appeared to be a decisive lead.

But just a few seconds before the final whistle, South Korea equalized through Kim Sunghyun and denied Pakistan a victory. Pakistan tasted the same fortune in their Asian Hockey Champions Trophy opener against Malaysia. They started their campaign with a 2-2 draw despite dominating the majority of the match.

The Green Shirts started the game strongly, taking the lead in the second quarter, thanks to a goal by Sufyan Khan. In the third quarter, Nadeem Ahmed extended their lead with another goal, before Malaysia made a comeback with a goal from the penalty corner. Pakistan were cruising towards victory with a 2-1 lead, however, Aiman Rozemi's late goal helped Malaysia level the scores in the dying minutes of the game.

Ferrari's Leclerc claims fourth straight pole in Baku



BAKU (AFP): Ferrari's Charles Leclerc secured pole for the fourth consecutive year at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix on Saturday ahead of McLaren's Oscar Piastri.

As title challenger Lando Norris of McLaren qualified only 17th, the Monegasque driver, who won the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in his last outing, continued his supreme single lap form to wind up three-tenths of a second ahead of Piastri. It was the 26th pole of his career at a track where he has yet to win. Carlos Sainz was third in the second Ferrari and Sergio Perez

fourth for Red Bull ahead of Mercedes' George Russell. Three-time world champion and series leader Max Verstappen was sixth in the second Red Bull as his recent struggles continued.

Verstappen leads Norris by 62 points in the title race with eight races of the season remaining. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton was seventh for Mercedes ahead of two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin, Argentine new boy Franco Colapinto of Williams and his teammate Alex Albon.

"It's one of my favourite

tracks of the season," said Leclerc. "It hasn't been an easy weekend for me with the crash in first practice and then a problem in second practice with a new part. "I wasn't worried, but the pace was already there and in my last lap I went for it a bit more. It is amazing to be on pole again!"

The session began in slanting sunshine across the old city by the Caspian Sea, the Mercedes duo quick to enter the fray on medium tyres for two exploratory laps of the slippery street track. As the conditions improved, Leclerc produced a lap in 1:42.775 to go top while Mercedes switched to softs, Russell swiftly jumping to second and Hamilton to fourth.

But in a final scramble for places, as Piastri went third behind Leclerc and Albon, Norris pitted and missed the cut, eliminated in 17th place ahead of only the Saubers and Alpine's Esteban Ocon. RB's Daniel

Ricciardo was also out.

It was Norris's first Q1 elimination since the Las Vegas race last year (2023). "The lap was good enough, but it was a yellow flag so I had to back off," said Norris. Q2 saw Verstappen on top ahead of Leclerc with Perez and Sainz third and fourth.

After a final flurry, Alonso rose to fifth and Colapinto to sixth while Albon hung on to 10th to push Bearman out in 11th along with RB's Yuki Tsunoda, Alpine's Pierre Gasly, Nico Hulkenberg of Haas and Aston Martin's Lance Stroll. The top-ten shootout began with Leclerc, in 1:46.610, on top ahead of Sainz after an early lap by Russell. As the final laps began, Albon left the pits with an airbox fan still attached to his Williams car. He pulled it off and threw it to a marshal.

This bizarre incident did not distract Ferrari or Leclerc, however, as he reeled off 1:43.365 to grab his fourth consecutive Baku pole.

Usman, Hasnain give Panthers dominant victory over Dolphins

FAISALABAD (Monitoring Desk): Usman Khan's brisk century, followed by Mohammad Hasnain's five-

fer steered Panthers to a resounding 50-run victory over Dolphins in the third match of the Champions One-Day Cup here at Iqbal Stadium on Saturday.

Chasing a daunting 329-run target, the Dolphins' batting unit unfolded on 278 in 47 overs despite half-centuries from Sahibzada Farhan and Qasim Akram.

Openers Sahibzada Farhan and Mohammad Huraiera gave the Dolphins a decent start to the run-chase, adding 68 runs for the first wicket. Panthers' skipper Shadab Khan drew a much-needed breakthrough for his side by dismissing Huraiera, who scored 39 off 30 deliveries.

Muhammad Akhlaq and Sahibzada Farhan then knitted a brief 41-run partnership for the second

wicket before both perished in quick succession, reducing the Dolphins to 114/3.

Farhan hit four fours and a six on his way to a 69-ball 52.

The Dolphins' middle order was then jolted by an exceptional bowling spell from Mohammad Hasnain during which the right-arm pacer claimed important wickets of Saud Shakeel (24) and Asif Ali (10).

The right-arm pacer, fuelled with momentum, returned to break a threatening 78-run partnership for the sixth wicket by dismissing Qasim Akram, who remained the top-scorer for the Dolphins with a 62-ball 65.

Hasnain soon completed his five-wicket haul by claiming two more wickets, including the Dolphins' last hope Faheem Ashraf, who walked back in the 44th over, after scoring a gutsy 41.

Mubasir Khan then wrapped up the Panthers' dominant victory by getting rid of Noman Ali and

Usman Qadir in his successive overs.

Put into bat first, the Panthers had a contrasting start to their innings as they lost both their openers Saim Ayub (6) and Abdul Bangalzai (5) inside five overs with just 19 runs on the board.

Following the early hiccup, Usman Khan joined Umar Siddiq in the middle and anchored the innings.

The duo batted sensibly to add 70 runs for the third wicket until Siddiq got run out in the 18th over. He scored 30 off 39 deliveries, hitting three fours and a six.

The Panthers then coped with another blow to their batting expedition as they lost Mubasir Khan (5) in the 22nd over with 105 runs on the board.

Usman Khan then received subtle support at the other end in the form of Haider Ali and together they raised a 103-run partnership.

Awais Munir, Asjad Iqbal begin Snooker WC with triumph



KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistani cueists Asjad Iqbal and Awais Munir emerged victorious in a display of outstanding performance on the day one of the Snooker World Cup in Mongolia.

The duo separately secured victories in each of their games without dropping a single frame.

