

ECP postpones re-polling
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan has postponed the re-polling on seven polling stations of PB-36 Kalat to be held on 23rd September 2024 on the request of the provincial government of Balochistan due to prevailing law and order situation in the area of the constituency till the normalization of law and order situation in the said constituency.



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ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Alexei Overchuk called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Proposed amendment in Election Act SC verdict on reserved seats can't be implemented: NA speaker

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has demanded the allocation of reserved seats under the amended Election Act. Speaker Ayaz Sadiq wrote a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja regarding the reserved seats.

He further mentioned that the Supreme Court's decision on reserved seats cannot be implemented after the amendment to the Election Act. In the letter, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq told the chief election commissioner that reserved seats cannot be changed after the amendment to the Election Act. The Election Act has been amended after the Supreme Court's decision, and the amendment applies retroactively.

He said that the Election Act is currently in effect, so the Election Commission should implement the law made by Parliament and adhere to the principles of democracy and parliamentary supremacy. In the letter to the chief election commissioner, Ayaz Sadiq stated, "As the Speaker of the National Assembly, he wishes to address the important issue of the sanctity and autonomy of the Parliament. It is essential to follow parliamentary principles to maintain the autonomy and dignity of the parliamentary system."

He wrote that an independent member who joins a political party cannot switch parties under the amended Election Act. The amended Election Act has been applied retroactively from 2017, and implementing it is the constitutional and legal responsibility of the Election Commission.

Meanwhile, the amendment to Section 104 reads that the declaration, consent or affidavit, by whatever name called, of an independent returned candidate once given for joining a political party shall be irrevocable and cannot be substituted or

Form 45 holds no value against votes: CJP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has rejected a petition for a recount and allegations of bias against returning officers in the PB-14 constituency. The petition was filed by Ghulam Rasool of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), challenging the victory of Mahmood Khan from Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

The case involved a request to recount votes from seven out of 96 polling stations. The chief justice asked the petitioner's lawyer how they determined the results were incorrect. The lawyer claimed discrepancies with Form-45 and alleged that officers were biased.

In response, the CJP emphasised the most important evidence in elections was the votes, not Form 45, which was filled out by the presiding officers, observing the form held no significance. The court ruled without concrete evidences of bias or misconduct, the election results must stand. As a result, the Supreme Court upheld Mahmood Khan's victory and dismissed the petition.

PTI, JJ reject proposed constitutional amends bill

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Former president Dr Arif Alvi and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Thursday condemned the proposed constitutional amendment. Both of the leaders strongly opposed the proposed constitutional amendment, calling it an attempt to undermine the Constitution.

During a media briefing in Lahore, Dr Alvi and Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, blasted the amendment, saying, "This is not just a bill; it is an attempt to bury the constitution." Alvi expressed gratitude to Maulana Fazlur Rehman for blocking the amendment, demanding transparency and insisting that the draft be made public.

Alvi further asserted that the current government lacks popular support and is attempting to dangerously change the constitution. "Many issues in Pakistan are escalating, and this amendment will only worsen the situation," he forewarned. Repeating Alvi's concerns, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman declared that Jamaat-e-Islami would oppose the amendment under any circumstances. "This is not

about negotiating aid; it's about protecting the constitution of Pakistan," he emphasised, noting that the Chief Justice's tenure is nearing its end.

Rehman also alleged that many officials hold questionable credentials, pointing to Form 47 parliamentarians. He warned that if the constitution is upheld, numerous parliamentarians could be dismissed. "If all parties adhere to the constitution, they will be safeguarded; otherwise, they will face the consequences later," Rehman asserted. He also stressed that all political parties have the right to hold rallies in Lahore and Islamabad.

Earlier, Dr Arif Alvi visited Jamaat-e-Islami's headquarters, Mansoorah, in Lahore, where he was warmly welcomed. The leaders discussed the country's overall political situation and the proposed constitutional amendment. JI's Deputy Emir Liaquat Baloch, spokesperson Qaiser Sharif, and other key leaders were also present at the meeting.

Arif Alvi on Tuesday called on Maulana Fazlur Rehman to convince him to oppose the proposed amendment. It was reported that

both leaders exchanged views on the constitutional amendment bill as well as other political matters. The meeting took place at the residence of JUI-F's chief in which PTI's Salman Akram Raja was also present.

The PTI leaders appreciated the stance of JUI-F head over the constitutional package saying it was needed for democracy. Alvi said it was not possible to pass amendment in the National Assembly without a healthy debate while mentioning the government made efforts, in vain, to bulldoze the bill the other day. It merits mention that Fazlur Rehman's importance lately has increased manifold as he is needed by the treasury and opposition.

Omar commends JUI-F chief's positive role with legitimate stance: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Omar Ayub has said that the government officials and allies in the special committee have played negative role as they are acting as puppets. Talking to media person in premises of the Parliament on Thursday, he said that Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto were also unaware of the draft of the constitutional amendment.

PM to attend UNGA session F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to participate in the high-level segment of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York from September 23-27, 2024.

He will be accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and senior government officials, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said at her weekly press briefing here Thursday. In his address at the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Shehbaz will reaffirm Pakistan's steadfast commitment to multilateralism and express support for the role of the United Nations in forging global peace, security, and prosperity.

He will also emphasize the importance of addressing long-standing issues on the agenda of the UN Security Council, including the question of Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir. Moreover, he will attend several high-level meetings on the sidelines of the UNGA session, including the High-level Meeting on Existential Threats Posed by Sea-level Rise and the UN Security Council's Open Debate on Leadership for Peace.

The bilateral meetings with world leaders, meetings with the UN Secretary-General and President of the UN General Assembly, and members of the Pakistani diaspora are also on the agenda of the prime minister's visit. Simultaneously, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will also participate in several high-level events and bilateral meetings with his counterparts.

Besides representing Pakistan at the Summit of the Future, convened by the UN Secretary-General on September 22-23, Ishaq Dar will also take part in several ministerial meetings, including the OIC Annual Coordination Meeting of Foreign Ministers; Meeting of OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir; Ministerial Meeting of G77 and China; and The Non-Aligned Movements Ministerial meeting. The spokesperson said that the prime minister's upcoming participation in the 79th UNGA session would be an opportunity to present Pakistan's policy perspective on important issues on the global agenda and reaffirm Pakistan's strong commitment to the purpose and principles of the UN Charter and international peace and security.

'324 cops, civilians martyred'

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A report from the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Thursday reported that 234 people including police officials, officers and civilians have been martyred in terror incidents in restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) since the start of this year.

Moreover, it said 616 others including civilians have been injured due to attacks by anti-state elements. In Peshawar alone, 103 police officials have been martyred, with 154 others injured in terrorism-related incidents. The report also noted that 103 civilians have died, and 159 have sustained injuries.

Dera Ismail Khan has reported the deaths of 63 security personnel, including 49 from the Frontier Corps, and 124 injuries. Furthermore, 8 law enforcement officials were martyred, with 4 others wounded. The report highlighted targeted attacks on politicians, resulting in 4 fatalities in Bajaur and North Waziristan, along with 2 injuries.

Dera Ismail Khan recorded the highest number of police casualties, with 25 officers killed and 23 injured, followed by Bannu, where 23 police officers were killed and 20 injured.

Pakistan keen to expand ties with Russia: PM

Islamabad and Moscow for enhanced trade & economic cooperation, regional connectivity

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that Pakistan was keen to expand trade, economic, energy, connectivity and security cooperation with Russia.

The prime minister, talking to Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, who called on him here, conveyed that Pakistan considered strengthening relations with Russia as an important priority of Pakistan's foreign policy, according to a PM Office press release. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said that he looked forward to welcoming his Russian counterpart Mikhail Mishustin to Islamabad next month.

Recalling his "very fruitful" discussion with President Vladimir Putin in July earlier this year and conveyed his thanks to President Putin for sending the high-level delegation to discuss expansion of bilateral cooperation. DPM Overchuk thanked the PM for the warm welcome and reiterated Russia's resolve to deepen relations with Pakistan. He characterized Pakistan-Russia relations as constructive and mutually beneficial.

The two sides agreed to maintain regular contacts. The prime minister also witnessed signing of a MoU between Russia and Pakistan, which signifies the shared understanding and desire of the two countries to further strengthen mutually advantageous cooperation in all areas of shared interest, especially trade, investment, energy, IT, agriculture, science & technology and education.

Meanwhile, Pakistan and Russia have reiterated their commitment to expanding trade and economic ties, along with enhancing regional connectivity, to strengthen bilateral relations. Both sides underscored the importance of fostering mutually beneficial cooperation in key sectors such as agriculture, food security, business, education, railways, science and technology, and promoting stronger people-to-people connections.

This was discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and the

visiting Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr Alexei Overchuk, who along with members of his delegation called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.

Welcoming the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, the President stressed the importance of exploring possibilities for barter trade, in addition to improving connectivity to strengthen economic relations between the two nations. He called for easing visa regulations and increasing connectivity through railways and direct flights to facilitate and enhance people-to-people and business-to-business contacts.

During the meeting, it was highlighted that there was great scope to increase bilateral cooperation in the agriculture sector. It was emphasised that there was enormous potential to undertake joint ventures in the agricultural sector for the mutual benefit of the two countries. It was also informed that a 75-member business delegation from Pakistan would visit Russia in October to explore avenues for business and economic cooperation.

Mr Alexei Overchuk said that Russia was looking forward to improving cooperation with Pakistan in the areas of food security, science and technology, education, connectivity and railways. He stated that the upcoming visit of the Russian Prime Minister to Pakistan, in October, would provide another opportunity to further strengthen bilateral relations. He further said that Russia held tremendous respect for all religions and Muslim culture, and had condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran.

Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Mr Ishaq Dar, Chairman Pakistan People's Party, Mr Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Mr Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, Minister of Energy (Power and Petroleum Divisions), Mr Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, Minister of Communications, Mr Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister of Commerce, Mr Jam Kamal Khan, Senator Ms Sherry Rehman, and senior officials of the Government were also present during the meeting.

CPEC Phase-II to help transform Pak's economy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said the second phase of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would help Pakistan transform its economy.

"We are entering into the second phase of CPEC which has huge potential of mutual cooperation in the field of agriculture, Information Technology, mines and minerals and many other important areas of mutual interests," the prime minister said while addressing an event organized by the Chinese Embassy here to commemorate China's 75th anniversary.

He congratulated the Chinese government and its citizens, emphasizing China's status as a global power and a vital partner in international affairs. President Asif Ali Zardari, federal ministers, diplomats, dignitaries, and senior civil and military officers attended the event.

Both leaders expressed their commitment to work-

ing collaboratively towards a prosperous future for both nations, underscoring the strength and significance of the Pakistan-China friendship. "The friendship between Pakistan and China is higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the oceans," PM Shehbaz Sharif remarked, highlighting the inseparable bond between the two nations.

The prime minister also acknowledged China's critical role during the negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, he stressed the need to develop in various fields including agriculture, industry and other areas to ensure development and prosperity in the country.

He reiterated that the ongoing partnership not only fostered regional development and peace but also contributed to global stability and progress, aligning with President Xi Jinping's vision. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's support for China's positions on international issues, including those related to Hong Kong and

Taiwan. He expressed gratitude for the warm welcome received from President Xi Jinping and the Chinese leadership during his recent visit to China, stating that the relationship between the two countries is indestructible and inseparable. The prime minister said the government was eager to welcome the Chinese Prime Minister who will participate in Shanghai Cooperation Organization Council of Heads of Government (SCO CHG) meeting to be held in Islamabad.

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong on the occasion commended President Xi Jinping's leadership in initiating a new era of development for China, transitioning from a deprived society to a prosperous one. He reaffirmed China's dedication to working alongside Pakistan in the active implementation of its global initiative, which focuses on mutual development and shared cooperation.

Pakistan to work with China for global peace

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working together with China for shared prosperity, and promoting peace and stability in the world.

Highlighting the importance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the President said that high quality development of CPEC would "help unlock greater benefits for our people, besides enhancing connectivity and prosperity of the region". He emphasized the importance of advancing the high-quality development of CPEC to unlock greater benefits for the people of two countries.

President Zardari was speaking at the "China's

National Day Reception", hosted by the Chinese Embassy. The event marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, was attended by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, federal ministers, dignitaries, diplomats, and senior civil and military officers.

President Zardari, extending the warmest felicitations to Chinese brothers and sisters on the auspicious occasion, stated that the first October marked the rebirth of a strong, united China, achieved through the heroic struggle of the Chinese people under the visionary leadership of the Communist Party. He reflected on the invaluable contributions made by the

successive generations in transforming the Pakistan-China friendship into an All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

This partnership, he said, had served as a model of inter-state relations and thus become a source of inspiration and strength for both countries. China was an iron-clad brother of Pakistan and the entire nation was proud of the enduring friendship as both countries stood by each other during testing times, he added. The president hoped that China was poised to achieve significant milestones in the coming decades, which would not only bolster its development but also reshape the global landscape in politics, economics and culture in positive ways.



Navigating the future: Safety first

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Directorate of Electronic Media and Publication (DEMP) in collaboration with Maritime Training Institute (MTI) and Nautical Institute of Pakistan organised a seminar to commemorate the World Maritime Day: an International Maritime Organisation (IMO) event on Thursday Sept 19, 2024 at Pearl Continental Hotel Karachi.

The seminar was orchestrated to celebrate the International Maritime Day. IMO acts as a primary platform for the entire global community- IMO ensured a binding contract for maritime safety, that was achieved in 1974 by officiating a treaty. World Maritime Day is celebrated through specific and varying themes, selected by Secretary General of IMO to call worldwide attention to maritime development efforts- theme for 2024 is Navigating the future: Safety first.

World Maritime day is dedicated to focus on the importance of shipping and creating a more viable and sustainable maritime future with adopting technological advancement as part and parcel of the maritime community.

Her Excellency Sarah Mooney, Deputy High Commissioner- British High Commission, congratulated the Pakistan Maritime community for organising the event and that Karachi with its boundless potential remains a hub. Pakistan blue economy being incorporated into its National economy is quintessential for the country's general growth. "Pakistan has a coastline of over a 1000 km which is home to a number of different species of marine mammals, plants and deep mineral resources."

Her Excellency went on to state, "the blue economy has not yet tapped its full potential which stands at a generating a staggering 1 billion dollars for Pakistan Economy." She also expressed that on the occa-



sion of the 50th Anniversary of 1974 solace convention a Nautical Milestone, the theme on Nautical safety partly reflects the collective efforts for the entire maritime community.

She congratulated Pakistan for ratifying Hong Kong Convention, a step that is crucial in ensuring that ships at the end of their lives do not pose a threat to the safety of the environment. She further mentioned that the World Navy's Commodore Anderson just a week back was in Pakistan to congratulate the country for the work they do as part of the 46 Nations CMF (Protecting Lives of Sea- East of Pakistan, left of Tanzania).

President of Institute for Chartered Shipbrokers Kevin Shakesheff (UK) pointed how transportation of goods continues to grow globally and growing economies are a signal that we need to fill our seas with bigger, better and more robust ships and vessels in order to meet the transportation requirement which amounts to 80% of all goods globally being transported through ships. Future is hybrid, and ships in the future will be manned by fewer pupil onboard. Thus a mechanised future means that the maritime community must absorb technology to stay relevant and sustainable.

Madam Irum Tanveer Odho, DG (PR) Press Information Department (PID) addressing the seminar on behalf of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MOIB), stated

it a privilege to address the Maritime Community on the auspicious occasion of World Maritime Day. She highlighted "we come together under the theme, 'Navigating the Future - Safety First,' which emphasizes the importance of safety, sustainability, and innovation in our maritime operations." She spoke on how the theme emphasised the need to enhance and focus on maritime safety. "Climate change is a global challenge, with profound implications for our coasts, oceans and seas."

It was further noted that Pakistan's unique geographic position- with warm, deep-water ports expanding over a 1,000 km-long coastline- placed it at the center of global maritime affairs, which has a direct impact and poses challenges for Pakistan in today's rapidly changing climate. Climate change is a global challenge with profound implications for our oceans, coastlines, and communities. As a responsible member of the international community, Pakistan has introduced several national policies like

Blue economy initiatives- including sustainable fisheries, marine renewable energy and marine bio-diversity conservation to safeguard our environment and promote sustainable development.

"National forest policy 2015, aims to increase the forest power and to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change." Madam Irum highlighted the role played by PID and DEMP, as representatives of MOIB disseminating vital information, providing extensive coverage helping to highlight Pakistan's safety on the Maritime Stage. Further paying gratitude to MOIB for playing a pivotal role in supporting these national efforts by fostering an informed society and advancing media development. DG PR, Irum Tanveer inaugurated a documentary presented by DEMP, on the critical role played by Mangroves for Pakistan, its economy, social cohesion and overall safety, called "Guardians of our coastline," an insight on Mangroves that act as a natural safeguard for climate disintegration."

Proposed amendments to be tabled after achieving consensus: Maqam

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister for States, Frontier Regions, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Engineer Ameer Maqam, Thursday, said that proposed constitutional amendments will be tabled in the house after due consultations and achieving consensus of all the political parties and other stakeholders.

While addressing to elders of Afghan Refugees and later talking to media during visit of Urban Cohesion Hub Karachi here, he said that negotiations were under way with the political parties and consultation process was continue in connection with the proposed amendments aimed at introducing reforms in judicial system and ensuring swift justice to the people of the country.

The government has initiated the process of constitutional amendment in the best interest of the people of Pakistan and there were no personal motives involved in it, he said and urged all the political leadership to join the hands of government for betterment of the country and the nation. The Federal minister was of the view that some elements were opposing the amendments only for the sake of political number scoring.

Ameer Maqam said that Pakistan has been hosting more than 3 million Afghan refugees which included around 1.4 million legal migrants and thousands of illegal immigrants for over 40 years. There was no other country in the world that has hosted such a large number of refugees for such a long time, he added.

The federal and provincial governments as well as national and international organizations were striving hard to resolve the issues of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and holistic measures were being taken for their repatriation to Afghanistan, he said adding that repatriation of Afghan nationals illegally staying in Pakistan was policy of the government but we are not using coercive measures for achieving the objective.

It is deplorable that some elements had overlooked the sincere efforts taken by government and people of Pakistan for assistance and welfare of Afghan nationals and they were proactively pursuing an agenda of creating rifts and inciting hatred between the brotherly

neighbors, he noted and opined that those elements were not well-wishers of Afghans. Terming peace in Afghanistan vital for peace and stability in Pakistan and vice versa, the federal minister urged the Afghan government to take measures those benefit people of both the countries and reject those elements and their nefarious agenda and make them accountable for their irresponsible activities which defy the norms, morals as well as national and international laws.

We believe that majority of Afghanistan possesses sentiments of respect and love for Pakistan and they do not support agenda of those self-centered anti-Pakistan elements," he maintained while referring to some recent incidents of disrespect to Pakistani national

flag and national anthem.

The organizers of the event in Peshawar were involved in the conspiracy against the homeland but those will be made accountable for their anti-state ambitions, Ameer Maqam alleged and termed it as the third attempt over the national solidarity and integrity after the ill planned cypher narrative and incident of May 9.

The federal minister said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was steering the nation out of the crisis as inflation has descended to single digit from the highest ever level, Rupee is getting stability, Stock market was expanding, law and order was under control in Karachi and status of the country was improving at the international level.

ٹینڈر نوٹس

فوکل پرس ٹی بی کنٹرول پروگرام چترال کوورج ذیلی ایشیا کی خریداری اور مرمت کے لئے برائے سال 2024-2025 کے لئے حکمت خیر بھینٹوخواہے ریسٹورڈ پری کوالیفائیڈ فرمز، ڈیڈوں سے برہمنڈر مطلب ہے۔ ٹینڈر ٹیڈر بھینٹوخواہ کے پبلک پروڈیومنٹ پالیسی 2014 کے تحت ہوگا۔ جو کہ پری دجیٹل کے دفتر میں مورخہ 02-10-2024 تک یا اس سے پہلے بذریعہ کوریئرس یا رجسٹری ڈاک بھیجی جانی چاہیے۔ جو کہ کی ڈی 11 بجے پریچر کیٹی اور موقع پر موجود نامزدوں کی موجودگی میں کھولے جائیں گے۔ ہر لٹافہ پر مستحقہ ادا آئٹم اور رقم کا نام بحسبہ رنگ نام ضروری ہے۔ دتی اور دتتہ قرار دے بعد موصول ہونے والے ٹینڈرز قابل قبول نہیں ہوں گے۔

1۔ آئٹم ٹینڈری 2۔ مرمت برائے ایکھ پینٹ 3۔ مرمت برائے بھنگو 4۔ پرنٹنگ چارٹر 5۔ پرنٹنگ چارٹر 6۔ خریداری برائے ایکھ پینٹ 7۔ متفرق اشیاء شراکتہ (1) ٹینڈر دہندہ برائے ٹیلنگ، انکم ٹیکس کے لئے ایف بی آر اور ٹیڈر بھینٹوخواہ اور پری کوالیفائیڈ کے ساتھ ریسٹورڈ ہو، سیکلنگ گورنٹ روز کے مطابق کائناتے جائیں گے۔ (2) تمام ٹینڈر کے ساتھ مینٹا-5000 روپے کالڈ چارٹ نام ذریعہ بھیجی آف کرنا لازمی ہے۔ (3) تمام ٹینڈر کے ساتھ مکمل ہونے چاہیے مکمل ٹینڈر پر غور نہیں کیا جائے گا۔ (4) ذریعہ بھیجی کرنا کیجیہا ریزرو 2014 کے تحت کسی ایک یا تمام ٹینڈر کو منسوخ کرنے کا اختیار حاصل ہے۔ (5) اخلاقی تعلیمی فرسٹ اور شراکتہ مضامین کی کنٹرول پروگرام آئٹم ڈی ایچ کیڈر بھینٹوخواہ اور مرمت کے لئے مورخہ 09-08-2024 تک دتتہ اوقات کا نام حاصل کئے جاسکتے ہیں اور اس کے مطابق ریست کرنا ہوگا۔ (6) تمام ٹینڈر بذریعہ رجسٹری یا کوریئرس مورخہ 02-10-2024 تک دتتہ 02:00 بجے تک موصول کئے جائیں گے اور مورخہ 03-10-2024 کو یوٹ 11:00 بجے تک دہندہ لگان یا ان کے نمائندگان کی موجودگی میں کھولے جائیں گے۔ (7) منظور شدہ ٹینڈر دہندہ ٹھکانہ کے ساتھ ایک معاہدے مناب سے ہرے کرنے کا پابند ہوگا۔

اشتہر: فوکل پرس ٹی بی کنٹرول پروگرام چترال

www.khyberpakhtunkhwa.gov.pk

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SENIOR LG&RDD SOUTH WAZIRISTAN LOWER