In his first match, Iqbal defeated Mongolia's Batarkhuu Naranhuu with a score of 3-0, the frames ending 71-38, 71-51, and 110-32. In the second match, Asjad also triumphed over Japan's Junji Miyazawa, again without

dropping a frame, with scores of 68-18, 63-11, and 83-01.

Meanwhile, Munir won his first match against Mongolia's Kash Uchjir, with frame scores of 60-17, 62-12, and 81-09. In his second match, Munir defeated Oman's Hussain Al-Wati without losing a frame, with scores of 68-06, 10175-12, and 83-15.

Remember, both departed from Karachi on Thursday to participate in the Mongolia World Cup as well as the World 6-Red Snooker Championship. Munir's coach, Shoaib Arif, banked on the cueist's

remarkable track record and added that he is well-prepared for the tournaments. "As a coach, I can say Awais Munir is well prepared for the tournaments and by the will of Almighty Allah, he will succeed and bring joy to the nation," said Arif.

It must be noted Awais is the only Pakistani cueist to make it to the finals in his first three international tournaments, winning one of them. Thus, he has one gold and two silver medals to his name. He won the Asian 6-Red Snooker Championship after beating Hong Kong's Nansen Wan in the final back in July.

Munir secured a 6-3 victory with the scores of 0-65, 35-26, 27-36, 38-20, 0-65, 13-46, 8-60, 34-0, 27-40. He had qualified for the final after defeating countryman Asjad Iqbal 5-2 in the semi-final a day earlier. He secured victory by winning five consecutive frames after initially trailing Iqbal 0-2.

Somerset stun Surrey again to win first T20 semi

Edgbaston (Agencies): Somerset produced one of the great T20 Finals Day comebacks as they recovered from 7-3 to beat Surrey in comfort by six wickets and reach their third final in four years.

Just two days after Somerset beat Surrey in dramatic style in the County Championship, it looked like the Brown Caps might get their revenge.

Defending a total of 153-9, Surrey quickly took the wickets of Tom Kohler-Cadmore, Tom Abell and Will Smeed in the space of just 13 balls. But James Rew and Sean Dickson both hit half-centuries as they posted a highest-ever Finals Day partnership of 144 for the fourth wicket to see their side to a record seventh final

with eight balls to spare.

The Cider Boys have only won two of their previous six finals – in 2005 against Lancashire at The Oval, and then again at Edgbaston 14 months ago, when they also beat Surrey en route to overcoming Essex. They will become the first county to defend the T20 title if they can now also go on to beat the winners of the second semi-final between Sussex and Gloucestershire.

After being put into bat, Dan Lawrence made a blistering start for the southern London side, hitting three fours as he raced to 19 off 10 balls – but then he went for one big shot too many off his 11th and hoisted a skier to Abell off Josh Davey. Two more of Surrey's England contin-

gent, Ollie Pope and Dom Sibley, who hit the first six of the match, then added 43 in four and a half overs before two wickets went down in as many balls.

Gregory bowled both stand-in England Test captain Pope and England Test keeper Jamie Smith – and was then involved again when he ran out Rory Burns. Gregory took his third wicket when Sibley lofted a catch to the deep mid-wicket boundary on 48, before Jake Ball got in on the act when he bowled Tom Curran. But it was left to Laurie Evans – the only non-England international in Surrey's top eight – to bludgeon a few late blows, including the only other six of the innings, to see his side past the 150 mark.

Forest stun Liverpool to end Slot's honeymoon

LIVERPOOL (AFP): Liverpool's perfect start under manager Arne Slot came to an abrupt end as Nottingham Forest stunned Anfield with a 1-0 win on Saturday.

Callum Hudson-Odoi scored the only goal 18 minutes from time to secure Forest's first away league win against Liverpool in 55 years. Liverpool had won all three of their opening games under Slot without conceding, including a 3-0 win away at Manchester United two weeks ago.

But the Reds were sloppy and sluggish after the international break and made to pay. "We had a lot of ball possession but only managed to create three or four quite good chances, so that is by far not enough if you have so much ball possession," said Slot. "We lost the ball so many times in simple situations."

Luis Diaz was unlucky not to spark the home side

into life when he robbed Ryan Yates and smashed a shot off the inside of the post midway through the first half. Diogo Jota volleyed straight at Matz Sels, who then denied Alexis Mac Allister with a header but Liverpool never managed to click through the gears against a well-organised Forest side, who are yet to lose in the Premier League this season.

The visitors did ride their luck when Sels fumbled a looping Diaz header and just scooped up the loose ball before it crossed the line. Slot tried to liven up Liverpool with a triple change on the hour mark as Diaz, Jota and Mac Allister were sacrificed after their exertions on international duty.

Early 'setback'

Trent Alexander-Arnold was pushed forward into midfield as a result, but the move backfired as it was Forest's substitutes who were the ones to make a



difference. Anthony Elanga sprinted forward on the counter-attack and fed Hudson-Odoi, who cut inside and fired brilliantly low and hard beyond Alison Becker.

Slot's men failed to rally and the stands at Anfield even began to empty with five minutes remaining -- a rare sight during Jurgen Klopp's glorious reign in charge. "If you lose a home game it's always a setback," added Slot. "Especially if you face a team who, we

never know, maybe they will go all the way to fight for the Champions League, but normally this team is not ending up in the top 10, so if you lose a game against them that's a big disappointment."

Defeat leaves the Reds three points behind champions Manchester City, who stretched their perfect start to the season with a 2-1 win over Brentford. And Slot has little time to come up with a solution as Liverpool travel to AC Milan to begin

their Champions League campaign on Tuesday.

"If I would change my way of preparation after a loss, that means I only do the best work I can after we lose," said the former Feyenoord boss. "We will try to in the best possible way be prepared for Tuesday, which is going to be a completely different game but also a game where we will face a lot of quality."

Haaland scores twice as Man City beat Brentford: Erling Haaland scored twice to take his Premier League tally to nine as Manchester City recovered from conceding after just 23 seconds to maintain their 100% record with victory over Brentford.

Visiting forward Yoane Wissa scored the quickest top-flight goal of the season, heading into an empty net from close range after John Stones and Ederson inexplicably messed up attempting to clear Keane

Lewis-Potter's nod-back.

City were rocking but Haaland steadied the ship, driving home the loose ball after Kevin de Bruyne had been tackled inside the Brentford box. The Norwegian was playing despite the death of a close family friend in midweek. He scored a second before the break as he outmuscled Ethan Pinnock to reach Ederson's long punt forward.

It left Haaland tantalisingly close to becoming only the fifth player in English top-flight history – and the first since 1946 – to score three successive hat-tricks. He came close. Brentford keeper Mark Flekken tipped one goal-bound effort over the bar. Haaland then sent an instinctive first-time strike against the post and was unable to get enough power behind the rebound to take it into the net.

But, despite the crowd clearly willing him on, dad

Alfie watching from the stands and manager Pep Guardiola opting not to take him off even though his side start their Champions League campaign with a 2023 final rematch against Inter Milan on Wednesday, this time Haaland had to settle for two.

Haaland's on fire As the game ticked into injury time, Haaland was confirmed as the club man of the match. He has now taken his overall tally for City to 99 in 103 appearances. His Premier League ratio is more than one a game.

To put that into context, legendary striker Sergio Aguero took 390 goals to score his club record 260 for the club. At the current rate, Haaland will overhaul the Argentine within three seasons. And the secondary point is he scores goals from nothing, which, on days like these, is absolutely priceless.



In brief

IRSA releases 218,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 218,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 186,300 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1548.02 feet and was 150.02 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 104,700 cusecs and 136,400 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1228.50 feet, which was 180.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded each 24,900 cusecs. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 139,900, 115,400, 121,700 and 71,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 24,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Six arms holders arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested 6 illegal arm holders and recovered arms, ammunition from their possessions during crackdown here on Saturday. According to police spokesman, Waris Khan police during course of action held Sabtain and recovered 1 pistol 30 bore from his possession. Similarly, New Town police apprehended Muddsar and recovered 1 pistol 30 bore from his custody. While, R.A Bazar Police confiscated 1 pistol 30 bore from Shabir. Following operation, Morgah Police seized 1 pistol 30 bore from Rizwan. Additionally, Kahuta Police nabbed Rafiq, Hafeez Ullah and recovered 2 pistols 30-bore from their possessions. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SSP Operations appreciated the performance of police teams adding that crackdown will be continued against those carrying illegal weapons.

Police recover looted items

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police have successfully curtailed criminal activities throughout the year, recovering looted items valued at Rs. 140.16 million. According to police spokesperson these recovered items include vehicles, gold ornaments, motorcycles, cash, and other valuables. He said over the past eight months, police have arrested 1,175 members of 496 criminal gangs involved in serious offenses such as robbery, theft, and vehicle snatching. Additionally, 3,163 individuals linked to property-related crimes were detained, he added. He said the police also recovered a significant amount of stolen property, including 326 cars, 584 motorcycles, cash, gold ornaments, mobile phones, and other valuables. Inspector General (IG) police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi praised the swift recovery efforts by the DIG Operations team, he added.

Over 549 unfit PSVs impounded

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have ramped up inspections of Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) following the orders of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani and 549 unfit vehicles were impounded. A police spokesman said the ongoing checks focus on vehicle fitness, route permits, and driver licenses.



ISLAMABAD: Workers painting the wall of 6th avenue underpass in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

09 out of 11 DISCOs' BoDs notified by Power Division: Musadik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Energy, Senator Musadik Masood Malik on Saturday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that nine out of the total 11 electric power distribution companies (DISCOs)' board of directors (BoDs) have been notified by the Power Division after fulfilling the codal obligations.

He was responding during the calling attention notice of Senator Saifullah Abro on delayed appointment of new Chairmen and Members of Board of Directors of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company, Sukkur Electric Supply Company and Power Planning & Monitoring Company (PPMC) as the Government has already dissolved the other Boards of DISCOs.

Senator Abro had alleged that there were 10 DISCOs across the country and out of that eight's board of directors were nominated but the two in Sindh were still awaiting namely Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) and Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO). Minister for Energy Musadik Malik said there

was no doubt about the fact that the country was passing through harsh times and improvement of the boards of DISCOs was critical.

"Inflation and employment are the important issues of the public. The 40% inflation rate has dropped to 9% and growth rate spiked up from 0 to 3% and the developing areas where farmers live are facing 6% development ratio this means that some improvement is taking place and I would like to present the economic indicators when the House permits," he said.

Senator Musadik Malik noted that there were 11 DISCOs under the Power Division out of which nine of them got their boards notified while three were pending. Among the pending, the first was PPMC whereas its Board nomination committee was held and the board was formed. However, the BODs' list was sent to the Prime Minister and he has approved it whereas it was also presented before the cabinet committee on SOEs which has also approved it. However its gazette notification was pending, he added.

The Minister underlined

that the SEPCO and HESCO shared the same status as board nomination committee meetings were held and the nominated boards's list were sent to the PM Office and then to SOE subcommittee of cabinet which would be notified in the next two weeks.

"All the three boards have been formed and would be notified in the coming days," he said. Unprecedentedly, the quorum was pointed out by treasury benches whereas the Chairman Senate said, "The quorum should have been pointed out by the Opposition whereas the agenda has been completed and the counting for the quorum would commence so that the media headlines should not flash that the Senate was adjourned without completion of its agenda."

The chair on protest of the Opposition ordered to ring bells in the House to call other members outside the chamber to complete the quorum for five minutes. However, there were only twelve members present in the House and it lacked quorum. The House was adjourned to meet again on Sunday (September 15th) at 4pm.

ANF recovers 28 kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country during last 24 hours managed to recover 28 kg drugs worth Rs 20 million and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters here on Saturday.

He informed that 115 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused netted near a university in Peshawar.

570 intoxicated tablets were recovered from an accused arrested in Sohrab Goth Karachi. In third

operation, 4 kg Ice was recovered from an accused rounded up near a university in Quetta.

The arrested accused during investigation confessed selling drugs to the students of educational institutions.