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

Sealed tenders based on MRS-2022 Bi Annual/ Non MRS-items for the below mentioned works are hereby invited on the basis of Single stage, single envelope procedure from the Government Contractors registered with PEC, enlisted with C&W Department as per Centralized Enlistment Policy of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the current financial year:

Work No	Work Name	Constituency	Estimated Cost (Millions)	Bid Security @ 2% (Rupees)	Last date & time of submission of electronic tender form	Date & time of opening of electronic bid
01	Repair and Maintenance of Transformer at PK-110, SW Lower	PK-110 SW Lower	10.00 M	Rs. 200,000	08-10-2024 01:00 pm	08-10-2024 01:30 pm

Terms and Conditions:

- The financial bidding will be online through E-bidding system. Tender form and BOQ can be filled online and downloaded from the official website of LG&RDD (www.lgpk.gov.pk) after one day of publishing NIT.
- The bidders are required to fill Electronic bids online and attach scan copy of Bid Security in shape of original Call Deposit in the name of procuring Entity along with (Additional Security if any), and submit hard copy of the same printed electronic bid form to the procuring Entity/ Executing Agency.
- The securities shall be in shape of call deposit in favor of the Assistant Director LG&RDD South Waziristan Lower.
- Only those Contractors/firms will be eligible whose workshops are registered with PESCO.
- The eligible contractors /firms must have;
 - Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), codes EEO4 & EE05
 - Inspectorate of Electricity, Energy & Power Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa License in Category "C" or "E".
- All those contractor / firms are eligible to participate in the tender who are registered with Inspectorate of Electricity, Energy & Power Deptt; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Electricity Act 1937 under rule 48 & hold class E License as well as Provide One year warranty of the particulars as per PESCO SOPs furthermore, the bidders must have the relevant codes for the above mentioned works as per PEC. The relevant codes shall be according to the items mentioned in BOQ while the contractor category shall be as per the estimated cost of the schemes. If the code and category does not match, the bid will be consider non-responsive.
- Electronic bids and original call deposit's received through fax or by hand will not be acceptable.
- Sealed bids sent through registered mail/courier service should reach up to the specified time and date as mentioned above.
- The contractor or his representative may be present at time of opening of electronic bids opening.
- The call deposits i.e. Bid Security along with (Additional Security if any), for the work/ contract must be prepared after publishing of NIT, before closing time of the Electronic bid apply.
- The contractor quoting their Bids up to a limit of 10% below of the Engineer estimate shall submit Security @ 2% only of Engineer estimate.
- The contractor quoting their bids than 10% below up to 20% below on the Engineer estimate shall submit along with their bids 8% additional security of Engineer estimated Cost in addition to 2% bid security in the name of procuring Entity. If the bid is not accompanied with the required amount of additional security then it will be considered as non-responsive and the 2% bid security shall be forfeited in favor of Government and the second lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.
- In case, a contractor quoting bids more than 20% below shall submit with his bid an additional security on Engineer estimate Cost equal to the differential amount of submitted bid and Engineer estimate along with detail rate analysis. In case of more than 20% below bids, if the bid is not accompanied by the detail analysis and for required amount of additional security, then the said bid shall be considered as non-responsive. All the Security submitted along with such non-responsive. All the security submitted along with the non-responsive bid shall be forfeited in favor of Government and second lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly. (KKPRA Notification NO. 6058-71 Peshawar, the May 10, 2022).
- In case detail rate analysis submitted with the bid is, in view of the procuring Entity, not convincing, the head of the procuring entity may declare such bid as non-responsive without any forfeiture of bid security and record reason thereof.
- The procuring entity may offer the contract to next lowest bidder after due diligence in the context of financial difference between such two bids or may advertise procurement opportunity afresh.
- After commencement of work by the successful bidder, the procuring entity may replace the Additional Security with a bank guarantee of the same amount from the scheduled bank; if the already deposited security is not in the form of bank guarantee.
- Any Electronic Bidder who provide false, or materially inaccurate or incomplete or do not send information in hard form will be disqualified as per KPPRA Act Section 29(1) read with KPPRA Rule (43). Furthermore the procuring Entity/Executing Agency will recommend and sent cases for debarment/blacklisting and will initiate/ take action in light of approved procedure/ mechanism as per KPPRA Act Section 29(2) read with KPPRA Rule (44).
- Electronic Bids will remain valid for 90 days from the closing date of bids. (As decided by the procuring Entity/ Executing Agency in light of Standard Bidding Documents).
- The PEC and KPRA registration (Active tax payer) must be valid for current financial year.
- The firms/contractors who wants to participate in tendering process may approach Directorate General, LG&RDD Peshawar within two days before closing time of electronic apply for uploading their names on the official website i.e. (www.lgpk.gov.pk).
- All bidders are required to be registered with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority, established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act, 2013 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No. XXI of 2013), for works, consulting and non-consulting Service as listed in Schedule-I of the Act.
- In case of tie / draw amongst the responsive bidders, the bid may be decided through free toss which shall be considered as final.
- The time limit of each work shall be as per the work order issued to the successful bidder and the contractor will have to start work within 15 days' time period after the issuance of work order failing which the work will be cancelled and security/ additional security (if any) will be forfeited.
- CDRs will not be released to the contractor till the award of contract.
- All applicable taxes will be recoverable as per directives of the government in vogue.
- Bidders may obtain bidding documents and further information from the office of Assistant Director (Senior) LG&RDD (HQ) District Tank on any working day before closing date.
- The Tender will also be available at KPPRA website (www.kppra.gov.pk).
- All material testing and all sorts of tests will be performed by contractor on the demand of the procuring entity.
- The procuring entity may reject any or all bids after communicating the reasons for rejection at any time prior to the award of contract.
- The successful bidder / contractor shall be responsible to produce satisfactory certificate of the work-done from MPA and Technical Committee constituted for the purpose before submission of bill for payment.
- Any addition made in the term of & conditions in the NIT advertised will be implemented as per KPPRA Rules.

INF(P)

2441/24

Assistant Director (Sr. LG & RDD S.W Lower

OFFICER OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SENIOR (H/Q) LOCAL GOVT: & RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, LAKKI MARWAT

CORRIGENDUM

Reference to advertisement No. (INF) (P) 2254/24 regarding "REPAIR & MAINTENANCE OF TRANSFRORMER" dated 31.08.2024 published in daily AAJ. The folloing TORS may be read as:-

- TOR No. 19 May be considered as "null and void/deleted."
- The date of opening is 01/10/2024 instead of 18/09/2024.

INF(P)2452/24

Assistant Director (Sr) LG &RDD, Lakki Marwat	Assistant Engineer (Sr) LG &RDD, Lakki Marwat
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ufone 4G

Public Notice

Dear Customers,
To maintain the quality of services, there will be changes in the prices of below offers effective **27th Sep, 2024**.

Offers	Price	Offers	Price
Super Voice	1100	Super Card Premium	1500
Super Card Max	1199	Super Card Gold	1700
Super Card Grand	1250	Digital Grand Offer	1900

For more information, please visit www.ufone.com or call our helpline number 333.
Terms & Conditions apply.

PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY
پاکستان ایئرپورٹ اتھارٹی

INVITATION TO BID
PROVISION OF OUTSOURCED SERVICES AT CHITRAL AIRPORT

Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) invites bids from reputed service providers (income/sales tax registered and enlisted in FBR's Active Taxpayer List) experienced in services for provisioning of manpower i.e. Janitors and Horticulture staff (gardener/mail) at Chitral Airport. Contract period would be two years (extendable for a further six months' period only). Bid documents containing detailed terms and conditions can be purchased from the following office against PKR 1,000/- (**NON-REFUNDABLE**) through bank draft/payment order favouring PAA or by depositing cash in the undermentioned account number:

Account Title:	CAA Revenue Account CAA Chitral Airport
Telephone No.	0943-412597
Account Number:	09750009099203
Bank's Name and Branch:	HBL Main Branch Chitral

Process: Single-Stage, Two-Envelope as mentioned in rule 36(b) of Public Procurement Rules 2004. Submit bid as per terms and conditions specified in bid documents, in one packet containing two separate sealed envelopes marked as "Technical Bid" and Financial Bid" to Airport Manager, Chitral Airport latest by 07th October, 2024 till 1200 hours.

This advertisement is also available on the same date at 1230 hours. PAA reserves the right to accept/reject any or all tenders due to cogent reasons which will be communicated to bidders on request. (This Advertisement is Also Available on www.ppra.org.pk and www.caapakistan.com.pk).

WARNING: Any financial instrument submitted by bidder, if found fake or got dishonoured at any stage, would result in blacklisting and legal action as per law.

Chief Operating Officer/Airport Manager
PAA, Chitral Airport
Telephone No. 0943-412597

GOVT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
COMMUNICATION & WORKS DEPARTMENT

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING (2ND TIME).
(Single Stage Two Envelop E-Bidding System).

The C&W Division Malakand Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites Electronic Bids from eligible firms / constructors in accordance with KPPRA procurement Rules 2014 amended up to 10-5-2022, on Single Stage Two Envelop Procedure for the following work(s).

S.No	Name of Work	Required PEC Category	Bid Security i.e Stamp Duty Rs. (M)	Period of Completion	Last date and time of submission of E-Bids	Date & Time of Opening
Establishment of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Emergency Rescue Services (Rescue-1122) ADP No. 1017/190115 in District Malakand.						
1.	Establishment of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Emergency Rescue Services (Rescue-1122) in Tehsil Bathkela District Malakand	C-4 & above with relevant Building code (CE-10)	1852000	As per worder	03/10/2024 at 12:00 PM	After Approval of Technical proposal
2.	Establishment of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Emergency Rescue Services (Rescue-1122) in Tehsil Dargai District Malakand	-do-	1445000	-do-	-do-	-do-

- Bid Solicitation Documents and Instructions to Bidders can obtained from the office on any working day or downloaded from C&W Website (www.cwd.gkp.pk) on day before the submission date / time.
- The bidders should submit their E-Bids as per KPPRA Notification NO.SOR (14/Vol-1-24/2021-22 dated:- 10-5-2022.
- A copy of Technical Proposal in their format is mandatory and to be uploaded as a part of E-Bid before submitting Financial Bid.
- Original Copies of Call Deposits for Bid Security and Tender Fee / Stamp duty/ Affidavit of financial bid should be enclosed with the Technical bid and shall reach to this office before closing date and time.
- Legible scanned copy of bid security shall submit electronically along with the bid on E-Bidding System.
- All Bidders are required to be registered with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority under Finance Act No. XXI of 2013.
- The Financial Bid will be open after approval of Technical Bids from competent Authority.
- The Bidder / must have the specialization code for Buildings Civil Work (CE-10).
- The Bidder / Firm must have License of Provincial Inspector / Electric / Inspectorate Govt: of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Energy & Power Department Peshawar for Electrical Installation work in Building.
- Venue of Bid opening is office of the Executive Engineer C&W Division Malakand.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, C&W DIVISION MALAKAND

INF(P)2454/24

PHC halts removal of PGMI Chief Executive

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court has suspended the removal order of Post Graduate Medical Institute (PGMI) Chief Executive Dr. Sahibzada Mahmood Noor and ordered government for submission of reply, on Thursday.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice SM Attique Shah heard the writ petition filed through Khalid Rahman advocate. During the hearing, Khalid Rahman informed the court that the peti-

tion, Dr. Sahibzada Mahmood Noor, was appointed as PGMI Chief Executive on December 1, 2022, for a two-year term.

In January 2024, PGMI inducted 572 Trainee Medical Officers (TMOs) in various hospitals. Those who were not inducted began protesting, prompting the then-caretaking government to form a committee comprising the Health Minister, Finance Secretary, Health Secretary, PGMI representatives, and young doctors.

The committee's recommendations led to PGMI creating 190 additional TMO seats, which would not entitle the inducted officers to certain benefits.

The counsel argued that PGMI had no role in the committee's decisions. The provincial government approved the induction, he added.

The lawyer stated that the provincial government blamed Dr. Noor for exceeding recruitment limits and ordered action against him on August 29, 2024, removing him from office on September 5,

2024.

The counsel Khalid Rehman Advocate argued that Dr. Noor's term ends in December. His removal three months prior tarnishes his reputation. He had no role in creating additional seats.

The Finance Department's objections were unfounded since the Secretary Finance was part of the committee, the lawyer argued.

The court suspended Dr. Noor's removal order and halted government action against him, seeking a response from the provincial government.



PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher talking to a delegation consisted of the presidents of Small Industrial Estates.

Ihtisham briefed on Sehat Card Program

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health Advocate Ihtisham Ali was briefed on the Sehat Card Program by Chief Executive Officer Dr. Riaz Tanoli. The briefing was attended by Special Secretary Health Habibullah, CEO Sehat Card Dr. Riaz Tanoli, and other relevant officials.

During the briefing, the Health Advisor was informed about the treatment packages offered

under the Sehat Card Program. The Secondary Care Package provides Rs. 40,000 per person and Rs. 200,000 per family, while the Tertiary Care Package offers free treatment up to Rs. 400,000.

The Advisor was also briefed that 10.5 million families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are receiving free treatment at 753 public and private hospitals under the Sehat Card Program.

So far, Rs. 88 billion has been spent on the free treatment of 3,529,487

individuals. It was further highlighted that the provincial government is bearing monthly expenses of Rs. 2.5 billion and annual costs of Rs. 30 billion for free treatment under the program. Currently, Rs. 19 billion is outstanding in dues for the program. There are 118 empaneled hospitals under the Sehat Card in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 635 across the country.

The importance of revisiting the treatment packages under the program was also discussed.

In response, the Health Advisor instructed that necessary steps should be taken promptly. In August alone, free treatment worth Rs. 2.5 billion was provided to 97,000 patients through the Sehat Card.

It was noted that 66% of patients have availed of free treatment under the Sehat Card in public hospitals. The highest expenses under the program were incurred at Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar, Institute of Cardiology, and Hayatabad Medical Complex.

Week-long Women's Week celebrations end

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In light of the provincial government's public agenda, the week-long women's week celebrations concluded on Thursday at Hayatabad Sports Complex.

Provincial Ombudsman, Rakhshanda Naz, attended concluding ceremony as the chief guest and emphasized the importance of women's rights and their development.

"Women are the foundation of our society, and their role is pivotal not only within a family but in the entire society", she stated. She added that they play a very important role in various sectors including education, health, economy, and social development.

The provincial

Ombudsperson further said that encouraging women's participation brings positive changes to society and lays the groundwork for a better future.

The event was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief) Uzma Mukarram, Assistant Commissioner Ayesha Tahir, Additional Assistant Commissioner Haseena Kamran, and Additional Assistant Commissioner Misbah Waheed, along with female police officers, female officials from the education department, students, and women from various walks of life.

The District Administration of Peshawar organized the event in collaboration with the District Youth

Office and the Sports Department. During Women's Week, various sports competitions were held among female students in government schools.

The week-long series of events also included, a Milad un Nabi organized at Darul Aman Women Crises Center in the context of Rabi' al-Awwal.

At the end of the event, prizes and shields were distributed among the female students and women who excelled in the competitions.

The event was meant to highlight the strength, determination, and vital role of women in society. It reminds us that recognizing women's power and providing opportunities for their progress is our collective responsibility.

PBS capacity building, data digitization termed vital

PESHAWAR (APP): Dr. Muzammil Aslam, Advisor to the Chief Minister on Finance, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has underscored the critical need for enhancing the capacity of the provincial bureau of statistics and leveraging data and digitalization to improve service delivery for citizens and businesses.

The CM's Advisor emphasized the urgent need for evidence-based solutions to drive policy-making and implementation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Highlighting the province's goals of increasing tax and non-tax revenues, Dr. Aslam reiterated the commitment of the economic team to bolster provincial resources, particularly towards education and health sectors.

He expressed these remarks during the inaugural meeting of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) led National Network of Economic Thinktanks (NNETT) Advisory Committee for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter.

Dr. Aslam commended SDPI's NNETT for their efforts in promoting evidence-backed policy making. He stressed the importance of this inclusive network as a government watchdog and an accountability mechanism at the local level.

Addressing the power sector challenges faced by the private sector, Dr. Aslam highlighted the government's focus on public-private partnership-based solutions to support the sector.

He underscored the critical need for enhancing the capacity of the provincial bureau of statistics and leveraging data and digitalization to improve service delivery for citizens and businesses.

The need to position Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as an attractive investment destination through inclusive economic policies was also a key focus of his address.

Former Caretaker Provincial Minister of Revenue, Industries, Commerce, and Technical Education, Mr. Adnan Jalil, echoed Dr. Aslam's sentiments, advocating for the digitalization of government departments to standardize operations. Mr. Rashid Aman, Provincial Chief of the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA), called for future policy research to align with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) package, supplemented by comprehensive impact assessments at both federal and provincial levels.

He emphasized the need for evaluating the impact of the 18th amendment and the development of district-level profiles and value chains linked to global networks. In his remarks, Mr. Rashid stressed the significance of academia-industry linkages, noting successful collaborations such as those between the University of Swabi and the Swabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Young Doctors Association holding protest outside Peshawar Press Club.

Young doctors stage protest, demand salary increase

PESHAWAR (APP): Young doctors here on Thursday staged a protest demonstration in front of provincial assembly to press demands about salary increase and promotion.

Young doctors demand-

ed advertisement of vacancies through public service commission, withdrawal of fee increase in colleges, salary increase of house officers and trainee medical officers and resolution of promotion related prob-

lems.

They also demanded provision of facilities in far flung area hospitals and hundred percent increase in salaries of doctors working in medical teaching institutes.

Muzammil flays govt for low cotton arrival

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Finance Muzammil Aslam has said that it is huge setback for Pakistan agriculture and potentially exports that Cotton arrival down by 61% in Sindh and 58% in Punjab as per Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA).

These views were expressed by Advisor to

CM KP on Finance Muzammil Aslam about the cotton arrival and the proposed constitutional amendment by the federal government issued from his office here on Tuesday.

"This is vision of Maryam Nawaz Punjab government when she breached the trust of wheat support price and gave unprecedented losses to farmer" he added.

Mr. Muzammil Aslam

said that the broken farmer community has been ditched the sowing of Cotton while it is huge loss to GDP and potential exports in particular.

KP Advisor on Finance said that Interestingly, Pakistan Stock Exchange is performing well after the failure of Constitutional Amendment.

This shows market is absolutely against the proposed amendments.

Govt making efforts for facilitation of industrialists: Tordher

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher has said that the provincial government is making all out efforts for provision of all possible facilities to industrialists.

He was talking to a delegation consisted of the presidents of Small Industrial Estates here in

his office at Civil Secretariat on Thursday. Those who called on the Special Assistant were included Haji Iftikhar Ahmad (Abbottabad), Waheed Arif (Peshawar), Sajjad Khan (Mardan), Abdul Malik Khan (Mansehra), Younas Khattak (Kohat) and representatives of others industrial estates.

The members of the delegation presented their demands before the Special Assistant and

requested him to play his due role in the resolution of their problems.

The Special Assistant said, beside granting relief to industrialists the provincial government is also making efforts for provision of conducive and better environment for the promotion of industrialization in the province.

He said that he is fully aware of the energy related problems and other challenges faced by the

industrialists and went on to say that due to these reasons he is doing efforts to provide cheaper electricity to industries and initiate credit schemes beside efforts for provision of incentives and facilities in other aspects.

The Special Assistant assured the industrialists that he will review the points highlighted by them and leave no stone unturned in removal of their hardships.

POWA observes strike from court proceedings

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Prosecution Welfare Association (POWA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa observed strike from court proceedings across the province and will be continued till fulfillment of their demands, on Wednesday.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prosecution Welfare Association observed a boycott of courts across the province yesterday, with no public prosecutor appearing in

court to pursue government cases. This indefinite boycott is in protest against the government's failure to meet their demands.

POWA demanding establishment of an independent and autonomous prosecution department. Creation of a Prosecutor General's office.

Moreover, revision in pay scales, Service structure and Olother benefits, POWA demanded.

The Prosecution Association presented a 9-point charter of demands to the government, warning

that if their demands aren't met, they will paralyze the entire criminal justice system.

POWA President Sangin Shah, General Secretary Javed Ali Mohmand, Information Secretary Waheedullah, and Zulfiqar Ali visited prosecution offices in various districts and met with protesting prosecutors.

During the provincial convention, prosecutors announced an indefinite strike and demanded immediate acceptance of their demands. They

emphasized that long-pending demands must be fulfilled. According to Association President Sangin Shah, the strike will continue indefinitely.

General Secretary Javed Ali Mehmud stated that we have been making these demands since 2015, but the government has taken no action. Punjab and Sindh have separate prosecution departments, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa does not. The boycott severely impacted court proceedings throughout the province.

Stray bullet takes life of innocent child

PESHAWAR (APP): A stray bullet took the life of an innocent child in Shero Jangi area on Charsadda Road here on Thursday. Police said the child whose name could not be ascertained, was playing in the street when a stray bullet fired from an unknown location, fatally hit him. The child died at the scene.

Area people expressed resentment over the lackluster response of police against the criminal activities and aerial firing in their area saying that innocent people were falling prey to the activities of anti-social elements. They appealed to the police high-ups to take strict action against those indulged in drug dealing and aerial firing in the area.



PESHAWAR: A man selling fish at Ghata Ghar market.



In brief

Students fight in campus F.P. Report

LARKANA: Fight broke out between two groups of students in the Sindh University campus of the Sindh University campus at Larkana over the issue of organizing an event by the student organization, where the students of one student organization vandalized and fired at vehicles and motorcycles parked in the campus. Due to this, an atmosphere of fear was created in the university campus, due to which students of an organization organized a sit-in against the campus management at the Chandka Bridge, the main area of the city by setting tires on fire. Loud slogans were raised against the non-restoration of law and order. Addressing the sit-in, students Sarang Abaro, Aftab Mahesar, Shiraz Chandio, Raja Lashari and others caused that PPP (SB) is planning to hold an event in the campus. The university applied to the campus management, after which the central leader of Pakistan Peoples Party (SB) Inayat Umrani along with more than 40 armed men of his party smashed the vehicles and motorcycles in the campus with sticks, which caused fear among the students. They demanded that legal action should be taken against Inayat umrani and his friends who caused the chaos in Sindh University campus Larkana by maintaining law and order in the university campus and protecting the reputation of educational institutions.

IG FC convenes jirga F.P. Report

WANA: In a significant move towards fostering peace and cooperation, IG FC Khyber Pakhtunkhwa South, Major General Mehr Umar Khan Niazi, convened a vital jirga with prominent tribal elders and religious scholars in Wana, Lower South Waziristan. The gathering brought together influential figures from the Ahmadzai Wazir, Suleman Khel, and Dotani tribes, marking an important step in reinforcing community ties in the region. The jirga saw the participation of 124 leading elders and scholars, along with top officials from the Frontier Corps, South Waziristan Scouts, and the local administration, including Deputy Commissioner Nasir Khan and District Police Officer (DPO) Farmanullah Khan. This was the first formal interaction between Major General Niazi and the local tribes since his appointment as IG FC South. The elders warmly welcomed the general, presenting him with the traditional tribal lungi as a symbol of respect and honor. Key issues such as law and order, security, and pressing public concerns were at the forefront of discussions, with an emphasis on addressing these challenges through mutual understanding and cooperation. The jirga underscored the importance of unity in ensuring peace and stability in South Waziristan.

Lack of sports facilities F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The land of Khyber is enriched with sports talent however shortage of facilities has wasted talents in various games in Landi Kotal. Grievances have been conveyed to the parliamentarians and concerned officials but in avail. The views were expressed by the General Secretary Khyber Sports Club Kaleemullah Shinwari, officials of Kunj Ground Committee and stars football players including Bilal Afridi, Amanullah, Sajjad, Irshad Afridi, Asad Shinwari and others while talking in "Meet the Press" program held in Landi Kotal press club district Khyber on Thursday.

Child protection unit inaugurated in Mardan

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC), in collaboration with UNICEF, achieved a significant milestone with the inauguration of the Child Protection Unit in Mardan.

The inauguration ceremony brought together key stakeholders, senior government officials, representatives from civil society, academia, adolescents, and children from District Mardan to mark this momentous occasion on Thursday. Jamal Shah, District Officer Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Mardan highlighted the significance of the Child Protection Unit and its role in safeguarding the rights and welfare of children in the region.

Wisam Hazem, Program Manager UNICEF Peshawar thanked the KP government for taking the initiative to inaugurate the Child Protection Unit in Mardan district and congratulated the district administration and KP Child Protection and Welfare Commission for their leadership in establishing the CPU. He said it would contribute to strengthening the child protection system in the district. Hazem reaffirmed UNICEF's continued commitment to supporting these efforts. Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection specialist from the UNICEF Peshawar emphasized that creating a safe, nurturing environment for children requires sustained and collective action by the community, government, and partners. He further



elaborated on UNICEF's long-standing support to the KPCPWC, aligning with global standards and frameworks on child rights.

He also stressed that strengthening child protection systems requires a holistic, multi-sectoral approach, integrating services across various sectors such as health, education, social welfare, and justice. He commended the Government of KP for its commitment, particularly for investment of public funds to establish 21 Child Protection Units across the province.

The event included enlightening sessions on the journey of Child Protection System development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, presented by Ijaz Muhammad Khan, Deputy Chief Protection Officer of KP Child Protection and Welfare Commission. He provided an overview of the journey of the child protection system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), focusing on the key legislative and structural advancements and informed about child protection courts, the prohibition of corporal punishment, and the establishment of a toll-free helpline (1121) for child protection.

He said that the CPUs have registered over 32,000 children at risk and provided psychosocial support to thousands. MPA and Chairman of the District Development Advisory Committee Zarshad Khan, was the Chief Guest of the inauguration ceremony. He thanked the KPCPWC and UNICEF for playing an important role in ensuring child protection at the district and community level. He also appreciated the role of CPU Mardan, and extended his services.

He said that this initiative is a testament to the dedication and commitment of the KPCPWC and the Ministry of Social Welfare to create a safe and protective environment for all children in the province. He further added that the successful inauguration of the Child Protection Unit in Mardan reflects a significant step toward creating a safer and more secure environment for children in the region, underlining the importance of protecting children from violence, exploitation, neglect, abuse, and harmful practices. The event concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the CPU Mardan, followed by a guided tour of the CPU for the guests.

CDM stages demo, set-in at Swari F.P. Report

BUNER: Chagharzai Democratic Movement (CDM) Chairman Arshad Khan Buner and Secretary General Abdul Waras Khan led a protest demonstration on Thursday in Central Bazaar Swari for the demands of reducing the problems and difficulties faced by the Chagharzai people.

They also staged set in at Qaisar Wali Khan Chowk for long and suspended traffic on main Buner Mardan road for pressing administration to accept their long standing demands. The leaders delivered speeches in favor of their demands and also raised slogans in favour of their demands. The protest demonstration and sit-in was attended by volunteer leadership for CDM's Tehsil Chaghorzai, Union Councils and Village Councils and the Chaghorzai people. Those who did not come, justified the traditional grass-cutting season, but still criticized and ashamed on them.

The speakers said that Chaghorzai has been suffering from deprivation for a long time and CDM is a national movement beyond political affiliation and from this platform, voice will be raised to remove the backwardness and deprivation of Chagorazai.

Chairman of CDM Arshad Khan Buner, Secretary General Abdul Waras Khan and every UC and village leadership and local leaders addressed the protest demonstration and sit-in. While Sohrab Khan of ANP, Nisar Khan of JJ, Shahzad Akbar Khan of PTIP addressed the protest demonstration and sit-in. Several others key figured and Chaghorzai elders also spoke and assured their support to the CDM.

The CDM Chairman Arshad Khan Buner and Secretary General Abdul Waras Khan mentioned the problems of the area, including the irregular load shedding of electricity, frequent tripping, low voltage, over-billing, lack of staff, medicine and textbooks in hospitals and schools, and the bad condition of roads and streets. They especially mention the weekly illegal recovery from Chaghorzai transport and the threats to security at the hands of miscreants in Chaghorzai tehsel. They demanded the State of Pakistan, Government of Pakistan, elected members, administration and police to solve the problems and difficulties faced by the people of Chaghorzai and establish peace by taking immediate steps otherwise, the people of Chaghorzai under the banner of CDM will take out a peaceful rally in Swari after three days dead line and will set in there until their demands are met.

Lodhran Pilot Project provides Toolkits to youth

F.P. Report



BAHAWALPUR: The Lodhran Pilot Project organized a Toolkit Distribution Ceremony to contribute for the youth empowerment in south Punjab aiming to improve economic stability. Toolkits among 537 pass out trainees in the field of Electrician, Beautician, HVACR and Domestic Tailoring. The youth has acquired technical and vocational training from TEVTA institutes through Lodhran Pilot Project with financial assistance of WHH, BMZ, Concern Worldwide and European Union.

Aamer Aziz, Director General TEVTA (Punjab) graced the event as chief guest and appreciated efforts of Lodhran Pilot Project for the provision opportunities to the youth for their economic empowerment. Mr. Aamer Aziz shared his complements for being partner with Lodhran Pilot Project to assist the youth of South Punjab through provision of state-of-the-art technical and vocational training to the youth. Technical and vocational training is playing vital role for the economic development of youth. Realizing the importance, technical education is being included in the curriculum of formal education at school level. Furthermore, internationally recognized IT courses have also been initiated at 40 training institutes in 17 districts of Punjab under the vision of Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Chief Minister Punjab. "TEVTA is also focusing

on environmental resilience and special initiatives are being taken to cope with the concern," he added. Mr. Aamer Aziz assured his full support to Lodhran Pilot Project for joint efforts for youth regarding green/environment friendly initiatives in future.

Dr. Abdul Saboor, Chief Executive Officer of the Lodhran Pilot Project, expressed gratitude to the TEVTA, District Administration, Government departments and Civil Society Organizations for their unwavering support. While addressing to the participants, Dr. Saboor shared the role of Lodhran Pilot Project for youth empowerment in the region so that they could contribute for better wellbeing of their families. He appreciated the support of TEVTA for the provision of quality technical and vocational training to the youth. "Lodhran Pilot Project has assisted 1800 youth through provision of technical and vocational training for their economic stability and 75 percent of the youth has started earning" he added.

During the event, Mr.

Asif Naveed Ranjha, Chairman Social Work Department, The Islamia University Bahawalpur, Mr. Muhammad Ozair, Deputy Director Social Welfare Department, Mr. Amir Hussain Regional Manager, Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance, Mr. Muhammad Ishtiaq Deputy Director, Social Welfare Department and other esteemed guests also addressed and encouraged the youth to play their role for the betterment of the society.

Pass out trainees and LPP team set up stalls to showcase their work, while the distinguished guests distributed toolkits among the trainees and encouraged entrepreneurial activities for better livelihood. Lodhran Pilot Project is implementing "Strengthening the socio-economic resilience of youth by promoting their economic self-reliance" Project and CSOs' BRIDGE Programme in Bahawalpur division to assist the youth and Civil Society Organization through various opportunities including skill enhancement and capacity building.

PBA confirms success of Ameer as KBA President

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Pakistan Bar Council confirms success of Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate as President KBA. The Pakistan Bar Council has rejected the appeal filed by Aman Bangash Advocate against Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate by majority opinion and directed Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate to continue his duties as President District Bar Association Kohat.

It may be recalled that Aman Bangash Advocate had challenged the success of Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate in the Bar Council after his defeat in the March 2024 Bar Elections. The hearing was lasted for 5 months.

All the lawyers of District Bar Association Kohat have expressed their joy and happiness on the success of Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate. Aman Bangash

Advocate also congratulated Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate and pledged to work together.

The President-elect, Dr. Ameer Ajam Advocate on

Advocate, MPA Daud Khan Afridi Advocate and Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafi Jan MPA for ensuring provision of Grant from the provincial government for



the occasion said, "We are all one, no one has lost here, Aman Bangash Advocate is his brother and teacher and together we will work for the welfare of lawyers community."

On this occasion, all Lawyers of the Bar Association Kohat specially thanked MNA Shehryar Khan Afridi, Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam

the welfare of Bar Association Kohat.

Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate has assured the House Officers of District Headquarters Hospital Kohat that their problems will be solved on priority basis and he himself will work on it.

Talash residents seek solution to problems

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The local administration arranged an open 'kutcheri' at Talash with deputy commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan in the chair. Besides local elders, social and political activists, District Police Officer Salim Abbas Kulachi, Additional Deputy Commissioner Bashir Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance Gohar Ali, Tehsil Chairman Timergara Mufti Irfanul Din and heads of all departments attended the event.

The local elders and members of the Talash Dushkhel

Qaumi Jirga including Dr Noor Muhammad, Aftab Alam, Muhammad Raziq, Maulana Nabi Shah, village council chairman Noor Ahmad Jan, PTI activist Muhammad Ali and others informed the officials about problems faced by local residents. They complained about lack of facilities in health and education, shortage of drinking water, lack of medical facilities in hospitals, incomplete development projects and issues related to agriculture. The heads of government departments present on the spot responded to some public issues. The DPO asked local elders

to report all the drug dealers and users in their area to police for eradication of the menace. He said the society should boycott the drug dealers. The DPO said that prompt action would be taken against the drug dealers with the full cooperation of the public.

The DC directed the health authorities to provide medical facilities in hospitals. He directed the ADC to submit a detailed report about the Talash girls' school. He issued instructions to the officers of all departments to ensure prompt action on public complaints raised during the open court.

Standing for national anthems: Diplomatic protocols and their global repercussions

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

In international relations, diplomats are the official representatives of their home countries in foreign states. They are required to follow a set of formalities, known as diplomatic protocol, which ensures the smooth conduct of their duties and maintains respect for the host country's traditions and laws. One of these key formalities is the respect for national symbols, particularly the national anthem. Diplomats are expected to stand respectfully during the playing of the host country's anthem at official ceremonies. This practice is not just a courtesy but an obligation rooted in diplomatic protocol and international law.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, serves as the foundation for the conduct of diplomats. While the Convention grants diplomats immunity from the jurisdiction of the host country in many respects, it does not exempt them from adhering to the social customs and protocols of the host nation. According to Article 41 of the Convention, diplomats are obliged to respect the laws and regulations of the host state, including ceremonial protocols. Although the Convention does not explicitly mention national anthems, the expectation is clear: diplomats must act in a manner that reflects respect for the symbols and values of their host country.

Diplomats are typically afforded significant privileges and immunities, such as exemption from local laws, but these do not excuse a diplomat from

behaving inappropriately during official ceremonies. Disrespecting a national anthem could lead to consequences that, while not criminal in nature due to diplomatic immunity, might involve other repercussions. A diplomat showing a lack of respect for the host nation's anthem could result in diplomatic censure, formal complaints, or requests for an apology. In severe cases, such behavior might strain relations between the diplomat's home country and the host nation.

Historical examples of diplomats who have disregarded these protocols are not common, given the sensitivity of the issue. However, there have been a few instances where diplomats have been criticized for failing to adhere to the expected standards of respect. One notable example occurred in 2002 when the American ambassador to Denmark, Stuart Bernstein, caused a minor diplomatic incident by failing to stand for Denmark's national anthem during a formal event. While Bernstein later clarified that the failure to stand was unintentional and due to a misunderstanding of local protocol, the incident received significant attention in the Danish media. The U.S. embassy in Denmark swiftly issued an apology, emphasizing that it was not intended as a sign of disrespect.

Another significant example is from the 2018 FIFA World Cup when the Serbian ambassador to Brazil, Veljko Lazic, did not stand during the playing of the Brazilian national anthem at a public viewing of a football match. The incident caused an uproar in Brazil, leading to

diplomatic discussions and a formal apology from the Serbian embassy, which clarified that the diplomat had not intended any offense.

In more serious instances, failure to respect such protocols can lead to significant diplomatic strain. For instance, in 2020, a Chinese diplomat in Canada, Cong Peiwu, faced criticism for refusing to stand during Canada's national anthem at an event commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party's founding. Canadian media took note of the incident, and while the Chinese government did not issue an apology, it added to growing diplomatic tensions between the two countries at the time. This incident, while not leading to an expulsion, contributed to an already complex relationship between Canada and China.

One notable example occurred in 2019 when the Turkish consul in Germany remained seated during the playing of the German national anthem at an official event in Berlin. The incident took place during a period of strained relations between Turkey and Germany, particularly over human rights issues and political asylum cases. The German media and public expressed outrage over the consul's behavior, viewing it as a deliberate act of disrespect toward Germany. Although no formal diplomatic protest was lodged, the event was widely criticized, and it contributed to the growing perception of a diplomatic rift between the two nations.

Another high-profile case involved Russian diplomats in Estonia in 2016. During a formal

ceremony in Tallinn, marking Estonian independence, Russian diplomats refused to stand for the Estonian national anthem. Given the complex historical relationship between Russia and Estonia, which includes tensions over Russian influence in the Baltic region, the diplomats' actions were seen as a political statement rather than mere negligence. The Estonian government issued a strong protest, accusing the Russian delegation of disrespecting Estonia's sovereignty. This incident further fueled the already strained relations between the two countries, where issues of national identity and independence are particularly sensitive.

In 2018, an incident involving a Venezuelan diplomat in Colombia further highlighted the delicate nature of respecting national symbols in diplomacy. At an official ceremony in Bogotá, the Venezuelan representative failed to observe the protocol during the Colombian national anthem, remaining seated throughout its playing. The situation was especially delicate given the ongoing political crisis in Venezuela and the strained relations between the two neighboring countries. The Colombian government formally protested the incident, viewing it as a sign of disrespect at a time when diplomatic tensions were already high due to the Venezuelan refugee crisis and differing political ideologies.

One of the most contentious incidents occurred in 2013 when a North Korean diplomat in Malaysia refused to stand during the playing of the Malaysian national anthem at a state function. The diplomat's actions

were widely condemned, particularly because Malaysia and North Korea had maintained relatively friendly relations up to that point. The refusal to stand for the anthem was seen as a provocative act, especially as North Korea was facing increasing international isolation. The Malaysian government, known for its careful diplomatic balancing act, issued a protest but did not escalate the matter further. Nevertheless, the incident left a lasting impact on the public perception of North Korea's diplomatic behavior.

On September, 2024, a notable incident occurred during the National Rehmat-ul-Lil-Aalamin (PBUH) Conference in Peshawar, where Afghan Acting Consul General Muhib Ullah Shakil and his aide remained seated while all attendees stood in respect for Pakistan's national anthem. This act of not standing, seen as a diplomatic gesture of defiance, sparked widespread discussion and criticism in both political and media circles. The Afghan diplomat's actions were interpreted by many as a sign of disregard for the host country's customs and courtesies, adding to the complex dynamics of Pakistan-Afghan relations. The incident highlighted the sensitivity of diplomatic protocols and national symbolism in regional politics.

These incidents, though rare, demonstrate that even unintentional breaches of protocol can have diplomatic repercussions. Disrespecting national symbols, such as the anthem, can lead to formal complaints, public scrutiny, and diplomatic protests. In more severe cases, such as ongoing tensions between countries,

these actions can exacerbate existing strains in relations, as seen in the Peshawar incident between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The incidents as mentioned above consequences for these diplomats were not severe, followed by clarifications and apologies. However, these examples highlight the sensitivity of national symbols and the importance of following established protocols. It is also essential to note that diplomats represent their countries' values and policies abroad. Their behavior is often scrutinized, not only by the host country but also by the global diplomatic community. Adhering to local protocols, such as standing for the national anthem, reinforces the values of diplomacy, respect, and peaceful coexistence. Conversely, failure to follow these customs can harm not only bilateral relations but also the broader perception of a country's diplomatic conduct.

In conclusion, while international law may not mandate specific behaviors during national anthems, established diplomatic customs, local regulations, and the Vienna Convention's broader principles all suggest that respect for the host country's anthem is a crucial element of diplomatic protocol. Disrespecting these practices can lead to diplomatic protests, strained relationships, or in extreme cases, the expulsion of the offending diplomat. Diplomats, as representatives of their nations, must carefully adhere to these protocols to maintain the decorum and respect that underpin international relations.



GLASGOW: Firefighters pump water and mud from city streets and help clean the city that was hit by a high flood wave, in southwestern Poland.

What we know about the fire ‘pandemic’ plaguing Brazil

BRASILIA (AFP): Brazil is burning. From the Amazon rainforest to the Pantanal wetlands, flames have consumed millions of hectares of forest and farmland in recent weeks. Nearly two-thirds of Latin America's biggest country is under smoke.

While fueled by extreme drought, which the government says serves as "a demonstration of the gravity of climate change," many of the fires were set by "criminals," in the words of environment minister Marina Silva. Here is what we know about Brazil's "fire pandemic," as Supreme Court judge Flavio Dino has described the state of affairs. According to data collected by satellites of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE), a total of 188,623 fires have been identified in Brazil since the beginning of the year.

The total number for last year was 189,926. The month of September 2024 has been the worst so far, with 61,572 fires recorded in 17 days compared to 46,498 for the whole of September 2023. The number of blazes in the Amazon this month are already much higher than in 2019, when destruction of the world's largest tropical rain forest sparked an international outcry that placed then president Jair Bolsonaro on the back foot. The figures for 2024 are still far from the record of 393,915 fires

recorded in 2007 -- more than a third in September that year alone.

But this time, "fires are burning in several regions of the country at the same time, which makes the problem more complex to manage," said Ane Alencar, scientific director of the Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM). Brazil has been experiencing a prolonged drought since June 2023, according to Suely Araujo, public policy coordinator for Brazil's Climate Observatory -- a collective of non-governmental organizations. Whatever rain did fall was "less than expected," resulting in dry conditions that can turn the slightest spark into a blaze.

"Climate change is at play, coupled with the El Nino phenomenon," said Araujo. Alencar said most of the fires were deliberately set, most commonly by farmers clearing land. Farmers can obtain government permission for such burning, but the practice has been temporarily banned because the fires can easily get out of control under current conditions.

However, "it is probably the law that is least respected in Brazil," Alencar told AFP. Another culprit is the massive and influential agro-industry sector, which Alencar says has been found to deliberately set fire to public forests to clear land for

farmers. A third cause is more difficult to pinpoint: individual arsonists whose only motive is to "sow chaos," according to federal police chief Humberto Freire. INPE researcher Karla Longo said that if the fire starters are not stopped, the blazes "will continue until it rains."

The drought that has Brazil in its grips is likely to last until October, she added. "The rainy season is supposed to start in the second half of October... but it may be delayed due to extreme dryness and low atmospheric humidity," added Ricardo de Camargo, a professor of meteorology at the University of Sao Paulo (USP). Leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who has vowed to combat climate change and pledged to stop illegal deforestation of the Amazon by 2030, conceded that Brazil was "not 100 percent prepared" to deal with the latest wave of fires as he announced \$94 million for the response. "The authorities should do more, at all levels," said Araujo, who led the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources, a federal agency, from 2016 to 2019.

She called for closer coordination between ministries, as well as between national and state governments. Freire has called for tougher penalties for "environmental crimes."

French budgetary situation ‘very serious’: PM

PARIS (AFP): France's budgetary situation is "very serious", Prime Minister Michel Barnier told AFP, saying more information was needed to gauge the "precise reality" of French public finances.

France was placed on a formal procedure for violating European Union budgetary rules before Barnier became head of government earlier this month, while the Bank of France warned this week that a projected return to EU deficit rules by 2027 was "not realistic". France's public sector deficit is projected to reach around 5.6 percent of GDP this year and go over six percent in 2025, which compares with EU rules calling for a three-percent ceiling on deficits.

Barnier, appointed by President Emmanuel Macron after protracted wrangling in the wake of an inconclusive parliamentary election, has floated possible tax rises to help stabilise finances, a measure Macron has ruled out during the seven years he has been president. "I am discovering that the country's budgetary situation is very serious," Barnier said in a statement to AFP.

"This situation requires more than just pretty statements. It requires responsible action," he said. The new prime minister, who has yet to appoint a cabinet, is to submit a 2025 budget to parliament next month, in what is expected to be the first major test for the incoming administration.

Two dead in botched armed raid

MOSCOW (AFP): Two people were killed in a shooting at the Moscow office of Russian retailer Wildberries, an incident the CEO blamed on a botched takeover attempt by her estranged husband. Wildberries said armed men accompanying Vladislav Bakalchuk, the husband of CEO Tatyana Bakalchuk, illegally entered the company's office building in central Moscow and opened fire.

Videos on social media showed a scuffle breaking out at the entrance to the office, while gunshots rang out in the background. A man could be seen wielding a handgun in one video. The incident came weeks after Wildberries, Russia's largest online retailer, finalised a merger deal that Vladislav criticised and that strongman Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov vowed to stop. "Today a group of people led by Vladislav Bakalchuk, Sergei Anufriev and Vladimir Bakin attempted to seize Wildberries' offices in Moscow," said CEO Tatiana Bakalchuk, who is also Russia's richest woman. "To my deep regret, as a result of the armed attack on Wildberries, a security guard at our office was killed," she said. A second guard later died of his wounds, Russian state media reported. Seven people were injured in total, including two law enforcement officers, Russia's Investigative Committee said. Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said it had opened a criminal case. One eyewitness, Nadezhda, told AFP she heard screams and shooting inside the building, a business centre that hosts other offices for other firms. "The wounded were moved out of the building and taken away by ambulance. Some of them were being carried," she said.