In another operation, 3.6 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted on Karakoram Highway Mansehra and an accused was arrested.

8.4 kg hashish was recovered from the bag of an accused held from Margalla Road Islamabad.

1 kg ice was recovered from the possession of an accused nabbed near Tanmi Mor in DG Khan.

400 grams ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Bahrain at a courier office at Jinnah International Airport Karachi.

10.2 kg heroin hidden in an uninhabited area near Pak-Afghan border in Chagai was recovered.

Separate cases have been registered against the arrested accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act and further investigations under underway.

Collaborative action urged to protect civil society space

ISLAMABAD (APP): Civil society representatives at an Open Public Forum underscored the urgent need for collaborative efforts to address the shrinking spaces for civil society in Pakistan.

The participants emphasized the need for enhanced collective advocacy to reform restrictive regulations impacting civil society. Building alliances with business groups, academics, and international organizations was highlighted as crucial for advancing policy changes that support greater freedom for CSOs.

They said the social development sector has shrunk to the historic low because of undue regulatory frameworks, and lack of donors' trust in the nongovernmental sector. Instead of engaging civil society to counter anti-state propaganda and to support development, many restrictions were imposed on them.

The forum underscored the importance of work-

ing with legal experts to challenge and seek reforms for laws that severely restrict CSO activities, such as those related to registration, foreign funding, and operational constraints.

The forum encouraged engaging with international organizations and networks to gain support and advocacy for a more favorable environment for CSOs. Participating in global dialogues and forums was also suggested to share experiences and influence international policy.

Devcom-Pakistan, a leading development organization, hosted the Open Public Forum on Saturday to address the pressing issue of shrinking spaces for civil society in Pakistan. The forum brought together key stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), policymakers, digital experts, and community leaders, to discuss the challenges faced by CSOs and propose action-

able recommendations for fostering a more enabling environment.

HRDN Executive Director Robeela Bangash said undue regulatory frameworks, political instability, inconsistency of policies, and the negative perception about the nongovernmental sector marred the spaces, and undervalue their work in the development of communities.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed highlighted the importance of building local partnerships and mobilizing community volunteers to support CSO activities and advocacy efforts.

He suggested comprehensive training for CSO staff and volunteers on navigating regulatory environments and enhancing digital security was emphasized. PAKAID chief executive suggested changing the work behaviour and patterns to seek partnerships and funding.

36 dengue patients registered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Gradual increase in dengue patients reach to 306 in Rawalpindi as 36 new cases have been reported during last 24 hours.

According to the latest report released by the District Health Authority, the largest number of patients were reported from Pothohar Town with 24 positive cases in one day. The report reveals that Dhamma Syedan, Chak Jalal Din and Kotla Kalan areas remained most affected areas among others from Rawal Town with continued positive cases being reported for many days.

The financial penalties of worth RS.12.8 million have been imposed since Jan 2024 along with a number of registered FIRs and challans against SOPs violators.

The comparative analysis given in the report shows that punitive actions taken against the violations this year are 4 times greater than those of the year 2023. Similarly, the average of confirmed positive has also declined significantly as compared to the previous years.

ICT Police nab suspect in Girl's assault case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police Team from Golra Police Station and the Special Sexual Investigation Unit (SSIOU) have successfully apprehended the accused involved in the sexual assault of a young girl.

According to a police spokesperson, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered at Golra Police Station following the victim's report. Upon receiving the report, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Islamabad, Syed Ali Raz, ordered an immediate response and directed the SSIOU team to take swift action, he said.

As a result, the accused, identified as Noman Shafiq, was arrested," he added. He said DIG Islamabad, Syed Ali Raz, assured the public that the suspect will be prosecuted based on strong evidence to ensure a fitting punishment.

Syed Ali Raz further emphasized that protecting women and children is a top priority, declaring them a 'red line' and warning that those involved in such crimes will not escape the law, he added.

4 members dacoit gang busted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have successfully arrested a four-member dacoit gang involved in street crimes and recovered stolen vehicles, gold and cash amounting Rs 60,000 from their possessions during crackdown here on Saturday, a police spokesman said. Police have also recovered weapons used in the crime.

Gujjar Khan police during course of action held four members gang of dacoits who were identified as Manzoor, Shehzad, Shahid, and Rizwan.

Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SP Saddar Muhammad Nabil Khokhar stated that intensive operations are underway to dismantle organized.

Strengthening democratic institutions essential for prosperity: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Saturday emphasized that the strength of the democratic system and the stability of democratic institutions are pivotal for the development and prosperity of the country.

He said that in democratic nations, people have the right to choose their leadership through their votes.

"They elect their representatives to the assemblies, and these elected representatives legislate and make policies to protect the people's rights and ensure their welfare in line with the public's aspirations."

He expressed these views in his message on the International Day of Democracy,

annually on September 15.

The Speaker highlighted that democracy guarantees freedom of expression and other fundamental rights. "The country's progress and prosperity are closely tied to the continuity of the democratic system."

Ayaz Sadiq said that in a democratic system, people participate in the political, social, and economic systems of the country through their elected representatives. Democracy not only ensures freedom of opinion but also provides the public with the opportunity to choose their leadership.

The Speaker stressed the importance of strengthening and promoting the democratic system to establish a

strong and stable society.

He urged all political parties to set aside their differences and work together for the country's development and the promotion of democratic values. He noted that in a democracy, resolutions to issues are found through mutual consultation, and our religion also emphasizes consultation, which is a fundamental aspect of democracy.

The Speaker said that democracy provides the common person with the opportunity to be involved in national affairs. He added that through the stability of democratic institutions and the promotion of democracy, the country can be guided on the path to progress and prosperity.

Tahira asks PTI to refrain from creating unrest

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Member National Assembly (MNA) Tahira Aurangzeb urged the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party to engage in constructive dialogue with other political parties for the betterment of Pakistan as the Chinese Premier scheduled to visit soon.

She emphasized unity to foster positive foreign relations with other countries.

Talking to PTV news channel, she urged PTI to recognize the need for unity and cooperation, rather than persisting in a confrontational approach that only serves to create divisions and unrest. By choosing dialogue over discord,

Aurangzeb believes that PTI can play a constructive role in shaping Pakistan's future.

Tahira Aurangzeb, a senior PML-N leader, lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party for its history of disrupting high-level visits from China.

With the Chinese Prime Minister's upcoming visit to Pakistan, Aurangzeb expressed concerns that PTI's ongoing protests and chaotic activities would once again jeopardize the trip.

Aurangzeb suggested that political parties should come together to discuss and formulate a collective approach to foreign policy.

She also praised China's role in Pakistan's economic

development, particularly through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative.

She also encouraged both countries to continue working together to promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.

Replying a query, Aurangzeb encouraged current political leaders of PTI to draw inspiration from past example of PPP and PML-N and work towards a united front for the country's progress.

She urged PTI to follow in the footsteps of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, working together to address the country's challenges and drive progress.

Ulema urged to play effective role for peace

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Aamir Khattak here on Saturday urged the ulema-e-Akram to play effective role for peace on Eid Milad ul Nabi (PBUH).

Chairing a Division Peace Committee meeting, Commissioner Engineer Aamir Khattak and Regional Police Officer, (RPO) Babar Sarfaraz Alpa reviewed all the arrangements being finalized of Eid Milad ul Nabi.

On this occasion, the parliamentarians, Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry, Provincial Parliamentary Secretary Culture, Shazia Rizwan, Naem Ejaz, Malik Ifitkhar, Tahira Mushtaq and Zebunnisa were present. Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar, DC Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock also participated in the meeting.

Pir Syed Saadat Ali Shah, Mehmood Ul Hasan Tawhidi, Pir Izhar Hussain Bukhari, Shaukat Jafri, Pastor Sohail Parvez, and Ulama-e-Akram from Jhelum, Chakwa and Attock participated in the meeting.

In Rawalpindi Division, Eid Milad-ul-Nabi (PBUH) would be celebrated with religious zeal and fervor, the Commissioner said.

He urged the ulema-e-Akram to come forward and play their active and effective role for peace. On 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal, like Muharram, the scholars should play their constructive role for the establishment of peace and harmony, he added. Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures should be ensured regarding 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal processions, he directed. "We all should make concerted efforts to foil nefarious designs of the

miscreants," he added. The scholars of all schools of thought should spread the message of peace from their mosques, he said. Foolproof security would be provided to all 12 Rabi ul Awwal processions in Rawalpindi Division, RPO said adding the organizers of Milad Committees should play their active role in preventing the use of musical instruments in the processions.

On this occasion, Ulema e Akram said that the scholars of all schools of thought are standing with the district administration for the establishment of peace.

There is no room for sectarianism in the country, they added. The traders association is always ready for every possible cooperation with Rawalpindi district administration, President Anumjan Tajran Shahid Ghafoor Paracha said.

Experts highlight importance of first aid training in schools

ISLAMABAD (APP): On World First Aid Day, medical experts and educators gathered to stress the importance of including first aid education in Pakistan's national curriculum and emphasized that this crucial skill could significantly reduce mortality rates and promote a culture of safety and emergency preparedness.

"In Pakistan, the 1122 Rescue service plays a crucial role in providing emergency medical care and rescue operations. However, despite their efforts many people remain unaware of the importance of first aid education and rely heavily on ambulances in emergency situations," said a report aired by PTV news channel.

"In Pakistan, most people lack basic first aid knowledge, leading to unnecessary delays in medical treatment," it added. "In emergency situations, every minute counts, and the lack of first aid education can result in severe consequences, including loss of life," said a renowned cardiologist Major General (Retd) Dr Azhar Mahmood Kayani.

"The majority of Pakistanis rely on ambulances to respond to medical

emergencies, rather than taking immediate action themselves. This reliance can lead to delayed treatment as ambulances may take time to arrive especially in traffic-congested areas," he added.

Report said, "In Pakistan the 1122 Rescue service has been working tirelessly to provide emergency medical care and rescue operations in Pakistan." "Since its inception in 2004, Rescue 1122 service has achieved an unprecedented milestone, rescuing an astonishing one billion, 55 lakh and 74 thousand lives which is remarkable feat underscores the organization's unwavering commitment to providing emergency services and saving lives."

"We remain committed to providing emergency services and saving lives," Spokesperson Rescue 1122 added. "First aid education can significantly reduce mortality rates and improve patient outcomes," Dr. Muhammad Ali, Emergency Medicine Specialist commented. "Most accidents can be managed with basic first aid skills, reducing the need for hospitalization," Dr. Sarah Khan, general practitioner added.

"First aid education should be a priority in Pakistan, where emergency services are often delayed," Dr. Zafar Iqbal, a Surgeon said. "First aid education is not just about saving lives, it is about empowering individuals to take action in emergency situations," Director General Rescue 1122 said.

"We need to recognize the importance of first aid education and make it an integral part of our education system," Dr. Farah Ahmad, a medical expert stressed.

"First aid education in schools can help reduce the burden on emergency services and improve community resilience," Dr. Asad Abbas, another medical researcher added. "First aid education should be integrated into the curriculum from primary level to high school," said a school principal.

"Including first aid in the curriculum will enhance students' knowledge and skills in emergency situations," Prof. Asad Abbas, Educationist, "By incorporating first aid into the curriculum, we can save lives and reduce the burden on emergency services," said another Physician.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur planting a sapling.

PTI playing double game: Khawaja Asif

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Saturday bashed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying the double game is being played through Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

Expressing his thoughts during the Senate session, Asif took a swipe at the embattled party, stating, "The PTI founder is engulfing fire in KP. Whatever has been said during the public gathering reflects the saying of the separatists." "It [the PTI] should keep the parliament as the political parliament. The PTI founder has merely apologized to the media over the statement of Ali Amin Gandapur," he said.

Asif maintained: "There is no chance of return from the path which the PTI is following." "You never know that the PTI will run the campaign of separation in KP," he said. Asif maintained: "The PTI wants to hold talks at the General Headquarters (GHQ)." Few days back, Asif asked the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to stage the protests but do not cross the red-line.