Vladislav denied that he and his men were armed, saying on social media he came to the office to take part in negotiations and that the shooting came from "inside the building". Wildberries disputed his account, saying his men were the "first to open fire" and that he had no right to enter the building as a former employee. It also said there had been illegal attempts to enter two of its addresses at once, without providing detail. Tatiana Bakalchuk called her husband's claims "absurd". "No one agreed to any negotiations," she said on Telegram. AFP saw several police vehicles near the office in central Moscow. Ten people have been detained in connection with the incident, Russia's state RIA news agency said.

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Still reeling from crisis, Sri Lanka holds pivotal election

COLOMBO (BBC): "I thought I'd spend my whole life here, fighting a corrupt government - but the younger generation did something." Samadhi P a r a m i t h a Brahmananayake is looking at the field where she spent months camped out with thousands of other demonstrators in Sri Lanka's capital in 2022.

She can't quite believe that luscious green grass has replaced the hundreds of protester tents that filled the field opposite the presidential secretariat. "I feel we're now more energetic, more powerful," says Ms Brahmananayake, a 33-year-old banker based in Colombo. Two years ago, huge crowds forced the country's deeply unpopular leader from office - now voters are just days away from choosing who they want for president.

It's the first election since the mass protests - called the "aragalaya", Sinhalese for struggle - which were sparked by Sri Lanka's worst economic crisis. Inflation was at 70%. Basics like food, cooking gas and medicine were scarce.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the president at the time, and his government were blamed for the mess. He fled the country just before crowds stormed his residence. Euphoric protesters leapt into the presidential pool, taking victory laps. Mithun Jayawardana, 28, was one of those swimmers. "It was awesome," he said thinking back. Jobless, with no gas or electricity at home, he says he joined the aragalaya for a lark. Today, he recognises how crucial the elections are: "We need a president who is elected by the people. The people didn't elect the current president." Ranil Wickremesinghe, the man who currently holds

the job, was appointed to the position after Gotabaya Rajapaksa resigned. Mr Wickremesinghe, who's been tasked with steering Sri Lanka through a period of painful economic reform, is running for re-election as an independent. He's stood for president twice before but never succeeded, and his political future appears uncertain. Many associate Wickremesinghe with the Rajapaksas, a political dynasty who have dominated Sri Lankan politics for decades. Many blame them for the years of financial mismanagement that led to Sri Lanka's economic woes. Even the country's top court ruled that Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother Mahinda, another former president, were among 13 former leaders responsible for the financial crisis. Despite the political baggage that comes with the name, a Rajapaksa has entered the political fray in these elections - there are still places the family enjoys a lot of support.

One such district is just over an hour outside Colombo. Music, fireworks and the cheers of supporters greeted Namal Rajapaksa as he approached the podium to address the hundreds that had come to hear him speak in the town of Minuwangoda. Even his father, Mahinda joined him on stage. Namal Rajapaksa denied his family's role in Sri Lanka's economic collapse. "We know our hands are clean, we know we have not done anything wrong to the people or this country," he told the BBC. "We are willing to face the people, let the public decide what they want and who to vote for."

In all, a record 38 candidates are contesting the 21 September election, none of them women. In 2019,

Sajid Premadasa, leader of the country's main opposition party, won 42% of the popular vote, losing to Gotabaya Rajapaksa. This time around he is thought to be in with a chance too. For people looking for change, many are looking to Anura Kumara Dissanayake. The candidate of the leftist National People's Party alliance has emerged as an unlikely frontrunner. Thousands of people flocked to a field in the small town of Mirigama, two hours north-west from Colombo, to hear Mr Dissanayake speak, many wearing bright pink hats or T-shirts with his face. "Yes 100% sure, okay," he tells the BBC, when asked if he can win. Campaigning as the voice of the working class, he is hoping to disrupt Sri Lanka's political establishment. Unlike past elections in Sri Lanka, the economy is front and centre in this one.

Holding her four-year-old son Nehan, Rangika Munasinghe laments the higher taxes she now pays. "It's very difficult. Salaries are being reduced, taxes on products and food are high. Kids meals, milk powder, all more expensive. Taxes are so high, we can't manage it," the 35-year-old told the BBC at a busy market in Colombo. Sri Lanka was able to stave off bankruptcy in 2022 thanks to loans from the International Monetary Fund, and countries like China and India. But now everyone is feeling the pressure from the country's enormous \$92bn (£69bn) debt burden, which includes both foreign and national debt. "I'm doing two jobs," says Mohamed Rajabdeen, who's in his 70s. He is selling spoons from a stall off a busy street. Once this is done, he will travel to his second job, working in security.

Rising rivers threaten southern Poland

WARSAW (AP): Soldiers and volunteers in southwestern Poland laid sandbags near swollen rivers around the city of Wroclaw to protect homes and businesses after days of flooding across Central Europe. Poland joins Austria, the Czech Republic and Romania in being hard hit by floods following record rains in the region starting last Thursday. Authorities have reported 23 deaths, with seven each in Poland and Romania, five in Austria and four in the Czech Republic.

The floods in Central Europe combined with deadly wildfires in Portugal are joint proof of a "climate breakdown" that will become the norm unless drastic action is taken, the European Union's head office said. The fourth death in the Czech Republic was reported, when police said they found the body of a 70-year-old woman who was swept away by waters in the town of Kobyla nad Vidnavkou near the town of Jesenik, located in the badly hit northeast. The weather has improved, with warm and sunny conditions in the Czech Republic, Poland and elsewhere. Water levels were

falling in some places, allowing authorities and residents to clean up debris.

Firefighters in Poland were pumping water out of flooded streets and basements. And in Romania, about 1,000 firefighters were working across the country to clean up severely affected areas, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations said in a Facebook post. But some areas are still under threat, particularly in southwestern Poland. Prime Minister Donald Tusk held crisis meetings in Wroclaw with local officials and rescue services, urging protective measures and saying his government will help those affected. Floodwaters were expected to crest, and high water levels were expected to continue for many hours, even days. Soldiers and residents in Marcinkowice, near Wroclaw, laid sandbags near a bridge over the Olawa River, whose waters flow into the Oder, the major river that rises in the Oder Mountains in the Czech Republic and runs north through Poland to Germany. The community leader of the town of Olawa, Artur Piotrowski, described the situation as

difficult. He told the Polish state news agency PAP that two villages in a low-lying area have been flooded and residents have refused to evacuate.

Thousands of Polish soldiers were in action. Some evacuated people and animals - including dogs and horses - from flood-affected areas and distributed food and drinking water. The army also posted on X that it set up a field hospital in the town of Nysa after patients in a hospital there had to be evacuated earlier this week. Soldiers also were building a temporary bridge in the town of Glucholazy to replace one that was washed away by the flooding. Residents in another flood-damaged town, Stronie Slaskie, have appealed to Tusk to send someone to direct the cleaning and recovery action, saying it was chaotic and inefficient.

Experts have been preparing for flood threats due to the cresting Oder River in Opole, a city of some 130,000 residents, which seems to have avoided any major flooding, and in Wroclaw, home to about 640,000 residents, which suffered disastrous flooding in 1997.

Colombia suspends peace talks with ELN rebel group

BOGOTA (AP): Colombia suspended peace talks with the National Liberation Army, or ELN, after blaming the rebel group for an attack that killed two soldiers and injured more than 20. "Today the dialogue process is suspended," said the government's peace delegation in a statement. "Its viability is severely damaged, and its continuity can only be recovered with an unequivocal manifestation of the ELN's will for peace."

This is the deepest crisis of the peace negotiations with the ELN since November 2022 and after President Gustavo Petro took power as the first leftist president launching talks with that and other armed groups under a policy known as total peace. The National Liberation Army,

or ELN, ended a cease-fire with the Colombian government in August, but was still involved in peace talks aimed at ending more than five decades of conflict.

The army said that the group fired homemade rockets from a cargo truck that had been parked near a base in Puerto Jordan, a small town in Arauca province. The rebel group has not claimed responsibility for the attack. The ELN was founded in the 1960s by union leaders and university students inspired by the Cuban Revolution. The group has an estimated 6,000 fighters in Colombia and Venezuela and finances itself through drug trafficking and illegal gold mines.

Recently the ELN has been spreading into rural areas abandoned by the

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the large rebel group that made a peace deal with Colombia's government in 2016. The attack left two soldiers killed and 26 wounded, according to the latest report from Defense Minister Iván Velásquez. Most of the wounded were airlifted to a military hospital in Bogotá, Colombia's capital, where Petro visited them. According to the hospital's medical report, 13 remain hospitalized in "stable condition," most with soft tissue injuries, while five are in the intensive care unit.

Authorities announced a reward of up to \$23,700 for information leading to the capture of those responsible for the attack. They also confirmed a reward of up to \$948,000 for the main leaders of the ELN.

Amazon drought leaves Colombian border town high and dry

BOGOTA (AFP): Extreme drought affecting large parts of South America has dramatically reduced the flow of the Amazon River where Colombia borders Peru and Brazil, choking food supplies and threatening residents' health. "The Amazon is drying up," the mayor of the Colombian border town of Leticia, which lies on the smaller of two branches of the river that flow through the Three Frontiers area, complained to AFP.

The level of the Amazon, the world's biggest river by volume, fell 10 meters (33 feet) in Leticia between June and August, Colombia's Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies said. The receding waters have turned the banks of the river into steep walls of

earth, preventing the barges that supply Leticia's 60,000 people with food, drinking water and fuel from docking in the town. The water level is so low that the community has built wooden stairs from the pier down to the water.

Leticia's mayor Elquin Uni said that basic goods have become scarcer and more expensive as the town finds itself stranded. "They are even taking two or three months now (to arrive). This has made things difficult and is putting our citizens' quality of life and cost of living at risk," he said. In July, the town hall of Leticia declared a "yellow alert" over the sinking water levels. Local Indigenous leader Crispin Angarita told AFP he had not seen the Amazon at such a depleted level in half a century and warned of the

threat to people needing urgent medical attention. In the absence of river transport "it takes four hours of walking to reach a health center," he said. Peruvian media reported that the drought had made it possible to walk across the Amazon from the Peruvian town of Santa Rosa de Yavari to Leticia, usually separated by 800 meters of water. Angarita said the drought was also threatening the livelihood of riverside communities, who live mainly from producing corn, rice, cassava and other crops.

In Brazil, the worst drought in seven decades is fanning the worst wildfire season in years, which has affected not only the Amazon region but also the southwestern Pantanal wetlands. In Peru, President Dina Boluarte declared a

state of emergency over deadly fires blazing in three departments, including Amazonas, also linked to a severe drought. While September is usually the driest month in the Three Frontiers region, 2024 is breaking dangerous new ground, said Santiago Duque of the Amazon Research Institute at the National University of Colombia. "We have had two years of extreme droughts and this one is worse as there was less rain at the beginning of the year," he said. Duque laid much of the blame for the situation on rampant deforestation in the Amazon, which in turn reduces humidity and rainfall. "We are gradually destroying the Amazon," he said. "We are increasingly realizing it will never look the way it did in the past."

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Floods in Europe sign of things to come

IN Poland, the government is struggling to keep River Oder within its banks, and in Hungary authorities are keeping a watch over the water levels in River Danube. In Czechia, the floodwaters are receding in some parts, while rivers in other regions like South Bohemia are on the rise.

It is felt that the damage caused by the floods would run into billions of dollars. Hungary has already asked for financial aid from Brussels, the European Union (EU) headquarters. In Poland, prices of food items are on the rise, and the government is thinking of bringing in price controls. People and armed forces have been pressed into service to build the embankments of the overflowing rivers to keep the villages and towns safe. It is reckoned that this is the worst flood situation in two decades. Europe has also experienced a heat wave this summer and shortage of water, and drought in parts of Spain. Governments are in an emergency mode and people are shocked by the situation getting out of hand.

Climatologists argue that this is indeed the sign of things to come because of the ever deepening climate crisis, due to the unrelenting emission of greenhouse gas emissions, especially of CO₂, which is contributing to rising levels of global temperature, rising sea levels and deforestation due to human intervention. Climate policymakers in international organisations like the United Nations have been raising the alarm for decades now.

The European Union has been one of the few organisations that has been working steadily to keep the goals on climate change on the agenda, and it has been pursuing a green agenda to a great extent unlike the United States, which is the highest CO₂ emitter. But EU leaders have been fighting shy of doing enough of sharing technology and giving financial assistance to poor and developing countries to make the green transition and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

EU wants countries like India, one of the major emerging markets, to pay the green bill as it were. The attitude of the EU, and of European governments in general, appears to be that EU is doing its part, and it is time other countries owned responsibility as well. It is an unhelpful attitude because the havoc and destruction that climate change brings will be experienced by all the countries irrespective of whether they belong to the advanced economies or the developing ones. And the human suffering it unleashes is the same for the common people everywhere.

A major issue facing the Conference of Parties 29 (COP29) at Baku, in Azerbaijan in November is the issue of who will pay for meeting the climate goals. It would be rather futile to wrangle over this and look for finer points of logic apportioning responsibility. The common sense logic should be that those governments and countries that can pay should pay for the common cause because ultimately you are paying for your safety and not just for the safety of others. There is no charity involved here.

Advanced economies like the EU might believe that they have taken the necessary measures to fight climate change and they cannot be expected to pay for others. But it would not help. The global village is not a pious slogan. It is a reality, at least in terms of climate. When there is a climate change tipping point, the whole globe, all the countries and all the people, would be affected by it. So, every country should pay as much as it can which would mean that those who can pay more should pay more. Climate crisis involves every country, and not just a few.

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Rich countries cannot buy their way out of migration crisis

Mohamed Chebaro

ANOTHER week and yet another plan to reduce migration to Europe comes to life. But I am not sure any nation can pay their way to stemming the flow of people determined to make it to somewhere safe — whether for legitimate reasons or otherwise — in a bid to change their life and destiny.

Migration is today a source of political instability in many Western countries. It has become the step ladder on which the extreme right and populist politicians are climbing to power or amplifying the failures of the state, while offering no substantial, valid remedies to the problems.

From Donald Trump's plans for mass deportations if he returns to power in the US to Italy trying to block refugees from departing from Africa and building new centers to process would-be immigrants in Albania. Now Sweden, a long-term haven for the war-weary and persecuted, has decided to start paying migrants who are willing to leave the Scandinavian country.

Sweden was for decades seen as something of a humanitarian superpower, but over recent years it has struggled to integrate many of its newcomers. Its anti-immigration right-wing government last week announced its willingness to pay 350,000 Swedish krona (\$34,000) to those willing to voluntarily return to their countries of origin. With this, it has become the latest nation hoping to start a major shift in its migration policy due to what it describes as an inability to welcome and support a large number of arrivals.

Sweden's conservative Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson came to

power in 2022 at the head of a minority coalition government propped up by the right-wing Sweden Democrats, vowing to get tough on immigration and crime. The hope is that the financial incentive will appeal to some of the several hundred thousand migrants who are either long-term unemployed or whose income is so low that they need state benefits to survive. But this is very simplistic and shows ignorance of why so many people choose to migrate or apply for asylum in the first place.

Most of Sweden's immigrants are from conflict-ridden countries, such as the former Yugoslavia, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iran and Iraq. In 2015 alone, at the height of the migration crisis in Europe, Sweden took in 160,000 asylum seekers, the highest per capita in the EU. But not all of them came because they were being persecuted at home — many simply wanted to use any excuse in the book to access life in a free country, with a generous welfare state to fall back on if their endeavor to integrate and build a new life faltered.

In Europe generally, the go-to solution for nations struggling to cope with migrant arrivals seems to be to throw money at the problem. Though that has produced some results at certain times, with the number of new arrivals dropping, this has only lasted until the migrants find new routes or new people smugglers to help them reach their destination.

Money paid as aid to help third countries cope with hosting refugees offered some Western countries respite at times, but that never managed to stem the flow completely.

The billions of euros the EU paid to Türkiye to help it deal with the Syrian refugee crisis did not, for example, prevent more than a million refugees, mostly Syrians, from arriving in Germany in 2015. The UK, meanwhile, is spending millions attempting to stop migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats.

Italy has this year seen a 64 percent reduction in the number of new arrivals from Africa after focusing on dealing with the problem "upstream," since a naval blockade tactic failed to stop boats loaded with refugees crossing the Mediterranean. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's government has pioneered outsourcing deals with authoritarian governments and failed states, which have allegedly engaged in illegal collective deportations and abused refugees seeking to reach Europe.

Italy, along with the rest of Europe, has continued to turn a blind eye to the activities of corrupt, brutal militias in Libya that are also charged with controlling migration flows.

Even Lebanon, the small country suffering political, economic and social meltdown, has received aid in return for preventing large numbers of people departing by sea to Cyprus. This is especially important for Europe because Lebanon hosts a large number of Palestinian and Syrian refugees.

Being paid the equivalent of \$34,000 could be a handsome return for any refugees in Sweden that have reached a dead end. But they are a very small minority and no amount of money is likely to be enough to lure most away

from a life that has given them access to a welfare state, a house, education and healthcare for their loved ones.

The issues of migration, asylum, economic migration and human trafficking have been plaguing the mainly rich Western world and there are no easy solutions. This is a time when nations are suffering from aging populations, reduced birth rates and dwindling resources.

The solution that still eludes most of these nations is their failure to offer a fair and accessible application system that could sift through millions of applicants annually. These same countries also often lack an agile vetting system to monitor and apprehend those who abuse the system or play it to their advantage.

Once new arrivals have been granted the right to remain, countries still fail to provide them with adequate orientation that might turn them into well-integrated, productive citizens who understand the rights and duties governing their new life. This is one reason for the increased communal hostilities and toxic narratives plaguing the immigration debate.

Until such a day, it is unlikely that a refugee or economic migrant will want to take a one-off cash payment and return to a less certain life and face unemployment and insecurity. Until further notice, certain nations will continue to be much-desired destinations for people who are ready to do anything — even risk their lives in small boats, be fleeced of their life savings by human traffickers or, in some extreme cases, face modern slavery — in return for a path to the shores of Europe or the US.

Modernization is not equal to Westernization

Swaran Singh

ALL emerging powers have to craft their foreign policy lexicon to explain their national objectives. This has become a prerequisite in the face of rising expectations from their interlocutors and competitors alike, for they have to make sense of emerging powers' future trajectories and policy priorities. For instance, 19th century Great Britain projected itself as the "balancer" amid European countries' power struggles and as a "global benefactor" by using the "white man's burden" theory to explain its colonial expansion worldwide.

As a 20th century superpower, the United States initially opted to remain "isolationist" — an impulse that keeps showing up in its policies even today. Despite being a reluctant participant in the two world wars, it finally chose to "lead the world" through its network of military alliances, international institutions and in the name of spreading "democracy" and free-market economy.

The 21st century has been witness to China's unprecedented rise. So the world expects China to explain its national priorities and principles. The "new era" has accordingly seen China enunciate novel concepts like the "Chinese Dream", "national rejuvenation" and the building of "a community with a shared future".

The three years that the world lost because of the COVID-19 pandemic have made the international community increasingly aware of China accounting for nearly one-third of global manufacturing, reflecting the increasing power of President Xi Jinping's vision. China's rise has seen most Western powers running around with their "protectionist" firefighting measures, while calling for "on-shoring" and accusing China of exporting its "overcapacity", which they claim has made China's exports increasingly competitive.

This has made modernization, which New China has been pursuing since its founding in 1949, and now formally termed "Chinese modernization" the biggest policy enunciation of China. The idea of inclusive modernization is often traced back to the late 1970s when late leader Deng Xiaoping advocated for "four modernizations". Under President Xi's leadership, the concept has become unitary Chinese modernization.

Since the Western capital-driven model of rampant urbanization and industrialization of the last century has created the irreversible climate crisis and inequality, the developing and less- and least-developed countries have been searching for alternative development paradigms. And the Chinese leadership's enunciation of Chinese modernization can be an alternative to Westernization, which for long was viewed as the only model for achieving economic development.

The idea of "Chinese modernization" featured

prominently in the "historical resolution" of the Communist Party of China Central Committee in 2021 and was mentioned 11 times in the Chinese version of the political report to the 20th CPC National Congress in October 2022. The term has since found mention in various other reports and speeches, and has been refined further to be made part of global narratives. Broadly speaking, China's development model seeks to achieve shared and common prosperity for all and do so through the balanced material-cultural-ethical pursuit of peaceful national rejuvenation under the leadership of the Party. The Party will also ensure the pursuit of high-quality development while adhering to socialism with Chinese characteristics fulfills the country's goal of developing whole-process people's democracy.

What makes Chinese modernization of global significance is the way it has shattered the myth of Westernization equals modernization. Other than President Xi's enunciation of his vision for Chinese modernization, the heft of China's development model and its game-changing potential lies in its \$17.79 trillion economy that drives its \$1.5 trillion investments in Belt and Road projects.

The magnetic pull of the Chinese development model lies in its being rooted in China's ancient wisdom of equitable and sustainable development. And it is because of its people-centric nature that China's economic development enabled it to lift more than 800 million people out of poverty. China's development principles have also helped it move from being the "world's factory" to becoming a global leader in several value-added high-end advanced manufacturing. Specifically, China today is the global leader in high-speed railways, solar and wind power, and electric vehicles (EVs) and EV batteries.

Indeed, as a leading engine of global growth and innovation, China has helped change the global landscape by expanding its partnerships with economies around the world. In fact, the World Economic Forum has recognized the role of China's innovations in reshaping global standards, especially in fields such as telecommunications and renewable energy.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization, likewise, has praised China's role in uplifting global industrial standards and driving global economic growth. And the Global Energy Monitor has said China is set to double its solar and wind energy capacity to 1,200 GW by 2025, five years ahead of its target of 2030, thus contributing to mitigate the climate crisis.

All this has been made possible through China's inordinate drive for health-care and education for all, which has enhanced its productivity and improved the Chinese people's quality of life.

SCO — the prospective EU and NATO of Asia

Akhtar Amin

PAKISTAN is all set to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heads of Governments meeting in October this year by virtue of its position as the rotating Chairman of the SCO Council of Heads of Government, the second-highest decision-making forum of SCO.

The council of the heads of government meeting is preceded by a Ministerial meeting comprising several rounds of senior officials' meetings held recently which focused on the financial, economic, socio-cultural and humanitarian cooperation among the SCO member states. What is Shanghai Cooperation Organization and how important it is for a durable regional bloc like European Union was revealed to me when I visited China for SCO Youth Leaders forum in August 2016. In the gathering of more than 12 regional countries, I thoroughly realized that SCO can become a regional cohesion force with a model of partial EU and NATO i.e. it can act both as European Union and at times NATO for the Asian Countries. It is worthwhile that the SCO member and observer countries comprises of more than 55% of the World's population, 60% of whom are Youth who are the real engine of change and can bring sustainable development in the region, and for that matter the world. While through frequent out of bound interactive sessions, the youth of these countries with

diversified culture can enhance people-to-people and cultural exchanges. This will indeed encourage them to become participants, promoters and contributors of multilateral relations.

Pakistan became a member of SCO in June 2017. From 2005 to 2017, it enjoyed the status of SCO Observer State. Pakistan's association with SCO is relatively new, but its association with SCO Member States is longstanding because it shares historical, cultural, civilization and geographical ties with them. Currently, nine countries enjoy the status of the SCO full members: India, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; three countries - Afghanistan, Belarus, and Mongolia - have an observer status with the SCO. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is popularly regarded as the Eurasian political, economic and security organization, in 2017 has given full membership status not only to Pakistan but India as well; the two countries having complex relations due to a number of historical and political events. The addition of Pakistan, India (2017) and Iran in 2023 makes its members tally to nine. The SCO membership indeed is a milestone achievement for the three nations, and the alliance now represent around half of the global population with prospects to pave the way for the long awaited sustainable economic growth besides strengthening strategic ties with

the rest of the world. The organization since its creation in 2001 in Shanghai- the global financial hub of China has been persistently pursuing various objectives for the peace and stability of the Eurasian region with special focus on eliminating terrorism, separatism and extremism, because these three evils are the main causative agents for destabilization of the region, and the same possess future threats to the peace and economic deprivation of the member countries.

Infact the "Shanghai Spirit" in itself emphasizes harmony and respect for other countries cultures with a policy of non-interference in others' internal affairs, and non-alignment. The SCO operates on policy of consensus which facilitates the member states to harmonize their strategies by rising above their bilateral differences. And the inclusion of India, Pakistan and Iran has only strengthen the gears of SCO collaboration both from economic and security perspective.

It is an established fact that the SCO members and observers collectively possess 17.5 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, 47-50 per cent of known natural gas reserves. And the potential for deeper and more expansive SCO economic cooperation remains huge, as regional cooperation starts to expand from project development to synergy in economic strategy, especially over the China envisioned Belt and Road

Initiative. The Belt and Road cooperation is also aimed at building an infrastructure and trade network to improve the inter connectivity of Asia, Africa and Europe along and beyond the ancient Silk Road trade routes and will take SCO from strength to strength.

China as the major player in the SCO states is exploring ways to coordinate the Belt and Road Initiative with regional cooperation initiatives such as the Eurasian Economic Union and national development strategies. It has been estimated in a study that the Exports would increase 20 billion U.S. dollars while imports would grow 19.8 billion U.S. dollars in the region if member countries cut customs clearance time by 25 percent, benefiting all member countries, especially Central Asian nations and Pakistan.

For Pakistan however there are challenges in completely enjoying the economic benefit of BRI and CPEC; first it has to improve its image and convince the regional countries about its quest for peace and development in line with the aspirations of the other SCO states. For this the fact cannot be ignored that in the World of fast communication small misunderstandings can lead to dire consequences for nations. Therefore, the relevant offices of Pakistan need to make an in-depth communication strategy for image building of the country so as to negate misconceptions. The people to people interaction is key towards achieving the same.

Furthermore the stereotype concept of International Relations like, "there is no permanent friendship among countries but permanent interest" has to be changed.

The one road one belt initiative will bring par development in countries around the belt. Through joint collaborations and intelligence sharing the countries can curb the menace of terrorism and bring peace in the region. The enhanced cultural ties between SCO countries can further build the level of trust. For Pakistan the good thing is that in China if you say "All-weather", it only mean Pak-China Friendship which has stood the test of time over the past seven decades of Diplomatic and people to people relationship.

There is no doubt in the fact that China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor is a game changer for the region and can make Pakistan Asian Tiger, a dream it shares with the People's Republic of China. Therefore providing adequate peaceful environment for the construction and operation of CPEC is a joint responsibility of the Government and People of the Islamic. To conclude the SCO member and observer states should focus on making Shanghai Cooperation Organization as Multifaceted alliance which focus on strengthening economy like EU and Security of allying states like NATO for Asia.

Writer is PhD Candidate of Peace and Conflict Management Studies)

Why Trump’s election fraud falsehoods might cost the GOP the House

DONALD Trump’s obsession with election fraud that doesn’t exist in any significant form could drive the country into a government shutdown — and may even put the Republican House majority at risk.

In a fresh show of governing futility, Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson on Wednesday failed to pass a six-month extension of government funding, with a measure attached to please Trump that makes it harder for Americans to vote.

The Republican nominee’s demands for a bill that targets noncitizen voting, which is already illegal, pushed Johnson into a corner with no obvious exits, raising the possibility of a Washington crisis in the run-up to Election Day that could blow back on the GOP.

The gambit has zero chance of producing a new law — since Democrats who control the Senate oppose it. And Johnson couldn’t even get 16 of his own members to vote for it for various reasons — including unreconcilable demands by some arch conservatives for massive budget cuts, which also have no chance of making it into law because of the reality of divided power in Washington.

Johnson now appears to have little choice but to negotiate with Senate Democrats on a short-term funding measure. But given the tiny House GOP majority and Trump’s looming presence, every step the speaker takes will be perilous — especially if he hopes to cling to his job if Republicans succeed in holding the House in November.

Trump seems to be setting the GOP up for an intra-party fight that could turn into a disaster in November.

The history of government shutdowns suggests that the party with control of the House — which has initial responsibility for the public purse — usually pays the biggest political price. And if the speaker cannot beat a deadline of October 1 to fund federal operations, the government could partially shut down.

The former president isn’t in the habit of asking Republican Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell for advice. But the Kentucky veteran warned on Tuesday that “the one thing you cannot have is a government shutdown. It’d be politically beyond stupid for us to do that right before the election, because certainly we’d get the blame.”

A potential self-inflicted wound for the GOP in Trump’s birth state

Ironically, Trump was on Wednesday in the state where his stand could wreak the most political damage for House Republicans. He held a big rally in New York, even though he’s part of a tiny

minority of people who think he can deliver his birth state in November.

More importantly, New York is also home to several hugely competitive House races that went red in the 2022 midterm elections and paved the way for the slim GOP majority. A political crisis over a shutdown that angers voters would, therefore, risk sweeping some of the most vulnerable Republicans in the country out of their seats.

One of the most threatened Republican lawmakers, Rep. Mike Lawler,

Stephen Collinson

which already passed the House in a standalone vote earlier this year, would require documentary proof of US citizenship to vote in an election. Critics warn such a law could disenfranchise citizens who lack such documentation and say the legislation is a fix for a problem that does not exist.

Johnson has been happy to indulge Trump’s voter fraud claims — both after the 2020 election and this cycle. But his desire to please the former president and his base is lead-

the way forward.

But Johnson lacks any obvious play that will get him out of his jam.

A vote that only succeeded in brewing more GOP frustration

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene — the Georgia Republican who is a fervent Trump supporter and who has been a constant irritant for Johnson — voted “present” on Wednesday. But she wouldn’t say whether she supported closing down the government. She instead declared the speaker’s strategy a “complete

Trump seems to be setting the GOP up for an intra-party fight that could turn into a disaster in November. The history of government shutdowns suggests that the party with control of the House — which has initial responsibility for the public purse — usually pays the biggest political price. And if the speaker cannot beat a deadline of October 1 to fund federal operations, the government could partially shut down. The former president isn’t in the habit of asking Republican Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell for advice. But the Kentucky veteran warned on Tuesday that “the one thing you cannot have is a government shutdown. It’d be politically beyond stupid for us to do that right before the election, because certainly we’d get the blame.” A potential self-inflicted wound for the GOP in Trump’s birth state Ironically, Trump was on Wednesday in the state where his stand could wreak the most political damage for House Republicans. He held a big rally in New York, even though he’s part of a tiny minority of people who think he can deliver his birth state in November. More importantly, New York is also home to several hugely competitive House races that went red in the 2022 midterm elections and paved the way for the slim GOP majority. A political crisis over a shutdown that angers voters would, therefore, risk sweeping some of the most vulnerable Republicans in the country out of their seats.

from the state’s 17th Congressional District, predicted on “The Source with Kaitlan Collins” Wednesday that the drama would end without a shutdown and that a funding bill would pass without the voting measure Trump wants included.

“The reality is that we are not shutting down the government with 45 days to go before the election,” Lawler, who supported the legislation, said.

Another at-risk New York Republican, Rep. Marc Molinaro, who got a shoutout at Trump’s rally in Uniondale, voted for Wednesday’s package — but signaled he did not support driving the country to the brink to make a political point. “We have to support the continuity of government,” Molinaro told reporters.

The elections measure,

ing him into a deep governing hole. The Louisiana Republican has also not provided evidence to back his claims that hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants could vote in November.

It is not yet clear how far the ex-president will push this issue — given that the election registration measure is doomed. One possible interpretation of Johnson’s decision to bring the issue to the floor on Wednesday is that he wanted to demonstrate to his party, and even the ex-president himself, that the fight is hopeless.

“And so now we go back to the playbook, draw up another play, and we’ll come up with a solution,” the speaker told reporters, amid rising frustration among some members of the House GOP majority about the lack of clarity on

failure” and added, “We weren’t here in the entire month of August and could have finished our 12 separate appropriations bills.”

The building showdown on Capitol Hill is far from the first time that Trump’s personal political goals have threatened to hurt his party.

His backing, for instance, of a cast of weak candidates in the 2022 midterms — mostly because they endorsed his false claims of election fraud — appeared to be a factor in the failure of an expected red wave. And the ex-president’s antics promoted senatorial candidates that went onto lose in swing states, costing the party control of the Senate.

Trump’s pressure on Johnson also helps explain why the narrow House

majority is often pushed into extreme situations and confrontations that it can’t win but that have led to this Congress being one of the least productive in modern history. Johnson, who took over from former Speaker Kevin McCarthy last year, has often found it impossible to govern.

The willingness of Republican leaders to showcase Trump’s false claims of election fraud is also a menacing omen ahead of an election that the ex-president is already implying will not be free and fair. As he did in 2020, the Republican nominee appears to be laying the ground to argue that he was cheated out of victory if he loses to Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee.

For example, the ex-president wrote on his Truth Social Network on Wednesday before the House vote: “Democrats are registering Illegal Voters by the TENS OF THOUSANDS, as we speak - They will be voting in the 2024 Presidential Election, and they shouldn’t be allowed to.” There are no facts that back up the claim. But Trump warned: “If Republicans don’t get the SAVE Act, and every ounce of it, they should not agree to a Continuing Resolution in any way, shape, or form.”

Trump’s decision to hold a rally in New York puzzled many strategists, since it’s not a competitive state in November. But the ex-president relishes appearing on his home patch — and repeatedly celebrated his huge crowd at the Nassau Coliseum on Long Island. And given that Trump attracts blanket coverage on conservative media and plans to swing through battleground states in coming days, he probably didn’t lose much by rallying supporters in his original home state.

If nothing else, he had fun, ripping Harris repeatedly over her economic and immigration policies, mocking President Joe Biden’s age, denying the existence of climate change and portraying New York City as gripped by violent crime.

“We are going to win New York,” Trump roared, claiming that he was the only Republican who could put the Empire State on the map on a day when the Teamsters Union declined to make a presidential endorsement after backing Democratic candidates in recent decades. This was a blow to Harris that reflected Trump’s success in transforming the once-corporate GOP into a party that is now able to court working-class voters.

“Nice seeing you again,” the ex-president, who now spends most of his time in Florida, told his crowd as Puccini’s aria “Nessun Dorma” rang out as he left the stage.

— CNN

Israel is leading the weaponisation of the digital world

brahim Al-Marashi

to Zero Day: Stuxnet and the Launch of the World’s First Digital Weaponrefers to Israel’s ability to destroy parts of Iran’s Natanz nuclear facility in 2010 with a malicious digital code known as Stuxnet. This code, sneaked into a USB drive, caused nuclear centrifuges to accelerate to the point that they destroyed themselves.

In 1981, by contrast, Israeli F-15 and F-16 aircraft had to fly long distances, refuel in mid-air and drop bombs on Iraq’s Osirak nuclear facility to

have another effect, in that it has disrupted the civilians’ ontological security, meaning the mental state derived from a sense of order and continuity, even banality of everyday life. Even medical workers in the country use pagers due to electrical outages, and every citizen is bound to be left wondering if their mobile phone has been weaponised.

Deterrence cannot be measured, however, and instead of Israel having deterred Hezbollah, the group will be under pressure to save face by striking back. Israel should have learnt a lesson from

The Lebanon attacks demonstrate Israel’s ability to strike from a distance, establishing a form of deterrence, while claiming plausible deniability, and avoiding a US rebuke at a time when Washington is pressuring Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not to strike Hezbollah. Nevertheless, the Lebanese group does have the ability to weaponise the digital, raising the possibility of violent non-state actors retaliating against their adversaries and taking digital warfare into the realm of AI across the Middle East. Notwithstanding the vague allusions to the attacks over the past couple of days, historical precedent does demonstrate that weaponising communications is a modus operandi of the Israeli state. In 1972, in retaliation for the killing of 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, Mossad operatives detonated an explosive in the phone of the Palestinian official Hamshari in his Paris apartment.

destroy it, with some even missing their target. Israeli pilots risked being shot down or even crashing, which almost happened when the planes narrowly missed telephone wires on the way to their target outside Baghdad.

Stuxnet did not put any Israeli operatives at risk when they sought to target Iran’s nuclear facility. The code, unlike a conventional bomb, could be easily edited, put onto a USB drive, travel a far distance, achieve its objective, and give Israeli deniability.

Notwithstanding the technological sophistication and difficulty to tamper with thousands of communications devices, Israel over the past two days was able to strike targets all over Lebanon, even in neighbouring Syria, with relative ease, in that none of its operatives had to be present to target individuals. It was assassination by remote control.

Establishing deterrence is based on signalling and demonstrating the ability to inflict hurt on an adversary. While the death toll is relatively low, Israel has been able to warn Hezbollah that its members are not safe anywhere in their country, without having to violate the sovereignty of Lebanon.

Tragically, it has also

when it introduced drone technology to the region in the 1970s, which only led to its proliferation among its adversaries, including the Houthis, who struck Israel directly with a long-distance drone in July.

Israel was the first to use drones in the Middle East in 1973 and had a monopoly on them in the region. But as Rami Khouri, the American University of Beirut professor, once told Peter W. Singer, the world’s foremost expert on drones: “The response to drones is to get your own drones. They are just tools of war. Every tool generates a counterreaction.” Indeed, by 2024, Hezbollah released videos of its drones having violated Israel’s sovereignty, having reached the city of Haifa. While it is uncertain if AI-enabled drones have ever been used, Israel did use an AI programme named Gospel to generate targets for its military campaign in Gaza. With the digital domain having been weaponised, Hezbollah will feel the need to retaliate. The retaliation, however, is unlikely to be a brute rocket or missile strike that Israel can intercept. The group might play the long game of scoring its own digital victory, perhaps pursuing its own weaponisation of AI to achieve this goal.

What to watch for in last weeks of US election campaign

After months of political campaigning, the US is now into the final countdown to the 2024 election. For observers of this election — which has major implications for American and global politics — there are a few key events and factors to watch over the next few weeks.

Election day is Nov. 5, but early voting is already starting in some states. The presidency, the House of Representatives and about a third of Senate seats will all be contested. In many states, voters will also make choices about state- and local-level positions.

For the presidential race, most of the traditionally important events are already over. The Republican and Democratic parties have held their primary elections and caucuses to choose their candidates. The Republican convention, where the candidate is officially chosen, took place in July and the Democratic convention in August.

Another traditionally important event in presidential campaigns is a debate between candidates

— or, typically, several debates. There is a long history of debates between US presidential candidates, but the current norms around the debates emerged with the age of television. This year saw some changes in recent norms, as President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump bypassed the Commission on Presidential Debates and negotiated their own terms for a debate on CNN.

That June 27 debate fundamentally changed the 2024 election. Biden’s performance was widely seen as poor, amplifying concerns about his age and mental acuity. As Trump gained a clear lead in polls after the debate, concerned Democrats began to demand a change. Eventually, Biden ended his candidacy and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris. The Democratic Party rapidly united behind her, making her the official candidate at the convention in August.

On Sept. 10, Trump and Harris participated in a televised debate on ABC News. Afterward, Trump

said he would not debate Harris again, though he might change his mind, and Harris has expressed

Kerry Boyd Anderson

will determine who wins. Harris’ campaign is focus-

niche media to traditional national media, so there attempted assassinations

While Americans might not have another opportunity to see Harris and Trump go head-to-head, both candidates will hold many campaign rallies and events, especially in the battleground states that will determine who wins. Harris’ campaign is focusing on maintaining the current enthusiasm within much of the Democratic Party while actively courting swing voters. Trump’s campaign seeks to maintain energy among his supporters while focusing substantial resources on encouraging potential voters who are often disconnected from politics to show up at the polls for Trump. Both candidates seem to prefer local and niche media to traditional national media, so there might not be many broadly televised interviews before the election. There are still several weeks left before the election concludes, leaving room for unexpected events.

interest in another debate. Meanwhile, vice presidential candidates J.D. Vance (Republican) and Tim Walz (Democratic) are scheduled to debate on Oct. 1 on CBS News.

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might not be many broadly televised interviews before the election.

There are still several weeks left before the election concludes, leaving room for unexpected events.

There is a tradition in US politics of speculating about an “October surprise” — a last-minute news event that is unexpected or planned by an opponent that could

change the election’s outcome. Furthermore, this race has already seen two attempted assassinations

of the Republican candidate and a late switch in the Democratic candidate. More surprises could be in store. Throughout the rest of September and October, pollsters will frequently release new data. This close to the election, polling can provide useful insights. However, observers should focus on polling in the battleground states that will determine

the election’s outcome, rather than on national polling. Poll results in Pennsylvania, for example, are far more relevant than nationwide surveys. Also, polling can help to explain that a race is very tight but, in a close race, polling may not be useful for predicting the winner; for example, some polling in several battleground states is so close that the results fall within the survey’s margin of error.

As Americans and many people around the world anxiously wait to see who wins, the reality is that the result might be unclear as Nov. 6 dawns. Some previous elections took days or even weeks for the final vote tallies to be completed and for courts to settle disputes. Trump, who argues that he won the 2020 election, has invested significant campaign resources in preparing to challenge votes that favor Harris.

Furthermore, this year’s election is the first presidential election to take place in the wake of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol as members of Congress voted to certify the presidential election

results. In the nearly four years since that attack, narratives about its nature and why it happened have diverged along partisan lines, so many Americans have very different perspectives on the event. The Jan. 6 attack blew an enormous hole in Americans’ confidence that their democracy automatically includes a peaceful transfer of power, and the breaking of that norm opens the door to more potential violence and distrust after the upcoming election.

Trump’s insistence that he won the last election also means that many of his supporters would not accept a Harris victory. Also, when Trump won in 2016, his opponents accepted his win but, in a very different political environment in 2024, they might be less willing to do so if the outcome is close and contested. Observers of US politics are naturally focused on the weeks leading up to Nov. 5, but the weeks immediately following the election will also be crucial to the future of US politics and policy.

— Arab News



Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, Maersk Pittsburgh, Maersk Cairo, Lotus-A, CD Fortune and FSM scheduled to load/offload Container, Sand and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively during last 24 hours. Meanwhile two more ships, Tirua and MSC Adelaide are arrived at outer anchorage port on Thursday.

Eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a chemicals carrier 'Chemroad Jupiter' left the port on today morning, while five more ships, Maersk Cairo, Lotus-A, PS Star, Belfort and BAM BAM are expected to sail on Thursday.

Cargo volume of 171,312 tonnes, comprising 123,603 tonnes imports cargo and 47,709 tonnes export cargo carried in 4,337 Containers (2,057 TEUs Imports& 2,277 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

SCCI' elections 2024:

BF's campaigning reached its peak

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: As the election of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is right around the corner, the Businessman's Forum campaigning has reached its climax in the city.

Voters in thousands announced support for the Businessman Forum in the election and said the sun of 25 September will rise with victory of the Businessman Forum and day will be a failure for so-called leaders of the business community.

According to details, the BF leaders headed by former FPCCI president Ghazanfar Bilour conducted campaign in Shaheen Bazar, Jhanda Bazar, Ghanta Ghar, G.T Road, Ring Road, Charsadda Road, Dalazak Road, Kohat Road, Karkhano Market, Gur Mandi, Saddar Road,

Industrial Estate Hayatabad Peshawar, CNG, Petroleum, Pabbi, Nowshera, Honey Market Tarnab Farm along with various sectors and business centres in the city.

Leaders of the Businessman Forum received a rosy welcome by traders and shopkeepers on arrival in different bazaars and markets in the city. The traders shouted full-throated slogans in favour of the BF leader, former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour.

Traders and shopkeepers as well as industrialists from throughout the city vowed to support the BF in the upcoming SCCI election. They were fully confident about the victory of the Businessman Forum in the election.

The business community said BF under the dynamic leadership of former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour

served selflessly and played an important role in the resolution of all issues.

Traders confidently said the Sun of 25 September will rise with the success of the Businessman Forum and so-called leaders of the business community will face humiliating defeat on this day.

Traders viewed that the BF was rendered services for the last 24 years selflessly, which is exemplary.

The business community said elections cannot be won by empty slogans.

The traders said only those people deserved for triumph who took practical steps for resolution of the issues. The business community said they will give vote to BF to ensure the landslide victory in the election to continue the process of selfless services in future as well.



PESHAWAR: Former FPCCI president Ghazanfar Bilour alongwith other Businessman Forum's leader conducting election campaign in City markets. Ejaz Khan Afridi also present on occasion.

SCCI demands resumption of PIA flight operation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) expressed concern over closure of PIA flight operation from Peshawar to Karachi and demanded for its immediate resumption.

Fuad Ishaq, president of the SCCI in a statement issued here on Thursday said PIA was operating only one flight from Peshawar to Karachi within a week and this service was availed by business community and people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He, however, said PIA has halted Peshawar to Karachi operation for the last several months, due to which the business community has not only faced difficulties but also inflicted huge revenue loss to the national carrier PIA.

The SCCI president said the PIA move to halt flight operations from Peshawar to Karachi has created great unrest among the business community and people of the province.

He demanded the government and higher management of PIA to immediately resume the flight operation from Peshawar to address their grievances.

Fuad Ishaq demanded the PIA should operate two flights from Peshawar to Karachi within a week to facilitate the business community and people of the province.

Stock markets rally after jumbo US rate cut

LONDON (AFP/APP): Asian and European stocks markets rallied Thursday, with a record high in Frankfurt, after the Federal Reserve announced a bumper interest-rate cut and pledged further reductions as inflation cools.

London's FTSE 100 stocks index was up almost one percent as it pared back some gains after the Bank of England held its own rate steady, as expected. The pound strengthened against the dollar.