Expressing his thoughts, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) stalwart said: "The arrival of the police in the parliament is shameful. But there is also a need to condemn those speeches delivered along with the masked people during the public gathering." He lashed out at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, saying, "KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur has challenged the writ of the state and warned of attacking the state with the group of people, which is all about derailing the democracy."

Pervaiz Ashraf flays PTI leadership

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and senior leader of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Central Punjab, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Saturday, criticized the PTI leadership, calling them the enemy of Pakistan's interests, democracy, parliament, constitution, and peace.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said, "The leadership of PTI is an enemy of consensus, Pakistan, peace, and the interests of the people, as well as democracy, parliament, and the constitution."

He said that while the committee established by the National Assembly Speaker aims to improve the parliamentary atmosphere, the PTI leadership appears to have a different agenda. He also referenced PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's question regarding a controversial tweet, saying that the individual behind it opposes peace, democracy, and the supremacy of the parliament, desiring chaos in the country.

"No patriot would post such a tweet or humiliate the institutions of the country," Ashraf said, emphasizing that no one should make national institutions or their leaders controversial. He stressed that the country's well-being is more important than any political party.

He highlighted the contributions of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's grandfather, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who granted Pakistan the right to vote and a constitution. In contrast, he criticized the grandfather of the opposition leader for laying the foundation of dictatorship in the country.

AI has potential to enhance transparency

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: We commemorate World Democracy Day to highlight the importance of democracy in empowering citizens and promoting their active participation in the political process. Democracy stands as the cornerstone of a just society, advocating for the protection of fundamental rights and enabling political, economic, and social inclusion.

This year, the global theme highlights the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in advancing good governance. AI has the potential to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public administration, making it a key tool in modern governance. AI can provide data-driven insights and thus make the democratic process more transparent and accessible for voters by sharing

important information about the candidates and their policies.

Democracy stands for people's participation in the political process, political pluralism, and people's rights. Its advocacy for the political, economic and social rights of citizens distinguishes it from other forms of government. The political landscape of our country has witnessed many challenges. Leaders like Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto made immense contributions to the restoration and strengthening of democratic processes in the country. Their unwavering commitment and sacrifice serve as a reminder of the continuous struggle to uphold democratic values.

As we observe this day, we also recognize the role that our Parliament plays in safeguarding democracy by

representing the will of the people, formulating public policy, and addressing the nation's most pressing challenges. It is the primary forum for addressing grievances, ensuring inclusivity, and fostering a resilient future for Pakistan.

On this day, we strongly reaffirm our commitment to democracy. It is through democratic principles that we can achieve equality, socio-economic justice, the rule of law, and freedom of expression. As Pakistan faces contemporary challenges, it is highly essential to strengthen democratic institutions, undertake reforms, and work collectively to consolidate democracy. The resolution of our nation's issues lies in a vibrant and inclusive democratic process. Let us recommit ourselves to upholding democratic values and ensuring that democracy continues to flourish in Pakistan.

Sindh govt announces free birth registration services

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government has made a historic decision to provide free birth registration services, with the Sindh Cabinet approving this initiative. Additionally, the Sindh Cabinet has introduced a penalty of 7 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 5 lakh for the cultivation of prohibited drug-related crops. It has also approved a punishment of 14 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 20 lakh for drug manufacturing and the use of premises for such activities. Furthermore, the cabinet has sanctioned imprisonment ranging from one to seven years, along with a fine of Rs. 10 lakh, for drug possession.

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and

Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, stated that the new birth registration initiative aims to streamline the registration process and make it more accessible to underprivileged communities.

In a statement he said that the abolition of the enrollment fee will greatly benefit disadvantaged and low-income groups by enabling them to register their children without financial barriers, while also helping the government collect accurate demographic data.

He said that the decision will have far-reaching benefits, as it will ensure the legal identity of every person in Sindh. Free registration will also help eliminate issues such as child labor, human trafficking, and early marriages by establishing documented age for legal protection.

Senior minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the punishments and fines for the cultivation of narcotic crops are the result of recommendations made by the Excise and Narcotics Department. He said that the new legislation related to drugs is not just a policy; it is a declaration of war against those involved in the drug trade. Decisive actions are being taken against all individuals connected to drug trafficking, and these efforts will be intensified.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that The Sindh government will not compromise on the illegal drug trade or the future of the new generation. The Government of Sindh will leave no stone unturned in its mission to bring those involved in the nefarious drug trade to justice.

Biden slams Trump

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden has denounced election-season attacks on the Haitian American community in the United States, calling out Republican leaders for fear-mongering. Speaking at a White House brunch billed as a "celebration of Black excellence", Biden warned that Haitian Americans were a "community that's under attack in our country right now". His remarks were a rebuke to Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his vice presidential pick JD Vance, both of whom have spread unfounded rumours about Haitian migrants and asylum seekers in the US.

"It's simply wrong. There's no place in America" for that kind of rhetoric, Biden said, without naming Trump directly. "This has to stop, what he's doing. This has to stop," Trump — a former Republican president — and Vance, a senator from Ohio, have campaigned on a largely anti-immigrant platform, stirring fears of mass migration and crime at rallies across the US.

In recent weeks, both men have zeroed in on the blossoming Haitian American community in Springfield, Ohio, where racial and ethnic tensions have simmered. Springfield, part of the country's industrial Rust Belt, has sought to bolster its local economy in recent years by welcoming newcomers to the city.

But as the Haitian American community grew, so too did the backlash. An estimated 15,000 Haitian immigrants have moved to the area — though officials on the city commission last year cited a lower estimate, between 4,000 and 7,000. Some longtime residents called on the city commission to "stop them from coming".

Tensions further escalated in August 2023, when a Haitian national was involved in a car crash that overturned a school bus and killed an 11-year-old child on the first day of school. While the boy's family has called on residents to stop the "hate", attacks on the Haitian American community have continued to spread, attracting national attention.

In recent weeks, unfounded rumours have ricocheted across the internet that Haitian Americans are eating pets, echoing an anti-immigrant trope with a long history in the US. The rumour appears to have originated from a screenshot, supposedly taken from a private Facebook group. And city officials have publicly denied there was any basis for it.

Even Vance acknowledged the murky nature of the allegations. "It's possible, of course, that all of these rumors will turn out to be false," he wrote in a social media post on September 10. But Trump

and Vance have since repeated the rumour multiple times, including at high-profile events like the September 10 presidential debate.

"They're eating the dogs, the people that came in," he said at the televised debate, viewed by 67 million people. "They're eating the cats." The increased scrutiny on Springfield has led to multiple threats, reportedly linked to anti-immigrant sentiment. On Thursday, city hall was evacuated after a bomb threat. On Friday, other city buildings were likewise emptied after emails warned of an explosive device — including several schools. Nevertheless, that same day, Trump revisited his attacks on the Haitian American community in a news conference at his golf club outside of Los Angeles, California.

"In Springfield, Ohio, 20,000 illegal Haitian migrants have descended upon a town of 58,000 people, destroying their way of life," he said. "Even the town doesn't like to talk about it because it sounds so bad for the town." He said the city — as well as Aurora, Colorado — would be a centrepiece for his immigration crackdown, should he be re-elected in November's election. "We're going to have the largest deportation in the history of our country," he said. — Aljazeera

Pakistan decries US sanctions as biased

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, on Saturday, said that Pakistan considered the United States' decision to impose sanctions on commercial entities over alleged connections to Pakistan's ballistic missile program as biased and politically motivated.

In response to media inquiries about the US decision to impose sanctions on commercial entities over alleged connections to Pakistan's ballistic missile program, she stated that similar listings of commercial entities in past were based on mere suspicion, involved items not listed by any export control regime, and yet were considered sensitive under broad, catch-all provisions.

It is widely known that some countries while claiming strict adherence to nonproliferation norms, have conveniently waived licensing requirements for advanced military technologies to their favoured states.

Such double standards and discriminatory practices undermine the credibility of global nonproliferation regimes, increase military asymmetries, and endanger international peace and security, said the spokesperson.

Iran says new research satellite launched into orbit

TEHRAN (AFP): Iran on Saturday blasted a new research satellite into orbit, state media said, in the latest such development for an aerospace programme that has long faced Western criticism. "The Chamran-1 research satellite was successfully launched and put into orbit by the Ghaem-100 carrier," state television said.

The satellite, which weighs around 60 kilograms, is designed to test hardware and software systems for orbital manoeuvre technology, the TV report said. The device was designed and built by Iranian Electronics Industries affiliated with the defence ministry, state TV said.

Western governments including the United States have repeatedly warned Iran against such launches, saying the same technology can be used for ballistic missiles, including ones designed to deliver a nuclear warhead.

Iran has countered that it is not seeking nuclear weapons and that its satellite and rocket launches are for civil or defence purposes only. The Ghaem-100 rocket which carried the latest satellite is manufactured by the aerospace organisation of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, an arm of the military. The carrier is the country's first three-stage solid-fuel satellite launcher, and official media reported its use in January to send a satellite for the first time into an orbit above 500 kilometres.

Iran has for years been advancing its aerospace activities, insisting they are peaceful and in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. In February, Russia put into orbit an Iranian remote sensing and imaging satellite, drawing condemnation from the United States. At the time, Iran's telecommunications minister said Iran had carried out a dozen satellite launches over the previous two years.

Iran in January said it simultaneously sent three satellites into orbit, nearly a week after the launch of a research satellite by the Guards. The Islamic Republic has struggled with several satellite launch failures in the past. Iran has suffered years of crippling Western sanctions, especially after its arch-foe the United States, under then-president Donald Trump, unilaterally abandoned a landmark nuclear deal between Tehran and major powers. Iran on Thursday summoned four European ambassadors after they imposed new sanctions over its alleged supply of ballistic missiles to Russia for use in Ukraine, which Tehran denies.

Russia, Ukraine swap 206 POWs in UAE-brokered deal

MOSCOW, KYIV (AFP): Moscow and Kyiv swapped 103 prisoners of war each on Saturday in a deal brokered by the United Arab Emirates, a rare moment of coordination between the two warring sides as Russia pushes ahead in east Ukraine.

The Russians released in the swap were captured during Ukraine's incursion into the Kursk region, Moscow said, while some of the Ukrainians freed had been held prisoner since Moscow seized the Azovstal steel plant in May 2022. "Another 103 soldiers were returned to Ukraine from Russian captivity," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Telegram. Among the freed were 82 privates and sergeants as well as 21 officers, Zelensky said.

Russia confirmed it had "handed over" 103 Ukrainian army prisoners, and received 103 Russian servicemen captured by Kyiv in its Kursk offensive in return. "At present, all Russian servicemen are on the territory of the Republic of Belarus, where they are being provided with the necessary psychological and medical assistance, as well as an opportunity to contact their relatives," the Russian defence ministry said.

Despite ongoing hostilities, Russia and Ukraine have managed to swap hundreds of prisoners throughout the two-and-a-half-year conflict — often in deals brokered by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia or Turkey. The announcement comes a day after Zelensky said 49 Ukrainian POWs had been returned from Russia, and three weeks ago both sides swapped 115 prisoners each in a deal also mediated by the UAE.

The UAE's foreign ministry hailed the deal as a "success" and thanked both sides for their cooperation on Saturday. The prisoner swap came as Russia pushed ahead in east Ukraine, where it claims to have captured a string of villages in recent weeks. The Russian defence ministry said in a daily briefing it had "liberated" the

village of Zhelanne Pershe, less than 30 kilometres from the key Ukrainian-held logistics hub of Pokrovsk.

Pokrovsk lies on the intersection of a key road that supplies Ukrainian troops and towns across the eastern front and has long been a target for Moscow's army. More than half of the city's 60,000 residents have fled since the invasion began in February 2022, with evacuations ramping up in recent weeks as Moscow's army closes in.