Lost & Found

I have lost original letter of my plot measuring 10 Marla and 250 Sq. ft. Plot # 148 Block C, (B.B.P. 1814) AWT Peshawar. If anyone find please return it to Saeed Ullah Khan S/o Abdullah Jan CNIC # 15201-8143385-7, Contact # 0303-3334071.

Lost & Found

I have lost Allotment letter of my Plot of Shuhada-e-Police Quota Allotment Letter# SC/1-212 Sector C-1, Zone-5 Regi model Town. If anyone finds please return it to Zarsheeda B.B Widow Ameer Bahadar Khan R/o Mohalla Zandi Khail Garhi.

Father's Name Correction

My father's correct name Sher Ali Khan while mistakenly written in all my Peshawar board educational documents as Sher Ali please make the required correction in it as Sher Ali Khan, from Fawad Khan S/o Sher Ali Khan.

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 997 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 997.95 more points, a positive change of 1.24 percent, closing at 81,459.29 points against 80,461.34 points on the last working day.

A total of 459,037,985 shares were traded during the day as compared to 400,195,963 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 18.610 billion against Rs 15.904 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 469 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 145 of them recorded gains and 239 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 85 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 35,184,576 shares at Rs 8.01 per share, K-Electric Limited with 23,819,654 shares at Rs 3.99 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 22,930,170 shares at Rs 1.33 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 141.10

per share price, closing at Rs 17,508.33, whereas the runner-up was Luck Cement Industries Limited with Rs 60.73 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,075.91.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 77.07 per share closing at Rs 822.91 followed by Siemens (Pakistan) Engineering with Rs 46.55 decline to close at Rs 479.57.

Rupee gains 13 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Thursday appreciated by 13 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.91 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.04.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.20 and Rs 280.70 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 36 paise to close at Rs 309.83 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.47, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.95, whereas an increase of Rs 1.22 was

witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs368.19 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 366.97.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 04 paise and 02 paise to close at Rs 75.66 and Rs74.05 respectively.

Gold rates up by Rs.800 per tola to Rs.268,500

The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.800 and was sold at Rs.268,500 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs.267,700 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.685 to Rs. 230,195 from Rs. 229,510 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.211,012 from Rs. 210,384, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,950 and Rs.2,529.14, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$8 to \$2,577 from \$2,569, the Association reported.

FFC wins 'Best ESG Reporting Award'



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) was conferred with "Best ESG Reporting Award" for Second consecutive year at 21st Annual Excellence Awards Ceremony organized by the CFA Society Pakistan in Karachi.

FFC was represented by Brig Zulfikar Ali Haider, Company Secretary and Syed Imran Rizvi, Manager Corporate Affairs.

The Company Secretary received the award on

behalf of FFC.

This award is an acknowledgment of best ESG practices, compliance towards international ESG disclosure frameworks with our continued commitment to global ESG implementation mission.

Huawei sign MoU with NIBFP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Huawei Technologies Pakistan and the National Institute of Banking, Finance Pakistan (NIBFP) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to digitally empower the Human Resources employed.

As per the MoU this alliance is set to mark a significant step in the digitalization of the banking sector of Pakistan as well as improve the overall capability and will be a stepping stone towards a better connected and intelligent banking infrastructure said a news release.

Riaz Nazarali Chunara,

CEO, of NIBAF Pakistan, and Ahmed Bilal Masud, Deputy CEO of Huawei Technologies Pakistan, signed the agreement in the presence of delegation from NIBAF Pakistan and Huawei.

"We are thrilled to embark on this meaningful collaboration, and hope that the signing of this MoU is a testament to the strategic partnership between both organizations for many years to come" said Riaz Nazarali Chunara, CEO, of NIBAF Pakistan. "This partnership will enable us to understand the latest trends of technology and

enable our workforce to effectively implement those for the digital transformation of our organization."

"Huawei is proud to partner with NIBAF Pakistan, and we are looking forward to this strategic partnership in achieving mutual goals and ensuring this training will help deliver the desired results" added Ahmed Bilal Masud, Deputy CEO for Huawei Technologies Pakistan.

The partnership is expected to provide technical training on technology such as Datcom, Cloud, Big Data, Cyber Security and Artificial Intelligence.

Sarhad Business Alliance delegation visited markets in City



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The delegation of the Sarhad Business Alliance, led by former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, successfully visited

Ashraf Plaza, People Mandi, Timber Market, Chehri Kabani, and Jahangirpura. During the visit, they met with voters, and the traders warmly welcomed the delegation,

garlanding them with flowers, showering flower petals, and displaying magnificent fireworks.

Chairman of Jahangirpura Bazaar, Ishfaq Ahmed, along with Aziz

Khan, Abu Bakr, and Meerus, announced their support for the Sarhad Business Alliance and Haji Ghulam Ali with 27 votes, ending a 20-year association with the Businessmen Forum.

They accused the Businessmen Forum of nepotism and failing to address traders' issues, stating that they would now support the people's governor, Haji Ghulam Ali.

Haji Ghulam Ali thanked Ishfaq Ahmed and his members and emphasized the need for the business community to support the candidates of the Sarhad Business Alliance, who are well-educated, experienced in their sectors, and possess a broad vision.

He further stated that the Sarhad Business Alliance would bring about changes in the chamber that would exceed even the traders' imaginations.

Food imports decline by 18.15% in first two months FY 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (APP): Food group imports into the country experienced a significant decline of 18.15% during the first two months of the current financial year as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of the last year.

From July to August 2024, Pakistan imported various food commodities valued at \$1.066 billion, down from \$1.303 billion during the same of last year, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

During the period under review, the commodities observed a negative trend in their respective imports including tea by 11.07 per cent as it was recorded at \$97.956 million as compared to the imports of \$110.155 million in the same period of the last year.

Meanwhile, the imports of edible oil like soyabean and palm into the country decreased by 52.20 per cent and 10.23 per cent respectively as soyabean

oil valued at \$22.241 million and palm oil 495.874 million were imported as compared to the imports of \$552.404 million and \$46.820 million.

In the first two months, the sugar imports into the country also decreased by 10.01 per cent and it was recorded at \$0.710 million against the imports of \$0.789 million in the same period of last year.

However, the imports of commodities including dry fruits and nuts grew by 88.24 per cent as dry fruits and nuts costing \$13.378 million were imported in the last two months as compared to the imports of 7.1017 million of the same period of the last year.

The import of spices also increased by 59.05 per cent as spices worth \$39.384 million were imported as compared to the imports of \$24.762 million in the same period of last year.

It is worth mentioning here that food group

exports from the country during the first two months of the current financial year grew by 42.39 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-August, 2024, food commodities valued at \$1.011 billion were exported as against the export of \$710.651 million in the same period of the last year.

ICT exports surge by 30% in first two months of FY 2024-25

Pakistan's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) export remittances have surged by 30% to US\$ 584 million during the first two months of Financial Year 2024-25 (July -Aug) in comparison to US\$ 449 million reported during the corresponding period last year of FY 2023-24.

According to the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication in

August 2024, ICT services export remittances of US\$ 298 million have been received, an increase of 26.8% in comparison to US\$ 235 million in August 2023.

In comparison to the previous month (July 2024), ICT services export remittances increased by US\$ 12 million to reach 298 million, an increase of 4%.

The trade surplus of US\$ 509 million, the highest in all Services (87.15% of total ICT export remittances) has been realized by the IT & ITes Industry during the first two months of FY 2024-25 (July-August 2024), an increase of 29.2% as compared to a trade surplus of US\$ 394 million achieved during the last year (FY 2023-24).

ICT export remittances inflow is the highest among the Services Sector within Pakistan's economy followed by "other business services" trailing at US\$255mn.

MoU sign between UoA Faisalabad and Pak Suzuki Motor Company



F.P. report

KARACHI: The University of Agriculture, Faisalabad and Pak Suzuki Motor Company Limited signed a

Memorandum of Understanding on 19th Sept 2024 to work together on cooperative research and development initiatives regarding Biogas Technology and

Organic Fertilizers, resource exchanges, information transfer and student training to promote innovation, advance research, education, community service

and project commercial feasibility.

The signing of MoU took place at Agriculture University Campus at Faisalabad, Pakistan in presence of Managing Director Pak Suzuki Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura and Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan (SI) along with respective teams from both organization

The Managing Director Pak Suzuki Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura and UAF Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan (SI) exchanged their views to work together for Socio Economic Development of the people of Pakistan and contribute to achieve Global Environmental Targets by reducing Carbon footprint as per the vision of Suzuki Motor Corporation, Japan.



Manchester City held by Inter Milan

MANCHESTER (BBC): Manchester City's Champions League campaign opened in frustrating fashion as they were held to a draw by impressive Inter Milan at Etihad Stadium.

Pep Guardiola's side were never at their most fluent, not helped by an injury to Kevin de Bruyne that forced him off at half-time - the City boss says he will have to speak to the club's doctors to find out the extent of the injury.

But City's Italian opponents were well worth their draw.

In a repeat of the 2023 Champions League final won by City in Istanbul, Inter showed superb organisation and attacking threat despite facing increased pressure in the second half.

Erling Haaland, seeking his 100th goal for the hosts, was largely kept quiet, and both sides had chances to make the breakthrough but were unable to capitalise.

Phil Foden, on as a second-half substitute for the injured De Bruyne, saw a shot saved by Inter keeper Yann Sommer, who also thwarted Josko Gvardiol.

Inter wasted many good situations, with former Manchester United defender Matteo Darmian choosing a flamboyant backheel when the shot was on, while another one-time Old Trafford star, Henrikh Mkhitaryan, fired over the top from close range, leaving coach Simone Inzaghi on his knees beating the turf in frustration.

But City went close to a dramatic late winner as Foden fired straight at Sommer after a delightful move and Ilkay Gundogan had two headed chances in the box.

"We faced a really difficult team," said Guardiola, whose side failed to score in a Champions League match

for the first time since October 2022.

"I'm still really, really satisfied for the game we played, especially with how [Inter] defended, they are masters of that, so big, they help each other unbelievably. So you cannot expect to create a lot of chances."

Ex-Spurs keeper's howler gifts PSG win over Girona

Former Tottenham Hotspur and Fulham goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga's late howler gifted Paris St-Germain victory against Champions League debutants Girona.

Portuguese left-back Nuno Mendes drilled a low effort at Girona goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga from a tight angle, but the keeper made a major error and let the ball sneak through his hands.

The hosts looked as if they would be held to a draw by the Spanish side's steely and determined defensive performance before Gazzaniga's error.

Girona, who are making their debut in Europe's top competition after finishing third in La Liga last season, were composed as they sat back and mostly nullified PSG - who registered 26 shots without one of their players scoring.

France forward Ousmane Dembele had good chances to break the deadlock for the hosts but saw a curling effort hit the crossbar and also had the ball snatched from his feet by an excellent Ladislav Krejci tackle when he charged towards the visitors' goal.

Spurred on by their vocal travelling supporters, Girona sat back but passed effectively to make life difficult for PSG.

But Girona offered little threat and were reduced to finding a way to see off PSG's waves of attacks.

Luis Enrique's side laboured for an opener and found it difficult to create much which caused any significant issue Gazzaniga until he failed to make a simple save at the death.

Girona are next in league phase action when they host Feyenoord on Wednesday, 2 October, while PSG travel to Arsenal on Tuesday, 1 October.

Meanwhile, rampant Celtic overpowered Slovan Bratislava at a jubilant Celtic Park to win their opening Champions League game for the first time ever in impressive style.

On a rare occasion when they began a game in Europe's premier competition as favourites, Brendan Rodgers' side delivered an invigorating performance full of energy and poise.

Liam Scates headed in Arne Engels' corner to send the crowd wild on 17 minutes, and the Scottish champions created a flurry of other opportunities before the break but failed to embellish their score.

However, Kyogo Furuhashi diverted Nicolas Kuhn's fierce cross into the net barely two minutes into the second half, banishing any lingering nerves Celtic fans may have had about profligacy returning to bite them.

Further opportunities came and went before the outstanding Engels slotted in a third from the penalty spot after Alistair Johnston was caught by Danylo Ihnatenko.

Kevin Wimmer's brilliant finish with the outside of his left foot briefly punctured the party atmosphere as Slovan hit back, but normal service quickly resumed.

Babar ton, Jahandad three-for keep Dolphins winless

FAISALABAD (ESPNCricinfo): Babar Azam's unbeaten 104 off 100 balls and Jahandad Khan's three wickets with the new ball handed Dolphins their third defeat in three games as Stallions registered a mammoth 174-run win in Faisalabad. The result also meant that the team batting first has won all seven matches so far in the tournament.

After Stallions opted to bat, Shan Masood and Yasir Khan gave them a start of 76 in 13 overs. Faheem Ashraf broke the stand with Masood's wicket and put the brakes on the scoring rate. Yasir, too, fell soon after but Babar played the anchor's role to perfection. Along with Tayyab Tahir, he added 57 for the third wicket and took the side to 150 in the 30th over.

Dolphins used six bowlers in the match and each of them picked up a wicket, but Babar stood firm. At the end of 40 overs, he was on 50 off 65 balls. In the last ten, he smashed 54 off 35, with the help of three fours and three sixes, and lifted Stallions to 271 for 7.

If Dolphins thought they would break their duck, Jahandad shattered their hopes quite early into the chase. With the second ball of the innings, he had Muhammad Hurraira caught behind for a duck. In his third over, he trapped Umar Amin lbw to make it 15 for 2.

Sahibzada Farhan and Saud Shakeel struck five fours in the next 20 balls but Jahandad struck immediately after that, this time cleaning up Shakeel.

Soon after, Haris Rauf dismissed Sarfaraz Ahmed and Qasim Akram in the space of three balls to leave Dolphins gasping for air. From 60 for 5, there was no comeback. The lower middle order surrendered without any resistance against the spin duo of Abrar Ahmed and Mehran Mumtaz. The two shared five wickets as Dolphins folded for 97.



FAISALABAD: Babar Azam raising his bat after scoring century against Dolphins during Champions One-Day Cup.

Why Joshua can beat anybody in the world - Eubank Jr

LONDON (BBC): When you are a marquee name like Anthony Joshua, there is no 'this is it'.

'AJ' is a maverick. He has been able to do things nobody has done. He has paved the way for other fighters.

He could lose to Daniel Dubois on Saturday and everybody would still want to see him fight Tyson Fury. That will not change.

Of course, defeat will be damaging to Joshua's reputation and career but it is not something he could not bounce back from. He has done it before.

To keep the momentum and wider interest in the bigger fights going, however, he has to win, and I think he will.

Joshua is too experienced, too strong and his boxing IQ will be too high for Dubois. It is a cliché but there are levels to the game and Joshua is just a few too many levels above Dubois.

The exciting thing about heavyweight boxing, though, is that they are so big, strong and powerful that even when there are levels, all it takes is one punch and it is over.

I have known Joshua for years and have been to so

many of his fights. We have always stayed in touch.

Our journeys have been slightly different but we both faced pressure early in our careers.

I can relate to what he has gone through and you tend to gravitate towards guys who are on that same level.

Joshua came out of the Olympics as a heavyweight gold medallist and, rightly so, became the poster boy of British boxing. Everybody was behind him.

For me it was a different type of scrutiny. I was a Eubank, carrying my father's legendary name, but I was an unknown entity and a lot of people did not want me to succeed or believe in me.

I had to prove those guys wrong over the years.

But as you grow older and get more experienced, you realise that what people expect of you and the pressure that they put on you actually does not matter. As long as you are content and can look at yourself in the mirror and say you did your best, that is what matters.

Family matters. Being a good human-being and

respected matters. Not the critics or the haters. If you become obsessed with trying to please them, you will never win.

Joshua is definitely at a stage and age now where he has been through it, seen it, heard it and done it all.

He does not care what people think, now it is all about solidifying his legacy and making the money which will last him, his family and generations to come.

The way Dubois has come back from defeats by Joe Joyce and Oleksandr Usyk and improved has been impressive.

He has shown a never-give-up attitude and I really do respect that.

I have had losses and it is not easy. You go into the ring with doubts and dark thoughts. So to get over that is a huge testament to Dubois' character.

There was a confrontation back in June where Joshua felt Dubois was disrespecting him.

I genuinely do not think Dubois is the type of fighter who would disrespect people, but how much respect can you give to somebody you are going to try and take their head off? Dubois is up against an

improved Joshua who will outgun him in too many different departments. I have seen the progress he has made since the Usyk losses.

Joshua has been busy with three fights last year and Dubois will be his second of 2024.

Activity is so important to becoming a better fighter. It is something I am kind of annoyed at in my own career, that I have not been active over the past year.

If Joshua goes into a fight with the right mindset then he has the skills to beat anybody in the world, and I would always back my guy against Fury.

Fury lost to Usyk and showed he is not unbeatable or invincible. Joshua is smart enough to look at what Usyk did, see the holes in Fury's game and do the same thing when they share a ring - which I am sure they will.

The Fury talk is for the future. For now, the focus is on Dubois and Joshua and they should enjoy reaching the pinnacle of boxing this weekend.

If you can headline at Wembley Stadium, you have made it. It does not get bigger than that.

ICC delegation visits Pindi Stadium

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Cricket Council (ICC) delegation visited the Pindi Stadium, Rawalpindi on Thursday to review the arrangements for the ICC Champions Trophy.

The delegation was led by Wasim Khan (ICC General Manager) and

included David Musgrave (Security Manager), Sarah Edgar (Senior Manager of Events), Aun Muhammad Zaidi (Event Manager) and Mansoor Manj (ICC Broadcast Consultant).

The ICC delegation reviewed the up-gradation and available facilities at Pindi Stadium and was

also briefed by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials on the occasion. The ICC delegation also met with the security officials.

The delegation, which had already visited the National Stadium Karachi, will also visit the Gaddafi Stadium Lahore.

Haaland, Acerbi and the art of the shirt swap



MANCHESTER (BBC): When Inter Milan defender Francesco Acerbi jokingly asked Manchester City star Erling Haaland for two shirts after Wednesday night's Champions League match, he may have been pushing his luck.

Shirt swapping has long been a tradition in football, however, with many players taking great pride in the impressive collections they are able to build.

Some shirts are, naturally, in more demand than others, with one team even travelling to matches with several bags full to hand out on behalf of their star player.

But what exactly do players do with the shirts they acquire? And are all treated equally once the exchanges are carried out in front of the cameras?

Who boasts the greatest collection?

Many players have

shared their proud collection of football shirts on social media, with entire rooms dedicated to showcasing the most revered.

Lionel Messi, no stranger to shirt swap demands as arguably the greatest player of all time, posted a photo of his collection which showed shirts covering the walls - as well as being encased in glass both in the ceiling and floor.

Former Barcelona defender Gerard Pique said he was "sorting through my closet" when he came across a star-studded selection, which includes shirts from the likes of Messi, Andrea Pirlo and David Beckham.

Pique added he had framed the shirt he exchanged after the 2010 World Cup final, in which his Spain side beat the Netherlands, from Dutch striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar.

But the award for the

most impressive of all collections surely goes to Italy manager Luciano Spalletti.

After guiding Inter Milan back to Europe's elite club competition in 2019, Spalletti shared his collection of "names from the Champions League", immaculately folded to display the names of countless giants of the game.

Football shirt currency - do some matter more?

Some players must deal with far greater demand for their shirt than others.

Messi knows this as well as anybody, but the Argentina star has developed systems for coping with that during his illustrious career.

Goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez told Prime Sport that Argentina's national team kitman prepares 650 Messi shirts for every two games, to be distributed between players, staff, sponsors and even managers around matchdays.

It pays to have a friend on the inside. Martinez is frequently inundated with requests for Messi shirts and, at the 2022 World Cup, he softened the blow of Poland's defeat by Argentina for Aston Villa team-mate Matty Cash by gifting him with one.

But it's not just all about the biggest names. Wayne Rooney admitted that his arrogance while playing meant he would never ask for a shirt from an opponent; however, he would always respect any player who asked for his.

And so, while he does not have a shirt from the likes of Zinedine Zidane, the former England and Manchester United star does have an Andorra shirt from Ildefons Lima

- who was delighted to discover Rooney had kept it.

"I always respected any player who came up and asked for my shirt," Rooney told BBC 5 Live earlier this year.

"I've seen players where they just throw it into the kit and aren't interested, whereas I'd always show respect and take it home and keep the shirt."

Former Premier League defender Nedum Onuoha took a different approach, placing more value on the shirts of team-mates, specifically those whom he played alongside in Manchester City's academy and at youth level for England.

"I didn't end up swapping that many shirts, but the shirts I did swap were with people who I came up through the academy with or played alongside for England Under-21s," Onuoha told BBC Sport.

"Most of us came from similar places. Our journeys went in different directions but I saw what it took for them to get here. There's a lot of meaning behind them."

On his favourite shirts, he added: "I have some of my early City ones in frames and an England Under-21s shirt from my debut when I scored as well, somehow."

"One of my favourites is from a pre-season friendly against Barcelona. I never asked for shirts because I was too shy. They were probably one of my favourite teams."

"After the game there were lots of shirt swaps and one which happened to be available was Seydou Keita's, one of my favourite players. I couldn't have taken it any quicker and it still means a lot to me."



The good and the bad of shirt swapping culture The tradition of shirt swapping is said to have started when France, after defeating England, asked to exchange with their opponents to remember the 1931 win.

One of the most famous exchanges in history came in 1970, when Brazil icon Pele and England great Bobby Moore exchanged shirts following the World Cup group match between the two nations in Mexico.

Today's shirt collections are a source of admiration and pride for many. With retro football shirts seemingly as popular as ever, it is a tradition unlikely to die out.

But one certain no-no to surface in more recent years is the half-time shirt swap.

Mario Balotelli was rebuked by Liverpool after swapping shirts with Real Madrid's Pepe as his side trailed 3-0 at half-time in 2014, while

in 2016 Eden Hazard was jeered by Chelsea fans for a similar exchange with Paris St-Germain winger Angel di Maria.

During last year's Champions League campaign, Haaland was asked to swap shirts at half-time by Young Boys captain Mohamed Ali Camara, whose manager said after the 3-0 loss he would "have a word with him".

Former Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson was also less than impressed when striker Ruud van Nistelrooy returned to the dressing room with a Manchester City shirt following a 3-1 loss to their bitter rivals.

Former Premier League defender Nedum Onuoha took a different approach, placing more value on the shirts of team-mates, specifically those whom he played alongside in Manchester City's academy and at youth level for England.

"I didn't end up swapping that many shirts, but the shirts I did swap were with people who I came up through the academy with or played alongside for England Under-21s," Onuoha told BBC Sport.

"Most of us came from similar places. Our journeys went in different directions but I saw what it took for them to get here. There's a lot of meaning behind them."