Ukraine had hoped its major cross-border incursion into the Kursk region last month would slow down Russia's advances in the east. On Friday, Zelensky said Moscow had been slowed down somewhat but conceded the situation on the eastern front was "very difficult". Russia meanwhile claimed this week to have clawed back a swath of territory in the Kursk region, as it mounted what appeared to be a counter-offensive.

Tensions between Russia and the West over the conflict reached dire levels this week over UK and US discussions about letting Ukraine use longer-range weapons to strike targets inside Russia. The discussions came after a visit to Kyiv by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and British counterpart David Lammy.

President Vladimir Putin warned the West on Thursday that green-lighting the use of the long-range weapons deep inside Russia would put the Nato military alliance "at war" with Moscow. "This would in a significant way change the very nature of the conflict," Putin told a state television reporter. "It would mean that Nato countries, the US, European countries, are at war with Russia," he added. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and US President Joe Biden on Friday delayed a decision on the move. US officials believe the missiles would make a limited difference to Ukraine's campaign and also want to ensure that Washington's own stocks of the munitions are not depleted.

CM KP inaugurates Chief Minister's Policy Office

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, inaugurated the Chief Minister's Policy Office (CMPO) newly established at Chief Minister Secretariat Peshawar on Saturday, marking a significant step forward in the province's governance and policy reform initiatives.

The CMPO is designed to function as a strategic think tank for the Chief Minister, offering innovative and evidence-based solutions to the pressing socio-economic challenges facing the province.

Concerned authorities gave a detailed briefs to the Chief Minister about the objectives, functions and various other aspects of the CMPO. It was told that key functions of the CMPO include acting as the secretariat for the CM's policy initiatives, procuring expertise from academia and market leaders, and developing a repository of government data. It will focus on high-priority sectors such as health, education, skill development, heritage, revenue growth, social protection, climate resilience, agriculture, electrification, and employment generation.

It was further informed that as part of its policy reform agenda, CMPO will emphasize employment generation through skill upgradation, climate resilience via carbon financing, and the development of mass transit systems and electric vehicle policies.

Moreover, the CMPO with its commitment to high value, high quality, and low-cost operations is set to revolutionize governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by accelerating

policy implementation and fostering a culture of innovation.

Talking on this occasion, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur said that CMPO will play in bridging the gap between government departments, academia, and industry to drive meaningful reforms, and will prove to be instrumental for fast track implementation of the policies and decision of the provincial government as per the given timelines.

"It will serve as the engine room of innovation, bringing fresh ideas and high-level expertise to help shape the future of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," said the Chief Minister and added that it will not only provide innovative solutions to the long-standing issues will also ensure accelerated implementation of the provincial government's policy decisions across the key sectors.

Putin's options for Ukraine missiles response

LONDON (Reuters): Vladimir Putin's options to retaliate if the West lets Ukraine use its long-range missiles to strike Russia could include striking British military assets near Russia or, in extremis, conducting a nuclear test to show intent, three analysts said.

As East-West tensions over Ukraine enter a new and dangerous phase, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and US President Joe Biden are holding talks in Washington on whether to allow Kyiv to use long-range US ATACMS or British Storm Shadow missiles against targets in Russia.

President Putin, in his clearest warning yet, said on Thursday that the West would be directly fighting Russia if it went ahead with such a move, which he said would alter the nature of the conflict. He promised an "appropriate" response but did not say what it would entail. In June, however, he spoke of the option of arming the West's enemies with Russian weapons to strike Western targets abroad, and of deploying conventional missiles within striking distance of the United States and its European allies.

Ulrich Kuehn, an arms expert at the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy in Hamburg, said he did not rule out Putin choosing to send some kind of nuclear message - for example testing a nuclear weapon in an effort to cow the West. "This would be a dramatic escalation of the conflict," he said in an interview. "Because the point is, what kind of arrows has Mr Putin then left to shoot if the

West then still continues, apart from actual nuclear use?"

Russia has not conducted a nuclear weapons test since 1990, the year before the fall of the Soviet Union, and a nuclear explosion would signal the start of a more dangerous era, Kuehn said, cautioning that Putin may feel he is seen as weak in his responses to increasing NATO support for Ukraine. "Nuclear testing would be new. I would not exclude that, and it would be in line with Russia shattering a number of international security arrangements that it has signed up to over the decades during the last couple of years," he said.

Gerhard Mangott, a security specialist at the University of Innsbruck in Austria, said in an interview he also thought it was possible, though in his view not likely, that Russia's response could include some form of nuclear signal. "The Russians could conduct a nuclear test. They have made all the preparations needed. They could explode a tactical nuclear weapon somewhere in the east of the country just to demonstrate that (they) mean it when they say we will eventually resort to nuclear weapons." Russia's UN ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told the UN Security Council on Friday that NATO would "be a direct party to hostilities against a nuclear power," if it allowed Ukraine to use longer range weapons against Russia. "You shouldn't forget about this and think about the consequences," he said.

Russia, the world's largest nuclear power, is also in the process of revis-

ing its nuclear doctrine - the circumstances in which Moscow would use nuclear weapons. Putin is being pressed by an influential foreign policy hawk to make it more flexible in order to open the door to conducting a limited nuclear strike on a NATO country. In the case of Britain, Moscow was likely to declare that London had gone from a hybrid proxy war with Russia to direct armed aggression if it allows Kyiv to fire Storm Shadow missiles at Russia, former Kremlin adviser Sergei Markov said on social media platform Telegram on Friday.

Russia was likely to close the British embassy in Moscow and its own in London, strike British drones and warplanes close to Russia, for example over the Black Sea, and possibly fire missiles at F-16 warplanes that carry the Storm Shadows at their bases in Romania and Poland, Markov predicted. Putin has tried and failed to draw red lines for the West before, prompting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy - who is urging the West to be less cautious when it comes to confronting Moscow - to dismiss their importance.

But Putin's latest warning on long-range missiles is being seen inside and outside Russia as something he will have to act on if London or Washington allow their missiles to be used against Russia. University of Innsbruck's Mangott said the way Putin's warning has been shown repeatedly on Russian state television created an expectation that he would need to deliver.