On his favourite shirts, he added: "I have some of my early City ones in frames and an England Under-21s shirt from my debut when I scored as well, somehow."

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In brief

KP team visits Parliament

ISLAMABAD (APP): A 30-member delegation from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly visited the Parliament House on Thursday, they were warmly welcomed by senior officials of the Upper House. During the visit, the delegation toured the Senate Museum and viewed a documentary showcasing the history of the Senate. The members praised the museum's collection, which featured statues of prominent political figures and historical photographs, describing it as an outstanding display of the nation's political heritage, said a news release. The delegation also toured the "Gali-e-Dastoor" in the Senate, which enhanced their understanding of Pakistan's parliamentary history.

202,100 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 202,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 143,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1542.12 feet and was 144.12 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 81,500 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1225.25 feet, which was 177.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 15,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 114,800, 111,400, 91,200 and 37,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 21,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Travel fares reduced by 5%

RAWALPINDI (APP): A meeting regarding the fares policy was held in the chair Deputy Commissioner Hassan Waqar Cheema on Friday and decided to reduced transport fares by 5% in the garison city. The Secretary Transport Authority was also present in the meeting. The deputy commissioner directed the relevant officials to ensure the displaying new fare lists on main bus stops by the transporters. "Strict implementation of newly fixed fares should be ensured", he said and further directed that the transport authority should check the vehicles and inquire about the fare from the passengers. Take strict actions against violation. He said that no one would be let rob the pockets of the citizens.

PMD forecast hot weather

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Thursday forecast mainly hot and dry weather for most parts of the country during the next 24 hours. Light rain-thunderstorm is likely at isolated places in Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir and adjoining hilly areas. As per synoptic situation, continental air was prevailing over most parts of the country. During the last 24 hours, hot and dry weather prevailed over most parts of the country. However, light rain/ drizzle occurred at few places in north-east Punjab and Kashmir. The highest maximum temperatures recorded were Nokkundi 42 C and Bhakkar 41 C.

Transporters, consumers welcome petrol price reduction

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a welcome move, the government's decision to slash petroleum prices and introduce discounted fares of transports brought smiles to the faces of citizens nationwide on Thursday where mostly citizens called for the continuation of these measures to alleviate the financial burden on the general public.

The government's decision to reduce petrol prices has been widely welcomed by transporters and consumers across the country, a report aired by PTV news channel said.

Transporters have assured prompt implementation of reduced fares, while consumers are thrilled about the decreased financial burden, said a citizen.

Industry experts predict that the decision will stimulate economic growth, increase consumer spending and will benefit the transportation sector.

"This is a great decision by the government. We will

immediately implement reduced fares to benefit commuters." Rahim Khan, President, Karachi Transport Association said.

"We appreciate the government's move to reduce petrol prices. This will help increase our profit margins." M. Iqbal, Transporter, Lahore added.

"The price slash will enable us to provide affordable transportation to citizens. We thank the government."

Secretary, Karachi Transport Association added.

"This decision will boost our business and provide relief to consumers. We welcome the move," another transporter in Islamabad said.

"Reduced petrol prices will increase our competitiveness in the market," Tahir Hussain, transporter, Islamabad mentioned.

"I'm thrilled about the petrol price reduction. My daily commute will become affordable," Amna Ali, Student from Islamabad said.

Consumers in Lahore also expressed gratitude, stating that the price slash would reduce their daily expenses and it has reduce 10 to 12 percent transport fares.

Residents in Islamabad while appreciating the government's efforts said that transporters have reduced the daily commuter fares which is a positive move for the economy.

"Finally, some relief, the fare cut will help me manage my expenses better," Nadia Ali, Housewife commented.

"This decrease in fares is a welcome move. It will make my daily travel more affordable." Sara Ahmed, working lady in Islamabad added.

"The 12% fare reduction will save me Rs. 500 on my monthly trips to Lahore," Amir Shahzad, a businessman added.

"The decreased fares will make education more accessible for students like me," Ali Hassan, a student of Rawalpindi said.

17 outlaws held, drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended 17 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possessions.

According to a police Spokesperson, under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate crime from the city.

He said following these directions, the Karachi company police team arrested an accused namely Shehryar and recovered one 30-bore pistol from his possession.

He said the Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely

Muhammad Rizwan and recovered a 223 bore rifle from his possession.

Likewise, the Sumbal police team arrested two accused namely Saddam and Faiz Ali and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession, he added.

He said the Industrial Area police team arrested an accused namely Abdullah and Ehtisham and recovered two pistols from their possession.

Similarly, the Noon police team arrested an accused namely Ubaid Ullah and recovered one 9mm pistol from his possession, he added.

He said the Humak police team arrested an accused namely Tahir Khan and recovered 530 gram hashish from his possession.

Cases have been regis-

tered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway, he added.

He said during the crackdown against proclaimed offenders and absconders, the ICT Police teams arrested nine absconders and target offenders from various areas of the city.

He said DIG ICT Syed Ali Raza directed the police officers to further intensify the crackdown against the criminal elements.

"Safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard" DIG added.

Citizens are urged to cooperate with police and report any suspicious activity or information through the emergency helpline "Pucar-15" or via the "ICT-15" app for immediate assistance.

Operation against unfit PSVs accelerated

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani have accelerated their ongoing operation against unfit Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) and impounded 636 besides issuing challan slips to 4833.

According to a police spokesman, Police under a grand operation launched near 25 days ago, were taking action in accordance with the law against the rules violators.

He said that fines amounting to over Rs 5.2 million were imposed on

the violators.

Police were taking strict action in accordance with the law against unfit commercial vehicles, checking route permits and licenses of the drivers.

The spokesman said that legal action was taken against 422 drivers for driving vehicles without licenses.

The licenses of 27 drivers found guilty of negligence were cancelled, he said adding, 39 cases were also registered against drivers and the owners of public service vehicles. All possible steps were being taken to ensure safe travel on PSVs, he added.

He said that the traveling time of the vehicles was also being checked. Legal action would be ensured against those endanger lives of the citizens, he said.

The spokesman said that action would also be taken against the PSVs owners and bus terminal managers found guilty of negligence.

The special squad of City Traffic Police is also ensuring checking of vehicles at bus terminals, he informed.

An awareness campaign was also launched to educate the citizens and drivers, he added.

Dengue death toll rises to four in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Health Authority Rawalpindi has confirmed 4 deaths in the district due to dengue since last month. All the deaths were caused for late reporting to the relevant allied hospitals.

Addressing to a media briefing here on Thursday, Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) District Health Authority Rawalpindi confirmed the deaths saying the dengue outbreak has turned into endemic with gradual increase in the district. He appealed the citizens to follow dengue SOPs for the safety of life.

"Covered water tanks, monitor health symptoms to timely report to symptoms and take hygienic measures", he said while highlighting the preventive measures.

Giving details of the four casualties Dr. Asif said that Shayan, a 17 years of age patient was brought in THQ Kahuta on 10th September and was immediately transferred to BBH after being diagnosed as a seriously

affected patient.

"However, he reported to the hospital too late to survive", he said.

The CEO further informed that patients, Tahira from Airport Housing Society and Samina from Shakrial were also brought late and couldn't survive in the Holy Family Hospital, Rawalpindi.

The CEO stressed for the strict monitoring and immediate consultations with a registered medical practitioner (RMP) to avoid any untoward situation. "Get blood examination, if platelet count is found less than 100000 this means you are affected", he said for the general public information.

He termed the recent dengue outbreak an 'endemic' in the district.

Dr. Asif informed that a 300 bed facility was already available in the district's allied hospitals.

He appealed to the media and the general public to assist the health authority in spreading

dengue information among the masses.

"Educational institutions, mosques and traders must come forward to create massive awareness on dengue preventive measures and treatment", he said.

Earlier, Dr. Ehsan Ghan, DHO Dengue Control informed that 21000 population of Chak Jalal Din area was reported to be among the most vulnerable, and was being dealt with 21 workers, 2 field hospitals and 2 Clinics on wheels to regularly monitor, diagnose and respond.

Dr. Ehsan underlined the need for exercising self responsibility by the citizens to avert the dangers of the endemic.

It is worth noting that dengue spread is accelerating in Rawalpindi district due to the most favouring weather underway. 57 new cases were recorded in Rawalpindi during the past 24 hours, signaling that dengue is rising. The number of patients under treatment in allied hospitals.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr. Amir Muqam visiting different classrooms for Afghan Refugees at Urban Cohesion Hub Centre.

Police recruits next of kin of martyrs and officers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police has initiated the recruitment process of children of martyrs and officials who died during the service in the capital police department under the Prime Minister's assistance package.

The announcement was made following a special meeting of the recruitment board, held on the directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, led by DIG Headquarters Syed Mustafa Tanveer, a public relations officer said while talking to APP on Thursday.

The recruitment board convened to discuss and approve the inclusion of the children of martyrs and officials who died while in service while protecting the lives and property of citizens.

Expressing his deep respect and admiration for the fallen heroes, IGP Nasir Rizvi said that, "The martyrs and officials who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty are invaluable assets of the police department."

He further said that, their dedication and selflessness serve as an inspiration to us all. Islamabad Police will forever cherish the memory of our heroes and ensure their families are cared for at every level."

Police arrest 22 suspects

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers, illegal weapon holders and other lawbreakers here on Thursday arrested 22 accused besides recovering over seven kg charrs, 45 liters liquor, five motorcycles, Rs 45,000, mobile phones, weapons and other items from their possessions.

A police spokesperson said that Gungmandi, Sadiqabad, Race Course, Westridge, Rawat and Kalar Syedan police rounded up Toqeer Iqbal, Asad, Sohlab, Saif, Zaheer Ahmed, Naveed Akhtar and Asfahan and recovered over seven kg charrs from their possessions.

Taxila police in their operation managed to net two street criminals and recovered a stolen motorcycle, Rs 45,000, mobile phone and other items.

Dhamial police also arrested a street criminal namely Farhan and seized a snatched motorcycle, weapon and other items.

Saddar police arrested an accused namely Asim and recovered three stolen motorcycles from his possession.

Pirwadhai, Bani, Sadiqabad, and Airport police conducted raids in their respective jurisdiction and nabbed five accused namely Javed, Jameel, Riaz, Sameer and Danish and recovered 45 liters liquor from their possession.

The spokesman informed that Rawalpindi district police also arrested four accused for having illegal weapons and recovered four 30 bore pistols and ammunition.

Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are underway.

City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.

DIG directs officer to combat crime efficiently

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory police Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Syed Ali Raza, on Thursday held an important meeting with rural zone police officers.

According to police spokesperson, the meeting was attended by SP Rural zone, SDPOs, SHO, and crime control police teams.

During the meeting, DIG Islamabad reviewed the performance of all police officials in detail and issued a show cause notice on poor performance.

On this occasion, while issuing directions to the officers, Syed Ali Raza said that in the upcoming meet-

ing, the performance of all the officers will be reviewed and there will be no compromise on the addition of crimes, he added.

During the meeting, DIG Islamabad issued directions to police officials, crime control teams to prevent incidents of robbery, dacoity, and theft, the spokesperson added.

He said under the supervision of the SHOs, these teams will work to arrest absconders, proclaimed offenders, target offenders, and other criminals.

The teams will also take effective action to prevent incidents of robbery, dacoity, and theft, he added.

He said that the progress of the crime control teams will be reviewed daily.

All police officers are expected to be more effective in combating criminal elements, he added.

The DIG further mentioned that police officers who perform effectively well will be commended, while those showing negligence or poor performance will face departmental action, he said.

The protection of citizens' lives and property is the top priority of the Islamabad Police, and any form of negligence and incompetence will not be tolerated, Syed Ali Raza said.

Anti-drug awareness campaign on full swing

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have initiated a special awareness campaign to eradicate the use of narcotics from the federal capital and ensure the safety of the youth from the curse of drugs.

According to police spokesperson ICT police led by Inspector General (IG) police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, has launched the "Nasha Ab Nahi" campaign to combat narcotics and protect youth from drug abuse.

In this regard, police officers have conducted special lectures in various educational institutions to educate students about the harms of drugs and preventive measures.

He said during this campaign, DIG Syed Ali Raza has delivered lectures on

the FAST University Islamabad campus about the harms of narcotics and preventive measures, emphasizing that drug abuse is detrimental to the health and future of students.

Students are urged to protect themselves and contribute to saving their surroundings from the curse of drugs, he said.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to collaborate in preventing youngsters from falling victim to drugs. He added.

Syed Ali Raza has appealed to the public to immediately inform the police about any drug-related activities in their vicinity, he said.

The cooperation of the public is deemed crucial for the successful eradication of this menace, he added.

DIG further said that, Islamabad Police and Anti-Narcotics Force are jointly working to combat drug trafficking, while special teams have been formed to apprehend drug peddlers in educational institutions, he added.

Syed Ali Raza emphasized that individuals involved in businesses related to narcotics and liquor will be brought to justice, he said.

DIG said the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police is actively engaging with the community to make the city safe and secure, he added.

Citizens are urged to report any suspicious persons or activities to the relevant police station, or at the emergency helpline "Pucar-15," or via the "ICT Police" app.

SP pays surprise visit to PS Industrial Area

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police Superintendent of Police (SP) Industrial Area zone on Thursday pays a surprise visit to Industrial Area police station.

According to a police public relations officer, under the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Ali Rizvi the SP Industrial Area Zone

Ali Raza paid a surprise visit to Industrial Area Police station.

He said during the visit, SP Ali Raza checked the station records, roznamcha, front desk, record room, lockup, investigation officers' rooms and residential barrack.

On this occasion, SP said that inappropriate behaviour toward citizens will not be tolerated under any circumstances, he added.

Ali Raza directed the police officials to listen to the problems of every citizen who comes to the police station with respect, he said.

He said the welfare of police officers is among the top priorities of the Islamabad police, SP added.

He said Ali Raza further directed the officers to make the dispute resolution centers more active, and the problems faced by citizens and police officers should be resolved on a first priority basis.

Power shutdown

ISLAMABAD (APP): IESCO on Thursday issued power suspension programme for Friday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

The power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Rawalpindi City Circle, Sarafa Bazar, City, Fawara Chowk, DHQ, Iqbal Road-II, Liaquat Bagh, Farooq Azam Road, Shamas Colony Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Ward No.08 feeder and surrounding areas.

ANF foils attempt to smuggle drugs and weapons

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting a raid in Karachi foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs and weapons and recovered 1200 grams charras, seven pistols and ammunition, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He informed that ANF conducted a raid at a courier office near Nursery Stop in Karachi and recovered 1200 grams hashish and weapons, concealed in electronic goods sent from

Peshawar. The recovered weapons included five 9 mm pistols, two 30 bore pistols and 17 magazines with 55 rounds.

The weapons and drugs were tactfully hidden in battery chargers and juicer machines.

The parcel was booked from 'Karkhano' Market Peshawar to Karachi.

ANF confiscated weapons and drugs and started investigation to find the accused involved in smuggling of arms and drugs.

IEA appoints ambassador

KABUL (Ariana News): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday announced the appointment of Abdul Ghafar Bahr as the new ambassador of IEA in Uzbekistan. Hafiz Zia Ahmed, Deputy Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, announced Bahr's appointment on his X account. Bahr was present at the recent farewell meeting of Khawaja Shadmanov, Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Kabul, with Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Amir Khan Muttaqi.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Rabi ul Awal 15 1446 — Friday, September 20, 2024

Taq-e-Zafar reflects history

KABUL (TOLONews): Taq-e-Zafar is a historical monument from the era of Amanullah Khan, located in Paghman district of Kabul. This structure, which represents Afghan culture, was built in the European style by architects from Kandahar and Kabul. Shafiullah, a resident of Paghman, said: "In Afghanistan, they suggested building it in every province, and after consultation, it was decided that the monument should be constructed in the province or district with the most martyrs."

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

Afghani value rises 3% against dollar

KABUL (TOLONews): The Central Bank of Afghanistan reports that in the first six months of the current solar year, the value of the Afghani has increased by three percent against foreign currencies, especially the dollar.

Haseebullah Noori, the spokesperson for the bank, emphasized that the Central Bank has been able to increase the value of the Afghani against other currencies by implementing better monetary policies and preventing the smuggling of dollars out of the country.

The Central Bank's spokesperson said: "In the past six months and the past year, the Central Bank of Afghanistan has successfully maintained the value of the Afghani. Our data shows that in the past year, the value of the Afghani has increased by 17.25 percent

against foreign currencies, and in the past six months, it has risen by three percent."

The Kabul Sarai Shahzada Exchange Union states that the implementation of infrastructure projects, the expansion of political interactions, and the increased demand for the Afghani are among the factors that have influenced the rise in the Afghani's value against foreign currencies.

Bahram Khan Zadrani, the head of the Kabul Sarai Shahzada Exchange Union, said: "In Sarai Shahzada and in all currency markets, the demand for the Afghani is higher. Globally, Afghans who are abroad have transferred their capital to Afghanistan, purchased property, and invested. These factors have had a significant impact on the value of the Afghani."

Mohammad Tahir Qayumi, a money exchanger, said: "Every year around this time, fresh fruit exports from Afghanistan take place, and the Afghani is stronger during this period."

Meanwhile, several economic experts say that the increase in the value of the Afghani against other currencies also contributes to the country's economic growth and development.

Abdul Nasir Rashtia, an economic expert, said: "The more the Afghani appreciates in value, the more we can sell goods at lower prices in the market, which can positively impact reducing prices."

Statistics from the Central Bank of Afghanistan indicate that the value of the Afghani in Asad (solar calendar) of the current solar year has increased by 17.25 percent compared to Asad of the previous year.

IEA's leader says all laws now based on Sharia

KABUL (Ariana News): The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) has reiterated that the current system is based on the Holy Quran and Sharia, opposed to previous laws that were of European and American origin.

Speaking during his tour of northern provinces, Hibatullah Akhundzada criticized previous laws under the former government and said the laws in place now are based on the "Quran, Tigh and Hadith".

He said: "Some countries claim to defend human rights; but in practice, they bombard and kill innocent people in countries like Palestine."

He also said: "The conquest of Kabul is like the conquest of Makkah."

He asked the officials of the Islamic Emirate to name victory day "Fath Day".

The leader of the Islamic Emirate stated that the Doha negotiations between the United States and the Islamic Emirate were conducted based on Islamic Sharia and according to him: "No step of these negotiations has been taken or implemented against the religion."

Vaccinations prevent malnutrition in babies

KABUL (Pajhwok): Health experts emphasize that childhood vaccinations play a crucial role in preventing malnutrition in babies.

Shah Wali Afghan, an internal medicine specialist in the malnutrition department at the French Medical Institute for Mothers and Children, explained that malnutrition could result from inadequate nutrition, illnesses, and a lack of vaccinations.

He urged families to ensure their children received vaccinations.

"Malnutrition occurs when a child's nutritional needs are not met, either in quality or quantity," Dr. Afghan stated.

He noted that illness could also diminish a child's appetite, leading to prolonged malnutrition.

Symptoms of malnutrition include weight loss, stunted growth, and shortness of breath. Dr. Afghan reported that their hospital saw around 50 children daily in the outpatient department and they included critically ill patients often suffering from malnutrition alongside pneumonia and diarrhea.

Highlighting the importance of the first three years of a child's life, he urged families to focus on proper nutrition and timely vaccinations.

He also advised mothers to maintain a nutritious diet during pregnancy, recommending foods rich in vitamins, particularly folic acid and iron.

Dr. Afghan recommended breastfeeding exclusively from the first hour of birth for the first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding alongside complementary foods.

He explained that antibodies in breast milk help protect infants from many diseases.

Most cases of malnutrition can be treated, except in instances of severe complications. "The good news is that with appropriate care, recovery is both safe and effective," he added.

"If a child becomes ill and loses appetite for an extended period, such parents should seek medical help promptly."

He said they provided free treatment for malnourished children and encouraged parents to bring their children for diagnosis and treatment.

Gulalai, a resident of Badakhshan Province, shared her experience bringing her malnourished son to the French Medical Institute.

She explained that her three-and-a-half-year-old son had lost weight and lacked appetite due to diarrhea and has been receiving care at the institute for six days.

Muttaqi invited to upcoming Moscow format meeting



KABUL (Ariana News): Russian ambassador in Kabul Dmitry Zhirnov, in a meeting with Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Amir Khan Muttaqi, invited him to participate in the next meeting of the Moscow Format of Consultations on Afghanistan.

During the meeting, Zhirnov emphasized that

Russia places great importance on its relations with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and, therefore, seeks to ensure the participation of Afghan delegations in all forums hosted by Russia, whether regional or international, according to a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Expressing gratitude for

the invitation, FM Muttaqi noted that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, viewing the Moscow Format as a constructive and beneficial initiative, has actively participated in previous meetings since its inception.

Muttaqi further called the upcoming meeting as a valuable opportunity to engage in constructive dis-

cussions with senior Russian officials and representatives from regional countries on matters of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation.

The next Moscow format meeting is expected to be held in the next two weeks, Muttaqi announced on Thursday, adding that a high-level IEA delegation will attend it.

25 tourist, historical sites identified and registered in Badakhshan

BADAKHSHAN (TOLONews): The Directorate of Information and Culture of Badakhshan has announced the identification and registration of 25 tourist and historical sites in more than eight districts of the province.

Officials from this directorate state that these tourist and historical sites have been identified and registered by the Ministry of Information and Culture in

the districts of Shughnan, Ishkashim, Zebak, Kuran wa Munjan, Baharak, Yamgan, Warduj, and Yftal. Sediqi Lalzad, the head of tourism for the

Directorate of Information and Culture of Badakhshan, said: "They have identified, registered, and documented 25 tourist sites that are natural, historical, and cultural, and this process will continue."

Meanwhile, a number of

Badakhshan residents are urging the country's businessmen and investors to invest in the province's tourist sites.

Attaullah Adeeb, a resident of Badakhshan, said: "Tourists and travelers should come with complete peace of mind, visit these areas, and help the tourism culture grow in Afghanistan, especially in Badakhshan."

Another resident of

Badakhshan, Shafiqullah, said: "Invest, coordinate with traders, and this in itself is an investment for the people of Badakhshan."

Badakhshan, with its pleasant climate, towering mountains, roaring rivers, wildlife, and historical monuments, is one of the provinces that has increasingly attracted the attention of both domestic and foreign tourists.

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani: War ended and reconstruction started

PAKTIA (TOLONews): The acting Minister of Interior, during the foundation stone-laying ceremony of a large mosque in Paktia, said that the war in the country has ended, and now it is time for reconstruction.

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani said that in the past, reconstruction efforts in Paktia province were neglected, but the attention of the Islamic Emirate will be greater.

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, the acting Minister of Interior, said: "Alhamdulillah, security has been established throughout Afghanistan by the grace of God. God has ended the phase of war and crisis, and the people's hope is that Afghanistan will make daily progress in construction, development, and rebuilding efforts."

The residents of Paktia said that after years of waiting, the time has come to work on the development of this province.

They also demand the fulfillment of the promises



made by the government.

Injeer Gul, a resident of Paktia, said: "From the center to the Patan border, the Machalgho dam road, similarly from the Tiri Pass road dam to the road from the center to Paktika, from the center to the borders of Ghazni, the airport, and in the same way, our regional

hospital must provide reliable services."

Mohammad Shah Fazli, another resident, said: "We hope that just as they came for the mosque, they will take steps for other issues as well, and we will come again and again to welcome them. The projects should be inaugurated, and their

work should begin."

This mosque is being funded by donor organizations and traders at a cost of 3.5 million dollars.

The construction will be completed within three years, and it will have the capacity to accommodate 10,000 worshippers at a time.

Traffic accident kills nine in Herat province

HERAT (Khaama Press): Local officials in Herat province report that a traffic accident has claimed the lives of nine members of a single family.

The incident occurred on the Herat-Kandahar highway in the Zawal district.

According to officials, the accident happened when a passenger car collided with a 580-type vehicle, resulting in the deaths of all nine passengers.

Herat officials have identified reckless driving as the primary cause of this tragic accident.

Similar traffic incidents have previously claimed the lives of citizens in this province, with reckless driving often cited as the main cause of such accidents.



Local authorities continue to urge drivers to exercise caution to prevent such tragic events.

The frequent traffic acci-

dents in Herat highlight the need for stricter traffic law enforcement and driver safety awareness to reduce the loss of life on highways.

Efforts to raise public awareness and improve road safety measures are critical to addressing the ongoing issue of reckless driving in the region.

SC resolves over 185,000 cases in past year



KABUL (TOLONews): Officials from the Supreme Court stated during a program explaining their achievements that in the past year, the Supreme Court has resolved more than 185,000 cases, including over 3,000 cases involving women.

They also mentioned that during this period, approximately 179,818 various types of surety bonds have been executed.

Atiqullah Darwish, the Chief of the Criminal Division of the Supreme Court, said during the program: "Last year, 250,762 civil and criminal cases were processed through the three courts, of which 203,478 cases were in the primary courts."

Atiqullah Darwish added that, based on the decree of the leader of the Islamic Emirate on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, more than 2,000 people

were released from prison, and nearly 2,000 others received sentence reductions.

The Chief of the Criminal Division of the Supreme Court added: "On the occasion of the minor and major Eids, a total of 2,304 individuals were released from prison, and 1,920 others were granted sentence reductions as deemed appropriate by the relevant authorities."

It was also stated during the program that the Supreme Court's High Council held 38 meetings last year and resolved 191 different issues during these sessions.

According to Supreme Court officials, any statutory laws that contradict Islam are not enforceable in the current Islamic system.

Mohammad Sharif Haqqani, the Chief of the Central Appeals Court, said: "Due to the large

number of issues, it naturally takes time. This does not mean that the courts are negligent or that anyone's rights are being denied or that a decision is not being made in their case."

Abdul Malik Haqqani, the Administrative Deputy of the Supreme Court, said: "The Islamic Emirate has not taken any action regarding personal laws that do not serve the public interest or that conflict with Islam."

According to information from the Supreme Court, the assigned inspection team of this department has inspected 533 cases according to applicable rules and regulations.

Supreme Court officials stated that within a year, they received 335 cabinet resolutions, orders, and decrees from the leader of the Islamic Emirate, on which appropriate actions were taken.

Mining and production industries: Russian investors plan major investment



PANJSHIR (BNA): Two prominent Russian investors have expressed strong interest in investing \$30 million in Panjshir province, focusing on the mining sector and establishing manufacturing plants. These investors, who visited Panjshir to explore potential opportunities, met with Hafiz Mohammad Agha Hakim, Governor of Panjshir, to outline their investment plans.

According to Bakhtar News Agency, the Russian businessmen highlighted their intent to invest in the technical extraction of minerals, as well as to build production factories for tomato paste, fruit juice, mineral water, and beverages. They stated that their initiative would not only

capitalize on Panjshir's agricultural produce but would also collect fruits from other regions. These fruits will be processed into juice and prepared for export to Central Asian markets.

The investors emphasized that with the establishment of these production facilities, Panjshir would generate an annual export revenue of approximately \$3 million from fruit juices, tomato paste, and other beverage products to regional markets.

The investors further acknowledged the favorable business environment created by the establishment of the Islamic Emirate and the improved security across Afghanistan, noting that these conditions make

the country an attractive destination for foreign investment.

They confirmed that their preliminary assessments for investment in Panjshir have been completed, and they expect to commence their operations soon.

In response, Governor Hakim welcomed the large-scale investment plans of the Russian entrepreneurs, particularly in the technical mining sector and the establishment of production facilities.

He assured the investors of full support and cooperation from the provincial authorities, emphasizing that such projects would contribute significantly to Panjshir's economic development.



ISLAMABAD: Sindh Ministers, Sharjeel Inam Memon and Nasir Hussain Shah called on President Asif Ali Zardari.

PHC orders NAB to submit response in KP CM assets case

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court has directed the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to submit its response in the assets beyond means case against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapur.

During the hearing, the petitioner's lawyer argued that NAB issued a notice to Gandapur on November 3, 2023, without specifying any charges, only requesting details of his assets. The lawyer claimed that a second notice, sent on November 24, was issued with malice and failed to comply with NAB laws, which require clear mention of the crime and requested information.

The lawyer further explained that at the time of the notice, Gandapur was a federal minister, and under NAB laws, witnesses must be presented in court. The petitioner requested the court to declare both NAB notices illegal and halt all proceedings, highlighting that Gandapur's father, brothers, and other family members had also been served notices.

Chief Justice of the Peshawar High Court inquired about the impact of the Supreme Court's recent ruling on assets beyond means cases. The court then ordered NAB to review the case in light of the Supreme Court's decision. Earlier this year, the Election Commission of Pakistan had summoned Gandapur on March 26 over his failure to declare his financial assets.

Larger bench for PTI rally pleas proposed

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Justice Farooq Haider of the Lahore High Court (LHC) Thursday recommended the formation of a larger bench to hear petitions related to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rally.

According to media reports, the cases involve PTI's Alia Hamza, Sheikh Imtiaz, and Akmal Khan, who filed three separate petitions seeking permission to hold the rally, prevent it from being stopped, and halt arrests.

During the hearing, Punjab Government's Assistant Advocate General Muhammad Farrukh Lodhi represented the state, while Advocate Ishfaq Ahmad Khan and others appeared for the petitioners. Justice Farooq Haider pointed out that these three petitions are of a similar nature and require a joint legal interpretation.

Uplift of tribal districts top priority: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, has termed the development of tribal districts as one of the priority areas of his government, adding that Jirgas are being organized to address the problems faced by these districts. The administration is working on addressing the issues identified in the first jirga held in this regard days before, and in the next phase, district-wise jirgas will be held to identify and remedy the problems specific to each merged district.

In a statement issued here, the Chief Minister said that the incumbent provincial government has implemented a policy for the merged districts, whereby recruitments would be carried out purely based on local domicile in each merged district, as these opportunities are the right of the local people. He

made it clear that this policy will be strictly enforced. Furthermore, the Chief Minister clarified that the purpose of halting illegal mining activities in the merged districts is to provide mining opportunities to local people, enabling them to have livelihood opportunities for themselves and their families. "New projects are also being introduced for infrastructure development in the merged districts, prioritizing the construction and rehabilitation of road infrastructure, providing clean drinking water and other facilities specially in the sectors of social services," he added.

In response to a question, the Chief Minister said that people will be resettled in areas where security clearance has been obtained, and unnecessary check posts are being abolished to alleviate the suffering of the local population. He maintained that funds

have been released to reactivate outsourced hospitals in the merged districts.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed that all promises made by the incumbent provincial government to the merged districts, will be fulfilled, as the development of these districts is a vision and dream of Imran Khan that will be realized. He emphasized that the provincial government's policy is clear: investments would be made in sectors that have the potential to make the province self-sufficient.

Additionally, the Chief Minister has termed maintaining law and order in the province, particularly in the tribal districts, as a major challenge, adding that the provincial government is taking pragmatic steps to effectively deal with this challenge in collaboration with relevant departments, institutions, administration, and local leaders.

Israeli planes bomb Lebanon after radio blasts

BEIRUT/JERUSALEM (Reuters): Israel bombed southern Lebanon on Thursday and said it had thwarted an Iranian-led assassination plot after explosions in booby-trapped radios and pagers in the past two days caused bloody havoc in the ranks of its arch-foe Hezbollah.

The attacks on Hezbollah's communications equipment killed 37 people and wounded around 3,000, raising fears that a full-blown war was imminent. The action also sowed disarray across Lebanon as panicked residents abandoned their mobile phones. "This isn't a small matter, it's war. Who can even secure their phone now? When I heard about what happened yesterday, I left my phone on my motorcycle and walked away," said Mustafa Sibal on a street in Beirut. Israel has neither confirmed nor denied being behind the attacks but multiple security sources have said they were carried out by its spy agency Mossad.

The Lebanese army said on Thursday it was blowing up pagers and suspicious telecom devices in controlled blasts in different areas. It called on citizens to report any suspicious devices. Lebanese authorities banned walkie-talkies and pagers from being taken on flights from Beirut airport until further notice, the National News Agency reported. Such devices were also banned from being shipped by air.

In Beirut on Thursday, a distant roar in the skies could be heard from what state media said was Israeli war

planes breaking the sound barrier — a noise that has become common in recent months. Hezbollah fired missiles at Israel on the day after the Oct. 7 cross-border attack by the Palestinian militant group Hamas which triggered the Gaza war, and since then constant exchanges of fire have occurred, although neither side has allowed this to escalate into a full-scale war.

Israel said its warplanes struck villages in southern Lebanon overnight, and a security source and Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV reported airstrikes near the border began again on Thursday just after midday. Hand-held radios used by Hezbollah detonated on Wednesday across Lebanon's south.

The previous day, hundreds of pagers — used by Hezbollah to evade mobile phone surveillance — exploded at once, killing 12 people including two children, and injuring more than 2,300. Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati called on the United Nations Security Council to take a firm stand to stop what he called Israel's "aggression" and "technological war" against his country.

Israel says its conflict with Hezbollah, like its war in Gaza against Hamas, is part of a wider regional confrontation with Iran, which sponsors both groups as well as armed movements in Syria, Yemen and Iraq. Also on Thursday, Israeli security forces said that an Israeli businessman had been arrested last month after attending at least two meetings in Iran

where he discussed assassinating Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the defense minister or the head of the Shin Bet spy agency.

Last week, Shin Bet uncovered what it said was a plot by Hezbollah to assassinate former Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon. Israel has been accused of assassinations including a blast in Tehran that killed the leader of Hamas and another in a Beirut suburb that killed a senior Hezbollah commander within hours of each other in July.

Despite the events of the past few days, a spokesperson for the UN peacekeeping mission in southern Lebanon said the situation along the frontier had "not changed much in terms of exchanges of fire between the parties." "There was an intensification last week. This week it is more or less the same. There are still exchanges of fire. It is still worrying, still concerning, and the rhetoric is high," the spokesperson, Andrea Tenenti, said.

Tens of thousands of people have had to flee the Israel-Lebanon border area on both sides since the hostilities began in October. The Israeli military said its overnight air strikes hit Hezbollah targets in Chihine, Tayibe, Blida, Meiss El Jabal, Aitaroun and Kfarkela in southern Lebanon, as well as a Hezbollah weapons storage facility in the area of Khiam. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the war was moving into a new phase, with more resources and military units being shifted to the northern border.

Children of resistant families vaccinated

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah in his meeting with Rotary Foundation Chairman Mark Maloney emphasized the provincial government's unwavering commitment to eradicating polio.

"Despite our hectic efforts Sindh continues to detect polio cases due to frequent cross-border travel from neighbouring countries. "We are confident that our initiatives will yield positive results," the CM said and added that his government had initiated vaccinations for all malnourished children to strengthen their immunity.

Murad Shah thanked the Rotary Foundation for their support in Pakistan against polio. At this, Mr. Maloney said that the Rotary has established 23 permanent immunisation centres across Pakistan and is providing support in high-risk union councils (UCs) within Sindh.

The Rotary Foundation is facilitating social mobilization and fostering confidence-building among families who have previously refused vaccinations in high-risk areas," said Maloney. Chief Minister Shah said that a recent special campaign in 85 high-risk union councils of Karachi has been initiated where a fractional injectable polio vaccine (IPV) was successfully administered with the full mobilisation of government officials. He lauded the active participation of deputy commissioners and assistant commissioners in converting refusal cases and supporting polio teams in their outreach.

Shah also lauded the role of over 5,000 police personnel who ensured a secure environment for frontline workers during the campaign. The CM reaffirmed his government's commitment to making both Sindh and Pakistan polio-free. "The Chief Secretary, divisional commissioners, and more than 3,000 members from the revenue department, administration, and elected representatives for their dedicated field work also actively participated in making the polio campaign successful.

Storm Boris floods Italy

ROME: About 1,000 people have been evacuated in the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna after devastating floods brought by Storm Boris that had wreaked havoc across Central and Eastern Europe.

The development came on Thursday before a meeting between the leaders of four flood-hit European Union countries — Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria — and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the southwestern Polish city of Wroclaw. Boris caused the worst flooding in more than 20 years from Romania to Poland over the past week, killing at least 24 people before moving west.

In Italy, schools were closed and rail services were suspended in several provinces on Thursday. In the town of Lugo, near Ravenna, authorities ordered the evacuation of all ground-floor residences, after the local Senio river broke its banks. "We are in a full emergency," the mayor of Ravenna, Michele De Pascale, told the Radio 24 broadcaster. — Aljazeera

We must fulfil Shaheed Benazir's promises: Bilawal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) began his address by welcoming the Peoples Lawyers Forum (PLF) to Zardari House. He said that the Party's lawyers' wing gave this country the 1973 Constitution and stood firm against every tyrant, whether in the form of dictators like Zia ul Haq and General Musharraf, or Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhary.

Bilawal highlighted that the struggle of the Party's lawyers led to the restoration of the 1973 Constitution and the removal of oppressive laws. He recalled how Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, even while in Dubai, would receive calls from the PLF. She would remark that if judges wished to engage in politics, they should form a political party and contact her in that capacity. She understood that politicising the courts would be detrimental to democracy, the Constitution, and the people.

Bilawal stated that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto herself envisioned the formation of a constitutional court, designed to address the injustices suffered by the people and her family, especially after her father's judicial murder. Her vision focused on establishing constitutional courts to handle cases with political and constitutional implications. The appointment of judges, which constitutionally lay with the Prime Minister, was later transferred to the Chief Justice through judicial intervention. Attempts were made to address this in the 18th Amendment, following global examples like the United States, where legislators hold such powers. However, this effort was derailed by the so-called "handshake" Chief Justice, who set a precedent for an insular judicial system. The doctrine of 'political activism' initiated by Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhary has since been propagated by figures like Saqib Nisar and Gulzar Ahmed. Articles of the Constitution, such as 58-2B, have been weaponised.

Bilawal said his family waited fifty years to achieve justice for Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. While expressing gratitude to the entire bench of the case, including Justice Isa and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, he questioned the plight of the common people if a former Prime Minister, his daughter, also a former Prime Minister, and her husband, a former President, had to wait five decades for justice. "We must fulfil Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's promises; come what may, we must establish the constitutional court in line with the Charter of Democracy," Chairman Bilawal vowed. The process of judicial appointments needs reform, and the people of this country must receive justice.

Bilawal noted that 15 percent of the Supreme Court's cases are constitutional, yet these occupy significant portions of time. He questioned whether it would not

Talk of Ukraine's missile deal riles Russia

MOSCOW, KYIV: Russian officials delivered dissonant statements in the past week about how Moscow would respond to Western weapons striking deep inside its territory, and whether such attacks will happen at all. Russian diplomats played on the now-familiar threat of a nuclear response.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told the state news agency TASS on Saturday that Ukraine's Western allies had already approved deep strikes inside Russia.

"The decision [to allow Kyiv to strike] is there; all the carte blanche indulgences have been issued to Kyiv's clients," TASS quoted him as saying. "Therefore, we will respond in a brutal way." US President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer had met the previous day, but issued no statement on whether they were giving authority to Kyiv to use US-made Army Tactical Missiles (ATACMs) or British-made Storm Shadow missiles to hit air bases and logistics 300km (185 miles) inside Russia.

Asked whether he had obtained such permission on Sunday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told CNN's Fareed Zakaria, "No. Until now, no." He also hinted that weapons with an even longer range of 500km (310 miles) might now be needed, because Russia had moved its fighter planes back from front-line airfields within range of the longest-range weapons that Ukraine currently possesses. "We waited too long," Zelenskyy said.

The US has given permission to Ukraine to use its weapons across the border for counter-battery fire. Until now, there have been no reports of Ukraine using ATACMs and Storm Shadow missiles to hit airfields or logistics. There was also dissonance in what the Russian response would be.

Sergey Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, on Friday told Rossiya-24 television that a nuclear conflict would reach the US. "I keep on trying to convey this thesis to them — the Americans will not be able to sit it out overseas. This war will affect everyone," he said, referring

to a possible nuclear conflict on Friday.

On the same day, Russian Ambassador to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzya said deep strikes with Western weapons amounted to a NATO-Russia war. "Once a decision to lift restrictions is really made, it will mean that NATO countries begin a direct war on Russia from this very moment," he said.

That echoed the position expressed by Russian President Vladimir Putin on September 12. Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chairman of Russia's powerful National Security Council and Putin's right-hand man, warned that Moscow's "patience" was wearing thin.

"Russia is showing patience. After all, it is obvious that a nuclear response is an extremely difficult decision with irreversible consequences," he wrote on Saturday, but added that "any patience comes to an end". Ukraine did strike deep inside Russia on Tuesday night, but used its own weapons. — Aljazeera

Ammunition from India enters Ukraine, raising Russian ire

NEW DELHI (Reuters): Artillery shells sold by Indian arms makers have been diverted by European customers to Ukraine and New Delhi has not intervened to stop the trade despite protests from Moscow, according to 11 Indian and European government and defence industry officials, as well as a Reuters analysis of commercially available customs data.

The transfer of munitions to support Ukraine's defence against Russia has occurred for more than a year, according to the sources and the customs data. Indian arms export regulations limit the use of weaponry to the declared purchaser, who risks future sales being terminated if unauthorised transfers occur.

The Kremlin has raised the issue on at least two occasions, including during a July meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Indian counterpart, three Indian officials said. Details of the ammunition transfers are reported by Reuters for the first time.

Following the publication of this report, India's foreign ministry described it as "speculative and mis-

leading". "It implies violations by India where none exist and, hence, is inaccurate and mischievous," ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Thursday.

"India has been carrying out its defence exports taking into account its international obligations on non-proliferation and based on robust legal and regulatory framework, which includes a holistic assessment of relevant criteria, including end user obligations and certifications," Jaiswal added. The foreign and defence ministries of Russia and the defence ministry of India did not respond to questions. In January, Jaiswal told a news conference that India had not sent or sold artillery shells to Ukraine.

Two Indian government and two defence industry sources told Reuters that Delhi produced only a very small amount of the ammunition being used by Ukraine, with one official estimating that it was under 1% of the total arms imported by Kyiv since the war. The news agency couldn't determine if the munitions were resold or donated to Kyiv by the European customers. Among the European coun-

tries sending Indian munitions to Ukraine are Italy and the Czech Republic, which is leading an initiative to supply Kyiv with artillery shells from outside the European Union, according to a Spanish and a senior Indian official, as well as a former top executive at Yantra India, a state-owned company whose munitions are being used by Ukraine.

The Indian official said that Delhi was monitoring the situation. But, along with a defence industry executive with direct knowledge of the transfers, he said India had not taken any action to throttle the supply to Europe. Like most of the 20 people interviewed by Reuters, they spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter. The Ukrainian, Italian, Spanish and Czech defence ministries did not respond to requests for comment.

Delhi and Washington, Ukraine's main security backer, have recently strengthened defence and diplomatic cooperation against the backdrop of a rising China, which both regard as their main rival. India also has warm ties with Russia, its primary arms supplier for decades, and Prime

Minister Narendra Modi has refused to join the Western-led sanctions regime against Moscow.

But Delhi, long the world's largest weapons importer, also sees the lengthy war in Europe as an opportunity to develop its nascent arms export sector, according to six Indian sources familiar with official thinking. Ukraine, which is battling to contain a Russian offensive toward the eastern logistics hub of Pokrovsk, has a dire shortage of artillery ammunition.

The White House declined to comment and the U.S. State Department referred questions on Delhi's arms exports to the Indian government. India exported just over \$3 billion of arms between 2018 and 2023, according to data compiled by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute think-tank.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said at an Aug. 30 conference that defence exports surpassed \$2.5 billion in the last fiscal year and that Delhi wanted to increase that to about \$6 billion by 2029. Commercially available customs records show that in the two years before the February

2022 invasion, three major Indian ammunition makers — Yantra, Munitions India and Kalyani Strategic Systems — exported just \$2.8 million in munitions components to Italy and the Czech Republic, as well as Spain and Slovenia, where defence contractors have invested heavily in supply chains for Ukraine.

Between February 2022 and July 2024, the figure had increased to \$135.25 million, the data show, including completed munitions, which India began exporting to the four nations. Arzan Tarapore, an India defence expert at Stanford University, said that Delhi's push to expand its arms exports was a major factor in the transfer of its arms to Ukraine.

"Probably in the sudden recent expansion, some instances of end-user violations have occurred," Unlisted Italian defence contractor Meccanica per l'Elettronica e Servomeccanismi (MES) was among the companies sending Indian-made shells to Ukraine, said the former top Yantra official.

MES is Yantra's biggest foreign client. The executive said the Rome-based company buys empty shells

from India and fills them with explosives. Several Western firms had explosive filling capabilities but lack the manufacturing capacity to mass produce artillery shells, the executive said.

Yantra said in its 2022-23 annual report that it had agreed a deal with an unnamed Italian client to set up a manufacturing line for L15A1 shells, which the former Yantra executive identified as MES. MES and Yantra India did not respond to emails seeking comment. Customs data indicate that Yantra shipped \$35 million worth of empty 155mm L15A1 shells to MES between February 2022 and July 2024.

Customs records also show that in February 2024, U.K.-based arms company Dince Hill — whose board includes a top MES executive — exported \$6.7 million in ammunition from Italy to Ukraine. Among the exports were 155mm L15A1 shells, which the customs declaration said were manufactured by MES for Ukraine's Defence Ministry and supplied for "promoting the defense capability and mobilization readiness of Ukraine."